



TOWARD A KINDER PLANET

A workshop for the ECIS Librarian's Conference, Berlin 2008

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This workshop will provide hand-on learning of selected tales from the presenter's folktale collections: *Earth Care: World Folktales to Talk About* (August House); *Peace Tales: World Folktales to Talk About* (August House); and *The Good Friends Book* (forthcoming, August House).

It is not necessary to print out the tale texts before attending the workshop.

TALES TO BUILD UNDERSTANDING

Ayat Jamilah: Beautiful Signs: A Treasury of Islamic Wisdom for Children and Parents.

Collected and adapted by Sarah Conover and Freda Crane. Illus. Valerie Wahl. Eastern Washington University, 2004.

Gadi Mirabooka: Australian Aboriginal Tales from the Dreaming. Edited by Helen K. McKay. Retold by Pauline E. McLeod, Francis Firebrace Jones, and June E. Barker. Libraries Unlimited, 2001.

Doorways to the Soul: 52 Wisdom Tales from Around the World. Elisa Davy Permain. Pilgrim Press, 1998.

Earth Care: World Folktales to Talk About by Margaret Read MacDonald. Linnet Books, 1999.

The Healing Heart for Families: Stories to Encourage Caring and Healthy Families by Allison Cox and David Albert. New Society Publishers, 2003.

The Healing Heart for Communities: Stories for Strong and Healthy Communities by Allison Cox and David Albert. New Society Publishers, 2003.

Kindness: A Treasury of Buddhist Wisdom for Children and Parents. Collected and adapted by Sarah Conover. Illus. by Valerie Wahl. Eastern Washington University Press, 2001.

The Moon in the Well: Wisdom Tales to Transform Your Life, Family, and Community by Erica Helm Meade. Open Court, 2001. (has a useful theme index)

The Moral of the Story: Folktales for Character Development by Bobby and Sherry Norfolk. August House, 1999.

Once Upon a Time...Storytelling to Teach Character and Prevent Bullying by Elisa Davy Permain. Character Development Group, 2006.

Peace Tales: World Folktales to Talk About by Margaret Read MacDonald. Linnet Books, 1992.

Stories of the Spirit, Stories of the Heart: Parables of the Spiritual Path from Around the World. Edited by Christina Feldman and Jack Kornfield. HarperSanFrancisco, 1991.

Stories for Telling: A Treasury for Christian Storytellers by William P. White. Augsburg, 1986.

Weaving Words, Spinning Hope: A Collection of Stories and Teacher Activities to Help Children Explore Issues of Peace, Justice, and Social Awareness. Compiled by Storytellers for World Change Network. Philadelphia: New Society Press, 1991.

Wisdom Tales from Around the World by Heather Forest. August House, 1996.

GRANDFATHER BEAR IS HUNGRY

An Eiven folktale from Siberia, retold by Margaret Read MacDonald from *Look Back and See* (H.W. Wilson).

Grandfather Bear woke up. It was spring!.

“I am SO hungry!” said Grandfather Bear. “I am SO hungry!”

Grandfather Bear went to find berries.

He looked and looked. No berries.

“I am SO hungry!” said Grandfather Bear. “I am SO Hungry!”

Grandfather Bear went to the river to find fish.

He looked and looked. No fish.

“I am SO hungry!” said Grandfather Bear. “I am SO hungry!”

Grandfather Bear went to find bugs in the old log..

Grandfather Bear began to shake that log.

That was the home of Little Chipmunk!

“Grandfather Bear! Grandfather Bear! What are you DOING!”

“I am SO hungry!” said Grandfather Bear. “I am SO hungry!”

“Grandfather Bear, don’t shake my house! I have nuts and berries.
I will SHARE with you.”

Chipmunk ran down in his hole.

He filled his cheeks with nuts and berries.

He ran back to the top.

“Here Grandfather Bear!”

“Thank you Little Chipmunk.

But I am STILL hungry!

“Wait, Grandfather Bear.”

Chipmunk ran down..

He filled his cheeks and ran up again.

“Here Grandfather Bear!”

“Thank you Little Chipmunk.

But I am STILL hungry!

“Wait, Grandfather Bear.”

All day Chipmunk ran.

Down and up.

Down and up.

Down and up.

At last Grandfather Bear was FULL.

“Thank you Little Chipmunk!

I want to give you a reward. Stand very still.”

Grandfather Bear pulled his heavy claw SO gently... right down Chipmunk’s back.

He left five black stripes!

“Now when anyone sees you they will remember
how kind you were to share with Grandfather Bear.”

OLD MAN WOMBAT (HOW KANGAROO GOT HER POUCH)

An Aboriginal folktale from Pauline McLeod, Sydney Australia.

Retold here by Margaret Read MacDonald as in *The Good Friends Book* (August House).

Pauline says that every Aboriginal tale has at least 18 lessons. She suggest that we ask the children to look for the lessons in this tale.

Mother Kangaroo too big kangaroo hops.
Her baby Joey took little hops.

They met Old Man Wombat.
He could not see well. He was very slow.

“Mother Kangaroo, is that you?” asked Old Man Wombat.
“Is that little Joey?”

“Mother Kangaroo, I am lost. I can’t find my hole.”

“I know where your hole is,” said Mother Kangaroo.
“I will help you go home.”

“But little Joey can not keep up.
I will leave him here by the gum tree.”

“Joey, you must wait here.
Mother will come back.
I have to help Old Man Wombat.”

“Walk this way Old Man Wombat. Walk this way....”

“Wait here Old Man Wombat.

I have to go back and see if my Joey is okay.”

HOP HOP HOP HOP HOP

“Good boy, Joey! You are waiting for momma.
I have to help Old Man Wombat. I will come back.”

HOP HOP HOP HOP HOP

“Joey is okay, Old Man Wombat. We can go now.”

“Walk this way, Old Man Wombat....Walk this way..”.

“Walk this way, Old Man Wombat...walk his way....”

“Old Man Wombat, I should go back and check on my little Joey. Wait here.”

HOP HOP HOP HOP HOP

“Good boy, Joey! You are waiting for Mamma.
Old Man Wombat is very slow.
I will come back soon.”

HOP HOP HOP HOP HOP

“We can go now, Old Man Wombat.

Walk this way Old Man Wombat...Walk this way...”

“Old Man Wombat, I think this is your hole.”

Old Man Wombat went into his hole.

He turned around three times.

“YES! Thank you Mother Kangaroo!

Mother Kangaroo I see you have trouble taking care of your little Joey.

Would you like a pouch to carry him?”

“Oh yes!”

“I will make a magic!” said Old Man Wombat....and POOF!!!

Mother Kangaroo had a pouch on her tummy!

“Thank you, Old Man Wombat!”

HOP HOP HOP HOP HOP

“Joey! See what we have! Jump in!”

HOP HOP HOP HOP HOP

And that is how Mother Kangaroo got her pouch.

Two Goats on a Bridge.

Reshaped from Eastern European and Russian folklore. Retold from: *Three Minute Tales* by Margaret Read MacDonald (August House).

Two Goats on a Hill. Story Number One.

Western Hill. (hold up right fist) (encourage audience to participate)

Eastern Hill. (hold up left fist)

Goat. (hold up right index finger)

Goat. (hold up left index finger)

One day.

Goat went down. (move right index finger down)

Crossed the bridge.

Ate the grass. Numnumnumnum.... (right finger goes down, crosses bridge, nibbles)

Went back. (returns.)

One day.

Goat went down.

Crossed the bridge.

Ate the grass. Numnumnumnum.... (left finger goes down, crosses bridge, nibbles)

Went back. (returns)

One day.

Both goats went down.

Both goats crossed the bridge. (both fingers come to bridge)

“Hey! I want to cross!”

“I want to cross too!”

“Well I am BIGGER!”

“Well I am STRONGER!”

The two pushed and shoved... (fingers push and shove until)

Pushed and shoved....

“ANNNNNNNHHHHHHH”

And they FELL into the river.

The goats climbed out all wet.

“Wasn’t *he* an uncooperative fellow!” (two fingers face away from each other and leave)

“Wasn’t **HE** an uncooperative fellow!”

Story Number Two.

Western Hill. (hold up right fist)

Eastern Hill. (hold up left fist)

Goat. (hold up right index finger)

Goat. (hold up left index finger)

One day.

Goat came down,

Crossed the bridge.

At the grass. Numnumnumnum.... (right finger goes down, crosses bridge, nibbles.)

Went back. (returns.)

One day.

Goat came down.

Crossed the bridge.

Ate the grass. Numnumnumnum.... (left finger goes down, crosses bridge, nibbles.)

Went back. (returns)

One day.

Both goats came down.

Both goats crossed the bridge.

“I want to cross!”

“I want to cross too!”

(fingers wiggle as goats talk)

“We have a problem!” .

“What can we do?”

“Let’s see...”

“Maybe if we both squeeze....

we could both pass....? (squeeze two fingers past each other)

“nnnnnhhhhhh... YES!”

“Wasn’t *he* a cooperative fellow!” (fingers nod at each other)

“Wasn’t **HE** a cooperative fellow!”

Now the question is....

Which kind of goat are you?

Lifting the Sky. A Skagit tale from the Pacific Northwest

Based on a telling by Skagit Elder Vi (TAQwSeBLU) Hilbert.

In *Peace Tales: World Folktales to Talk About* by Margaret Read MacDonald (August House).

The Creator was going there, going there.

His face was shining so brightly...no one could look on his face.

The Creator had a big basket full of languages.

He was giving out languages to all of the peoples across this great land of ours.

He had a language for the Iroquois people.

A language for the Cherokee people...

A language for the Seminole people...

A language for the Hopi...

A language for the Navajo...

A language for the Sioux...

But when he came to the Pacific Northwest...this beautiful land...

He still had a whole basket full of languages.

What to do?....

He just DUMPED them all out.

Everybody got a different language!

The people on this island spoke one language.

The people on this island spoke another.

The people in this valley spoke one language.

...in this valley...another.

No one could communicate.

No one could cooperate.

And in those days the Creator had made one mistake.

He had left the sky too low.

.

Tall people were bumping their heads against the sky.

And some of them were climbing into the Sky World before it was their time.

This could not be allowed.

So all of the chiefs met together.

How can we fix this problem?

How can we communicate?

How can we cooperate?

They decided that if they had even ONE word...
that everybody shared....
They could cooperate.

They decided on the word...YAHOW!

The chiefs told everyone to go and cut a tall pole... to push on the sky.

“Everybody push...all together.... YA...HOW!

The sky went up only a little.

“Everyone has to put their back to the poles.”

“YA..A..A..HOW!”

The sky only went up a little further.

"Who is not pushing?
We have to push harder.
Everyone needs to use a BIG voice."

"YA..A..A..HOW!"

Almost! If this had been a European story that would have done it.
Because what is the magic number in European stories? Three!
But this is a Native American story. The magic number is...FOUR.
So one more time.

“Everybody use your shoulders.
Everybody use your voice.”

"YA..A..A..A..HOW!"

“YES! WE DID IT!”

Vi Hilbert says this just shows what can happen...
If everyone shares even ONE word....
and cooperates.

Not Our Problem A folktale told in Burma and Thailand.

Retold from: "Not Our Problem" in *Peace Tales: World Folktales to Talk About* by Margaret Read MacDonald. (August House).

A King sat with his Advisor eating honey on puffed rice.
A drop of honey fell onto the window sill.

"Oh, your majesty!" said his Advisor, "A drop of honey has fallen onto the window sill!"
"Never mind." Said the King. "It is not our problem."

Slowly the drop of honey dripped down from the windowsill...
and fell with a *plop* on the ground below the palace.

A gecko saw the honey and began to eat it.
"Your majesty, a gecko is eating the drop of honey."

"Never mind," said the King. "It is not our problem."

A cat *pounced* on the gecko and began to eat the gecko.
"Your Majesty a cat is eating the gecko which was eating the honey."

"It is not our problem."

But just then a dog ran out and attacked the cat. The two began to fight.
"Your Majesty a dog and cat are fighting under the palace."

"Never mind. It is not our problem."

The owner of the cat saw the dog attacking her cat.
So she ran out with a broom and began to beat the dog.
But when the owner of the dog saw the woman beating his dog, *he* ran out and began to beat *her*.

Your Majesty, the owner of the cat and the owner of the dog are fighting under the palace.
Perhaps I should send someone to stop the fight.

"Never mind," sighed the king. "It is not our problem."

Soon the friends of the woman began to beat the man!
And friend of the *man* began to beat the woman's friends.

"Your Majesty, a fight is going on under the palace. We should do something to stop this."

"Never mind," insisted the king. "It is not our problem."

Just then the soldiers were passing through town.
When they saw the fight, they rushed to break it up.
But when they heard the situation, Some sided with the man.
And some sided with the women.
The soldiers began to fight among themselves.
And a civil war broke out!

In the fighting the palace was burned to the ground.
The King and his Advisor stood in the ashes.

“You know...” said the King. “Maybe it *was* our problem.”