

2: A Fish Story

Based on the Minnesota quarter reverse



OBJECTIVE

Students will closely examine and analyze an American tall tale. Students will learn the key features of a tall tale and will compose a tall tale of their own.



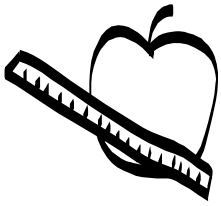
MATERIALS

- 1 overhead projector (optional)
- “Minnesota Quarter Reverse” page
- 1 class map of the United States
- 1 copy of an age-appropriate text that tells the story of any tall tale (except for Paul Bunyan) such as:
 - *American Tall Tales* by Mary Pope Osborne
 - *Cut from the Same Cloth: Women of Myth, Legend and Tall Tale* by Robert D. SanSouci
 - *Here Comes McBroom: Three More Tall Tales* by Sid Fleischman
- “Tall Tale Analysis” graphic organizer
- Overhead markers
- “Create A Tale” sheet
- “Tall Tale Rubric”
- Large sheets of white construction paper
- 1 copy of an age-appropriate text that tells the story of Paul Bunyan and the creation of Minnesota’s 10,000 lakes, such as:
 - *Paul Bunyan* by Bill Balcziaik
 - *Paul Bunyan* by Sandra Becker
 - *Paul Bunyan* by Esther Shephard
 - *Paul Bunyan and his Blue Ox* by Patricia A. Jensen
 - *Story of Paul Bunyan* by Barbara Emberley



PREPARATIONS

- Make copies of the following:
 - “Tall Tale Analysis” graphic organizer (1 per student).
 - “Create A Tale” sheet (1 per student).
 - “Tall Tale Rubric” (1 per student).



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- Make an overhead transparency (or photocopy) of the following:
 - “Minnesota Quarter Reverse” page
 - “Tall Tale Analysis” graphic organizer
- Locate an age-appropriate text that tells the story of Paul Bunyan and the creation of Minnesota’s 10,000 lakes (See examples under “Materials”).
- Cut the construction paper into the shape of a large coin (2 coins per group).



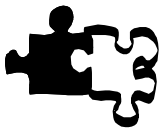
GROUPINGS

- Whole group
- Pairs
- Small groups



CLASS TIME

Five 45- to 60-minute sessions



CONNECTIONS

- Language Arts
- Social Studies
- Art
- Drama



TERMS AND CONCEPTS

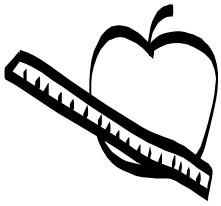
- Quarter
- Reverse (back)
- Tall tale
- Character
- Setting
- Hyperbole
- Resolution



BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

Students should have a basic knowledge of:

- U.S. geography
- The writing process
- Fictional writing



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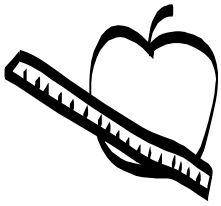
STEPS

Session 1

1. Ask the students if they've ever heard of a tall tale and, if so, what one might be. Accept all student responses. If necessary, explain that a tall tale is a story with exaggerated characteristics and accomplishments.
2. Explain that tall tales are stories that were created as a form of entertainment long before television ever existed. Sometimes these stories changed over time as they were told from person to person, becoming more and more exaggerated. Usually the stories were told in a way that was easy for people to retell.
3. Ask if the students can think of any tall tales that they may know. Students may remember the stories of Johnny Appleseed, or Pecos Bill.
4. Introduce the selected text. As a group, preview the text and illustrations to generate observations about what might be occurring at different points in the text.
4. Read the selected text to the class and attend to any unfamiliar vocabulary.
5. Display an overhead transparency or photocopy of the "Tall Tale Analysis" graphic organizer and distribute a copy to each student. Explain the three sections and the appropriate thinking by reflecting on the story the students have just heard. Complete each section as a class.
 - **Character:** Explain that the characters in tall tales have features and traits that are extremely exaggerated. The feats that they perform are also greatly exaggerated. Characters in tall tales usually can be described as strong, courageous, honorable, etc. How would you describe the main character? What characteristics are most exaggerated about him or her?
 - **Setting:** What was the setting of this story? Would the story have made sense if this story took place in another location?
 - **Hyperbole:** Hyperbole is the exaggeration used in the tall tale in order to make the story impossible and humorous. What kind of exaggeration was used in this tall tale?
6. Divide the students into pairs and distribute a copy of the graphic organizer to each pair. Direct the students to work together to complete this sheet.

Sessions 2 through 4

1. As a class, revisit the "Tall Tale Analysis" chart from the previous session and discuss.
2. Describe the 50 State Quarters® Program for background information, if necessary, using the example of your own state, if available. Then display the transparency or photocopy of the Minnesota quarter reverse. Locate Minnesota on a classroom map. Note its position in relation to your school's location.



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3. With the students, examine the coin design. Have the students point out the elements of this design, including the outline of the state of Minnesota, the pine trees, the water, the bird (loon), and the individuals fishing, as well as the words “Land of 10,000 Lakes.”
4. As a class, discuss what the students can infer about the state of Minnesota by looking at this coin. They should be able to note that the state has many lakes and that people there participate in outdoor activities, including fishing.
5. Explain that, in groups of three, the students will write tall tales of their own. For each tall tale, they will need to develop a central character that is somehow responsible for creating Minnesota’s 10,000 lakes.
6. Distribute a “Create a Tale” sheet to each student. As a class, review the assignment as described on this sheet.
7. Distribute a “Tall Tale Rubric” to each student and review this rubric with the entire class.
8. Allow enough time for the groups to draft, edit, and write their tall tales.
9. Distribute two pieces of large white construction paper cut in the shape of a large coin to each group. Each group will use these coins to draw the hero of its tall tale. On the back of this coin, the students will write the questions from their “Create a Tale” sheets, including all the answers.
10. Finally, each group will use the classroom resources to create costumes and props in order to make a dramatic presentation of its tall tale. The groups should practice their productions before presenting them to the class.

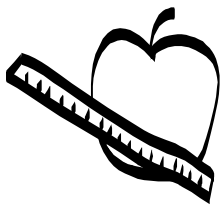
Session 5

1. Direct the groups to take turns presenting their characters and then their tall tales to the class.
2. Hang the students’ illustrations in the classroom so that students can see both sides.
3. Introduce the selected text about Paul Bunyan. As a group, preview the text and illustrations to generate observations about what might be occurring at different points in the book.
3. Read the selected text aloud.

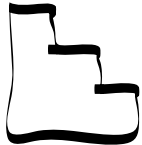


ENRICHMENT/EXTENSIONS

- Have students read additional examples of tall tales and direct them to analyze the features of the story using a new “Tall Tale Analysis” sheet. Have students compare characters using a Venn diagram.



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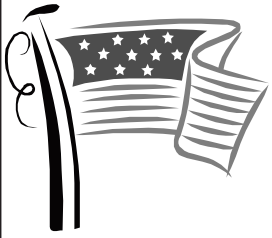
DIFFERENTIATED LEARNING OPTION

Videotape the skits for students to use in completing the “Tall Tale Analysis” sheet.



CONNECTION TO WWW.USMINT.GOV/KIDS

Minnesota chose a lake to be on the reverse of its quarter because the lake is an important symbol of the state. Many states choose important landmarks to be on their quarter. You can learn more about states by visiting the United States Mint H.I.P. Pocket Change™ Web site. Visit the “State Symbol” Teacher Feature. (www.usmint.gov/kids/index.cfm?fileContents=teachers/features/2002/11.cfm)



NAME _____

Tall Tale Analysis

CHARACTER	SETTING	HYPERBOLE



NAME _____

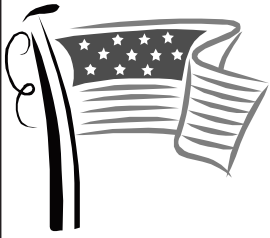
Create A Tale

Directions: Use the steps below to create your presentation. Be prepared to present your work on _____.

1. Use the questions in the chart below to brainstorm your group's tall tale.
 - Complete the chart, answering the questions to create a character and a setting.
 - Imagine how you might exaggerate this character's attributes.
 - Think of how these attributes will lead this character to create Minnesota's 10,000 lakes. Remember, your purpose is to *explain* the existence of Minnesota's 10,000 lakes.

Character Questions	Student Ideas
What is your character's name?	
What is special about your character (physical features)?	
What is his or her job?	
Where will this story take place?	
Are there any other characters in your story?	
What problem did your character solve that led to the formation of Minnesota's 10,000 lakes?	
How was the character able to solve this problem?	

2. As a group, draft and edit your tall tales using the writing process.
3. On your construction paper, draw a large illustration of the hero of your tall tale. On the back of this illustration, copy the chart above and include your answers.
4. Use classroom resources to create costumes and props in order to act out your tall tale.
5. Practice this production with your group before you present it to the class.
6. Present your illustration and character description to the class and then present the dramatic enactment of your tall tale.

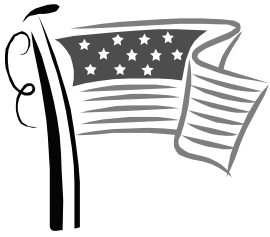


NAME _____

Tall Tale Rubric

Directions: Use the rubric below as a guide when you create your tall tale and presentation.

Parameter	4	3	2	1	Score
Requirements	All of the written requirements were met.	Almost all the written requirements were met.	Most of the written requirements were met, but several were not.	Many requirements were not met.	
Teamwork	Group members consistently work well together.	Group members usually work well together.	Group members occasionally work well together.	Group members rarely work well together.	
Characters	The main character is named and appropriately described in the tall tale.	The main character is named and described.	The main character is named, but not described in a way that related to the story's goals.	It is difficult to tell who the main character is or how he/she is the hero of a tall tale.	
Setting	Many descriptive words are used to tell when and where the story took place.	Some descriptive words are used to tell when and where the story took place.	Few descriptive words are used to tell when and where the story took place.	The setting of the story is not described.	
Problem and Resolution	It is very easy for the reader to understand the problem the main character faces, and the resolution makes sense.	It is fairly easy for the reader to understand the problem the main character faces, and the resolution makes sense.	It is fairly easy for the reader to understand the problem the main character faces, and the resolution makes little sense.	The tall tale's problem is unclear, and the resolution makes little sense or is not based on the character's traits.	
Illustration	The character illustration is detailed, attractive, and creative. All the required information is included on the back of the illustration.	The character illustration is somewhat detailed, attractive, and creative. Most of the required information is included on the back of the illustration.	The character illustration relates to the tall tale. Some of the required information is missing from the back of the illustration.	The character illustration does not relate to the tall tale. None of the required information is included on the back of the illustration.	
Presentation	Group members speak clearly and at an appropriate volume. Props and costumes are used.	Group members speak fairly clearly, but may be difficult to hear at times. Props and costumes are used.	Group members speak somewhat unclearly and are difficult to hear at times. Props and costumes are made, but are not used.	Group members do not speak clearly and are difficult to hear. Props or costumes are not made or used.	
TOTAL					



Minnesota Quarter Reverse

