

**“Tell a Tall Tale”  
or  
“Meet the Hyperbole Family”**

Winter > Family > LA (MS.w.family.LA.talltalehyperbole)

**Season & Location:**

Winter; The language lesson contains some advanced language concepts and usage, and should be completed after some significant practice toward the beginning of the year. Since it’s an activity that ultimately results in a story being told for the purpose of entertainment, these are activities that can be done spontaneously any time and any place where people gather.

**Partnerships/Community Connections:**

This activity will appeal to anyone anywhere who enjoys a good story, or matches storytellers with people who could use some good entertainment. There are many opportunities for students to share their stories at tribal and other community events; Powwow, Restoration, school assemblies, etc. Classes can also partner with other grades, or students in other schools and exchange stories.

Having advice and input from a master storyteller would be ideal. There are a few of these who have done work for the Tribe; in addition, there are community members who are legendary storytellers.

**Standards\* Focus:**

**Dee Ni Specific goal:**

Activity adds transitive verb practice to the mix; enough examples should be provided so that the pattern is established, and students have an opportunity to use other verbs to practice.

**Writing:**

The following outline offers a focus for instruction in writing to help ensure that students gain adequate mastery of a range of skills and applications. Each year in their writing, students should demonstrate increasing sophistication in all aspects of language use, and they should address increasingly demanding content and sources.

Text Types and Purposes:

*Anchor Standard 3:*

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

7.W.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

- a. Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.
- b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
- c. Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another.
- d. Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.

e. Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events.

#### Craft and Structure

##### *Anchor Standard 4:*

Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

7.RST.4 Determine the meaning of symbols, key terms, and other domain-specific words and phrases as they are used in a specific scientific or technical context relevant to grades 6–8 texts and topics.

##### *Anchor Standard 5:*

Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.

7.RST.5 Analyze the structure an author uses to organize a text, including how the major sections contribute to the whole and to an understanding of the topic.

##### *Anchor Standard 6:*

Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

7.RST.6 Analyze the author’s purpose in providing an explanation, describing a procedure, or discussing an experiment in a text.

### **Speaking and Listening:**

The following standards offer a focus for instruction each year to help ensure that students gain adequate mastery of a range of skills and applications. Students advancing through the grades are expected to meet each year’s grade-specific standards and retain or further develop skills and understandings mastered in preceding grades.

##### *Anchor Standard 4:*

Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

7.SL.4 Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with pertinent descriptions, facts, details, and examples; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.

##### *Anchor Standard 5:*

Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.

7.SL.5 Include multimedia components and visual displays in presentations to clarify claims and findings and emphasize salient points.

##### *Anchor Standard 6:*

Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

7.SL.6 Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate. (See grade 7 Language standards 1 and 3 for specific expectations.)

*\*“Second Language” standards are addressed by default – consult state scoring guide.*

### **Additional Standards:**

### **Promotion Of Mental, Social, And Emotional Health:**

*Acquire knowledge and skills to understand that mental, social and emotional health contributes to building and maintaining interpersonal relationships.*

HE.08.MH.01 Identify how emotions change during adolescence.

HE.08.MH.02 Identify school, home and community resources for mental and emotional health concerns.

**Cultural Knowledge:**

Fun  
Communication  
Belief/World View  
Family

**Vocabulary:**

Tall tale (“big story”)	natlh-sri~'-chu'
Story teller	natlh-sri~' yvlh-nvn
White lie (“Little lie”?)	Duu-lhvn 'in-stvm
*Exaggerate	yvlh-sri-chu'

**Intensifiers:**

More	ch'aa
Most	stin'
Many	lhan

**Transitive Verb Phrases:**

I will tell a story (tall tale) to you.	nvlh-dvsh-nvn natlh-sri~'-te
I will tell a story (tall tale) to you all.	xwii-nutlh-t'e tr'vn natlh-sri~' -te
You will tell a story (tall tale) to me.	'aa-sintlh-nvn natlh-sri~' yvlh-nvn-te
You will tell a story (tall tale) to us.	'aa-xwintlh-nvn natlh-sri~'- te
We will tell a story to you.	'aa-witlh-nvn natlh-sri~'-te

### **Grammar & Language Concepts:**

Practice and reinforcement of compound and otherwise complex sentence structure, using **transitive** verbs,  
Practice of oral renditions of complex Dee Ni words and phrases,  
Use of specific, accurate, and colorful descriptive modifiers,  
Continued practice of noun possessives and verb tenses.  
Use of intensifiers and other “hyperbole” enhancing language tools and techniques.

### **Prior/Concurrent Lesson Plan Materials:**

“Family”  
Storytelling  
Middle School Reading/Writing (Using scoring guides and lesson plans for this grade level)  
“Interrogatives”  
“Family Tree” lesson (from “family” unit of this set of lesson plans)

### **Lesson Objectives – After completion, students/instructors will be able to:**

Identify family members located on a family tree using Dee Ni vocabulary and phrases,  
Compare and contrast the characteristics of a “Tall Tale” with those of other types of stories,  
Create a “Tall Tale” by modifying a familiar story about family and friends,  
Use visual aids and writing techniques to prepare for an oral presentation,  
Confidently deliver a “Tall Tale” type story using Dee Ni vocabulary and phrases,  
Use interrogatives to clarify story details as necessary,  
Create a “Public Speaking” work sample for a portfolio (optional)  
Use intensifiers, pronouns, adverbs, etc to generate a detailed (and exaggerated) tale that holds the listener’s interest beginning to end,  
Effectively and accurately assess their own work and effort, as well as the work and effort of classmates,  
Successfully identify Dee Ni vocabulary words when given a brief matching/multiple choice quiz and/or language puzzle.  
Create an illustrated book, PowerPoint presentation, web page, video, etc. version of their Tale

### **Lesson Procedures:**

Students study the concept of the “Tall Tale”; learning what distinguishes a regular story from a Tall Tale; students read a selection of famous tall tales (and complete whatever activities the classroom instructor has in mind for the students to reinforce this knowledge).  
Students study “Family” Dee Ni vocabulary and phrases, and complete the “Family Tree” activity.  
Students recall a favorite “family” short story. This could be a story about something a brother or sister did when they were younger; something a parent does every 4<sup>th</sup> of July; something an uncle did in a war; etc. The story can be funny or serious, true or fabricated, exciting or otherwise – but no matter what, it should be fairly short. Naturally, the story should also be age-

appropriate and not contain anything illegal, amoral, or overly provocative. (Also - as with the "Family Tree" activity, students may feel safer choosing to create their story using a fictional family, or a family of historical figures, or whatever other ideas they may come up with to describe a family.)

Students use their "Family Tree" to select and identify characters, then utilize the Dee Ni Plot Map to describe the story line - identify the main characters, the setting, rising action, climax, resolution, theme, etc.

Students are instructed on proper presentation and storytelling techniques – ideally, advised by a veteran storyteller guest. Instructors should consult the "Public Speaking" scoring guides at the 8<sup>th</sup> grade level and decide if this project might provide a work sample for student portfolios.

(Students should be working on this with it in mind that the final product will be an ORAL presentation – the telling of a "Tall Tale". The written component is mostly to collect thoughts and provide Dee Ni vocabulary and phrases to practice leading up to presentations.)

Students identify major plot elements in their story, and use intensifiers, adverbs, and adjectives to generate specific, exaggerated, and unique details that turn these details into the parts necessary for a story to be a Tall Tale.

Students use whatever visual aids they need, and share their story with their classmates.

Students might optionally convert their oral presentation into a printed book, a PowerPoint presentation, a web page, a video, a slideshow, etc.

When presentations are complete, students will do a self-assessment to evaluate their effort and attitude toward the project. They will also complete a peer assessment for their classmates. Students take a deep breath, laugh nervously, and go back to their seats.

### **Assessment:**

As mentioned above, the "Public Speaking Scoring Guide" might be used by the classroom instructor to assess the oral presentation,

Dee Ni Project Scoring Rubric is utilized to assess the final product, including the plot map, modifiers list, presentation skills, etc.

Students can play a "family" vocabulary card game (Family Poker) to self-assess vocabulary knowledge,

Lesson plan materials include a word puzzle game (crossword/word search) as well as a short matching quiz,

A self-assessment can be completed once the presentations have been made, in addition to a peer assessment. Materials to complete these assessments are provided in lesson materials.

### **Materials & Supplies:**

Books of tall tales

Paper, pens, pencils, old magazines, etc... Art supplies for creating "Tall Tale" books, if desired.

Dee Ni dictionary – print, digital, talking, etc.

Dee Ni plot map template,

Prior lesson plan materials: "Family Tree", "Interrogatives"

Lesson plan materials – outline, quizzes, puzzles, etc.