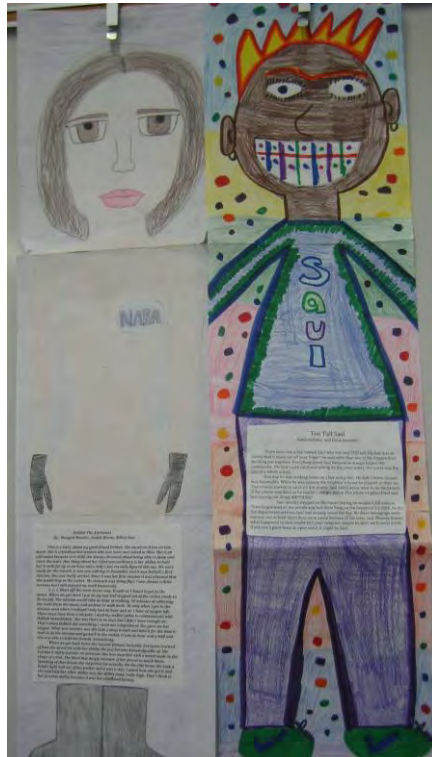


# Arts and Crafts of Storytelling

Debra Brand  
Sawgrass Springs Middle School  
12500 West Sample Road  
Coral Springs, FL 33065  
754 322-4500  
debra.brand@browardschools.com



For information concerning IMPACT II opportunities such as interschool visits, staff development, workshops, and Adapter and Disseminator grants, please contact:

The Broward Education Foundation  
600 SE Third Avenue 1st floor  
Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33301  
754 321-2032

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## Goals

The major goal for this project is simple - to help students expand their vocabulary and increase knowledge of figurative language in order to strengthen writing ability. Identifying the importance of incorporating similes and hyperbole in narrative, expository or persuasive writing unquestionably makes each student a stronger writer. An additional goal of the program is to teach students about American folk heroes and heroines featured in “tall tales.” The lesson further serves to teach children to write original tall tales after being inspired by stories that are such a rich part of our American cultural heritage. The tall tale characters studied include John Henry, Pecos Bill, Johnny Appleseed and Paul Bunyan.

## Objectives

Students will:

- ✓ interpret and write similes.
- ✓ respond to the figurative language of hyperbole using interpretive and evaluative processes.
- ✓ apply knowledge of figurative language to create verbal imagery.
- ✓ study the characteristics of tall tales.
- ✓ apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate and appreciate tall tales.
- ✓ develop a vocabulary and ideas for writing a tall tale.
- ✓ compose a tall tale using the writing process – draft, revise, edit, publish.

## Course Outline

1. Review similes using *like* and *as*.
2. Students create animal similes.
3. Introduce concept of hyperbole.
4. Students create hyperboles.
5. Art Pockets lessons.
6. Introduce elements of tall tales.
7. Students brainstorm ideas for tall tale characters using planning sheet.
8. Using planning sheet, students discuss the scenario for their group tall tale.
9. Draw the character.
10. Brainstorm additional ideas.
11. Use laptops to write story draft.
12. Revise/peer edit story.
13. Create a game [optional].

## Lesson 1: Simile

Goal: Students should be able to use their knowledge of similes to promote their appreciation and understanding of tall tales.

Materials: Markers, white board, student handouts

Write the following on the board:

A  
SIMILE  
I  
K  
E

Review with students that similes are a way to compare two things using 'like' or 'as'. For example, if I want to say that somebody swims well, I can say they swim like a fish because fish swim well. There are two basic patterns that you can use.

Like - verb + like + noun

As - as + adjective + as + noun

Examples:

She swims like a fish.

He looks like an ogre.

She plays like a pro.

He walks like a duck.

She acts like a fool.

Examples:

He is as tall as a giant.

She is as fast as a rocket.

He is as graceful as a swan.

She is as sneaky as a fox.

He is as quiet as a mouse

## Animal similes



We use similes to describe things by comparing them to other things.  
For example, if I want to say someone is fast, I can say she is as fast as a horse.

Use the words below to complete the sentences.

dog	bee	ox	mouse	lamb	mule
bat	snail	eel	lark	bunny	owl

- (1) I can't stop right now. I'm as busy as a \_\_\_\_\_.
- (2) I couldn't hold on to it. It's as slippery as an \_\_\_\_\_.
- (3) Look at her go! She's as quick as a \_\_\_\_\_.
- (4) She can't see a thing. He's as blind as a \_\_\_\_\_.
- (5) She'll know what to do. She's as wise as an \_\_\_\_\_.
- (6) She's in good spirits today. She's as happy as a \_\_\_\_\_.
- (7) This computer is terrible. It's as slow as a \_\_\_\_\_.
- (8) He'll never change his mind. He's as stubborn as a \_\_\_\_\_.
- (9) Don't worry about him. He's as gentle as a \_\_\_\_\_.
- (10) I can't hear you. You are as quiet as a \_\_\_\_\_.
- (11) Get him to move it. He's as strong as an \_\_\_\_\_.
- (12) I can't go to school today. I'm as sick as a \_\_\_\_\_.

## Lesson 2: Hyperbole

Goal: Students should be able to use their knowledge of hyperboles to promote their appreciation and understanding of tall tales.

Materials: Markers, white board, student handouts

# Hyperbole

A hyperbole is a type of figurative language often confused with a simile or a metaphor. The difference is a hyperbole is an exaggeration. For example: His neck was as long as a giraffe's' looks like a simile. It is comparing neck length to the length of a giraffe. Everyone knows that a giraffe's neck is approximately five or six feet long. Imagine having a neck that long!

Complete each of the following to make a hyperbole.

1. Your sister is so thin...
2. The classroom is so cold...
3. My teacher is so old...
4. The water was so choppy...
5. The wind blew so hard...
6. The actress used so much makeup...
7. My brother is so tall...
8. The television was so loud...
9. I'm so hungry...
10. I was so frightened...
11. My leg is so swollen...
12. My best friend is so forgetful...
13. That cat is so mean...
14. My brother is so bad...
15. The wind blew so hard ...

## Lesson 3 - Art Pockets

Goal: Students should be able to determine main idea and essential messages from tall tales.

Materials: Construction paper 12" x 18", glue, scissors, ruler, yarn, ribbon, colored pencils, fine tip markers, Literature Pockets Tall Tales [Paperback] Evan-Moor Educational Publishers



### Art pocket

1. Take a 12"x16" piece of construction paper.
2. Fold up 6" to make a 12" square.
3. Have students cut out or draw the letters for *Tall Tales* and glue them on the front.
4. Punch 2 -3 holes in the left side of the cover.
5. Fasten cover and packet together with yarn or ribbon.
6. Add each story as it is completed.

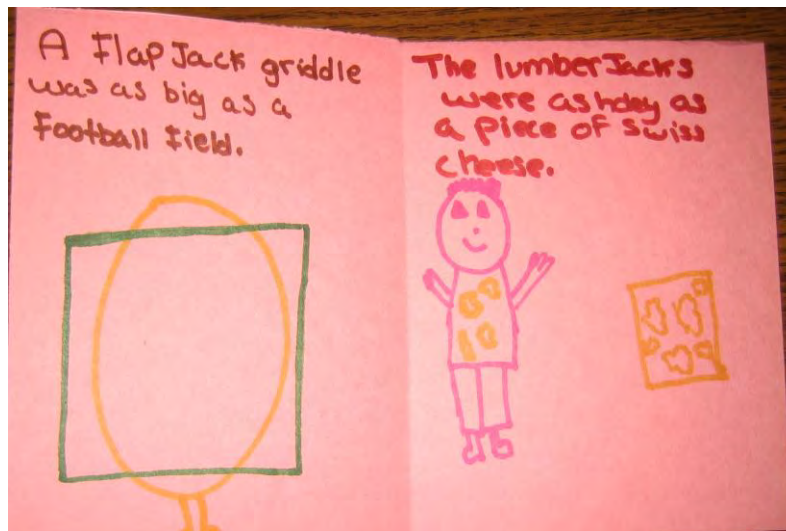




# Paul Bunyan\*

Materials: Construction paper, markers, scissors

1. Read the tall tale.
2. Students create a Venn diagram comparing and contrasting the characteristic of the mosquitoes and the bees.
3. Review that a simile compare two things using *like* or *as*.
4. Locate five similes in the story.
5. Accordion-fold a white piece of 4" x 18" into six 3" sections.
6. Write one of these on each section  
\_\_\_\_\_ is as tall as \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ is as easy as \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ is as big as \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ is as slow as \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ is as strong as \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ is as \_\_\_\_\_ as \_\_\_\_\_ (original)
7. Draw a picture for each simile.
8. Store in the Art Pocket.



\* Additional activities in Literature Pockets Tall Tales Evan-Moor Educational Publishers

# Babe, the Blue Ox\*



## HOW TO WRITE A WORD CINQUAIN

A cinquain poem has five lines.

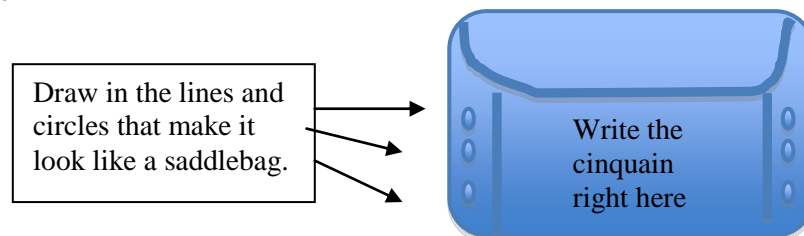
Line 1 - 1 word	Noun
Line 2 - 2 words	Adjectives that describe the noun in line 1
Line 3 - 3 words	-ING verbs that describe the noun in line 1
Line 4 - 4 words	Four-word phrase about the topic
Line 5 - 1 word	Synonym (similar word) for title

Babe  
Enormous hulk  
Overpowering, traveling, dreaming  
Paul's blue gigantic friend  
Ox

Review the story of Babe, the Blue Ox. Have students suggest possible topics:

- Description of size
- Description of strength
- One adventure
- His friendship with Paul Bunyan

Have students write the final draft on **brown** construction paper to simulate a saddlebag. Store in Art Pocket.



\* Additional activities in Literature Pockets Tall Tales Evan-Moor Educational Publishers

## Pecos Bill\*

Materials: Brown bag, scissors, yarn, colored markers, foil, glue.

1. Read the tall tale.
2. Create a Fact vs. Fiction chart about coyotes.
3. Open the brown bag and turn it upside down so the bottom flap faces up. From the bottom flap, cut a circle large enough for your neck. On both sides of the shorter sides of the bag, cut two holes large enough for your arms.
4. Cut a straight vertical line through the center of one of the wide sides to the neck hole. You should be able to put this on like a vest.
5. To create fringe make 1" long cuts along the inside bottom edges of the front flaps.
6. Using colored markers, foil, etc., decorate the vest with western symbols (cowboy hats, coyotes, yarn for lassos, tornadoes, etc.)
7. (Optional- Punch holes in the front and lace the yarn through)
8. Store in the Art Pocket.

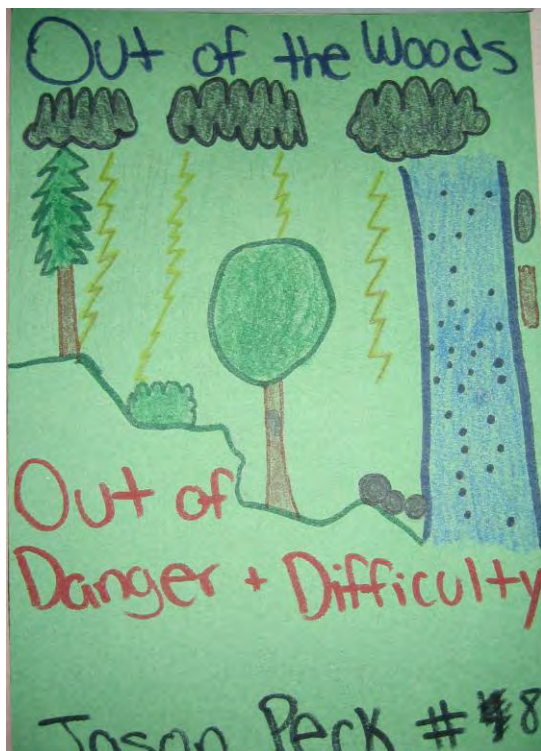


\* Additional activities in Literature Pockets Tall Tales Evan-Moor Educational Publishers

# Johnny Appleseed

Materials: Johnny Appleseed from Capstone graphic Tall Tales, Oriental Trading Paper Plate  
Johnny Appleseed Craft Kit IN-48/5862, colored construction paper, markers, glue

1. Introduce the concept of idioms. *Dressed to kill.*
2. Class volunteers idioms they use.
3. Write these on the board.
4. Work with students to find one idiom for each child.
5. Pass out a variety of colored pieces of construction paper.
6. On the top third have the students write the idiom.
7. On the bottom third write the meaning of the idiom.
8. Between the two draw an illustration of the idiom itself.
9. Create an idiom quilt by taping all the idioms together OR
10. Store in the Art Pocket OR
11. Hang as a word wall.
12. Read the tall tale.
13. Locate five idioms in the tale.



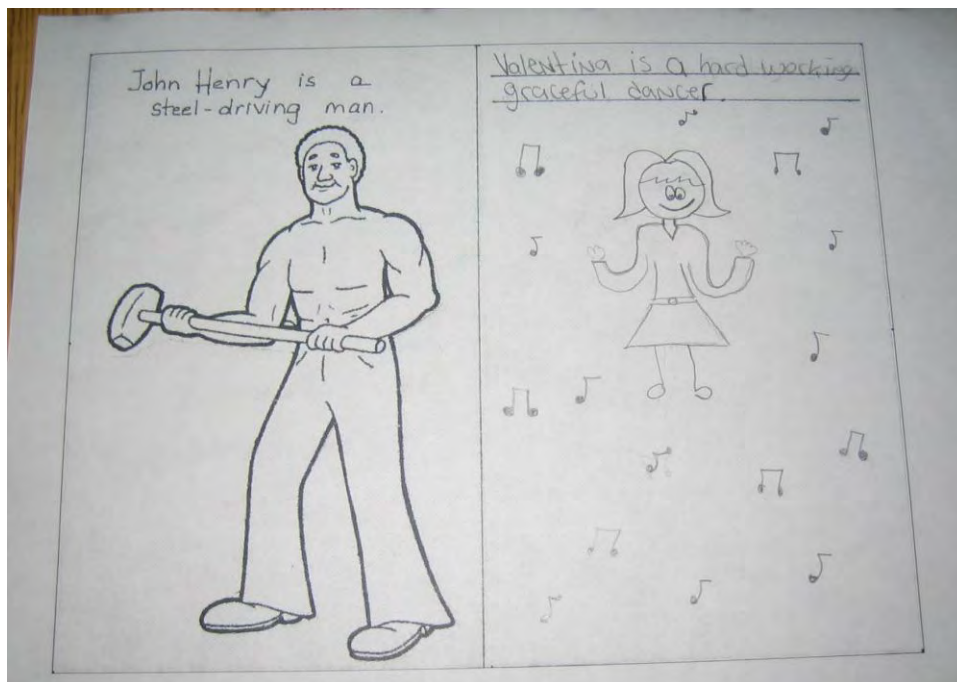
# John Henry\*

## Option 1

1. Read the tall tale.
2. Go to <http://printables.scholastic.com/printables/detail/?id=35537>
3. Print out the Story Train graphic organizer.
4. Complete the story train that sequences the contest between John Henry and the machine.
5. Students rewrite the story in their own words.
6. Store in the Art Pocket.

## Option 2

7. Ask students to explain why John Henry was called a 'steel-driving man'. Then explain they are to think of a similar phrase that describes themselves. This may be a skill or special talent they possess.
8. Inform the class that John Henry always had a hammer in his hand. The hammer was something a steel-driving man needed.
9. Ask students to think about one thing that would be included in a drawing they made of themselves.
10. Hand out - *John Henry and Me*.
11. On the right side have them draw a picture of themselves holding an object that reflects their talent.
12. Below the picture write a descriptive sentence.
13. Store in the Art Pocket.



\* Additional activities in Literature Pockets Tall Tales Evan-Moor Educational Publishers

## Lesson 4 - Write a Tall tale

### Original Tall Tale directions

Goal: The student will write an original story using the elements of a tall tale.

Materials: Capstone Graphic Tall Tales, art paper, fine-tip markers, copy paper, tape, colored pencils, jump drives

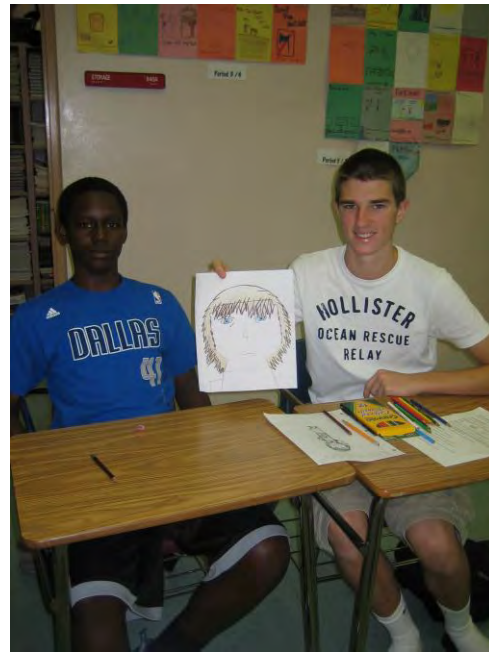
Begin this lesson reviewing literary terms idioms, simile and hyperbole.

As the class has read several tall tale short stories, discuss the plot, setting, characters, problems and solutions. Compare and contrast the main characters. Students point out examples from those stories that could not really happen. Explain that such things are called exaggerations or hyperboles. Discuss the characteristics of tall tales.

Brainstorm interesting occupations or hobbies a character might have. The character may be something that they would not want to be in real life or they may have the character do something they may actually like to do themselves.

- pilot
- stewardess
- astronaut
- plumber
- mechanic
- rock star
- policeman
- teacher
- sports person
- original idea





Students working in small cooperative groups concentrate on drawing the character on paper. This is done long before they think about writing the story as this brainstorming helps them with their character description. Later, students are more inspired to write the story to accompany their wonderful character. Tape three sheets of white paper together to make one large sheet of paper (on back side only). Tell students that the area on the character where the story will be written must be lightly colored so story will show up.



Brainstorm things the character might do including exaggerations, idioms and similes. A plumber may be strong enough to raise a car without a lift or a pilot may sneeze hard enough to propel the plane if there is no fuel. Groups complete planning sheet and worksheet before writing their original tall tale.

# Tall Tale planning sheet

Brainstorm your tall tale character.

Choose a profession that can **encounter a problem** and then **solve it** in an **exaggerated** way.

Fireman  
Plumber

Ball player  
Airplane pilot

Secret agent  
Cowboy

Policeman  
Original idea

You will be given three pieces of computer paper. Draw your person there. Remember we will be placing your tall tale inside the character. Be sure to leave space for that to happen.

As you create your **larger-than-life character** \* discuss the **two adventures** you plan for them to **encounter** and **solve**. Do not forget to include **similes** (2), **hyperboles** (2), **idioms** (1) and **personification**(1).

**\*Bolded type means these are graded items.**

## Tall Tale checklist/ rubric

- The story has many exaggerations / hyperboles in it.
- The main character has a problem to solve.
- The main character is bigger than life (stronger, taller etc).
- The main character has super-human abilities but is not a superhero.
- The plot of the story is funny and impossible.
- In the end, the main character solves a problem, overcomes an obstacle and/or defeats a “bad guy.”
- The story includes lots of action.
- At the end of the story, we know what happens to the character.



# Tall Tales Worksheet

## A. Main Character

1. What is the name of your main character?

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2. Brainstorm adventures/challenges that the main character of your tall tale may have. Think about the adventures of the stories that you heard or read. *Circle your best idea.*

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3. Describe your main character? What does he/she look like? How will the reader picture your character? Will he/she have any special skills/powers?

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4. What makes the main character larger than life? (Example – He can swim from New York to California in 60 seconds.) Again, think about the characters in the stories we read.

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**B. Setting**

When choosing the setting make sure it “fits” the character. For example, if the challenge your main character is facing is building a railroad, the setting shouldn’t be at an amusement park.

Describe the setting (where the story is taking place) of your tall tale. You need two.

1 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**C. Plot**

The problem of your tall tale should relate to the character and his/her adventure or challenge.

1. What is the problem of your story? You need two.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. How does the main character solve the problems? (Be sure to EXAGGERATE!)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**D. Similes - Hyperbole - Idiom ( Personification - optional)**

Write at least two similes that you can use in your tall tale.

Simile 1 \_\_\_\_\_

Simile 2 \_\_\_\_\_

Hyperbole 1 \_\_\_\_\_

Hyperbole 2 \_\_\_\_\_

Idiom 1 \_\_\_\_\_

Personification 1 \_\_\_\_\_

## Lesson 5 - Create a game

Goal: Students create a game based on all the tales.

Materials: Heavy weight paper, markers, index cards, dice

### Determine the age range of your players,

- For young children, you would want to create something that is simple, easy-to-understand and fun.
- For teens you could create something that is more competitive and exciting.

### Think of a theme for your game.

- Are you interested to create a game that is based on some skill (Scrabble®) or a path game that is purely based on luck and chance like Candyland®.

### Map out the rules and directions for the game.

- Be explicit about what the players are to do to play the game.

### Sketch a rough draft of your board design.

- This will allow you to determine whether you need to include more or less details in your final design.

### Apply the design to a stronger board.

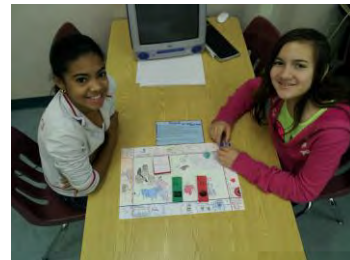
- Use a sturdier material such as cardboard, card stock, or poster board so that your game pieces can stand up to the use.

### Create the game pieces.

- You can draw the images on paper, then tape or glue them to a different material, such as light cardboard (the type used on cereal boxes); if making a game based on certain people, you might even use photos or clipart.
- To make the pieces stand, cut out a strip of cardboard that you can fold into a 3D triangle (similar to picture frame stands). Then stick to the back of the piece for support.

### Play the game to get out the kinks.

- Test your prototype design with patient friends and family in order to iron out any unforeseen bugs or pitfalls.



## Evaluation Method

1. Completion of the art activity associated with each story.
2. Participation in the storytelling activity.
3. Original Tall Tale

### Tall Tale rubric

- The story has many exaggerations / hyperboles in it.
  - The main character has a problem to solve.
  - The main character is bigger than life (stronger, taller etc).
  - The main character has super-human abilities but is not a superhero.
  - The plot of the story is funny and impossible.
  - In the end, the main character solves a problem, overcomes an obstacle and/or defeats a "bad guy."
  - The story includes lots of action.
  - At the end of the story, we know what happens to the character.
4. (Optional) Creation of game for the story of their choice.

## Resource/Materials/Bibliography

Ink for printer, Fine-tip markers, copy paper, index cards, tape, colored pencils, jump drives, construction paper 9x12 and 12" x 18", glue, scissors, ruler, yarn, colored pencils, fine tip markers

### Literature Pockets, Tall Tale Evan-Moor Educational Publishers



### Oriental Trading Paper Plate Johnny Appleseed Craft Kit IN-48/5862



### Capstone graphic Tall Tales

