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Folktales and Philanthropy: Using Folktales as a Bridge to Community Service

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Folktales and Philanthropy -

Using Folktales as a Bridge to Community Service

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Abstract:

Using folktales in an ESL/EFL classroom is not a new concept. Many teachers have found these ancient stories to be useful for language learning. In this paper I will explore some rationale for utilizing a student's culture, folklore and folktales in particular in order to increase reading and writing skills, as well as other academic skills. In addition I will draw a correlation between folktales and philanthropy and show how folktales may be used as a bridge to community service task-based projects.

This paper also contains materials for a Folklore and Philanthropy course that I developed for my current teaching context at Al-Yamamah University in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. I have included a course overview, goals and objectives, as well as a scope and sequence for four units. In addition, I have elaborated on one unit of the course by providing objectives, detailed lesson plans and supplementary material.

Through this course learners will investigate and work with different types of folktales. Due to the fact that many folktales reveal a character making some sort of a sacrifice on behalf of others, learners will find that such selflessness is a form of philanthropy. They will look at giving motivators and make connections between folktales and "giving." Finally, through community service task-based projects, students will improve their reading and writing skills while developing social consciousness and a generosity of spirit.

Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) Descriptors

English (Second Language)	Cultural Differences
Language Skills	Cultural Education
Reading Ability	Cultural Exchange
Reading Comprehension	Cultural Images
Reading Skills	Cultural Influences
Second Language Learning	Cultural Inter-relationships
Student Attitudes	Cultural Traits
Vocabulary	Culture
Vocabulary Development	Foreign Culture
Vocabulary Skills	Intercultural Communication
Writing (Composition)	Instructional Materials
Writing Skills	Newspapers
Class Activities	Student Developed Materials
Classroom Techniques	Teacher Developed Materials
Creative Teaching	Realia
Reading Instruction	Tape Recordings
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INTRODUCTION

"If a story is not about the hearer, he will not listen… and here I make a rule….
a great and interesting story is about everyone or it will not last.

This quote is taken from John Steinbeck's book, *East of Eden.* I particularly like it because for me, it speaks to the importance of meaningful stories and how these stories connect us to others.

Storytelling is an old tradition that is found in all cultures and all countries. When choosing effective teaching strategies, it is worthwhile to consider universals that cross cultural lines. One of these universals is folklore.

What exactly is Folklore? Folklore is the traditional art, literature, knowledge, and practice that is disseminated largely through oral communication and behavioral example. It is the things that people believe (such as planting practices, and family traditions); do (such as dance, music making, mending clothes); know (how to build an irrigation dam, nurse an ailment, or prepare barbecue); make (architecture, art, craft), and say (personal experience stories, riddles, songs and folktales). (Adapted from: *http://www.afsnet.org/?page=WhatIsFolklore*).

Folktales exist in every culture, and there are four basic kinds. They are myths, legends, fables and fairytales. It is important to note that even though some of these tales exist in written form today, they originated in oral form and were traditionally passed from one generation to the next by spoken word.

Philanthropy is defined by Oxford dictionary as " the desire to promote the welfare of others…". It is separate from business and government initiatives in that philanthropy is a private or individual act of helping and caring for others without expectations of reward or

compensation. At its essence, philanthropy embodies all that it means to be human and to care about the welfare and well being of others.

Within this paper, I will explore some rationale for using folktales in a second language classroom. In addition, I will explain how folktales and philanthropy are connected to each other. I will also explore the potential that exists within folktales to inspire and motivate philanthropic acts. As well, I will describe how this topic has evolved for me, and I will include materials for a Folktale and Philanthropy course I developed during my studies at SIT in the summer of 2012.

Context

Educational Setting

I began teaching at Al-Yamamah University in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia in September 2011. Al-Yamamah University is located slightly North of the capital city of Riyadh. Due to segregation regulations, females have a separate campus from the males. In Saudi Arabia, many places of business are gender segregated. For example, a woman may only dine in a restaurant if that restaurant has a family section. A lot of coffee shops and stores are for males only. Even most banking institutions have a female branch that is essentially another area of the building with a separate entrance. These branches are staffed 100% by women. (See more examples of Saudi segregated society in *Beliefs: Social Context* section p. 16)

Due to the fact that Al-Yamamah is located quite North of the city centre, there are no stores or service centres adjacent or close to either the male or female campus. There is a small cafeteria, coffee shop, printing service and gym area on the ground floor of the female campus. I have been told that similar amenities exist on the male campus.

There is no public transportation system, so students rely on private drivers and taxi services for transportation to and from school. Traffic is an issue, as are accidents. These factors sometimes contribute to tardiness and absenteeism. However, once students arrive on campus, there are few distractions.

A typical classroom can accommodate 18-20 students comfortably. Seating consists of standard stacking chairs and moveable 3' x 4' rectangular tables, which I usually arrange in a horseshoe formation. Additional tables and seating is usually situated in the back and on opposite sides of the room. These are generally used for small group work when necessary.

Students

The students are female and range in ages from 18 to 25 years. Some may be slightly older. They attend Al-Yamamah with the intention of enrolling in one of YU's academic programs: Business Administration, Computer Science; etc.   However, they must complete the Preparatory Year English Program that is administered by Saudi INTERLINK Language Centres (SILC), unless of course they demonstrate proficiency during assessment placement or produce an acceptable ESL certificate. SILC is my employer and they develop and deliver the English program for YU.

These women come from higher socio-economic backgrounds. As a result, most have traveled abroad at some point and have been exposed to different cultures and languages. The majority, if not all, will have traveled within Saudi Arabia e.g. Jeddah, Qassim, Mecca/Medinah, Dammam; etc.

For the most part, students are Saudi-born and raised. However, they may also have a different Middle Eastern background e.g. Jordanian, Palestinian, Syrian, etc but have grown up in Saudi Arabia. Unless married, they all live in the paternal family home. Some may be married and have small children. However, the majority will be single and child-less.

The majority of my students have voiced the goal of owning their own business once they complete their degree. For the most part, their business choices range from fashion design companies, Internet sales companies (jewelry, cosmetics; etc) and clothing stores. These are great goals and dreams to have, however, a Saudi woman is somewhat restricted in her post-graduate options for several reasons. First, she is expected to get married in her early 20's and to have children. As well, she will need the support of a male guardian in order to open her own business. Even with such support, the male will be the primary owner, with the business being in

his name, not hers. Finally, very few Saudi women (especially this affluent population) would consider working for someone else. Therefore, it is not surprising that most of the students are aiming at owning their own business.

Even with high aspirations, a lack of motivation for completing assignments and projects is unmistakably apparent in the entire student population. I believe that this is partly due to the fact that Al-Yamamah has a very student-centered approach to teaching which is directly opposite from the teacher-centered environment these students have been exposed to in high school, and even other Saudi universities and colleges. They are used to having things done for them by their teachers as well as others in their lives. These students come from well to do families and have grown up with a multitude of servants to take care of their daily needs. For the most part, being self-motivated is a foreign concept. This type of situation can present many challenges in the teaching environment.

Other Stakeholders

SILC's administration consists of the IMT (INTERLINK Management Team). Within the IMT is the General Manager for both the male and female English Programs. As well, there are two Instructional Coordinators and an Assistant Manager. The Instructional Coordinators oversee program delivery. Ultimately, the IMT have control over what is being taught (types of projects, Common Assessment Tasks; etc for each level). However, teachers are given some degree of autonomy to design their own curriculum and materials as long as the course benchmarks, which have been developed by the IMT, are met for the level being taught.

RATIONALE

Topic Background

My interest in folktales goes back more than 20 years. After completing my Education degree in 1987, and teaching for a year, I decided to return to university in 1989 and enroll in a Bachelor of Arts program with Folklore as my major. During my program of study, I completed courses in a number of topics including folk religion, material culture, folklore research methods, folk beliefs, folklore and popular culture, folksongs, and folk-life studies just to name a few.

Coming from a family and culture (Newfoundland, Canada) that is particularly rich in oral tradition, the study of folklore and its related topics resonated deeply with me. As well, through completing a number of research projects and assignments, I drew upon the knowledge of my family and friends to increase my understanding of my own personal folklore. My interest and prior studies in culture and folklore have helped me to have an open and inquisitive approach to the two cultures I have taught and lived in during the last three years: Saudi Arabia and South Korea.

During my IYTP last year, our ICLT instructor asked that we examine a cultural question within our context. I decided that I would like to investigate the oral tradition of Saudi Arabia through the medium of folktales because Saudi Arabia is also known for its rich oral culture. It took me some time to figure out exactly how I would start this inquiry in my classes. My main challenge was how to integrate this course content into an already jam-packed syllabus. As well, I was uncertain whether I should introduce the material (a folktale) or see if my students could recall a folktale. Finally, I chose the latter and solicited folktales from my students. Once we had some material to work with, I built language-learning activities around those stories.

In February, March and April 2012, I began some focused activities using folktales. Later in this paper, in the *My Process* section, I provide examples of activities and folktales that I used during my IYTP.

During our second summer of course work at SIT, and in particular through projects for both SLA and CDA, I further defined a direction I wanted to take with the topic of folktales. The research I conducted regarding using folktales and L1 culture in the classroom convinced me of the benefits of utilizing this medium for language learning. However, I still felt that I could expand more on my ideas.

Before returning to teaching three years ago, I had spent 10 years as a NGO (Non-Governmental Organization, or charity) professional. I started in the field as a Resource Development Coordinator. After 3 years I progressed to Director of Development before becoming Executive Director of two charities and finally CEO of the last organization I worked for. This decade of experience taught me a lot about philanthropy and what motivates people to give of their time, talent and resources for community service.

Folktales contain common themes such as good versus evil, adversity versus triumph, and problems needing solutions. As well, they clearly exhibit common universal truths and highlight human characteristics through character personas. The more I thought about it, the more I could see a link between folktales and philanthropy. Within the folktale, there exists an opportunity for community service projects. This paper will show how these two areas can be connected in a meaningful way to teach language skills.

Beliefs

In this section, I will discuss aspects of my own teaching philosophy, and explain my personal beliefs about culture in the classroom. I will do so by using the "I, Thou, It" as a framework. While I have held some of these beliefs for quite some time, I explored and expanded them while designing and developing my CDA project this past summer at SIT.

(I)   The teacher sets the tone of the classroom.

I believe that it is the teacher's responsibility to establish the 'tone' of his/her classroom. As a teacher I assume that students need to feel safe and comfortable, as well as challenged and successful. I have a life mantra that I share with my students: *"There are never any mistakes in life"*. I like to discuss this concept as it applies to all of life, but also like to frame it so that the students understand that mistakes are lessons in disguise. I openly encourage my students to make mistakes in English so that they will receive a deeper lesson.

I try to develop a rapport with my students by letting them see the real me. I offer examples from my own culture and personal life experiences, and encourage them to do the same type of sharing because I believe it validates them as people and as learners.

In my classroom, I am more than a teacher. I am a friend, a guide, and sometimes a confidant if students have issues in their personal lives. I have an open-door policy whereby my students are invited and encouraged to come talk to me privately about anything. It is during these conversations that my students see that I care about them as people, not just as students. As a result, I believe this not only lowers affective filters but also increases their motivation to succeed because they know I believe that they can.

(Thou)   Students learn in a variety of ways.

Students learn in different ways. Therefore, it is important to prepare for and address all different learning styles. I believe that by participating in a wide variety of activities and tasks that are designed to address different modalities of learning, the student will discover what works best for them. I believe that the teacher and student walk this journey of discovery together through feedback mechanisms. In my classes, students are asked to reflect upon activities and tasks through a variety of means such as individual journal writing, simple Q/A surveys, small group discussions and open class discussions dealing with what worked best/worst for them in the lesson. Once the information has been gathered, and a pattern becomes evident, I use this to better facilitate optimum learning for all participants.

(It)   There is value in what learners already know.

I believe that it is important to acknowledge and honour what a student already knows. In my opinion, this automatically puts the learner in a winning position. When students generate their own content, they are already the experts. This sense of familiarity increases interest level and motivation, and decreases anxiety. The student becomes more engaged through their own sharing process, and other class participants connect to the content in a different way than if the content was developed and delivered by the teacher.

(It)   I believe that we are all cultural beings and have so much to discover, connect with, and share regarding our own cultural identities.

Through examining folktales from their own culture as well as folktales from other cultures, students will embark on a journey of discovery. This content offers the opportunity to

discover or re-discover what is unique, similar and different about the student's culture. Folkloric aspects such as food traditions, tribal rituals, and daily customs can be explored. Folktales can also be used as a code to discuss culturally taboo topics such as relationships. In addition, they can be utilized as a springboard for task-based project learning with a philanthropic focus.

(It) **I believe that it is important to learn about your culture because it gives a sense of your *place* and *role* in the world.**

It is important to honour and respect what came before us. However, as we move forward in life, it is as equally important to see how our cultural similarities and differences shape our view of today's world.

By using folktales to inspire community service, my intent is to design and deliver a course whereby the content is not only meaningful to the students, but it will also be memorable. By exploring moral and ethical issues that exist in folktales, I believe that my students will come away with a better concept of self. It is my hope that they will take pride in who they are and where they come from, and will develop a deeper understanding of how culture affects their social concepts, beliefs and behaviours.

Through examining what motivates folktale characters to behave (good vs. evil, generosity vs. greed, selflessness vs. selfishness; etc.) I believe that students will develop a greater awareness of social responsibility and be inspired to pursue philanthropic interests in their communities.

(Social Context)   Many topics are NOT open for discussion in Saudi Arabia.

Saudi Arabia is definitely one of the most interesting places on the planet! I see so many dichotomies that are absolutely intriguing. I plan to explore one of these – personal relationships – through using folktales.

The society is almost 100% gender-segregated. For example, most service outlets will have a male counter/seating section and a family counter/seating section. Banks have a male branch and a female branch. Segregation is not only visible everywhere, but it is also enforced by the religious police. For example, unmarried males and females are not allowed to socialize in public.   I find it fascinating then, that Saudis will elaborately describe male/female relationships in the oral tradition, particularly folktales. These folktales are exuberantly romantic.   They talk about forbidden love and wildly passionate affairs. However, within these stories, there are also common universal themes around relationship boundaries, associated moral issues and lessons to be learned. I believe that by using folktales as a code, students will more openly explore and discuss their opinions and beliefs about male-female relationships.

(Social Context)   The level of social consciousness within the student

population is somewhat low.

Saudi Arabia is a wealthy country that can afford to hire foreigners to come in and take care of their needs. For example, this student population has grown up with a host of personal servants that do everything for them. This has resulted in a somewhat insular mentality. For the most part, these young women have never had to pick up after themselves, or do daily chores. As such, they are not as aware of the needs of their community as students in other places might

possibly be. For the most part, they have never considered any altruistic activities because wealth has allowed for so much to be taken for granted.

Having taught in the country for two years now, I believe that Saudis, given the opportunity, can be very charitable. It is just not a 'front-of-mind' consideration. Each year, as part of the Muslim faith, families are required to donate a percentage of income to a charitable cause. While this does happen, and various charities are supported, the thought process and intrinsic reward that comes from giving seems to be lacking.

By exploring the concepts of selflessness, generosity of spirit, and the common good that exist in folktales, and by reflecting and relating how these concepts apply to their own lives, I believe that students will develop a greater awareness of philanthropy and will naturally become more socially responsible.

Research

Folktales are defined as stories that originated orally and have been passed down orally through the generations. They are found in all cultures and countries and are an aspect of a culture's folklore. There are four basic kinds. These are legends, myths, fairytales and fables. Folktales transmit meaning for students because they reflect their culture and therefore, are something that they can personally identify with.

In her portfolio research paper "Folklore, the Arts and the ESL Child", educator Caryn Camp writes that, "The psycho-linguistic perspective towards literacy instruction maintains that meaning arises from the transaction between the reader and the text" (Camp, 2000). A big advantage of using folktales is that they have a very predictable structure. As a result, students

can instinctively predict story elements. For example, if there's a villain, there will be a hero; if there is a problem, there will be a solution. Generally, the common story pattern among folktales is "problem – 3 step action plan (usually) – solution".

In The Reading Teacher Journal, Worthy & Bloodgood state, "There are some folktales for which many cultures have a variant or version" (Worthy & Bloodgood, 1992/1993). These versions may be slightly different from culture to culture, but the essence of the story remains. Did you know that studies have shown there exists over 700 versions of Cinderella! These different variants have come about because of cultural distinctions. For example in Middle East, most children grow up with *The Three Little Goats* instead of *The Three Little Pigs.*

Elaine Lutz, with the Office of Educational Research and Improvement in Washington, DC draws upon the cultural connection aspect of folktales when she says that "Using folktales in teaching reading helps students to feel more connected to their own cultural heritage and the heritage of others while developing their reading interests" (Lutz, 1986). Folktales are the perfect medium for comparing and contrasting similarities and differences that exist among cultures because they contain so many cultural associations on issues dealing with beliefs, morals, practices and traditions.

One of the most appealing advantages for using folktales in the classroom is that they contain so many universal themes. Students can identify with these themes because they are also a part of their ethos. Hadaway & Mundy, in their article written for The English Journal, *"Crossing Curricular and Cultural Boundaries: A Study of Family Folklore",* point out "Folktales deal with universal experience, with recurring human problems, they touch our humanness." (Hadaway & Mundy, 1992)

If you are someone that believes that to truly acquire a language, the learner must also understand and embrace the culture, then you might also agree that thoughts and values are derived from culture. During my research, I found some very interesting information that related folktales to First Language Acquisition. When we first learn our native language we internalize and absorb the sounds, grammar, meaning and values of the language. We usually acquire all this information within the first 5 years of our life. Consider the naturalization effect that occurs in a child with regards to adjective order for example. How does a child internalize the rule that a number must come before a color when describing something? Does a child learn this as a grammar rule or perhaps in part from hearing about: the three little pigs, and the five little monkeys? (Price, 2001).

As with adjective order, much more is internalized about culture through folktales. For the sake of simplicity, I will continue to use *The Three Little Pigs* as an example to illustrate some basic messages that we internalize from exposure to this folktale. In this folktale, we learn about independence. We internalize that at some point in life we will be expected to move out of the family home and start out on our own and exert our own independence from the family unit. As well, we also learn about work ethic. We internalize that those that are lazy will fail, and those that work hard will succeed. We come to understand that there may be problems, but if we help each other and work as a team, we can overcome many obstacles. Other versions of this tale may have a slightly different twist. However, fact in point, these different versions exist to complement the morals and beliefs of that particular culture. By comparing versions, students can engage in conversations about how and why cultures are similar and different in some ways.

ESL/EFL Teaching Approaches

PA: <u>Participatory Approach</u>

Paulo Freire was a Brazilian educator who believed that the content of language lessons should be based on the learner's cultural and personal experiences. His Participatory Approach (PA) has been called deeply contextual because the learning of the target language flows from important discussions that are drawn from the real-life experiences of the students.

By utilizing a folktale as a PA 'code', students can analyze the situation illustrated in the folktale through bringing their own experiences and cultural knowledge into the discussion. If appropriate for the teaching context, students can finally resolve to change their personal situation by coming up with an action plan and implementing it.

CBI: <u>Content-Based Instruction</u>

Folktales serve as great content in which to learn language skills. Many of our students once they leave our classes, will be expected to compete academically with native speakers. Therefore, it becomes part of our responsibility to assist them in navigating these waters with success. They need to develop comparison and contrasting skills, know how to evaluate ideas, draw conclusions and write summaries. They will need to compile facts or evidence of support, and learn how to organize ideas and to understand how ideas are connected to each other. In addition, they need to understand what is not directly stated, but instead that which is implied. In other words, they must develop inferencing skills. Folktales are ideal for introducing and developing this skill-set because they require less energy for decoding the text. As a result, more energy is available for focusing on improving academic skills.

TBLT: Task-Based Language Teaching

Task-Based learning involves providing students with meaningful tasks in which they have the opportunity to use the target language in order to complete the task successfully. Community service, or giving of oneself to benefit others in society, is a very worthwhile and meaningful personal experience. Folktales provide a somewhat built-in scenario of problem-solution that can be extracted and applied to the student's context. Depending on the folktale, and the limitations of the society, there exists a multitude of possibilities for the student to develop and initiate a project that will benefit someone in their community. Due to the communicative nature of task-based learning, language skills will improve through using the target language to accomplish the project.

Community service projects could take the form of awareness and promotional campaigns for an existing cause or charity; food drives; clothing drives; special event fundraisers; marketing projects such as developing a 30 second public service announcement or You Tube promotional video; poster and/or brochure development just to name a few. If the teacher approaches the folktale with the intention of developing a community service project, then he or she will surely see many different opportunities arising from these ancient stories.

ANALYSIS

In his book "Teaching Languages: A Way and Ways", Earl Stevick writes that "A language course that relates to personal goals and what is personally meaningful will be more effective". (Stevick, 1980). My hypothesis for using folktales as a bridge to community service is based on the premise that if students take the leap from 'self to other', then this action will result in the creation of a new self-concept and an awareness of social responsibility.

Through using the very familiar folktale Cinderella, I will now briefly explain how a teacher could utilize this tale if they were to view it through a philanthropic filter.

First, the teacher would have students read the folktale, and depending on their proficiency level, take the necessary time to cover unknown vocabulary and facilitate a class discussion to verbally summarize the details of the folktale. Next, the teacher would spilt the class into small groups and have them imagine that Cinderella was a girl that lived in their neighborhood. The groups would discuss several questions such as "How is Cinderella different from her step-sisters?", "How does she look different?", "How does she act different?", "Does she feel that she fits in with other girls her age?", "What does she want the most?", "What would make Cinderella most happy?": etc. Each group would then come up with one way that they could help Cinderella feel better. Once each group has discussed the questions and found a solution, they would then share their solutions with the class. Based on the student's responses, and if they haven't already posed the solution of giving Cinderella nicer clothes to wear, then the teacher would facilitate a discussion on how to reach or contact Cinderella and give her nice clothes. Finally, to direct this activity towards a community service project, the students could then develop an action plan for initiating, advertising, promoting and conducting a clothing drive for needy children and/or adults in the community. Another alternative project could be to

research a local charity (if one exists) that conducts clothing drives and create public service announcements, and/or public poster demonstrations to promote the work of the charity.

Folktales lend themselves beautifully as a lead into community service projects because most times, if not all times, the students will elicit some type of solution from the folktale situation that can and will relate to a problem that exists in today's society. If the teacher's objective is to develop service projects in his or her class, then folktales are an interesting medium to discuss relative issues, problems and solutions.

MY PROCESS

In the beginning….

In February, March and April of 2012, I began doing some work with folktales in my reading and writing classes at Al-Yamamah University in Saudi Arabia. To begin with, I had the students talk to family members to solicit some commonly known folktales (such as legends) and then report back to class. What pleased me most was the level of enthusiasm that my students demonstrated just simply because I was interested in hearing these stories.

Over a number of classes, we re-constructed several folktales using class discussions to negotiate agreement regarding the details and sequence of events in these stories. I did several different writing activities with several different classes. For example, one activity involved splitting students into small groups of 4 or 5 and having them re-construct and write their tale on chart paper. When they finished this exercise, each group peer-corrected a different group's story for grammar, spelling, vocabulary and sentence structure. Then each group returned to their story and decided if they agreed with the suggested revisions from the editing group. This segment of the activity produced the most discussion and decision-making among students.

Finally, I made correction suggestions within the student's written text (such as SV – subject verb agreement; SP – spelling error; P – punctuation error; etc), and then each group made their final edits and re-wrote the story to be posted in the classroom.

This activity worked very well in that the students were excited about making revisions. I also believe that they learned more about common writing errors through group discussion than if I had corrected their individual work. They were completely engaged in the process and passionate about their versions of the folktale. It was after this, and other similar exercises, that I was convinced I had found something worthwhile pursuing further.

In the middle….

For 8 weeks this past summer (2012), I took several courses to complete the requirements for my MAT degree. It was during these courses, and the projects within, that I narrowed my focus and explored the possibility of taking a different approach to using folktales in my classroom.

For our SLA course, we had to develop and present a poster project on a topic of interest. I started with folktales only. My poster demonstrated rationale for using culture, and folktales in particular, for language learning. This project initiated a thought process for me. I knew there was value in utilizing this medium, but I wanted to do something different with the folktales. Finally, through a lot of reflection and personal journal writing, an idea began to germinate. Due to the fact that I had spent 10 years as a charity professional, I began to explore the possibility of connecting these 2 areas of interest. As a result, I started to read countless folktales from all over the world, and I began to see an opportunity to use folktales as a springboard into a community service project.

At the same time, I had to design a course for my CDA class. I decided to use Folktales and Philanthropy as my course topic. This CDA project really helped me to further clarify, by using concrete examples, how these two areas could indeed work well together. I have included part of my course development in this paper.

In the end….

My goal was to implement some of these lessons in my reading and writing class this current semester at Al-Yamamah University. However, due to the time deadline for this IPP submission, as well as my current curriculum requirements, it has been impossible to execute any of these lessons over the last four weeks.

The beginning of the first term of a new academic year is always a little chaotic. This year in particular saw a significant increase in student enrollment. However, most students did not register until the middle of week two (of an eight week term). As a result, a lot of class levels were split into two sections in order to accommodate the increased number of students. This created a domino effect. Teaching assignments also changed in order to reduce the number of teachers doing overtime hours. Even with these adjustment, approximately half of the staff are currently working a 1 + ½ of the normal teaching load. To increase the confusion even further, the SILC Management Team (IMT) changed this term. There is now a new Assistant Manager, who is also doubling as an Instructional Coordinator (IC) – which was her previous role. This person happens to be my IC for this term. To say that she is overworked and overwhelmed is an understatement. She is doing her utmost best given the situation. The entire staff has pulled together and is working as a team to get things done.

At the time of writing, we are just mid-way through the term (week four). Over the last two weeks, classes have settled down and are finally starting to gel somewhat. I am teaching a TOEFL Prep class which is SILC Level 8 Listening/Speaking, and I'm teaching a SILC Level 6 Reading/Writing course. My only opportunity to implement Folktale and Philanthropy lessons would possibly be in the Level 6 class. However, I have a mixture of students who are repeating this level, as well as new students that placed into this level. As a result, the curriculum of the last two weeks has had to focus entirely on the material being tested in the mid-term, which was administered this week (week four). Specifically, this material is the structure, outline and content for an argumentative academic essay. Unfortunately, time has not permitted me to explore any folktales and their related lessons so far this term.

In the future…

Within the SILC context, the four skills are divided between two courses: (1) Reading/Writing and (2) Listening/Speaking. It is quite possible to use folktales as the reading content to develop and test comprehension and critical thinking skills (benchmarks for each SILC Reading and Writing course). As well, it would be reasonable to consider developing a group task with a philanthropic focus as one of the core group projects in the higher Listening and Speaking levels (SILC Level 5-7). I have not included Level 8 because beginning with this academic year, the last SILC level in both Reading/Writing and Listening/Speaking courses are now TOEFL Prep only. The most ideal time to implement this Folktales and Philanthropy material at SILC **would not be** the first term of a new academic year. However, barring start up delays and complications, any other term during the academic year would be more suitable.

Even though it is possible to execute this material in the SILC context, I believe that the course content can be extracted and delivered best in a context where the four skills are integrated and taught concurrently.   Based upon the teacher's assessment of his or her students' proficiency level, the lesson plans contained within can be used exactly as laid out or adapted slightly to fit their course delivery schedules. Moreover, teachers that are interested in this type of material are encouraged to find and use other folktales that lend themselves to philanthropic pursuits. If the teacher first becomes aware of the potential to link folktales and philanthropy, then the possibilities for community service projects are infinite.

COURSE DEVELOPMENT

Course Introduction:

I believe there is value in using folktales to teach language, and as a way to inspire philanthropy. Through examining folktales and completing related community-focused projects, students will develop a greater understanding of philanthropy and its importance for their lives.

This course, "Folktales and Philanthropy", was designed with my current teaching context in mind. It was developed as a reading and writing course for students who are at a high-intermediate proficiency level, and who are completing the last level of SILC's Preparatory Year Program at Al-Yamamah University. However, the units, content and lesson plans may be extracted and adapted to any teaching context.

In this section, I will outline a course overview, as well as provide goals and objectives, a scope and sequence, and an assessment plan for the full course. Furthermore, I will elaborate on one of the four units by providing specific lesson plans and folktale content.

Course Overview:

Folktales, or stories in general, are quite common in every culture. Saudi Arabia has an especially rich oral culture. Through reading folktales, students will learn about and distinguish different forms (myths, legends, fairytales and fables), as well as classify common themes and motifs. Students will also identify with their own culture through the lens of a folktale. Natural comparisons will occur when reading folktales from other cultures. Folktales will provide a vehicle for analysis of human characteristics such as generosity, selflessness, compassion and kindness. As well, inferences will be made from folktales on such general concepts as 'the common good' and 'goodwill'.

Through working with folktales, students will enhance reading strategies, increase comprehension and critical thinking skills, identify and use writing structures, discover and utilize process writing techniques, and develop creative writing skills.

This course was originally designed as part of the curriculum for SILC's Level 8 Reading/Writing course. The content is set up in such a way that it can be delivered twice a week – Sunday and Tuesday classes. The time frame for these classes is 8:30 a.m. to 10:20 a.m. (1 hour, 50 minutes with no scheduled break). The entire course can be completed after 8 weeks (one term) with a total of 27 hours and 20 minutes instructional/contact hours dedicated to "Folktales and Philanthropy".

The students are Saudi Arabian females (approximate ages 18-25) who are at a high intermediate level of proficiency and are completing the last level of the university's English Preparatory Year Program (PYP). Al-Yamamah University's PYP has 8 levels ranging from Beginner to Advanced.

Enrolment is mandatory for the PYP in that all students must pass the 8th level benchmarks before moving on to academic programs. The estimated number of students for this course is between 10-18. Students will be evaluated/assessed on the material and concepts covered in class through short production tasks as opposed to traditional written/audio/oral tests.

Through this course students will first become familiar with the folktale forms, and the meaning of philanthropy. They will then start uncovering some common themes through comparisons of folktales from a variety of cultures. In addition to common themes, students will analyze particular human characteristics from various folktales, as well as different types of giving and what motivates each. Finally, students will apply what they have learned about philanthropy and 'generosity of spirit' by developing and implementing community service projects.

Course Goals and Objectives

GOAL #1: Students will explore different types of folktales from different countries (including Saudi Arabia) and identify philanthropic activities within each folktale.

OBJECTIVES: Students will be able to

- define and distinguish between the four basic types of folktales

- compare and contrast folktales from different cultures.

- identify common motifs (themes) and human characteristics that exist in folktales.

- analyze the concepts of 'selflessness' and 'the common good'

- Synthesize behavioural motivators of folktale characters with charitable giving (compassion, generosity, selflessness)

GOAL # 2: Students will deepen their understanding of their own culture by comparing it to cultures of the world.

OBJECTIVES**:** Students will be able to

- identify and name similarities and differences between Saudi Arabian culture and other cultures as seen in the folktales.

- express opinions (verbally and written) about common universal truths and human characteristics that arise from the folktales examined in class.

GOAL #3: Students will investigate the 'giving culture' of Saudi Arabia and determine how it is similar to or different from that of other cultures.

OBJECTIVES: Students will be able to

- analyze and describe motivational factors that lead people to give either their time, talent and/or money – (within Saudi Arabian and other cultures).

- critically examine philanthropic acts in their own society and determine if more could be done for the common good.

- demonstrate an example of a personal giving motivator, that resulted in a philanthropic act, through a written, visual and/or auditory creative project that shows depth of understanding of philanthropic concepts explored in the folktales.

GOAL #4: Students will develop greater reading and writing skills through a variety of interactive lessons.

OBJECTIVES: Students will be able to

- effectively use context clues to discover the meaning of unknown words.

- extract meaning from the presented folktale and accurately respond to comprehension and critical thinking exercises.

- retain and retell (verbally and written) major components and details of a folktale.

- analyze and explain how a character's actions exemplify generosity of spirit.

- develop creative writing skills by writing a different scenario for the folktale.

- identify writing structures such as topic sentences and supporting details.

- utilize process writing techniques to complete level appropriate discourse

GOAL #5: Students will increase their knowledge of philanthropy through selecting a local charity or cause and investigating how they receive operational funds for community service programs.

OBJECTIVES: Students will be able to

- research a not-for-profit organization in the community and use persuasive writing to build support for the organization.

- produce a PR promo for this charity (through a choice of mediums) and design a public exhibit for the university as a means of affecting change and creating interest in the charity's mandate.

- develop and describe in writing their own personal philosophy of giving.

Course Scope and Sequence:

There will be four units. Each unit will take two weeks to deliver (total of 4 classes @ 1hr, 50

mins. per class):

- *Week 1 & 2*: Introduction to folktales; Types of folktales; Morals; Introduction to

  Philanthropy; What does it mean to give?

- *Week 3 & 4*: Folktales and Philanthropy – How are they related; Common

  themes/motifs

- *Week 5 & 6:* "Be the Change You Want to See in the World)

- *Week 7 & 8:* Responsibility and Generosity of Spirit – Community Service

  Project

Scope and Sequence for Four Units

	Theme	Activities	Reading Skills	Writing Skills	Products
Week 1-2	- Types of Folktales - Morals - What is Philanthropy?	- read examples of 4 types of folktales - collect, and record in writing, a folktale from own culture - discuss philanthropy, what does it entail, give examples, distinguish different types of giving	- comprehension: accurately retell a folktale after reading it - identify opposites in folktales: greed/generosity; good/evil, wise/foolish; - distinguish between 4 types of folktales through identifying distinguishing elements when reading - explore moral concepts	- sequencing & cohesion - subject verb agreements - sentence structure - topic sentences & supporting details - paragraph structure	- students will write a four paragraph essay defining what a folktale is, outlining the four types and how they are different, defining philanthropy with examples, and drawing a personal conclusion of how folktales and philanthropy may be connected
Week 3-4	Folktales & Philanthropy	- read, analyze, compare and contrast several different folktales from different cultures. - discuss sacrifice and selflessness - create a list of giving motivators	- use context clues - identify common themes - develop critical thinking skills - make inferences - identify different types of giving (time, talent, money) and what motivated each character	- develop a questionnaire for an interview they will conduct - develop an outline to use for a case study report they will write	- interview family members regarding types and motivations for giving in their lives. - write and present a 5 paragraph case study based on a guideline developed in class
Week 5-6	"Be the Change".. you want to see in the world	- identify and discuss different human characteristics evident in assigned folktales - develop an "Acts of Kindness" chart for classroom for students to record their own daily experiences	- use skimming and scanning speed reading techniques - timed reading exercises - comprehension & critical thinking: what motivates a person to give, how can the common good be enhanced by that act	- write an identity profile of themselves using a guideline - - write a 'bio-poem' using structure/steps given in class - create an expression wall and post poems and other meaningful quotes written or researched by students	- journal reflection of what it feels like (or how it would feel) to be generous of spirit. – Give concrete examples - How does it relate to your personal character?
Week 7-8	Responsibility & Generosity of spirit	- differentiate between needs & wants; benefits to giver and receiver - identity examples of responsible action & generosity folktales & in their own community	- review and reinforce all reading skills developed so far - read examples of and de-construct examples of both descriptive and persuasive letters	- journal exercises expressing personal thinking about volunteering, selflessness, helpfulness, generosity; etc - write a descriptive or persuasive letter using cohesive devices	- students will develop a community service project by identifying a need and developing promotional materials to create awareness (pamphlets, posters, letter for support; etc.)

Course Assessment:

    A.   <u>Assessing Student's Needs</u>

        On day one of classes, students will complete an in-depth needs assessment (Appendix A) that is made up of 8 sections: personal contact information, previous exposure to English courses, interests/hobbies, current use of English, what they already know how to do in academic writing, how they feel about English in general, how they prefer to learn, and a writing sample.

        This assessment will serve as an information tool and a diagnostic tool. I have used a variation of this with other classes at this SILC level and lower levels, and it has worked very well. It generally takes between 30-45 minutes to complete, depending on the student's proficiency.

        On day two, students will be given a KWL chart to complete (Appendix B). On a KWL chart, students fill out distinct sections listing what they already *K*NOW, what they *W*ANT to learn, and what they have *L*EARNED. This tool will focus directly on the content of the course: Folktales and Philanthropy. Students will write in only two of the three sections at this point (K and W). With little prompting from me, and with just a course syllabus to guide them, they will describe what they already know about folktales and philanthropy, and what they want to know about folktales and philanthropy. The third section will be completed at the end of the course. Both assessment tools will be collected at the end of each respective class. I will explain to students that this information will help me to structure the course more to their needs.

    B.   <u>Assessing Student's Learning</u>

        Informal assessment will occur during each lesson in the form of teacher observation of students' participation during discussions and classroom pair/group tasks. Students that may be

reluctant to participate will be encouraged to, and at times required to do so in other ways. For example, if a student does not feel comfortable contributing to most discussions in class, she will be required to write reflections of the topics discussed.

After lesson 4 (the end of Unit 1), as well at the end of lesson 8 (the end of Unit 2), students will be asked to complete two sides of an index card stating what is helping their learning thus far in the course and what is hindering their learning. I am choosing to do this twice so as to have a clearer understanding of how the students feel about what they are learning early in the course and about the mid-way point.

Each writing task within the units will be graded. The criteria will be decided on through collaboration with the students. Then, I will develop a grading rubric based on these criteria.

For the final project (Unit 4), the students will be given clear project guidelines as well as a teacher-developed rubric so that they will have a clear understanding of what is required of them for the project. This rubric will assess students' work in the following areas: depth of research; knowledge of the organization; content accuracy, readability and grammar; use of persuasive language, pictures, quotations; etc; and a plan for action. (Appendix C). Students will first pair up and evaluate each other's projects using the rubric. Then I will do my evaluation for each student.

C.   Assessing the Effectiveness of the Course

During the last class, students will complete the third section of the KWL charts that they partially filled in on Day Two.

Next, students will be split into small groups of 3-4 students and asked to discuss the following three topic areas using these questions as conversation starters:

1. *Instruction:* How do you feel about the way the teacher taught the course? Did she allow for individual expression – spoken, written, visual; etc?   How did she allow for individual expression?

2. *Content:* How do you feel about the course content? Did you enjoy the materials (folktales)? Did you like the tasks, activities and projects? Do you feel that there was enough time given to fully explore learning concepts? What was your favorite folktale? Why? What was your least favorite folktale? Why?

3. *Learning:* What did you learn in this course? Was it valuable? Did your English skills improve? How will you apply some of the concepts discussed in your private life?

Once students have discussed these questions and have made individual notes, they will then create a mind-map that has three main circles: Instruction / Content / Learning. (Appendix D) I will explain to the students that the information from the KWL chart and the mind map will help me to make the course better for future students, so their input is very valuable to me.

UNIT PLAN

In this section, I will outline and describe one Unit of the course. I have chosen Unit #3: "Be the Change You Want to See in the World" to demonstrate through examples how folktales may be utilized as a bridge to a community service project. I have not included plans for developing the community service project as I feel that each teacher would have their own preferences and constraints to work with within their teaching context. Instead, my goal is to show how folktales may be used as a *bridge to* community service task-based projects. The type of project that develops out of the unit is the teacher's choice. As will be evident from within the activities, a project may take several different directions depending on the time and limitations of the teaching context.

Unit Overview: <u>Unit #3: "Be the Change You Want to See in the World"</u>

Building from two previous units in this course, students will further develop reading and writing skills by using folktales. Different human characteristics such as generosity, greed, kindness, respect, selfishness, and selflessness will be examined. Correlations will be made between these characteristics and philanthropy. Students will explore their own identity by writing an identity profile (Appendix E). Students will list various characteristics that they believe define them in the areas of physical, familial, and social. They will also construct a bio-poem (Appendix F) in such a way that the words they choose for each question will reflect their individual uniqueness. These poems will then be posted in class. Lastly, students will also write in-depth journal reflections outlining their reactions to the folktales and the activities.

Due to the length of each folktale, and the estimated time it will take each student to read the selection, the folktales will be assigned for home reading before each class lesson. Students can be given guiding questions or a story map graphic organizer (Appendix G) for each folktale to help focus their reading. In addition, students must underline unknown vocabulary, use

context clues to guess meaning, look each word up in dictionary, write a definition for the word, and write the word in a sentence as a pre-lesson activity.

The lessons have been designed using the Present–Practice-Produce (PPP) format. PPP is a logical choice for this particular content because students will be presented with a tale (an example), will practice/explore the concepts it contains (through discussions, reflections and class activities) and will produce a philanthropic act (by extracting meaning and using inference). I have also tried to incorporate reflective exercises at the end of each lesson. I have chosen PPP over the usual Pre-During-Post format for reading lessons because the students will do the readings at home while class activities will focus more on the concepts contained within the folktales and the resulting activities or projects that arise from each tale.

Unit Objectives: Students will be able to

- identify (name) human character traits contained within folktales used in this unit
- express understanding of giving motivators and generate a list discussing in detail
- discover 'giving motivators' by contributing daily to the Random Acts of Kindness Charts they develop for the classroom
- express opinions (verbally and written) about common universal truths and human characteristics
- create a collective definition for 'generosity of spirit' and "the common good'
- analyze and explain how a character's actions exemplify 'generosity of spirit'
- effectively use context clues to understand the meaning of new words encountered in the folktales of this unit
- increase vocabulary by defining and using new words found within folktales

- ▫   identify attributes and factors that shape personal identity

- ▫   compare and discuss benefits of diverse interests and talents that contribute to community identity

- ▫   enhance and further develop creative writing skills by completing an Identity Profile and a Bio-Poem

- ▫   express how they feel, or would feel, about their own giving practices through a focused journal reflection exercises

Unit Lesson Plans

In this section, I have included detailed lesson plans for the unit. The list of supplementary materials needed for the lessons are included in the Appendix Section of this paper as follows:

Appendix E: Identity Profile

Appendix F: Bio Poem

Appendix G: Story Map Organizer

Appendix H: "The Drum"

Appendix I: "The Trouble with Helping Out"

Appendix J: "A Couple of Misers"

Appendix K: "The Star Thrower"

Lesson #1

Time	Lesson Stage	Procedure/Steps	Beliefs underlying your choices	S-T inter-action	Materials and Aids
8:30	Lead-in	- Introduce quote of the week & discuss: *"Make a career of humanity...and you will make a greater person of yourself, a greater nation of your country, and a finer world to live in." Martin Luther King Jr.* - T also explains that today Ss will create "Random Act of Kindness Charts' for classroom	Ss will define 'humanity' and discuss how it relates to philanthropy. Ss will provide examples of things they could do that would make their lives, community and world a better place.	T-S S-S S-T	Quote typed on bright paper to post in classroom. WB and markers
8:45	Present and Practice	- In small groups, Ss discuss and summarize verbally "The Drum", an Indian folktale - Class discussion of what happened in the story as well as unknown vocabulary. - T solicits descriptive words about main character and writes on board e.g. kind, caring, helpful	- This folktale illustrates selflessness and how a person can be rewarded for their kindness to others - vocabulary development using specific content	S S-S S-T-S	Folktale: "The Drum" Student Dictionary Story Map Organizer
9:50	Produce	- In small groups (3-5 Ss), Ss will create a Random Act of Kindness Chart for their group. Each S will record at least one random act of kindness they have performed within the last few weeks. Ss will continue to contribute to chart daily.	- S will become more aware of their own level of generosity through keeping a daily record of kindness acts		colored & white paper markers
10:10-10:20	Reflection (complete for HW if time does not permit)	- Ss will reflect upon the following questions in their journals in paragraph form: Describe in detail a random act of kindness you performed. How did it make you feel? Did you have to sacrifice anything in order to give? How did that make you feel? Would you do it again? Why or why not?	- S will express their personal feelings about giving. -T will use examples sentences from journals to compile an error correction worksheet for a later class	S-T	S journals

Lesson #2

Time	Lesson Stage	Procedure/Steps	Beliefs underlying your choices	S-T inter-action	Materials and Aids
8:30	Lead-in	- Revisit definition of Philanthropy from Unit 1 - Discuss "the common good"? What does it mean? Why does it matter? What are some examples from your community?	- Reactivate schema from previous lessons so Ss can identify, define and give examples of the 'common good' concept	T-S S-S	WB & markers
8:45	Present and Practice	- In small groups, Ss discuss and summarize verbally "The Trouble with Helping Out"- African American folktale - Class discussion of what happened in the story as well as unknown vocabulary. - Discuss and distinguish between selfishness and selflessness by referring to aspects of the folktale. What kinds of expectations do we have when we show kindness or give assistance?	- Folktale deals directly with expectations associated with giving thereby providing good input for a rich discussion - Ss will make inferences from the story to real-life situations. What does it mean to sacrifice? How far would you go in order to give?	S S-T-S	"The Trouble with Helping Out" Student Dictionary Story Map Organizer
9:50	Produce	- Brainstorming session using mind map to describe a situation in which you think you should try to help others instead of doing what you want for yourself e.g. reasons, beliefs, motivations; etc Individual writing exercise: Sometimes people disagree about what is the best thing for everyone. Explain a situation in which you think you should do something for yourself instead of trying to help others. Describe some things your family and/or community does to help your community. - As a class, write a definition for 'the common good'. Post in classroom.	- Self-exploration of concepts being addressed in the lesson -critical thinking skill development - building ideas for individual writing task - group collaboration/consensus	S	Ss writing notebooks or paper
10:10-10:20	Reflection (complete for HW if time does not permit)	-In Journals, Ss will describe one concrete thing they could do, for who, and why (explaining steps involved) for the common good	-prep for community project in next (last) unit	S	Ss journals

Lesson #3

Time	Lesson Stage	Procedure/Steps	Beliefs underlying your choices	S-T inter-action	Materials and Aids
8:30	Lead-in	-Introduce & discuss quote of the week: *"The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others."* — Mahatma Gandhi -T passes out an index card to each S and asks them to write one characteristic of their personality that is unknown to their classmates. Collect, read each one and have the class guess which S wrote which card.	-Ss will begin a self-discovery journey of how they can be of service to others -Ss will identify ways they are unique as well as similar	T-S S-T T-S	Quote on colorful paper index cards
8:45	Present and Practice	-In small groups, Ss discuss and summarize verbally "A Couple of Misers" – a folktale from India. - Class discussion of what happened in the story as well as unknown vocabulary. - Discuss community responsibility – helping others who do not have as much as you. Have students share examples from their reflection in last lesson	-folktale illustrates how expectations and giving are sometimes related - re-activate schema on 'common good' lesson from last week	S S-T-S	"A Couple of Misers" Student Dictionary Story Map Organizer
9:50	Produce	- Ss complete Identity Profiles and share Identity wheels with each other -Class Discussion: why is it important for members of a community to have diverse talents, interests, and skills? How can these be used collectively for the common good? - Ss write Bio-Poem	-self-discovery of identity traits and building personal view of themselves as a philanthropist	S S-T-S S	Identity Profile Bio-Poem guidelines & directions
10:10-10:20	Reflection (complete for HW if time does not permit)	Referring to bio poems and identity profiles, Ss choose a metaphor that illustrates how they feel about giving and their role as a member of their community. They must write a detailed explanation of their choice. These will be posted in classroom alongside bio-poems	- applying creative writing process using abstract themes/images relating to their personal identity	S	colored pencils, paper, craft supplies

Lesson #4:

Time	Lesson Stage	Procedure/Steps	Beliefs underlying your choices	S-T inter-action	Materials and Aids
8:30	Lead-in	-Ss discuss ways in which one person can make a difference.	-review learning from previous lesson	T-S-S	
8:45	Present and Practice	-T distributes "Star Thrower" and Ss read silently -Ss write 2-3 sentence summary after timed reading	-timed reading practice	S	"Star Thrower"
9:50	Produce	-In small groups Ss discuss the reasons people take action for the common good; how they feel about their own ability to make a difference; brainstorm different ways they can share time, talent or treasure to take action for common good. -T circulates copies of news articles from local papers that may help generate ideas for causes -Ss each picks 'a cause' that they can help and comes up with at least 2 things they can do. -Ss write a 3 paragraph essay outlining the following: 1. description: of the problem or area of need 2. solution(s): how can they help and what do they would to do to make it happen 3. resolution: what needs to be done long-term. How do they resolve to 'take action'.	-Ss will revisit giving motivators as discussed in previous Unit - Ss begin to think about and consider a local organization or cause for Final Course product -practice skimming and scanning techniques	S-S S	local news-paper articles Ss writing notebooks or paper
10:10-10:20	Reflection (complete for HW if time does not permit)	-Ss will reflect in their journals how today's activity empowered or disempowered them	Ss will build concrete ways/steps they can demonstrate their generosity of spirit in their community	S	Student journals

CONCLUSION

Folktales are widely used by language teachers all around the world to help students improve reading, writing, listening and speaking skills. There are many advantages of using folktales for language learning. They contain a predictable structure that assists students in comprehending the details of the story. They contain a lot of cultural connections that allow a student to easily compare and contrast elements of the tale with their own culture, especially on issues dealing with beliefs, moral ethics, practices and traditions. Folktales contain common universal themes dealing with humanity and how we relate to each other. They are also very useful for helping students develop academic skills because the text requires less time to decode. As a result, students can concentrate on improving their ability to compare and contrast; to evaluate ideas, organize them and understand how they relate to each other; to compile facts and write summaries; and to infer or draw conclusions from what has been read.

Folktales may also be used as a means or pathway to navigate through taboo waters. For example in Saudi Arabia, as with many other teaching contexts, there are certain cultural topics that are not openly discussed. Through using a folktale, these topics may be explored and talked about indirectly from a safe distance. Many times, this empowers students by giving them the means to voice their opinions one step removed from their own lives. That's powerful! Folktales can be utilized in a similar way as a pathway or bridge to community service. Each folktale contains some sort of conflict or problem. If a teacher can develop the ability to view a folktale with a philanthropic filter, then it is possible to extract the building foundation for a project that will benefit someone or some organization in the student's community. That kind of potential exists within the folktale if the teacher wants to use it.

In conclusion, I present this option to educators who seek creative ways to teach language as well as ways to present students with experiences that are not only memorable, but also make

a difference in their lives and the lives of people in their community. I believe that through

developing and implementing community service projects, students will improve all four skills

while creating meaning and purpose in their own lives. It is through taking a leap from 'self' to

'other' that we as humans begin to develop a new concept of self. By engaging students in

socially responsible tasks and projects, they become more aware of service to others. In

addition to improving their English skills, this can have a profound affect on their lives.

APPENDIX

The following is a list of supplementary materials that have been referred to within this paper. I

have included the page number for the section of this paper where the item is first referenced:

Appendix A:　　　Needs Assessment (referenced on p. 34)

Appendix B.　　　KWL Chart (referenced on p. 34)

Appendix C.　　　PR Material Development Project Rubric (referenced on p. 35)

Appendix D.　　　Mind Map (referenced on p. 36)

Appendix E:　　　Identity Profile (referenced on p. 37)

Appendix F:　　　Bio Poem (referenced on p. 37)

Appendix G:　　　Story Map Organizer (referenced on p. 37)

Appendix H:　　　"The Drum" (referenced on p. 40)

Appendix I:　　　"The Trouble with Helping Out" (referenced on p. 41)

Appendix J:　　　"A Couple of Misers" (referenced on p. 42)

Appendix K:　　　"The Star Thrower" (referenced on p. 43)

Appendix A: Needs Assessment

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Full name: _____ Student Number:_____

Nationality: _____ Main Language:_____

Date of Birth: _____ Other Language(s) _____

Email Address:_____ Cell Phone: _____

SCHOOL DETAILS

Name of a University that you attended before YU: _____

Years attended: _____   Major:_____

Main Language of Study: _____

INTERESTS AND HOBBIES

1. What subjects/topics do you want to read/write about in this class?

   _____
   _____
   _____ _____

2. What subjects/topics do you NOT want to read/write about in this class?

   _____
   _____
   _____ _____

3. When you are not at school, what do you enjoy doing? What are your interests?
   (Write at least 4 things!) a._____ b. _____

   c. _____   d. _____ _____

4. Do you like to travel?

   _____

   If yes, where have you traveled? Where do you want to travel?

   _____
   _____ _____

CURRENT USE OF ENGLISH

1. Where do you use English?

   _____ _____

   Is this mainly spoken, written or both?

   _____ _____

2. How many hours a week do you usually use English outside the classroom?

   _____ _____

3. Do you use English mainly with native speakers (example, Americans), non-native speakers or both? (include details)_____

4. Please give details of extended visits/stays in English-speaking countries: _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

ACADEMIC ENGLISH

1. Have you taken any English classes at Al Yamamah before? YES   or   NO   (circle one)

   IF YES, What classes? When?

   _____

   IF NO, what was the last English class you took? Where? When?

   _____

2. What is your experience in English academic writing and reading? (please check "√")

	I understand this and I can do it	I know what this is, and maybe I can do it	I know what this is but I can't do it	I don't know what this is
thesis statement				
essay outline				
5 paragraph essay				
summary				
paraphrase				

peer editing				
self editing				
skimming a reading (for the main point)				
scanning a reading (for specific information)				
reading context clues				
creating an interview questionnaire				
character sketch (written)				
persuasive writing				

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT ENGLISH?

Answer the following questions by choosing a number between 1 and 4 (1 = great, 4= not very good)

1. In English, what are your strengths?

    a. Listening   1   2   3   4
    b. Speaking   1   2   3   4
    c. Reading   (academic)   1   2   3   4
    d. Reading   (for enjoyment)   1   2   3   4
    e. Writing   (academic)   1   2   3   4
    f. Writing   (informal)   1   2   3   4
    g. Grammar   1   2   3   4
    h. Pronunciation   1   2   3   4
    i. Vocabulary   1   2   3   4

2. What is most important to you in learning English?

    a. Listening   1   2   3   4
    b. Speaking   1   2   3   4
    c. Reading   (academic)   1   2   3   4
    d. Reading   (for enjoyment)   1   2   3   4
    e. Writing   (academic)   1   2   3   4
    f. Writing   (informal)   1   2   3   4
    g. Grammar   1   2   3   4
    h. Pronunciation   1   2   3   4
    i. Vocabulary   1   2   3   4

3. How do you feel about learning English? _____

_____

_____

4. What do you want to do in this English class? _____

_____

_____

5. Do you want to improve your English for school, for work or for personal reasons?

_____

_____

_____

HOW DO YOU LIKE TO LEARN?

Answer the following questions by choosing a number between 1 and 4 (1 = like it a lot, 4= dislike it a lot)

1. In class, do you like learning:

a. Individually?	1	2	3	4
b. In pairs?	1	2	3	4
c. In small groups?	1	2	3	4
d. In one large group?	1	2	3	4

2. Do you like learning:

a. By memorization?	1	2	3	4	_____
b. By problem solving?	1	2	3	4	_____
c. By getting information for yourself?	1	2	3	4	_____
d. By listening?	1	2	3	4	_____
e. By reading?	1	2	3	4	_____
f. By copying off the board?	1	2	3	4	_____
g. By listening and taking notes?	1	2	3	4	_____
h. By reading and making notes?	1	2	3	4	_____
i. By repeating what you hear?	1	2	3	4	_____

put an "x" beside your 3 favourite ways to learn

3. Do you like to learn

a. From radio?	1	2	3	4	_____
b. From TV/video/movies?	1	2	3	4	_____

4. <u>When you speak</u>, how would you like to be corrected? (circle as many as you wish)

        a. In front of everyone?   c. Later, in private?
            or…

        b. Later, at the end of the activity?
            or…

5. <u>When you write</u>, how have you been corrected in the past?

I have corrected my own work (writing drafts)	yes	no	_____
A partner or classmate has corrected my work	yes	no	_____
My teacher has corrected my work (drafts)	yes	no	_____

** put an "x" beside your favourite method**

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS – About Anything!

_____

_____

WRITING ACTIVITY

Please write at least 10 sentences or more about this topic. Remember to organize your answer in paragraphs!

What is your favourite story? It can be from a book, a T.V. show or movie? What is it about? Why is it your favourite? What can you tell me about the characters? How would you describe them? e.g. mean, kind, funny; etc. Use as many descriptive words as possible to describe the characters in your favourite story.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Created collaboratively with Katrina Baran (MA in TESOL 2012). Taken and adapted from :

Richards, Jack c. (1990) Language Teaching Matrix. Cambridge University Press
Jordan, R.R. (1997) English for Academic Purposes. A Guide and Resource Book for Teachers. Cambridge University Press
Hutchinson, Tom and Alan Waters. (1987) English for Specific Purposes. Cambridge University Press

Appendix B: KWL Chart

Name: _____   *Student ID:* _____

KWL Chart

What I **KNOW** already	What I **WOULD** like to know	What I have **LEARNED**
About folktales: About philanthropy:	About folktales: About philanthropy:	About folktales: About philanthropy:

Appendix C: PR Material Development Project Rubric

© Anne Michelle Myrick, B. Ed, MA in TESOL (SIT 2012)

| CATEGORY	4	3	2	1	S	T
Purpose of Organization	Clearly and completely tells purpose of the organization using key words	Tells purpose of the organization, using key words, but is somewhat vague or incomplete	Tells purpose, but does not use key words	Tells purpose of the organization, does not use key words, and is somewhat vague or incomplete		
Ways Organization helps the community	Clearly and completely explains ways the organization helps the community using key words	Explains ways the organization helps the community using key words, but is somewhat vague or incomplete	Explains ways the organization helps the community, but does not use key words	Explains ways the organization helps the community, but does not use key words, and is somewhat vague or incomplete		
Getting involved	Clearly and completely explains how to get involved in the organization using key words	Explains how to get involved in the organization using key words, but is somewhat vague or incomplete	Explains how to get involved in the organization using key words, but does not use key words	Explains how to get involved in the organization using key words, but does not use key words, and is somewhat vague or incomplete		
What the world would be like	Clearly and completely provides examples, using key words, of what the world would be like without the organization	Provides examples, using key words, of what the world would be like without the organization, but is somewhat vague or incomplete	Provides examples of what the world would be like without the organization but does not use key words	Provides examples of what the world would be like without the organization but does not use key words, and is somewhat vague or incomplete		
Donations	Clearly gives examples of how people can donate to the organization using key words	Clearly gives examples of how people can donate to the organization using key words	Gives examples of how people can donate to the organization using key words, but does not use key words	Gives examples of how people can donate to the organization using key words, but does not use key words, and is somewhat vague or incomplete		
Quotations, pictures and impacting info	Includes several quotes, pictures and impacting information using persuasive language	Includes some quotes, pictures and impacting information using persuasive language	Includes some quotes, pictures, but does not contain impacting information or persuasive language	Has no quotes, few pictures or pieces of impacting information		
Readability	All presentation materials are clearly readable without spelling errors. Font is easily seen both close up and from a distance.	Majority of presentation materials are clearly readable containing only a few spelling errors. Font is easily seen both close up and from a distance.	Most of presentation materials are clearly readable containing only a few spelling errors. Font is easily seen both close up and from a distance.	Presentation materials are not clearly readable and/ or contain numerous spelling errors.		
Content - Accuracy	At least 5 accurate facts are displayed on the PR material.	4 accurate facts are displayed on the PR material.	3 accurate facts are displayed on the PR material.	Less than 3 accurate facts are displayed on the PR material.		
Attractiveness	The PR material is exceptionally attractive in terms of design, layout, and neatness.	The PR material is attractive in terms of design, layout and neatness.	The PR material is acceptably attractive though it may be a bit messy.	The PR material is distractingly messy or very poorly designed. It is not attractive.		
Grammar	There are no grammatical mistakes on any of the PR material.	There are several grammatical mistakes on the PR material.	There are many grammatical mistakes on PR material.	There are a lot of grammatical mistakes on PR material.		
Persuasion	Includes 3 or more pieces of evidence (facts, statistics, examples, real-life experiences) that support the position statement.	Includes 3 or more pieces of evidence (facts, statistics, examples, real-life experiences) that support the position statement.	Includes 2 pieces of evidence (facts, statistics, examples, real-life experiences) that support the position statement.	Includes 1 or fewer pieces of evidence (facts, statistics, examples, real-life experiences).		
Action Plan	Provides a doable action plan that would benefit the organization.	Provides an action plan that will need to be somewhat revised, but would benefit the needs of the organization.	Provides an action plan that would need to be largely revised, and has little to do with the needs of the organization.	The action plan is neither doable nor consistent with the needs of the organization.		

Appendix D: **Mind Map**

Name: _____   *Student ID:* _____

Mind Map

Directions: Think about the three areas you just discussed in your group. Refer to the notes you took during that discussion. Finish the mind map by writing meaningful words that describe how you feel about each area. Feel free to decorate however you wish. ☺

Instruction

Content

Learning
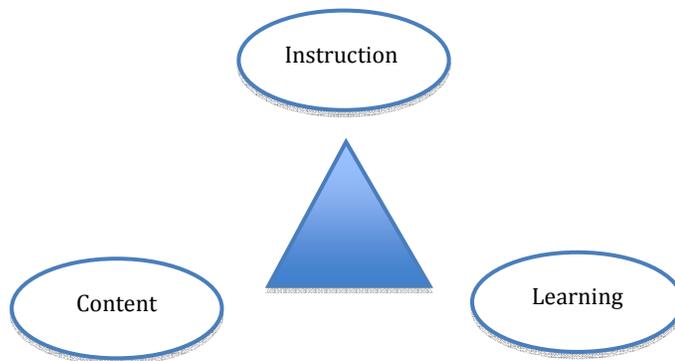
Appendix E: Identity Chart

Building Identity – Who are you? How do you identify yourself?

As we grow, we learn that we are unique and have likes, talents and skills that make us different from others. However, another important thing to remember is that we also have a lot in common with other people. It is these things that we build community around.

A community is a group of people with shared interests. A community can also be a place where people with shared interests gather or come together. Communities are important because they offer us support when we need it.

PERSONAL IDENTITY Components

Fill out the chart below. If there are some things you don't know, you can leave it blank.

Physical Identity:
Skin color: _____
Facial characteristics: _____
Height: _____
Age: _____
Hair color: _____
Hair style: _____

Family Identity
Date and place of birth: _____
Siblings: _____
Birth order: _____
Parents/Guardians: _____
Extended family: _____
Family history: _____
Family traditions: _____

Social Identity
Ethnic group: _____
Language: _____
Nationality: _____
Friends: _____
Community: _____
Neighbourhood: _____
Teams: _____
Hobbies/Interests: _____
Religious group: _____

Idea retrieved from http://www2.facinghistory.org/Campus/rm.nsf/sc/IDCharts

Identity Wheel

From the previous exercise, choose **eight identity components** that are most important to you. Write them in the eight spaces of the identity wheel. Then, compare your wheel with another classmate.

Idea taken   **from**
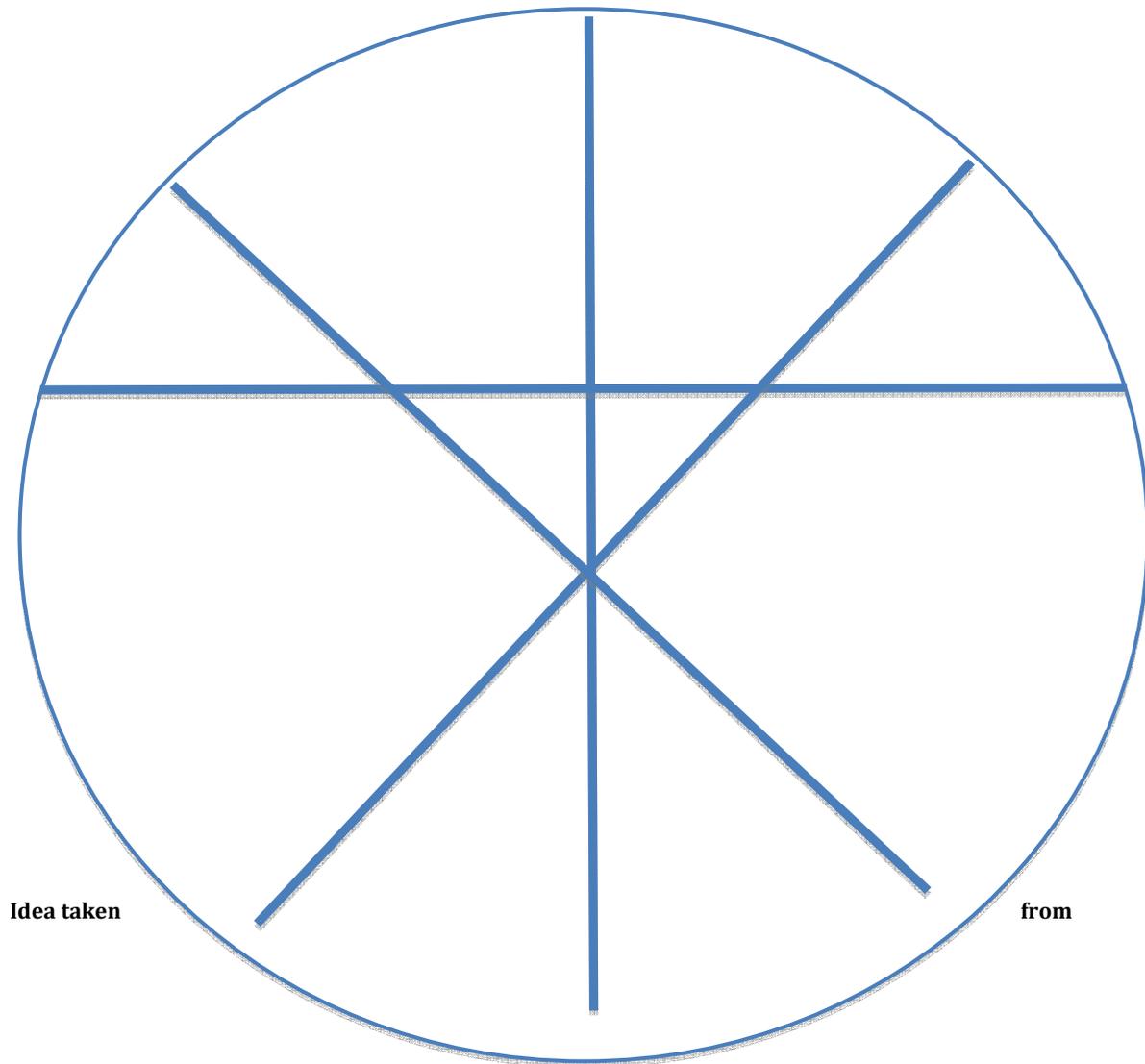
Appendix F: Bio-Poem

Write a BIO-POEM

Think about the past few years in your life, or think about your entire life. Come up with some ideas for your draft bio poem. When you have a bio poem that represents you, edit and finalize it so that you have something written for every line. Try to keep each to one line only.

Follow the steps below. Each step should be one line in the poem.

[line 1] Write your first name

[line 2] List three or four adjectives that describe you

[line 3] Write some important relationships you have in your life (e.g., daughter of . . . , friend of . . .)

[line 4] List two or three things, people, or ideas that you love

[line 5] List three feelings you have experienced

[line 6] List three fears you have experienced

[line 7] Write down some of your accomplishments (e.g., who won . . . who performed . . . . who learned . . .)

[line 8] Write two or three things you want to see happen or want to experience

[line 9] List the name of your town

[line 10] Write your last name

Taken and adapted from
http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/lesson_images/lesson398/biopoem.pdf

Appendix G: Story Map Organizer

Use this organizer to help you define the different elements of the folktale.

Setting:

Where:
Major:
When:
Minor:

Characters:
Problem(s):

Events:

Event 1	Event 2	Event 3

Outcome/Resolution

Appendix H: "The Drum"

A Drum: An Indian Folk Tale

The boy said, "I have a nice piece of wood and you can start your fire with it."

A poor woman had only one son. She worked hard cleaning houses and grinding grain for the well-to-do families in town. They gave her some grain in return and she lived on it. But she could never afford to buy nice clothes or toys for her son. Once, when she was going to the market with some grain to sell, she asked her son, "What can I get you from the market?" He promptly replied, "A drum! Mother, get me a drum." The mother knew she would never have enough money to buy a drum for her son. She went to the market, sold the grain, and bought some gram flour and some salt. She felt sad that she was coming home empty-handed. So when she saw a nice piece of wood on the road, she picked it up and brought it home to her son. The son didn't know what to do with it. Yet he carried it with him when he went out to play.

An old woman was lighting her woodstove with some cow-dung patties. The fire was not catching and there was smoke all around and it made the old woman's eyes water. The boy stopped and asked why she was crying. She said that she couldn't light her fire and cook. The boy said, "I have a nice piece of wood and you can start your fire with it." The old woman was very pleased, lit the fire, made some bread, and gave a piece to the boy.

He took the bread and walked on till he came upon a potter's wife. Her child was crying and flailing his arms. The boy stopped and asked her why the child was crying. The potter's wife said the child was hungry and she had nothing in the house to give him. The boy gave the bread in his hand to the hungry child, who ate it eagerly and stopped crying. The potter's wife was grateful to the boy and gave him a pot.

When he walked on, he came to the river, where he saw a washerman and his wife quarreling. The boy stopped and asked the man why he was scolding and beating his wife. The washerman said, "This woman broke the only pot we had. Now I've nothing to boil my clothes in before I wash them." The boy said, "Here, don't quarrel, take this pot and use it." The washerman was very happy to get a large pot. He gave the boy a coat in return.

The boy walked on. He soon came to a bridge, where he saw a man shivering in the cold without so much as a shirt on him. He asked the man what had happened to his shirt, and the man said, "I was coming to the city on this horse. Robbers attacked me and took everything, even my shirt." The boy said, "Don't worry. You can have this coat." The man took the coat and said, "You're very kind, and I want to give you this horse."

The boy took the horse, and very soon he ran into a wedding party with the musicians, the bridegroom, and his family, but all of them were sitting under a tree with long faces. The boy stopped and asked why they looked so depressed. The bridegroom's father said, "We're all set

to go in a wedding procession. But we need a horse for the bridegroom. The man who was supposed to bring it hasn't arrived. The bridegroom can't arrive on foot. It's getting late, and we'll miss the auspicious hour for the wedding." So the boy offered them his horse, and they were delighted. When the bridegroom asked him what he could do in return, the boy said, "You can give me something: that drum your musician is carrying." The bridegroom had no trouble persuading the drummer to give the drum to the boy. The drummer knew he could easily buy another with the money he was going to get.

The boy now rushed home to his mother, beating his new drum, and told her how he got it, beginning with a piece of wood from the roadside.

Story reproduced from: ⬜**www.darsie.net/talesofwonder/**

Folktales from India: A Selection of Oral Tales from Twenty-two Languages, selected and edited by A. K. Ramanujan. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1991), 226-27.

Appendix I: "The Trouble With Helping Out"

The Trouble With Helping Out - African American (Surinam)

One time, one time there was a big fire in the wood. All the trees were in flames, and nearly all the animals were burned to death. To get away from the heat, Snake slithered into a deep hole. The fire went on for a long time, but was at last put out by a heavy rain. When the danger was over, Snake tried to climb out of the hole, but try as he would, he could not get up the sides. He cried out to everyone who passed by to help him; but nobody dared to help because they were scared of getting bitten by him. To each he promised not to bite, of course, but no one would take the chance.

At last, a hunter came along and took pity on Snake and pulled him out. But as soon as Snake was free, he turned on Hunter and was about to bite him. "You can't bite me after I pulled you out of the hole," said Hunter. "And why shouldn't I?" asked Snake. "Because," explained Hunter, "you shouldn't harm the one who has been kind to you." "But how am I sure that everybody acts this way?" said Snake. "All right," said Hunter, "let's put the case before a competent judge!" Snake agreed. So together they set out for the city.

On the way they met Horse. Hunter and Snake told their story again, and asked if anyone should return evil for good? Horse neighed, saying that he was usually whipped for his good services to man. Then they saw Donkey and asked him the same question. Donkey hee-hawed, saying that was beaten with a stick for his good services to man. Then they met Cow and told her the story and asked her if it was right for Snake to act this way. Cow bellowed that she expected to be slaughtered for her good services to man. Snake then claimed that he had won the case and lifted his head to strike Hunter. But Hunter said, "I don't agree yet; let's put the case before Anansi, who is very wise!" Snake agreed, and so they continued on their way.

Well, they came to the city where Anansi dwelled and it so happened that they found him at home. They told him al that had happened, and what Horse, Donkey, and Cow had said, and then asked Anansi to settle the dispute fairly. Anansi looked thoughtful, and shaking his head, said, "My friends, I cannot say who is right until I have seen with my own eyes how everything happened. Let us go back to the exact spot."

Well, then, all three walked back to the hole in the wood out of which Hunter had helped Snake, and Anansi asked them to act out everything just exactly as it had happened. So Snake slid down into the hole and began calling for assistance. Hunter pretended to be passing and, turning to the hole, was about to help Snake out again when Anansi stopped him, saying, "Wait, I will settle the dispute now. Hunter must not help Snake this time. Snake should try to get out without any assistance, so that he will appreciate a kind act." Snake had to stay in the hole, and he was hungry the whole time. At last, after many tries he just managed to get out. But experience had been a good master, and Snake had learned his lesson well.

Well, some time later, Hunter was caught poaching in the king's woods and was thrown into prison. Snake heard of it and made up his mind to help Hunter, so he hastened to

the king's palace. Unobserved, he approached the king. When he got a good chance, he suddenly bit the king, and succeeded in making his escape before any one could catch him.

Then he made his way to the prison in which Hunter was confined and found a way to enter it. He calmed Hunter's fears and said, "A while ago, you did me a favor, and now by experience I have learned to appreciate it. I come to aid you. Listen! I have just bitten the king and he is very sick and will die from the poison. I bring you the only cure for my bite. It is known to me alone. Send word to the king that you can cure him. But that you won't do it unless he promises to give you his only daughter in marriage." So saying, Snake gave Hunter the cure, using three different kinds of leaves, and then he left.

Hunter did as Snake told. He sent word saying that he could cure the king, and asked as his reward his release from prison and the king's daughter in marriage. The king was afraid that he was dying and so he consented.

The king was quickly cured to health, and Hunter married the princess, and I know because I [was] at the wedding.

The Trouble With Helping Out." Abrahams, Roger. African-American Folktales: Stories from Black Traditions in the New World. New York: Pantheon Books, ©1999. pp. 173-74.

Appendix J: "A Couple of Misers"

A Couple of Misers – India

A miserly man married a miserly woman and they had a little son. They were such misers that they wouldn't eat a betel nut; they would carefully suck on one and wipe it and put it away. They ate meals only because they needed to eat to keep alive. Still they complained and asked God why he had to make a stomach that they had to fill every day so many times.

They had a secret grain pit in the gods' room, and their life's ambition was to fill it with money by the time their little son grew up. The wife complained about the size of the cucumbers in their backyard: if only they could have been twice the size, the family could have dined on them for two more days. When her husband asked her to wear the one or two pieces of jewelry she had received at her wedding, she would say, "Are you crazy? If I wear them, I'll wear them out. Who's the loser then? You and me!" The husband would beam at his wife's wisdom.

For years, no guest had ever entered their house for a drink of water or a morsel of food. One rainy season, the couple had shut all the doors when suddenly they heard someone banging on their door. The husband opened it and in came a holy man, grumbling, "What a terrible rain, what a terrible rain!" As soon as he came in, he shut the door behind him and praised them.

"You are such good people. I'd have caught cold in that rain and died. You took me in and saved my life."

As he had come in like a wet dog, he wet the whole house with his drippings. The wife said, "That's all very well. You've dripped water all over the house."

The husband chimed in, "What shall we do if the house gets too damp and the walls crumble?"

The holy man was not worried. He said, "No such thing will happen. After all, a holy man like me is in this house. Why don't you bring some cow dung and wipe the floor with all this water and make it clean and nice?"

The husband couldn't bear this man's intrusion. "We don't yet know why Your Holiness is here," he said, quite bluntly.

The man said, "What does a holy man do in his devotees' house? It's very hard these days to find real devotees like yourselves. You're two in a thousand. Because of the likes of you, holy men survive in this world. Well, anyway it's time for dinner. You could give me some dinner. Then you can spread a mat. I'll lie on it and be gone in the morning. Anyway, good generous people like you are very rare. I'd rather get a glimpse of your sweet faces than go on a pilgrimage to Kashi."

He didn't seem to wait for any yes or no from them. The couple stood there with their mouths open. He didn't notice them at all. He took off most of his wet clothes, wrung

them out then and there, and hung them up to dry on the peg. He even took the dry shirt and dhoti of the host from the clothesline, put them on, and sat on a chair without a word of apology. He asked the bewildered host to sit down on the other chair, and asked the woman, "Will you finish cooking soon?" The husband sat down where he stood, his mouth still open. His wife went in to cook.

She had some leftover rice from the afternoon. She felt that wouldn't be enough and made some more. She meant to serve the leftovers to the guest and the fresh hot rice to her husband. But she was too flustered to do so, and actually served her husband the leftovers and the guest the fresh rice. The holy man relished everything he ate and asked for more chutney and more ghee and more everything. She couldn't help serving him whatever he asked for, to the great astonishment of her husband, who knew her very well. The guest talked ceaselessly through the meal and even afterwards as he relaxed in his chair and praised her cooking fulsomely.

"What a wonderful cook you are! It was like ambrosia. The spices, the proportions! Others may bring the whole spice bazaar to the kitchen but can't cook one good curry."

The wife ate the small scraps of food left over from this hearty meal, and came out of the kitchen, somewhat exhausted. The holy man addressed them both with great satisfaction.

"Look, as I said, we don't get devotees like you every day. I'm very pleased with your hospitality. I'll give you three wishes. Ask what you want."

Now the faces of the miser and his wife blossomed. The man came and fell at the guest's feet and said, "Sir, please, may whatever I touch turn into a heap of silver rupees."

The holy man asked him first to let go of his legs, and when he had done so, said, "Done."

The husband put his hands out and touched a couple of things around him, and they fell down in a clanging heap of rupees. His joy knew no bounds. He jumped up and down, touching everything he could see, turning things into heaps of rupees.

The wife now fell at the holy man's feet, and thinking of the cucumbers in her backyard, said, "Swami, may whatever I touch grow as long as a yard."

The holy man quickly said, "Let go of the legs first," released himself, then said, "So be it."

Whatever she touched grew at once as long as a yard. She went into the kitchen and touched the hot chilies. They became a yard long. She touched the cucumbers. They too grew a yard long. She touched whatever she fancied and made them all long.

Right at that moment, her little son was wakened by all this noise and began to cry. The mother ran in happily and touched his nose, saying, "My rajah!" And his nose at once grew long, a yard long. She screamed, horrified by her son's bizarre looks. When the husband ran in, the child was howling, unable to bear the weight of his nose on his face. "O my poor son," said the man and picked up the child, who at once crumbled into a heap of rupees. Then the

husband and wife realized their blunder. They ran weeping to the holy man, who carefully kept his distance, and they begged of him, "Please, give us the third wish at once."

"Tell me what you want."

"We want everything to be as it was. Please see to it that our first two wishes are cancelled."

The holy man said, "So be it."

The child began to play in the cradle as before. The chilies and cucumbers shrank back to their normal size. The heaps of rupees vanished, and things returned to their original shapes. When the man and the woman turned around, the holy man was nowhere to be seen. They said, "Look, that was God himself, come down to teach us a lesson." From that day on, they gave up their miserly ways and lived happily.

"A Couple of Misers". Ramanujan, A. K. A Flowering Tree and Other Oral Tales from India. Berkeley London: University of California Press, ©1997.

The Star Thrower

One day a man was walking along the beach when he noticed a figure in the distance. As he got closer, he realized the figure was that of a boy picking something up and gently throwing it into the ocean. Approaching the boy, he asked, "What are you doing?" The youth replied, "Throwing a starfish into the ocean. The sun is up and the tide is going out. If I don't throw them back, they'll die." "Son," the man said, "don't you realize there are miles and miles of beach and hundreds of starfish? You can't possibly make a difference!" After listening politely, the boy bent down, picked up another starfish, and threw it into the surf. Then smiling at the man, said, "I made a difference for that one."

(Adapted from Star Thrower, by Loren Eiseley)

Taken from: http://www.lessonsforhope.org/student/Unit3/ca_activity1.asp

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