

*Using **Storytelling** to Develop Students' Literacy Skills and Positive Values*



Using Storytelling to Develop Students' Literacy Skills and Positive Values

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English Language Education Section
Curriculum Development Institute
Education Bureau
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
12/F, Wu Chung House
213 Queen's Road East
Wan Chai, Hong Kong

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Preface

Using Storytelling to Develop Students' Literacy Skills and Positive Values is a resource package produced by the English Language Education Section, Curriculum Development Institute, Education Bureau, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, in support of the *English Language Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 – Secondary 6)* (CDC, 2016). The resource package is based on the professional development activity “Using Storytelling to Develop Students' Interest in Reading” organised in April 2014. Additional materials and ideas are included for teachers' reference in using storytelling as a teaching strategy in the junior secondary English classroom.

Aims of the Resource Package

The resource package aims to enhance teachers' knowledge and skills in conducting storytelling through providing:

- suggestions on how to incorporate storytelling into the junior secondary English classroom;
- stories and suggested activities;
- video clips to demonstrate good storytelling techniques; and
- presentation slides with graphics and illustrations for classroom teaching.

Contents of the Resource Package

The resource package comprises a **handbook** and a **DVD-ROM**.

- The **handbook** contains the following:

Part I: Introduction

- What is storytelling?
- Why should storytelling be used in the English classroom?
- What is the role of storytelling in the English Language curriculum?
- How should storytelling be conducted in the English classroom?

Part II: Using Storytelling in the Junior Secondary English Classroom

Teachers may consider the features of a text in deciding whether the text could be used to conduct storytelling in the junior secondary English classroom. Three stories (Stories 1 – 3) and an additional text are included in the resource package to illustrate the different features of texts which are suitable for conducting storytelling. Some suggested activities to be conducted before, during and after storytelling are provided for teachers' reference.

Appendix: Transcription of the Storytelling Demonstration

- Transcription of the storytelling demonstration is provided for teachers' reference.

- The **DVD-ROM** contains the following:
 - An electronic version of the handbook (in both WORD and PDF formats)
 - Four video clips of the storytelling demonstration
 - Presentation slides with graphics and illustrations

Acknowledgements

We are most grateful to Mr Roger JENKINS for granting us the permission to include the stories he presented at the professional development activity "Using Storytelling to Develop Students' Interest in Reading" in April 2014.

Part I

Introduction

Part I

1. What is storytelling?

*"Humanity's legacy of stories and storytelling is the most precious we have.
All wisdom is our stories and songs."*

- Doris Lessing

To motivate students' interest in learning English and address their learning needs, teachers can provide a variety of literacy experiences. Storytelling is one literacy experience that can be provided for students of all ages, especially junior secondary students who need to develop a good reading habit before they face the challenge of the public examination at the senior secondary level.

Through storytelling, teachers can arouse students' interest in imaginative texts. Very often students are stimulated to read the stories on their own after listening to them told by their teachers. Another benefit of storytelling is that many stories can help promote values education which is emphasised across the curriculum. The moral behind stories often echoes the values that help shape students' personality. Teachers are encouraged to develop students' language skills and foster the development of positive values through storytelling.

2. Why should storytelling be used in the English classroom?

Storytelling can provide students of all ages with an enjoyable and relaxing learning experience. The topics and the length of the stories may vary, depending on the lesson time and the purpose for introducing the stories to the students, whether it be for enjoyment and stimulation, developing language skills, teaching the moral or developing students' knowledge of other subjects.

When listening and responding to stories, students can:

- develop a response to imaginative texts;
- make use of their knowledge of the world to make sense of the stories;
- understand different feelings, views and attitudes;
- identify implied meanings through inferencing;

- give expression to imaginative ideas through oral, written and performance means;
- give expression to one's experience;
- acquire the knowledge of other subjects; and
- develop positive values.

3. What is the role of storytelling in the English Language Curriculum?

According to the *English Language Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 - Secondary 6)* (CDC, 2016), the subject target of English Language is for students to develop an ever-improving capability to use English to think and communicate, to acquire, develop and apply knowledge, and to respond and give expression to experience. In this regard, stories have much to offer.

Appropriate stories can be incorporated in the General English Programme of the English Language curriculum to enhance junior secondary students' literacy skills, develop their positive values, and arouse their motivation in learning English. Storytelling provides a context in which students may enjoy the stories in a relaxed atmosphere. With the use of appropriate storytelling techniques, teachers can help students understand the explicit and implicit meaning of the stories, which facilitates their reading and understanding of the story texts. Storytelling also lends itself to fostering students' positive values through presenting imaginative situations in which the consequences of both appropriate and inappropriate actions and decisions unfold. To help students progress towards the target of the English Language curriculum, teachers are encouraged to adopt a wide variety of student-focused teaching strategies to help students appreciate, respond to and give expression to stories.

4. How should storytelling be conducted in the English Classroom?

When telling stories, English teachers can make use of intonation, facial expressions and appropriate gestures, props and pictures to help students understand and interact with the content of the stories. The vocabulary in the

stories can be adjusted in the process of storytelling to suit the language proficiency of the students. In storytelling, the use of books is not necessary. Teachers can tell stories drawing upon their own experiences to arouse students' curiosity and sustain their interest.

Students' participation can be enhanced through group participating actions. The teacher may encourage students to repeat a phrase, a catchy refrain or a repetitive pattern as well as mimic his or her actions. Students may be provided with the opportunities to become storytellers themselves, so that they can experiment with the use of facial expressions, gestures and intonation. Students can also be invited to assist in telling the story by being the characters in the story. They can also be given lines to say. The class can join in and say the lines of the characters. Students can develop their creativity in the process. When retelling stories, they almost always have to simplify, elaborate or adapt them. They may then build on these skills and create or tell their own stories, thus transferring their creativity to other works.

Below are some suggestions for conducting storytelling:

Before storytelling

- Activate students' prior knowledge and immerse them in the background of the story with pictures or realia.
- Guide students to make predictions about the story with questions.
- Introduce the setting and characters of the story and invite students to predict what the story is about.

During storytelling

- Tell the story, and throughout the process take on the roles of the characters and the narrator, making use of intonation, gestures and facial expressions.
- Use presentation slides, pictures or relevant props to enhance understanding of the main events or supporting details.
- Invite students to predict the next part of the story or infer the characters' intentions and feelings.

- Invite students to mimic the actions of the characters.
- Ask stimulating questions to check students' understanding.
- Observe students' reactions and adapt the story where appropriate.
- Connect the story to students' life experience to help them understand and respond to the story better.

After storytelling

- Invite students to:
 - act out part of the story;
 - discuss the events in the story.
- Distribute the text version of the story to students and provide them with the opportunity to read the story with teacher support or on their own.
- Teach reading skills by exploiting the story.
- Provide students with creative writing tasks to exercise their imagination.
- Introduce books or texts related to the theme or content of the story to extend students' reading experience and promote reading across the curriculum.

The above suggestions for conducting storytelling are conducive to making reading texts more approachable and appealing to junior secondary students, helping them connect their learning experiences, developing their interest in reading across the curriculum, and fostering their positive values and attitudes. These storytelling strategies could also be employed to extend students' reading experiences by supporting them to read texts other than stories. To this end, an additional text is included in the resource package to illustrate how this can be done. It is hoped that teachers' skills in storytelling can be enhanced to support students to embark on their reading journeys.

Part II

Using Storytelling in the
Junior Secondary
English Classroom

The features of a text should be taken into consideration when deciding whether the text could be used to conduct storytelling in the junior secondary English classroom. Three stories (Stories 1 – 3) are included in the resource package to illustrate the different features of texts which are suitable for conducting storytelling. They are stories containing a simple and clear storyline. Their language is familiar and easy to pick up. The themes of these stories may be related to other Key Learning Areas or subjects, which can help promote reading across the curriculum. The moral of these stories can also facilitate the development of students’ positive values and attitudes.

Summary of features of the three stories in the resource package

Feature	Story
Simple and clear storyline	All stories
Repetitive language pattern	Story 3: The Road to Lhasa
Themes related to other Key Learning Areas or subjects	Story 1: Arachne (History)
	Story 2: Sharing the Pratas (Mathematics)
	Story 3: The Road to Lhasa (Geography, History)
Moral promoting positive values and attitudes	Story 1: Arachne (humility)
	Story 2: Sharing the Pratas (generosity)
	Story 3: The Road to Lhasa (perseverance)

With a view to facilitating the use of these stories in English lessons, some suggested activities to be conducted before and after storytelling are provided for teachers’ reference. Teachers may also refer to the storytelling demonstration video clips on the DVD-ROM for some ideas about the use of various techniques during storytelling, e.g. variation in rhythm and speed, use of onomatopoeia, repetitive language patterns, intonation, facial expressions, appropriate gestures, props and pictures. Transcription of the storytelling demonstration in the **Appendix** is provided for teachers’ reference.

Story 1 - Arachne

In ancient Greece there lived a beautiful woman who was highly gifted in weaving. She was called Arachne and was no ordinary weaver. The act of her weaving was sheer magic and a sight to behold. Everyone was amazed at the tapestries she produced.

Arachne had a very high opinion of herself. When she looked at her tapestries, she was very proud of them and boasted that she had a greater talent than the Goddess Athena. Athena was the Goddess of Wisdom, and also the Goddess of Weaving. Athens was her city and it was named after her. Upon hearing her proud words, the people said, "No, no, no... You mustn't say that because you know you are not the only person to make tapestries. The Goddess Athena will not be happy if you continue boasting about how good you are." "I don't care!" said Arachne.

Athena was upset and decided to visit the young woman. A few days later, Arachne had an exhibition of all her latest tapestries. Dressed as a little lady in a long grey cape, Athena came to see Arachne's work. She walked along looking at all the different tapestries and she finally came to Arachne and warned her of the consequences of provoking the gods. Athena said, "Your work is



very good but I happened to think that the tapestry made by Athena is as good as yours." "No way!" cried Arachne. "I am the best!" When Athena heard of Arachne's bold claims, she was furious and revealed her true form. There was a big flash and a loud bang and a puff of smoke. When the smoke cleared, the little old lady had disappeared. Standing in her place resplendent in a beautiful blue cape was none other than the Goddess Athena.

"You think your shuttle is better than my shuttle. We should have a competition to see whose shuttle is the best shuttle in the whole of Greece," shouted Athena.

The next day, the two women set to work, and all the people stirred in the middle watching the shuttles. The people were amazed when they watched Arachne busy over here and Athena busy over there.

Athena made a tapestry that showed Mount Olympus. Olympus was the home of the Greek gods. In this particular picture, they could see Zeus himself, the king of all the gods. It seemed to the people that they were in the presence of the god. When the people looked at the tapestry made by Arachne, they saw a forest and in the forest there was a lion and it was so real as if the lion was about to leap out from the picture. The people recoiled in fear and even Athena had to admit that Arachne's work was brilliant and flawless. Athena turned and said, "Yes, Arachne... That's what you keep saying and I must say that your shuttle is better than mine." "Yes!" said Arachne, "I am the best."

"So you said that again, but because you are so proud and like to boast, you will be punished. From this day onward, when people see you weaving, they will recoil in horror," said Athena.

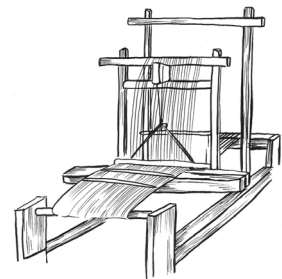
Suddenly there was another flash of light, a big bang and a cloud of smoke. When the smoke cleared, the people saw that Arachne had disappeared and in her place on the ground was a spider. Out of anger, Athens had transformed Arachne into a disgusting spider ("arachni" in Greek). To this day, spiders continue to weave their webs, not a tapestry. Whenever people see their webs, they recoil in horror. That is why to this day, spiders are known as members of the Arachnid family.

Story 1: Arachne

Suggested Activities

Before Storytelling:

- Show pictures of Chang-o, the Chinese Goddess of the Moon and ask students to share what they know about her story. Introduce the story of Chang-o as a myth based on a legend which has been passed on from person to person for thousands of years. Explain that myths of a culture are often used to explain universal and local beginnings and involve supernatural beings. Invite students to share if they think Chang-o's story is still relevant to their lives, and explain why.
- Display a world map and introduce Greece, which has a long history like China. Tell students that you are going to tell them a Greek myth.
- Introduce the main characters "Arachne" and "Athena". Arachne was a beautiful woman who was very clever at weaving while Athena was the Goddess of Wisdom as well as the Goddess of Weaving in ancient Greece. Ask students to guess their relationship.
- Display pictures or realia of tapestries and show students videos of tapestry weaving from the Internet to introduce the word "tapestry". Draw students' attention to the use of a shuttle in tapestry weaving in the videos to introduce the word "shuttle". Explain that a shuttle is a tool designed to carry the thread across the yarn in a loom while weaving.
- Point to the word "shuttle" on the board and ask students to think about another meaning of "shuttle" with the following guiding questions:
 - I take the shuttle bus from my home to the MTR station every day. Can you tell me what a shuttle bus is?
 - The shuttle in a loom passes back and forth between the threads. In what way is a "shuttle" bus similar to the "shuttle" in tapestry weaving?
- Tell students you are going to tell them a story about a competition between Arachne and Athena on making tapestries with shuttles.



During Storytelling:

- Tell the story in your own words. Use facial expressions, tone of voice and gestures to engage students and help them understand the story.
- Divide students into five groups. Display the following table or refer them to the presentation slides in the DVD-ROM, and ask students to perform the corresponding actions when they hear the target words in the story.

Group	Target word	Corresponding action
1	Arachne	Say "I am the best." and hold up their thumbs
2	Athena	Say "Ah! The Goddess!" and put their hands together in front of their chests
3	People	Say "That's us!" and raise their right hands
4	Tapestry	Say "Wow! It is so real!" and raise both of their hands
5	Shuttle	Say "Zoom! Zoom! Zoom!" and draw a letter "z" with their hands in the air

- Draw students' attention to the use of the above sentences or phrases to reinforce the characteristics of the different people or objects. Ask them to talk about each person or object's characteristics with reference to the sentences or phrases.



After Storytelling:

- Distribute the story text to students and ask them to read the story.
- Draw students' attention to the use of dialogues in the story. Have students re-tell the story in groups of four, taking up different roles (i.e. the narrator, Arachne, Athena and the people).
- Introduce the activity "Hot Seat". Assign two students to take on the roles of Arachne and Athena. Ask students to prepare some questions to ask each character and take turns to interview them.
- Guide students to work in groups and reflect on the lessons learnt by Arachne. Get students to share real-life examples similar to Arachne's experience, and discuss what they have learnt from the incident.

Extended Activities

- Get students to discuss in groups whether Arachne should be punished by being changed into a spider, and if not, decide on a better punishment for Arachne and explain their choices. Ask students to re-write the ending of the story by changing the punishment Arachne received based on their discussion.
- Refer students to the last sentence of the story "That is why to this day, spiders are known as members of the Arachnid family". Explain to students that the word "Arachnid" originates from "Arachne" and Greek mythology is related to the origins of a number of English words. Get students to read interesting stories about English word origins on the Internet and ask them to share what they have read in class.
- Show students objects or pictures of the objects whose names originate from Greek myths (e.g. an "Atlas"). Ask students to research online into the relationship between the names of the objects and Greek myths, and share their findings with their classmates.



Story 2 - Sharing the Pratas

Raju and Shyam were the best of friends. They'd grown up together and now worked on the same farm, side by side. Every day they'd bring some pratas and curry and sit down to eat together.

On this particular day, as they were about to eat, a stranger greeted them as he passed by on the road. Raju and Shyam asked if he had eaten. He had not, so the two men invited him to join them.

Raju had brought three pratas and Shyam five. They divided each one into three parts and each man ate heartily the same amount. When they had finished, the stranger thanked them and took out eight silver coins by way of saying thank you for his meal.

The two friends protested – eight silver coins was far too much for a meal of pratas and curry! "Not at all," said the stranger. "Besides, I am paying you for your kindness and company, which has been most welcome and refreshing!" And with a wave, he said goodbye and walked on.

Raju and Shyam couldn't believe their good fortune! "Here," said Raju, dividing the coins, "you take four and I'll take four."

"Excuse me, my friend," said Shyam, "but you only brought three pratas, whereas I brought five. So I think I should have five" – and he took one coin off Raju's pile, "and you should have three."

"Sometimes I bring more, sometimes you bring more," said Raju unhappily.

At that moment Shyam's son passed by on his way home from school. Seeing their long faces, he asked, "What was the matter?" When his father had explained their problem about the eight pratas and how to divide the eight silver coins, the boy

said, "Easy Dad! You should have SEVEN and Raju ONE!"

Raju was shocked! Only one? Shyam was confused. Huh? I should have seven?

"Well my friend, it's too complicated for me," said Raju. "I leave it up to you. Whatever you decide is fine by me."

* When he got home, Shyam told his wife what had happened. "I shared them 4 – 4 with Raju, but our son says I should have kept seven and given Raju one. Who was right?"

Shyam's wife explained:

"There were 8 pratas, each divided into 3 parts, making $8 \times 3 = 24$ pieces.

Each man ate the same amount $(24/3) = 8$ pieces.

Raju brought 3 pratas (= 9 pieces) and ate 8, leaving 1 piece for the stranger.

Shyam brought 5 pratas (= 15 pieces) eat 8, leaving 7 pieces for the stranger."

"So our son was right!" exclaimed Shyam. "Then – how can I also be right?"

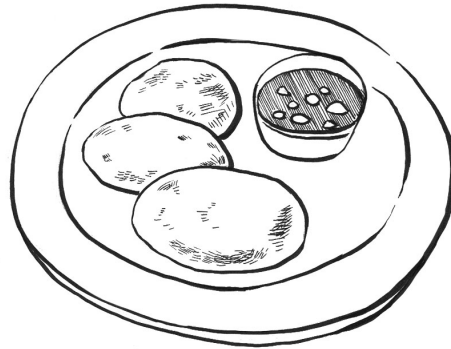
"Because your answer was based on friendship, and the value of friendship is worth a lot more than three pieces of silver."

Story 2: Sharing the Pratas

Suggested Activities

Before Storytelling:

- Display the following picture or realia of pratas and ask students the following questions:



- Have you tried these before? Where?
 - What do you call them in English?
 - What do you eat them with?
 - Can you name food that looks similar to them?
- Tell students that you are going to tell them a story about pratas. Use the following picture to introduce the three main characters in the story, i.e. Shyam, Raju and a stranger.



- Invite students to guess the relationship among the three men with the following questions:
 - Are these two men (Shyam and Raju) good friends?
 - Why is this man (the stranger) holding some coins in his hand?

During Storytelling:

- Tell the story in your own words up to paragraph 9 (marked with #). Use facial expressions and gestures to engage students in the process of listening to the story. Guide students to understand how the eight coins were to be divided between Shyam and Raju with the presentation slides in the DVD-ROM.



- Invite students to suggest how the eight coins should be divided. Display the following options:
 - a. 4 for Shyam, 4 for Raju
 - b. 5 for Shyam, 3 for Raju
 - c. 7 for Shyam, 1 for RajuAsk students to indicate and explain their choice.

After Storytelling:

- Distribute the story text and ask students to read from paragraph 10 to the end. Invite students to find the answer to Shyam's question in paragraph 11 (marked with *), i.e. "Who was right?", according to Shyam's wife.
- Ask students to read aloud the last paragraph for the theme of the story, i.e.

The value of friendship is worth a lot more than three pieces of silver.

Explain that the theme is the meaning behind the story. In this story, the theme is also the moral of the story, i.e. the lesson that is taught in the story. Ask students the importance of a theme in writing a story.

- Ask students to work in groups and discuss what they believe is more important than money by completing the following sentence. Invite them to share their work in class and explain why.

The value of _____ is worth more than one billion dollars.



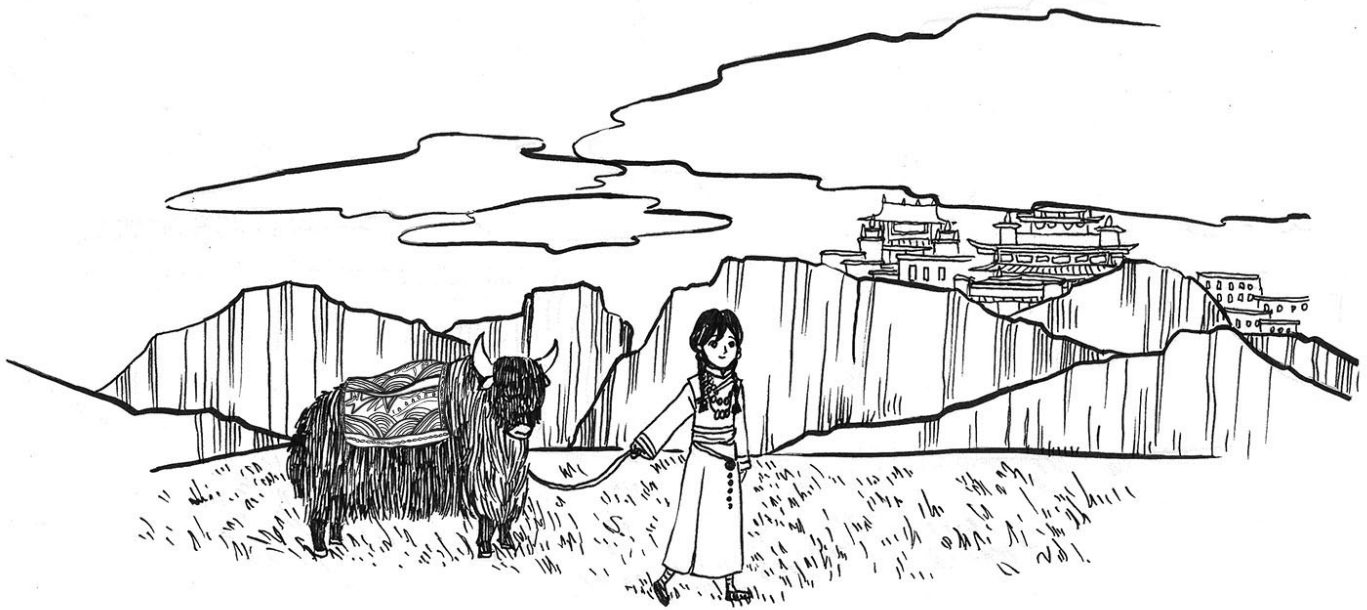
Extended Activities



- Introduce other stories about sharing (e.g. “Stone Soup”, “The Apple War”). Get students to read and share their stories in groups. They discuss with their groupmates the moral of the stories they have read, i.e. what people can share with others and the benefits of sharing. Get students to display banners with the moral in these stories in the classroom.
- Topic for follow-up writing:
 - Two good friends, Tom and Peter, joined a drawing competition organised by a young artists’ gallery during the summer holidays. They planned to work together in the school for a week and submit a painting about Hong Kong in 2050. Tom brought all the materials such as drawing tools and paints and spent the whole week on the painting but Peter only appeared an hour every day and mainly gave advice to Tom on how the painting could be improved. After a month, Tom attended the prize presentation ceremony and was happy to find that they had won the competition and got an award of \$10,000.

Imagine you were Tom. Write an email to Peter. Provide an account of what had happened and suggest how you would like to divide the money with him.

Story 3 – The Road to Lhasa



There was an old woman who sat beside the road that led all the way to the holy city of Lhasa. One morning, a magnificently-dressed man rode on his horse and said rudely, "You, woman, how far is it to Lhasa?" She said "Oh! It's very, very far. You won't get there before the night time." "What? Of course I will. Look at my marvellous horse." And he dug in his heels and rode away.

The woman sat beside the road. A little later, a young girl came along, leading her yak. The yak was so big and hairy but the girl was so small and slim. When she saw the old woman, she said politely, "Excuse me." The old woman said, "Yes?" "How far is it to Lhasa?" "Oh! It's far, very far, but don't worry. You will get there before the night comes." "Will I?" said the girl uncertainly. "Yes," said the old woman. "Go on." And the girl gave her yak a gentle tug. They started walking.

They walked up the steep and winding path. Up, up, up into the mountains. As she walked, she was afraid that she might slip and fall down into the rushing river below. But then she found a bridge and she crossed over the bridge. She came to a forest, a BIG forest on the mountain. The wind was very strong. As she walked through, she struggled to go on. The wind was so strong that it knocked her down. CAK~DON~CAK~DON...

But the girl picked herself up and she kept on walking. One step at a time; one foot in front of the other. She went up beyond the trees and then she was in the land of snow. There was no path to follow. There were only stones that other people had piled up to guide the way. The girl was very scared. She thought she might get lost and that she wouldn't reach Lhasa before the night came. But she kept on walking. One step at a time; one foot in front of the other.

In the afternoon, she walked past the man lying on the ground beside his horse. They were both asleep. They had ridden so hard. They could ride no more. The girl wished that she could also lie down and rest. She was so tired but she knew what she had to do. She gave her yak a gentle tug and kept on walking. One step at a time; one foot in front of the other.

And in the very late afternoon, as she came towards another ridge, suddenly, she heard some sound # – the sound of drums, gongs and temple bells. When she got to the ridge and looked over into the next valley, there was Lhasa – the holy city of Lhasa with all its temples and its monks. She had made it all the way to the holy city of Lhasa, walking one step at a time; one foot in front of the other.



Story 3: The Road to Lhasa

Suggested Activities



Before Storytelling:

- Write the title of the story on the board and ask students what they know about the city of Lhasa. If they have never heard of Lhasa, display some pictures of landmarks and landscape in Tibet.
- Put students into groups and give each group several topics:
 - Location and geographical features
 - Modern and ancient means of transportation to Lhasa
 - Clothing and appearance of TibetansStudents can then use tablet computers or smartphones to carry out research from the Internet and share their findings about the topics with their group members.
- Tell students you are going to tell them a story about the experience of two people who would like to go to Lhasa.

During Storytelling:

- Tell the story in your own words. Use visual aids, e.g. images of mountain ranges and steep valleys surrounding Lhasa, trails to Lhasa and yak riding as the backdrop of the story.
- Dramatise the dialogues between the man (arrogant and rude), the girl (humble and respectful) and the woman (old and wise) to show their characteristics.
- Make use of voice and movements or post the sentences in the classroom when the story comes to certain phrases to emphasise actions and repetitive structures: "Up, up, up into the mountains" (repetition and gestures); CAK~DON~CAK~DON (onomatopoeia of stumbling hoofs); "One step at a time; one foot in front of the other" (motifs/repetitive structures – the teacher may let students chime in when the sentence appears repeatedly during storytelling).
- Play the sound of Tibetan drums, gongs and temple bells when reading aloud the sentence marked with # to create a celebratory mood and the sense of achievement for the completed mission.

After Storytelling:

- Distribute the story text to students and ask them to read the story.
- Invite five students to role play the characters of the old woman, the man, the girl, the horse and the yak. Other students prepare questions to interview these characters.
- Discuss with students the different behaviour between the man and the girl. Ask students to explain the different outcomes to the man and the girl. (For more able students: ask students to discuss why the old woman gives different answers to the man and the girl.)
- Ask students to discuss the message of the story (attaining goals and overcoming difficulties) and the symbolic meaning of mountain climbing (overcoming adversities, challenges, hard times, etc.) and Lhasa (life goal, achievement, dream or career aspiration).

- Draw students' attention to the sentence repeatedly used ("One step at a time; one foot in front of the other") and the effect(s) it creates:
 - to depict the repetitive action;
 - to show the little progress being made; or
 - to portray the girl's persistence.

Ask students how the message of the sentence can be applied in their life.

- Refer to the sentences "The girl was very scared. She thought she might get lost and that she wouldn't reach Lhasa before the night came". Ask students about the difficulties they have experienced before and ask them to share how they overcame the challenges. Guide students to think that a seemingly impossible task can be achieved by taking baby steps and persevering. Invite them to apply what they have learnt from the story in daily life to overcome challenges.

Extended Activities

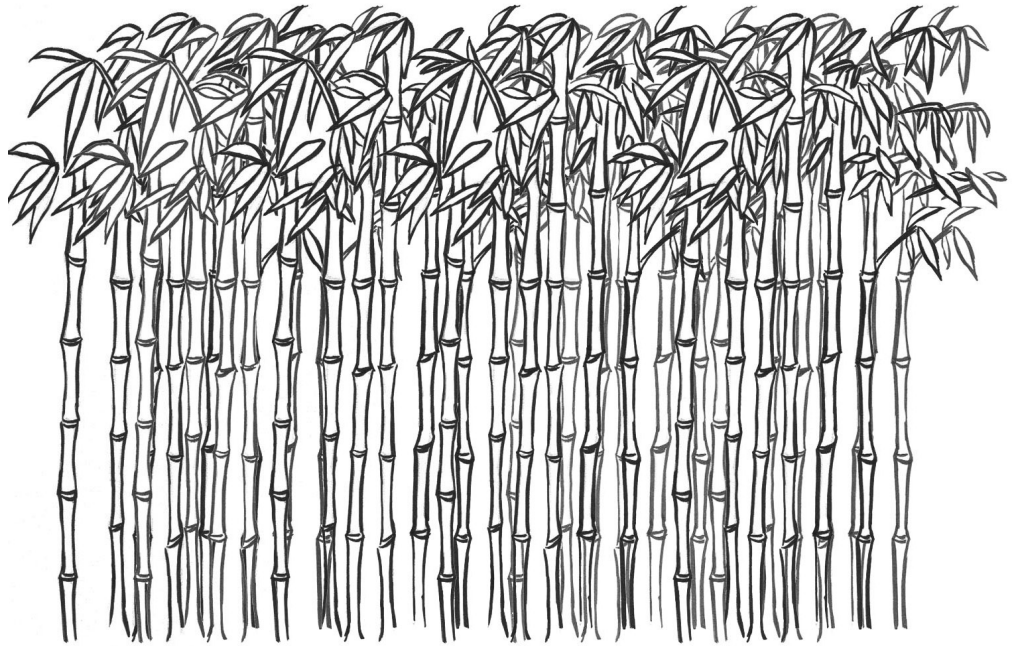


- Ask students to research on success stories and create a digital story about overcoming challenges.
- Encourage students to read quality self-help books, e.g. *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens* and write an article on the class wiki to share their own good habits to achieve success with their classmates.



Additional Text - Moso Bamboo

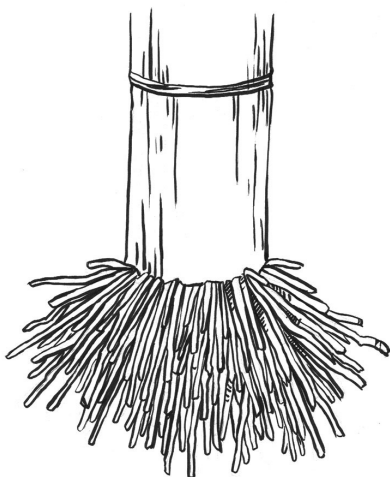
* Are you a fan of martial arts movies? The Chinese martial arts movies with those amazing aerial fights when the characters are going through great bamboo forests, leaping and bouncing off the trees, are very, very



exciting indeed. This story doesn't actually talk about martial arts. But let's talk about the bamboo forest because where they film it, it's not just any bamboo. It's a very special type of bamboo called moso bamboo.

What is unusual about moso bamboo? Let's say you've got yourself a seed. You plant the seed and water it. You come back a week later, NOTHING. You come back a month later, still nothing. You are thinking, "Hmm... maybe I should move it somewhere else. But actually where did I plant it?"

Then you come back a year later. And there is still NOTHING. By now you think it is a total waste of time. You've spent money on something and nothing happened. You keep walking on the same path every day, for two years, three years, four years, FIVE years.

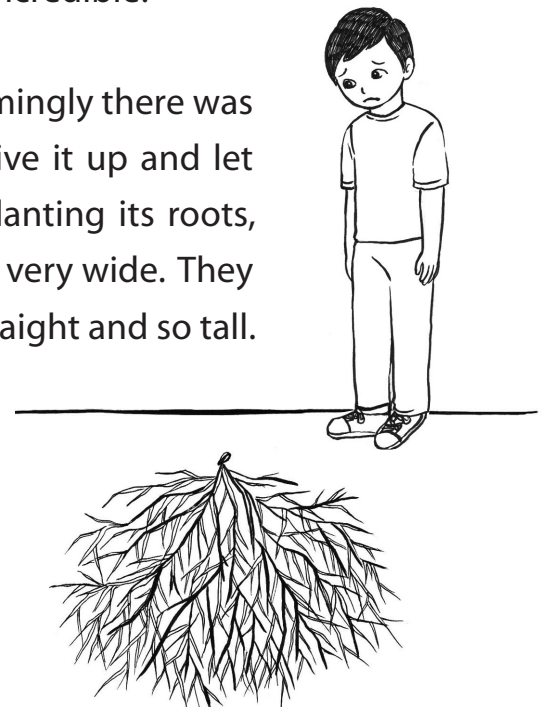


But then one day, you walk past, and BOOM! there is the moso bamboo and it's up to your knees! It wasn't there yesterday, but now, sixty centimetres tall, up to your knees, in just one day.

Tuesday you come back. BOOM! And it's up here, up to your chest! It has grown FOUR FEET in two days!

Wednesday, JINK! It's as tall as a man. 1.8 metres tall, sixty centimetres every single day. And it grows, it keeps on growing like that EVERY SINGLE DAY for six to seven weeks, until it's up to thirty to forty metres tall. How incredible!

* So what has it been doing? For those five years seemingly there was no activity at all and you thought you would just give it up and let it die. For five years the moso bamboo has been planting its roots, extending its roots. They go very, very deep, and very, very wide. They have to be wide in order to support its standing so straight and so tall. If you got martial arts fighters do that kind of kick and fight, it doesn't want to fall over so it has to be wide in order to give it that stability. It has to go deep in order to have the kind of energy to be able to tap on the amazing amount of energy to drive it up so fast for six or seven weeks.



** So, what has it got to do with you? By the time you are in Secondary Six, you have been in secondary education for five years. Are you going to shoot up? I don't mean physically. I don't want to see another generation of basketball stars. I'm talking about what's going on in your heart, what's going on in your mind. What roots are you putting down? How deep and how wide? It is going to help you to make that kind of growth and show what you are really capable of. The story of moso bamboo



is the idea about putting down roots, deep and wide. Think about that. What does that mean? What do you have to do to make that kind of growth? Or are you just going to be the same person five years from now, no difference from when you walked into your school from Primary One into Secondary One? True story. Moso bamboo. Right here on your doorstep in China.

Additional Text: Moso Bamboo

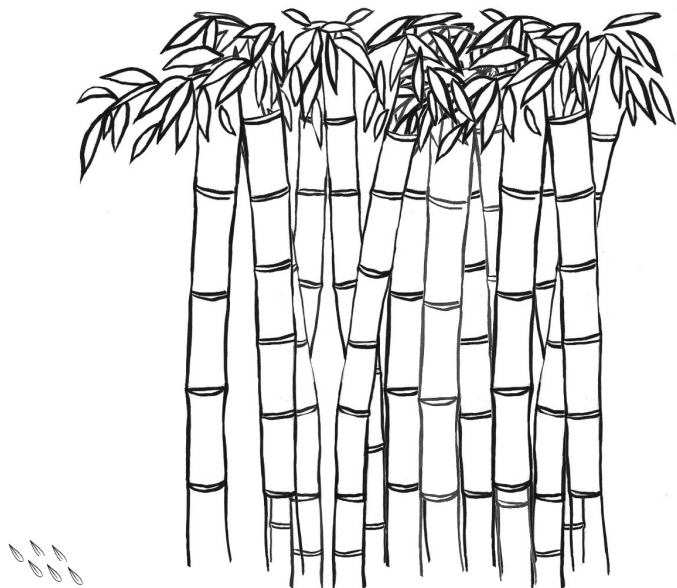
Suggested Activities

Before Storytelling:

- Display the picture of a panda and ask students what pandas eat.



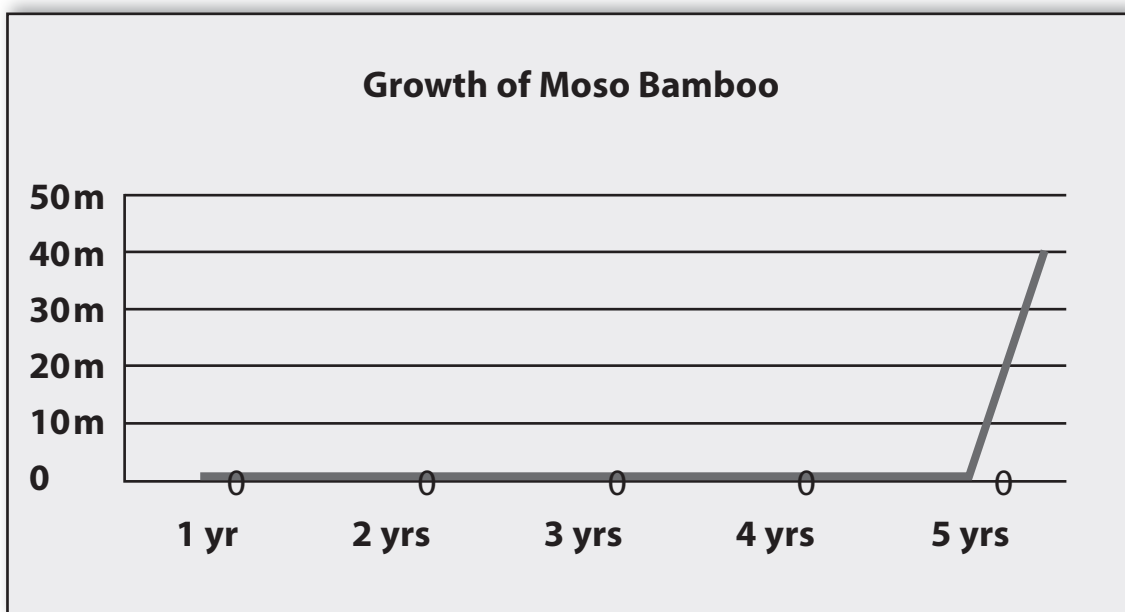
- Display pictures or realia of bamboo products and ask students to talk about how bamboo is used in daily life, e.g. bowls, furniture, scaffolding and flooring. (Please refer to the presentation slides in the DVD-ROM.)
- Display the following two pictures showing: (i) a baby panda and a full-grown panda; and (ii) a bamboo seed and a bamboo of its full height. Ask students to guess the answers to the following questions:
 - How long does it take for a baby panda to grow into an adult panda?
 - How about for a bamboo seed to become a full-grown bamboo?
- Demonstrate how to find the answers to the questions from the Internet. Tell students that it takes about two years for a baby panda to grow into an adult panda and three to four months for a bamboo seed to grow into a full-grown bamboo, i.e. of its full height. Ask students if the growth is steady throughout the period.



- Add the word “moso” before “bamboo” and introduce “moso bamboo”, which is a temperate species of giant bamboo native to China. Show students film excerpts of moso bamboo forests in Chinese martial arts movies from the Internet.
- Ask students to guess how long it takes for moso bamboos to grow into a bamboo forest as in the film excerpts. Tell students that you are going to tell them something about the growth of moso bamboo.

During Storytelling:

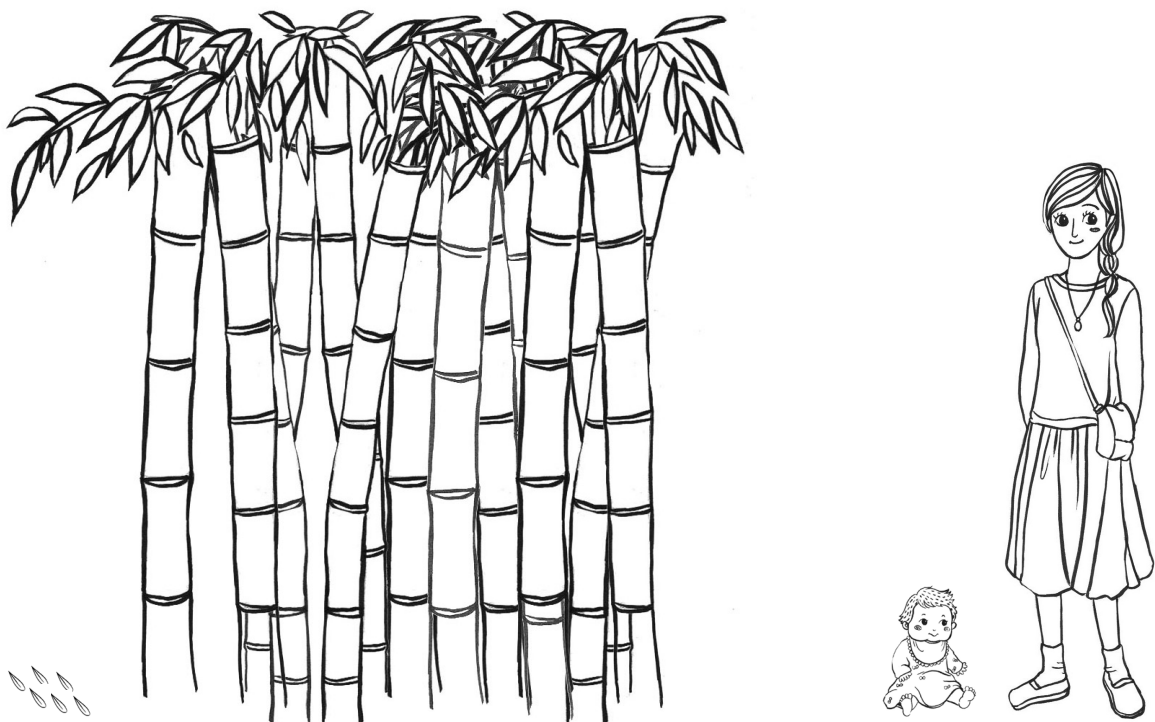
- Present the text in your own words from paragraph 1 to paragraph 7 (marked with *). Make use of onomatopoeia (e.g. BOOM! JINK!), pauses (e.g. NOTHING), volume and pace of speech (e.g. FOUR FEET) and gestures (e.g. deep and wide, the skyrocketing growth of moso bamboo) to create sound effects, enhance understanding and communication, and engage students in the process of listening.
- Indicate the growing process of moso bamboo with the following chart. Ask students to describe the growing process of moso bamboo in their own words. Ask for ideas about what the moso bamboo has been doing in the past five years.



- Reinforce the message about the unsteady physical growth of moso bamboo during the period of five years.

After Storytelling:

- Distribute the text to students. Display the following guiding questions and ask students to read paragraph 8 (marked with **) for the answers:
 - What does moso bamboo represent?
 - What does growth refer to in the text?
- Display a picture of a bamboo seed, a full-grown moso bamboo, a baby and a teenager. Ask students to reflect on their own growing process. Draw students' attention to the different growing paces among them. Guide students to understand that growth does not only refer to the physical growth but also mental or intellectual growth and everyone has their unique learning style and pace.



- Invite students to discuss the theme, which is also the message of the text. Introduce words like “stamina”, “perseverance”, and “diligence” to describe the message of the text. Then they write a reflective journal on their learning experience with reference to the message of the text. Use the following questions to help students:
 - Are you similar to moso bamboo? If yes, in what way? If no, why not?
 - What is the message of the text?
 - What would you do if you couldn’t see any expected outcomes after years of hard work?
 - What would you do if your progress plateaued?
 - What are your strengths and weaknesses? What are your goals? How will you achieve them?

Extended Activities



- Introduce students to inspiring stories or biographies about people realising their dreams. Get students to think about what they want to achieve in their life and how they will realise their dreams. Remind students that their goals need not be limited to excellent results and remarkable achievements but finding meaning and direction in life.
- Highlight the twists in the text (i.e. nothing happened after the seed was planted, suddenly the bamboo grows rapidly) which makes unexpected turns to surprise readers. Tell them that this is a kind of technique to impress readers. Ask students to share their reading or viewing experience of twists in stories, films, commercials, etc. They then apply the technique in their writing and upload their works to the school intranet or other sharing platforms. Encourage them to read each other’s work and give feedback to their peers.

Appendix

Transcription of the
Storytelling Demonstration

Story 1 - Arachne

Storyteller: This is a very old story. It came from a time just before I was born. It's about 2500 years old. I am only about 2000 years old. From Ancient Greece, and it's about a woman named Arachne (show the name on the screen). Arachne had a very high opinion of herself. I would like all the people over here (pointing to some audience), these five. Whenever I say "Arachne", you're gonna say "I'm the best" (hold up his thumb). We will do the action as well. Arachne!

Audience: I'm the best! (hold up their thumbs)

Storyteller: Why did she feel that she was the best? Well, she would make tapestry (show a picture of tapestry). A tapestry is a way of making a picture using threads, different coloured threads, weaving. She would make the most beautiful tapestries. Whenever I say the word "tapestry", I want you to go "Wow! It's so real!" (hands up with amazement). Tapestry!

Audience: Wow! It's so real! (raise both their hands)

Storyteller: No, no, no, hello, you are not here, ok? I appreciate the enthusiasm. Arachne!

Audience: I'm the best! (hold up their thumbs)

Storyteller: Hello, wakie-wakie, okay alright, it's after lunch. Now, you may not have made any tapestries yourself, and it uses a special machine. It's called a loom (show the picture of a loom). And it's basically a wooden frame and it has a lot of threads hanging this way which I think is called the weft. And then you weave (mime going through the thread) through your coloured threads, going in and out. To weave them in and out is to use this piece of wood and that's called a shuttle. Yesterday I came on the shuttle bus from the airport to the hotel (point from right to left). The space shuttle went from the Earth up to the space station and back (point from low to high). Shuttle is anything that goes backwards and forwards. The shuttlecock in badminton, ok, same idea. I want this group (point to some audience), just this group here, whenever I say "shuttle",

you're gonna go "Zoom! Zoom! Zoom!" (draw a letter "z" with his hand in the air) Shuttle!

Audience: Zoom! Zoom! Zoom! (draw a letter "z" with their hands in the air)

Storyteller: Ok, very good. There is one other character in this story and her name is Athena. She is the Goddess of Wisdom. Athens was her city. It's named after Athena. Now, whenever I say "Athena", I need this group here to go "Ah! The Goddess!" (put his hands together in front of his chests). Athena.

Audience: Ah! The Goddess! (put their hands together in front of their chests)

Storyteller: And one more, whenever I say the word "people", I need you all to go "That's us!" (raise his right hand). People.

Audience: That's us! (raise their right hands)

Storyteller: Arachne...

Audience: I'm the best (hold up their thumbs)

Storyteller: ...loved to make tapestry.

Audience: Wow! It's so real! (raise their hands)

Storyteller: When she did, her shuttle... (pause)

Audience: Zoom! Zoom! Zoom! (draw a letter "z" with their hands in the air)

Storyteller: ...would fly backwards and forwards so fast that all the people...

Audience: is...

Storyteller: That's us! Hello, come on, ok? Now you see why we have to do this in the university. It's quite difficult, right? All the people...

Audience: That's us! (raise their right hands)

Storyteller: ...would stare with an amazement because her tapestry...

Audience: Wow! It's so real! (raise both their hands)

Storyteller: ...was so live. This is in the days long before cameras. Whenever Arachne...

Audience: I'm the best! (hold up their thumbs)

Storyteller: ...would put up one of her tapestries.

Audience: Wow! It's so real! (raise both their hands)

Storyteller: Then, the people...

Audience: That's us! (raise their right hands)

Storyteller: ...were astonished and she was very proud of her work and

Arachne...

Audience: I'm the best! (hold up their thumbs)

Storyteller: ...would continue to boast. The people...

Audience: That's us! (raise their right hands)

Storyteller: ...would say, "no, no, no... you mustn't say that because you know you are not the only person to make tapestry.

Audience: Wow! It's so real! (raise both their hands)

Storyteller: The Goddess Athena...

Audience: Ah! The Goddess! (put their hands together in front of their chests)

Storyteller: ...also likes to weave and she would not be happy if you continue boasting about how good you are". "I don't care!" said Arachne.

Audience: I'm the best! (hold up their thumbs)

Storyteller: A few days later, she had an exhibition of all her latest tapestries.

Audience: Wow! It's so real! (raise both their hands)

Storyteller: And among all the people...

Audience: That's us! (raise their right hands)

Storyteller: ...who came to see her work on display was a little old lady in a long grey cape. And she walked along looking at all the different pictures and finally she came to Arachne.

Audience: I'm the best! (hold up their thumbs)

Storyteller: And she said, "Yes your work is very good but I happened to think that the tapestry...

Audience: Wow! It's so real! (raise both their hands)

Storyteller: ...made by Athena...

Audience: Ah! The Goddess!

Storyteller: ...is as good as yours." "No way!" said Arachne.

Audience: I'm the best! (hold up their thumbs)

Storyteller: And as soon as she said that, there was a big flash and a loud bang and a puff of smoke. When the smoke cleared, the people...

Audience: That's us! (raise their right hands)

Storyteller: ...saw that the little old lady had disappeared too. And standing in her place resplendent in a beautiful blue cape was none other than the Goddess Athena.

Audience: Oh! The Goddess!

Storyteller: She said, "So, you think your shuttle..."

Audience: Zoom! Zoom! Zoom! (draw a letter "z" with their hands in the air)

Storyteller: ...is better than my shuttle?

Audience: Zoom! Zoom! Zoom! (draw a letter "z" with their hands in the air)

Storyteller: We shall have a competition to see whose shuttle...

Audience: Zoom! Zoom! Zoom! (draw a letter "z" with their hands in the air)

Storyteller: ...is the best shuttle...

Audience: Zoom! Zoom! Zoom! (draw a letter "z" with their hands in the air)

Storyteller: ...in the whole of Greece." So the very next day, the two women sat to work, and all the people...

Audience: That's us! (raise their right hands)

Storyteller: ...stood in the middle, watching one shuttle...

Audience: Zoom! Zoom! Zoom! (draw a letter "z" with their hands in the air)

Storyteller: ...and the other shuttle...

Audience: Zoom! Zoom! Zoom! (draw a letter "z" with their hands in the air)

Storyteller: And as they watched, the people...

Audience: That's us! (raise their right hands)

Storyteller: ...were amazed because Arachne...

Audience: I'm the best! (hold up their thumbs)

Storyteller: ...was busy over here, and Athena...

Audience: Ah! The Goddess!

Storyteller: ...was busy over there. She made a tapestry...

Audience: Wow! It's so real! (raise both their hands)

Storyteller: ...that showed Mount Olympus. That's not where the camera came from. Olympus was the home of the gods, the Greek gods. In this particular picture, they could see Zeus himself, the king of all the gods. It seemed to the people...

Audience: That's us! (raise their right hands)

Storyteller: ...that they were in the presence of the god, but when the people...

Audience: That's us! (raise their right hands)

Storyteller: ...looked at the tapestry...

Audience: Wow! It's so real! (raise both their hands)

Storyteller: ...made by Arachne,
Audience: I'm the best! (hold up their thumbs)
Storyteller: ...they saw a forest, and in the forest there was a lion and it was so real as if the lion was about to leap out from the picture. It was so real that all the people...
Audience: That's us! (raise their right hands)
Storyteller: ...recoiled in fear and even Athena...
Audience: Ah! The Goddess! (put their hands together in front of their chests)
Storyteller: ...turned and said, "Yes Arachne...
Audience: I'm the best! (hold up their thumbs)
Storyteller: Yes that's what you keep saying and I must say that your shuttle...
Audience: Zoom! Zoom! Zoom! (draw a letter "z" with their hands in the air)
Storyteller: ...is better than my shuttle."
Audience: Zoom! Zoom! Zoom! (draw a letter "z" with their hands in the air)
Storyteller: "Yes!" said Arachne.
Audience: I'm the best! (hold up their thumbs)
Storyteller: "So you said again, but because you are so proud and like to boast, you will be punished. From this day forward, when people see you weaving, they will recoil in horror." "Oh yeah," said Arachne.
Audience: I'm the best! (hold up their thumbs)
Storyteller: Suddenly there was another flash of light, a big bang boom and a cloud of smoke. And when the smoke cleared, the people...
Audience: That's us! (raise their right hands)
Storyteller: ...saw that she had disappeared too and in her place on the ground was a spider. To this day, spiders continue to weave their webs, not a tapestry. Whenever we see those webs, we go "errrr" and recoil in horror. That is why to this day, spiders are known as members of the Arachnid family. (show the picture of a spider)
Audience: Ah...
Storyteller: This is why you tell stories because whenever you get that "Ah" at the end of a story, thank you. Where does this come from? When scientists, back in the 17th to 18th century, were looking to classify animals, they in their schools in their day had to study the classics,

they had to study the Greek and the Latin stories. One of them would have remembered this story and that's why he said let's call the spider arachnid from Arachne.

Story 2 - Sharing the Pratas

Storyteller:

A story from India. Let's do some Math. This is for all the Mathematicians! So Sharing the Pratas - Math, munchies and friendship. Two men, Shyam and Raju and they meet together. They work in the field. They are ordinary guys. On this particular day, Shyam brought five pratas and Raju brought three and they were going to share them with a little bit of curry as well. When they were just about to eat, along came a stranger passing by asking the way to the town. And they sort of ... (point to the right). Then they said, "But have you had lunch?" and the stranger said, "No, I haven't." "Please, sit down and join us." Shyam and Raju, they had five and three, so that was eight pratas and they shared the pratas with the stranger. Each man ate the same amount of pratas. When they finished, the stranger stood up and he was so grateful that he gave each of them...because they shared their pratas... he gave them eight silver coins. Shyam and Raju said, "No, no, no, no, no, that's too much. You know, one prata isn't worth one silver coin." And the stranger said, "No, no, I'm not paying you for the pratas. I'm paying you for your kindness in sharing your meal with me. Thank you. Farewell."

Now they had eight silver coins, and the question was how they should share them together. Raju said, "Let's share them - four for you and four for me." Shyam said, "Just a minute, Raju. I brought five pratas and you only brought three. I think I should have five silver coins and you should only have three." Raju said, "Well, other days, I bring five pratas and you only bring three but that doesn't stop us from sharing them equally then, doesn't it?" He wasn't very happy. The two of them were kind of like EM~EM~EM. While they couldn't decide, Shyam's son came along and said, "What's up?" He saw his dad and his best friend were not happy. They explained what had happened. His son, because he had done Hong Kong

Math, was very good. He said, "No, Dad, you should get seven silver coins and Raju should only have one." Raju was like "What? One minute I have four, now then I have three and now I only have one? What kind of Math and conspiracy is this?"

Let me ask you, how should they split the coins? (show the presentation slides) Can I have a show of hands? (raise his hand) All those who think they should have 4-4? All those who think it should be 5-3? All those who think it should be 7-1? Nobody? Ok, any other? It sort of looks like Liverpool football score, doesn't it? Shyam didn't know what to do and said, "The Math is too complicated for me, I didn't get beyond the P2." He said, "I'm going to share it because you are my friend, four for you and four for me."

But when he got home, it still troubled him. He said to his wife, "Which is correct? What should I've done? My answer was 4-4, but our son said I should have kept seven and given only one to Raju." His wife said, "Well, you are both correct." Shyma was like, "Ha! How can they both be correct? 7-1 and 4-4?" You know like Math, two plus two is always four, right? How come? Shyam's wife, who was very clever, said this, "Shyam, Raju and the stranger divided the eight pratas into three pieces." Which means how many slices? 24, I want to make sure you follow me. If each hungry man ate the same, 24 divided into three means how many slices? Eight slices. They all ate eight slices. Raju, he brought three pratas divided into three, making a total of nine slices. He ate eight, leaving one for the stranger and that's why he deserved one silver coin. Shyam, on the other hand, he brought five pratas divided by three which was fifteen slices which he ate eight and gave seven to the stranger. He said, "Wife, now that you've explained, I understand that 7-1 is correct. How can it be possible that 4-4 is also correct?" His wife said, "Because friendship is worth more than three pieces of silver."

Story 3 - The Road to Lhasa

Storyteller:

This is such a good story, somebody here has already seen it and was asking about this story. It's a short story, but it's a story that is so appropriate for you. (Display the title of the story) I don't need to translate this for you, do I? (To a native-speaking English teacher) Maybe just for you. The Road to Lhasa. This morning because it was a primary workshop I gave them the whole thing about where's Lhasa, but you know that it's the capital of Tibet, as we call it, but the Chinese call it Xizang. (Display the presentation slides of the tangram) It's a very holy city, a city of pilgrimage. It's on my bucket list, meaning I would like to get there before I kick the bucket. I'm going to tell the story using the tangram, which is a puzzle you are all familiar with.

There was an old woman who sat beside the road that led all the way to the holy city of Lhasa. One morning, a man rode up on a horse magnificently dressed, said, "YOU! WOMAN! How far is it to Lhasa?" She said, "Oh, it's far. VERY far! You won't get there before nightfall." "DON'T BE RIDICULOUS!" said the man. "Look at my magnificent horse. Of course I will." And he dug in his heels and then rode away.

And the woman sat beside the road. A little while later, a girl came along, leading her yak. The girl, so small and slim; the yak, so big and hairy. When she saw the old woman, the girl said, "Excuse me, how far is it to Lhasa?" "Oh, it's far," said the old woman. "Very far. But don't worry, you will get there before nightfall," "Will I?" said the girl. "Yes," she said. "And you know what you have to do." And the girl gave her yak a gentle tug and started walking.

She walked up, up and up the steep slope that led up and up into the mountains. As she climbed, she was afraid that she might slip

and fall down into the rushing waters of the river below. But then she found a bridge and passed over. She came to the forest, the great forest on the slopes of the mountains. As they walked on, the wind blew so strong, she struggled to go forward. The wind was so strong. It knocked her down. But she picked herself up, and kept on walking. One step at a time, one foot in front of the other. Up beyond the tree line and into the land of snow. Now there was no path to follow, just the stones that other travellers, other pilgrims had placed to guide the way. The girl was afraid that she would get lost and she would not reach Lhasa before nightfall. But she kept on walking, one step at a time, one foot in front of the other. And always the yak following behind her.

In the afternoon, she passed the man magnificently dressed, stretched out on the ground beside his horse. They were both fast asleep. They had ridden so hard. They could ride no more. How she wished she too could lie down and rest, but she knew what she had to do. She gave her yak a gentle tug and kept on walking. One step at a time, one foot in front of the other.

And very late in the afternoon, as she approached yet another ridge (music fades in), as the sun began to sink down in the sky, suddenly, she heard the sound of drums and bells and temple gongs. And when she looked over the ridge into the valley beyond, there were the temples of Lhasa with all its monks. She had made it, all the way to the holy city of Lhasa! Walking one step at a time, one foot in front of the other.

As I say, Lhasa is a real place, one day I hope I will get there. But it also stands for any challenge facing you to become a storyteller, facing your students to become better and more confident in English. And the way to succeed to achieve that goal, like the girl in the story – one step at a time, one foot in front of the other. Or

in terms of becoming a storyteller, one story at a time, one word after the other.

Additional Text - Moso Bamboo

Storyteller:

Let's keep with true things but now we get to certain land of science and because here I am in Hong Kong, let's talk about Chinese martial arts movies. Are you a fan of martial arts movies? Bruce Lee? Er...ok, it's not cool to admit that, is it?

(Showing the picture of Zhang Zhiyi in the film of Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon) I'm a big fan of her. I see that coming up with a prequel to Crouching Tiger. This has been in the news. But I don't want to talk about beautiful young women, sorry, that would be another session. I want to talk about the bamboo. This bamboo is called Moso Bamboo. Did you know that? No? So you are going to learn something today.

Moso bamboo is rather special. If I was to give you a seed of moso bamboo as souvenirs of this workshop, and you went home. You planted it, you watered it, and after a week, (pause) NOTHING. After a month, (pause) NOTHING. And you will think I'm going to complain to the EDB, you bring in this guy and he gives me a seed and there's NOTHING. Six months. NOTHING. By now, you've probably forgotten where you planted the seed. A year goes by, two years go by, three years, four years, FIVE years go by.

And yet one day when you come back from school, HUH! Right there, outside your front door where you planted the moso seed five years ago, there is a moso bamboo and it is UP to your knee. Yesterday, it wasn't there. Today, 24 hours later, it's up to your knee.

The next day you go off to school, and when you come back, HUH? It's now up to your chest. Two days, from NOTHING to your chest.

Next day, you go off to school, and when you come back, WOW!

Here it is, up here. (put hand to the head level). Every day, sixty centimetres; sixty centimetres every day. And for the next five to six weeks, every single day another sixty centimetres until it is at that great height thirty-five to forty metres tall. (raise finger, mime growing up quickly.) It goes up.

How does it do that? In the space of just five to six weeks. But of course it is not five to six weeks, is it? It's five years.

What has it been doing for these five years? It's been developing a root system, roots that go really, really deep, in order that it can get that energy for when it does go up. The roots go very wide because as you can see it, as a plant it's very tall and thin. And when you've got a beautiful Chinese woman kind of doing this (mime standing and balancing on a bamboo), you got to have really broad roots, right? Not that I have experienced a beautiful woman doing this but I can imagine.

Who said they were working with Year Six, Secondary Six? So you say to your Secondary Ones, you tell them the story. Five years from now, what are you going to be? If I came back, here they are, Secondary Ones, they come in like this. (mime their short height) By the time they leave in Secondary Six, are they going to be like this? (show an image of a tall, rangy guy on screen). Of course I'm not talking about this. I'm talking about what's going on in here and what's going on in here. (point at the head and heart).

Moso bamboo. It's the idea about putting down roots, deep and wide. Ask the kids to think about that. What does that mean? What do they have to do to make that kind of growth? Or are they just going to be the same five years from now, no difference from when they walked into your school from Primary One to Secondary One? True story, Moso bamboo. Right here on your doorstep in China.

