

The Jug: Storytelling tips and Learning tools

Before narration:

- Introduce the setting for this story as a village in India (though this is not a folktale)
- Discuss the below professions with the children before reading. The story can be better appreciated with an understanding of why the exchange of each item is important:
 - Basket weaving: Baskets are hand-woven from plant stems and sold in the market
 - Honey gathering: Honey gatherers go in groups to forests to gather honey from bee hives which they later sell. The gatherers face occupational hazards such as tigers and snakes, and of course, the sting of bees
 - Confectionery: The confectioners make different kinds of sweets from milk, honey, flour, etc. and display it in beautiful arrays for sale. Festival times and parties are times of good business

Storytelling:

- Modulate your voice to express different feelings of the characters:
 - The weaver in pain
 - The delighted honey gatherer
 - The eager sweet shop owner
 - The sad beggar, and
 - Anita in all the above scenes
- Towards the climax, ask the children to guess what happens after Anita gives the sweet box to the beggar. You may ask, “Can you guess what happened next?” Appreciate responses and disclose the ending in the story

After narration:

- There is a sense of justice in the story where good deeds are rewarded. Discuss this topic with the class
- Print out the illustrations and study each of them:
 - Weaver in pain illustration: What is the tall, grey structure in the background?
[Answer: Called 'Gopuram', it is the monumental entrance to South-Indian Hindu temples.]
 - Why does the honey-gatherer have a mask hanging on his waist?
[Answer: Masks with human faces are worn by honey gatherers on the back of their heads to deter tigers by tricking them into believing them to be human faces.]
 - What are Anita and her mother wearing in the last illustration?
[Answers: Anita: Silk skirt, Mother: Silk 'sari'
In India, expensive, silk clothing is usually worn on festive occasions by the rich and is considered a symbol of social stature.]
- Ask the children if they have tried Indian sweets? Can they describe how they looked and tasted, and what they were made from
- Ask the children to describe Anita

Extended activities:

- Ask the children to share with the class, any other stories of good being rewarded
- Encourage the children to do their own research about each profession

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- Discuss the concept of 'bartering' in history before money was introduced
- To pick a topic and write their own chain (barter) story in teams of four. When finished, ask them to read aloud to the class
- Research what a 'sari' is and find out how to tie one

Reading Comprehension:

Ask the children:

1) Have you tasted honey? Describe the taste. Describe a dish you have eaten that was prepared with honey. Did you like it? Did you not?

Read aloud the responses.

2) What is the synonym of "mendicant" in the story?

3) In olden days, goods were exchanged for other goods instead of using money. What is this system called?

Answer Key

1) Based on individual experience. The teacher can share his/her experiences too. It will be interesting to learn how honey is used in various cuisines if the class has students from different cultures

2) Beggar

3) Barter