

Spreading out from Stories (Plenary)

X.TED ELT Conference, at TED Mersin College

29th April 2018

Storytelling: Some Quotations

Stories can be used with large groups or individuals; they can be 'performed' or shared together; they can be classic folk tales, anecdotes, jokes, or reminiscences; they can be 'passed down' to an audience or created with them, on the spot; they can be as close as family yarns or as distant as fables from afar; they can reveal great truths, or they can be hilarious lies; they can crackle and buzz as live entertainment, or be a personal exploration; they can be swapped in the playground, or bring generations together. Stories teach language and listening; consolation and creativity; meaning and memories. Listen...

"There have been great societies that did not use the wheel, but there have been no societies that did not tell stories" Ursula LeGuin

"The tale is often wiser than the teller" Susan Fletcher

"If stories come to you, care for them. And learn to give them away when they are needed. Sometimes a person needs a story more than food to stay alive" Barry Lopez

"Story is the vehicle we use to make sense of our lives in a world that often defies logic" Jim Trelease

"Fairy tales are more than true: not because they tell us that dragons exist, but because they tell us that dragons can be beaten" G K Chesterton

"Australian Aborigines say that the big stories - the stories worth telling and retelling, the ones in which you may find the meaning of your life - are forever stalking the right teller, sniffing and tracking like predators hunting their prey in the bush" Robert Moss

"Of course it's true, but it may not have happened." Anon

"If you want your child to be brilliant, read them fairy tales. If you want your child to be a genius... read them more fairy tales." Albert Einstein

"The average children's book exposes a child to 50% more words than an evening television programme" (Robert Wedgeworth, ProLiteracy Worldwide, at St Petersburg Conference, June 2002)

"When the government of an African country placed television sets in villages in the hope of educating and entertaining its people, it was noticed by an anthropologist living in one village that after a while the villagers stopped watching and returned to listening to the village storyteller. The anthropologist could not understand this, and told them that the television knew far more stories than their old storyteller. They answered 'Yes, the television knows more stories, but the storyteller knows us' " (Pat Ryan, quoted in Chris Powling's 'Storytelling and some stories about it')

"Storytelling reveals meaning without committing the error of defining it." Hannah Arendt

"The shortest distance between truth and a human being is a story." Anthony de Mello, 'One Minute Wisdom'

"Stories tell us of what we already knew and forgot, and remind us of what we haven't yet imagined." Anne Watson

'We are perishing for lack of wonder, not for lack of wonders.' (G K Chesterton)

"Whilst 'thou shalt not' may reach the head, it takes 'once upon a time' to reach the heart" Philip Pullman.