



SUMMER ADVENTURES
ON THE ROAD

Tell Your Story



DID YOU KNOW?

Human beings have been telling stories as long as we have lived on this planet. Stories can be spoken or written; stories can be pictures or photographs too. People tell stories to explore the world and to explore themselves. Stories can capture experiences, reflect culture, inspire action, and evoke imagination.

Stories also reflect the storyteller. Creating stories that matter to us is a powerful act and an opportunity to share who we are and what we have experienced with others. Listening to the stories of others is an act of empathy and an opportunity to open our minds to the experiences of others.

The storytelling activities that follow will provide you with the opportunity to imagine, reflect, explore, act, and empathize with the planet and its inhabitants - expanding the long-held tradition of storytelling on this Earth.

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Wolf Stories

Ages 4-8

PG 4

Tree Stories

Ages 4-8

PG 5

Bird's-Eye Stories

Ages 4-8

PG 6

Story Stones

Ages 4-8

PG 7

Wolf Stories

Ages 9+

PG 8

Ecosystem Stories

Ages 9+

PG 9

The Rest of the Story

Ages 9+

Book List

READY TO EXPLORE?





WOLF STORIES

ACTIVITY 1 Ages 4-8

READ

Wolves - and many other animals - communicate with one another using their own language. Sometimes they use sounds like growls or whines, but other times they just use their body by crouching or standing tall. They even use their sense of smell as a form of communication! Learn more by reading this excerpt from *The Hidden Life of Wolves*, by Jim and Jamie Dutcher.

TO DO

Think of ways you communicate like a wolf - without words, with your body, or with your other senses. Could you tell a story like a wolf? Let's play a game and try!

Here are the rules:

- Use sounds but no words.
- Use your body language.
- Use other senses - sight, smell, or touch.

Here's what to do:

- Tell a happy story as a wolf would.
- Tell a sad story as a wolf would.
- Tell a scary story as a wolf would.

TREE STORIES

ACTIVITY 1 | Ages 4-8

MATERIALS

Crayons or colored pencils

TO DO

Trees have a lot of wisdom we can apply to our own lives. Draw a tree that represents you. Make sure it includes roots, branches, and leaves. Surrounding your tree, draw pictures or write about how each part of the tree represents parts of you and your life. What other parts of a tree do you know? How do they connect to you? Add them to your tree and your story.

LEAVES

What do you hope for?

BRANCHES

How have you grown so far and in what ways do you want to grow next?

ROOTS

Where do you come from? Who came before you and why do they matter to you?



A large rectangular area enclosed by a dashed blue line, intended for drawing and writing.

BIRD'S-EYE STORIES

ACTIVITY | Ages 4-8

Imagine that you are a bird flying high above the earth. Then imagine you get closer and closer to the ground as you fly down to taste a delicious insect. Choose one or more friends or family members to reflect with and share your thoughts on the following questions.

What story would a bird tell about your community from flying high above, looking down?



What story would a bird tell about your neighborhood perched in the trees, looking down?

What story would a bird tell about your street or home while perched on your windowsill or feeding from the ground outside?

STORY STONES

ACTIVITY | Ages 4-8

MATERIALS

Paint or markers

Collect some pebbles from your neighborhood. Clean them with soap and water and let them dry.

START WITH THE STONES

Make a game of your story stones by creating each of these kinds of stories:

- A simple story with three stones representing a beginning, middle, and end.
- A tag-team story where someone pulls one stone to start the story, then tags another person who pulls another stone to move the plot forward. Keep the round going until you run out of stones.
- A dialogue story with multiple characters who are trying to solve a problem. Remember that the characters don't have to be only people but can also be animals, plants, or even objects!
- A story with characters who have conflicting motivations like a hero and villain at odds with one another.
- Or make your own game with the story stones!

Tell your story until the bucket is empty. Then keep adding new story stones to your collection as you find them over time!

START WITH A STORY

- Create an original story in your mind or written on paper. Illustrate your story through story stones by using permanent markers or paint to draw different symbols and images on each pebble. Let them dry.
- Tell your story to friends or family members and pass around the illustrated story stone at each point in the story.

Check out [this site](#) for story stone inspiration.



WOLF STORIES

ACTIVITY | Ages 9+



WATCH AND READ

Wolves have been part of stories for generations. They've had a central place in the folklore of cultures from the North American Arctic to the Indian jungle to the Chinese tropics. The roles of wolves in mythology are diverse and include the "Big, Bad Wolf," the wise hunter, and the fiercely wild animal. These roles are called archetypes.

Author Margaret Atwood wrote, *"All stories are about wolves. All worth repeating, that is. . . . Think about it. There's escaping from the wolves, fighting the wolves, capturing the wolves, taming the wolves. Being thrown to the wolves, or throwing others to the wolves so the wolves will eat them instead of you. Running with the wolf pack. Turning into a wolf. Best of all, turning into the head wolf. No other decent stories exist."*

Read about more wolf archetypes in [Wolves at the Door](#). Next, watch [Wolves of Yellowstone](#) to learn more about them and their reintroduction to the park in 1995.

TO DO

- Create an original story to tell through photography, illustration, or written or oral narration that turns a villainous myth upside down.
- It could be about wolves or other animals – real or metaphorical – that are frequently villainized.
- Share your story with friends or members of your family.

ECOSYSTEM STORIES

ACTIVITY | Ages 9+

Every factor in an **ecosystem** depends on every other factor. While gray wolves and grizzly bears are predators, they - and all the other wildlife - are critical to the health of every ecosystem. When gray wolves were nearly **driven extinct** in Yellowstone, their absence caused a ripple effect that depleted the health of many other kinds of wildlife in the area. This is relevant to human communities too. People also need one another to be healthy inside and out.

Tell a story about a conflict you experienced that involved many conflicting needs and perspectives. Consider the following as you create your story:

- Were you able to come together and compromise or was the resolution one-sided?
- How were you able to come together as a community if you did find a resolution?
- If you weren't able to come together, what made your "ecosystem" unhealthy and how might it have been better solved?
- What was the root cause of the conflict? Did other conflicts arise from this root cause?
- How does interacting with others who are different from us help us grow?
- Can conflicts due to differing perspectives sometimes be helpful? How so?
- Are there ongoing issues in your community that come from differing perspectives? How can conflicts like these be useful?
- How do people in your community need or rely on one another? What value does each person bring for the overall health of your community?

Thinking of our communities as ecosystems can become an opportunity to apply empathy skills and solve problems.



FULL LINKS

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The Hidden Lives of Wolves

https://www.nationalgeographic.org/media/wolf-language/?utm_source=toolkit&utm_medium=referral&utm_campaign=summer-road-trip-2021&utm_content=road-trip-content

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Story stones

<https://www.scholastic.com/parents/books-and-reading/raise-a-reader-blog/inspire-creative-storytelling-story-stones.html>

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Wolves at the Door

https://www.nationalgeographic.org/media/wolves-door/?utm_source=toolkit&utm_medium=referral&utm_campaign=summer-road-trip-2021&utm_content=road-trip-content

Wolves of Yellowstone

https://www.nationalgeographic.org/media/wolves-yellowstone/#wolves-of-yellowstone?utm_source=toolkit&utm_medium=referral&utm_campaign=summer-road-trip-2021&utm_content=road-trip-content

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Ecosystem

https://www.nationalgeographic.org/encyclopedia/ecosystem/?utm_source=toolkit&utm_medium=referral&utm_campaign=summer-road-trip-2021&utm_content=road-trip-content