

Quick Sources for Beginning Tellers

Compiled by Dr. Mike Lockett, The Normal Storyteller, January 2008

Your choice of stories can bring great success to your telling. However, it is often difficult for beginning storytellers to take stories in books and turn them into oral stories to present to audiences when they first begin to tell stories. It is sometimes recommended that a good starting place is to look for stories that have already been told with success by established storytellers. Collections of ready-to tell tales are available. Several are listed below. It is recommended that storytellers have the courtesy to site the source of the stories when they use them. Though most of the stories in the sources listed are freely available, the tellers went to considerable work to craft them for use in their present forms. The following books include stories that have been told successfully by many beginning storytellers.

- **Best-Loved Stories Told at the National Storytelling Festival**, National Storytelling Association, National Storytelling Press, 1991. (Note: The folktales in this book may be freely told. Contact the authors regarding the crafted stories.)
- **Easy-To-Tell Tales: Stories for Young Children** by Annette Harrison. National Storytelling Press, 1992.
- **Favorite Folktales from Around the World**, by Jane Yolen, Pantheon. 1986
- **Juba This and Juba That: Story Hour Stretches for Large and Small Groups**, by Virginia Tashjian. Little, Brown & Co., 1969
- **Just Enough to Make a Story: a Sourcebook for Storytelling** by Nancy Schimmel. Berkeley, CA: Sister's Choice Press, 1982, 1989.
- **Len Cabral's Storytelling Notebook**, by Len Cabral and Mia Manduca, Neal-Schuman Publishers, 1997.
- **One Hundred Folktales**, by Stith Thompson, Indiana University Press, 1974
- **Ready-To-Tell Tales**, and **More Ready-To-Tell Tales**, by David Holt and Bill Mooney, August House, 1994, 2000
- **Shake-It-Up Tales! Stories to Sing, Dance, Drum, and Act Out**, Margaret Read MacDonald August House, 2000
- **Storytelling for Young Adults**, "Techniques and Treasury, Gail de Vos, Libraries Unlimited, 1991.
- **The Storyteller's Sourcebook: A Subject, Title, and Mitif Index to Folklore Collections for Children (1983-1999)**, Margaret Read MacDonald and Brian W. Sturm, Gale Group, 2001
- **The Storytellers Start-up Book: Finding, Learning, Performing and Using Folktales**, Margaret Read MacDonald, **The Storyteller's Start-Up Book**, August House, 1993
- **Twenty Tellable Tales**, "Audience Participation Folktales for the Beginning Storyteller," Margaret Read MacDonald, H.W. Wilson Company, 1986

In addition to listing books that serve as wonderful resources for beginning storytellers, I have included a handful of websites in addition to my own site where storytellers can find stories to learn. Several of the sites also offer hints for the storytellers.

- **Aaron Shepard's site** - www.aaronshep.com
Aaron Shepard is a storyteller and author. His website is a wonderful link that beginning storytellers can visit to find new stories to learn. The site also includes suggestions for how to tell stories. Aaron also serves as a resource for publishers and storytellers who are interested in writing and publishing stories in books.
- **Heather Forest's Story Arts Site** – www.storyarts.org/library/index.html
Heather Forest is a world class storyteller. Her site has a great collection of short stories that are simply told. Heather makes it a point to keep the story outlines brief. This allows new storytellers to use the outlines and add different details so they can retell the stories in their own words.
- **Free classic Literature Site by Linkscape** - www.litscape.com/indexes/all/fables.html
This link is provided by Linkscape.com. It is a free site designed to provide free access to great works of classic literature in a reader-friendly format. The works are indexed by title, first line, last line, and moral (for fables). *The highlight of this site for storytellers is access to 240 of Aesop's Fables.*
- **Folklore and Mythology Electronic Texts** - www.pitt.edu/~dash/folktxts.html
This site contains hundreds of folktales myths and legends – all listed alphabetically for easy reference. The stories have been edited and/or translated by D.L. Ashliman from the University of Pittsburgh. This outstanding site is great for helping storytellers find the sources of the stories.
- **Foxtales International** - www.foxtalesint.com
Brian “Fox” Ellis is a storytelling friend of mine. We have worked together a number of times. His website has a good collection of teachers’ lesson plans that are appropriate for beginning storytellers. Brian also has a few stories on his site that can be learned by beginning tellers.
- **Normal Storyteller** – www.mikelockett.com
This link was developed by Dr. Mike Lockett, the author of this book. Mike shares stories on his site along with suggestions for telling them. The site also contains useful information about storytelling.
- **Storylover's World** - www.story-lovers.com/
Jackie Baldwin is an award-winning storyteller. Her site lists stories for storytellers at all levels and helps make connections that can answer storytellers’ questions. She has a weekly radio program that broadcasts stories that can be listened to over the Internet.
- **Storyteller.net** - www.storyteller.net/
K. Sean Bulava has operated this site for approximately ten years and serves storytellers of all levels. The site is a good place for articles related to storytelling. Beginning storytellers will find this a good site to help answer their questions.
- **Tim Sheppard's site** - <http://www.timsheppard.co.uk/story>
Tim Sheppard has a very comprehensive site that serves storytellers well. The site hosts the Storytelling FAQ that covers many *Frequently Asked Questions* about storytelling. It has a wonderful list of links and a guide to information concerning storytelling around the world.