

The Talking Cave: Storytelling tips and Learning tools

Before narration:

Introduce this as a folktale from India (from the Panchatantra folktale collection) in which a smart jackal outwits a stupid lion.

Storytelling:

- Roar like a lion and howl like the fox. Ask the children to join and make sounds with them
- Use simple gestures and show the facial expressions of:
 - The lion:
 - as it waits anticipating the fox's return
 - looking foolish when it roars
 - The fox:
 - looking suspicious, rubbing paw against chin as it first spots the paw prints
 - squeals in excitement as it escapes
- Use character voices for the lion (nasal) and fox (base)

After narration:

- This is a story that has talking animals. This form of expression in the English language is called 'anthropomorphism'. Discuss if the students know of any other stories in which animals talk.
- Researching the word root for 'anthropomorphism' can be an exercise in itself [Anthrop-human, morph-form. Anthropomorphism, or personification, is attribution of human form or other characteristics to anything other than a human being. Most cultures have traditional fables with anthropomorphized animals, which can stand or talk like humans, as characters. Source: Wikipedia.org]
- Ask the children to describe the lion and the fox
- How are the two animals generally described?
[Fox -sly, lion-brave]
- Ask children if they know what 'siesta' is?
[Answer: Short, afternoon nap]
- Extrapolate on how the lion could have caught the fox. What would have happened had the lion not roared?

Extended activity:

Make masks of the lion and fox using color paper, elastic strings, and crayons.

Reading Comprehension:

Ask the children:

- 1) What is a synonym for "quick-witted"?
- 2) How did the fox know that there was a lion inside the cave?

Answer Key

- 1) Some synonyms: Alert, sharp, smart
- 2) The fox saw footprints of the lion going inside the cave, but none leaving the cave. There would have been footprints leading out had the lion left