

- TEACHER'S GUIDE -



Antonio Rocha (pronounced Haw-sha), originally from Brazil, began his career in the performing arts in 1985. In 1988, he received a Partner of the Americas' grant to come to the USA to perform and study with American mime and director Tony Montanaro. Since then, he has earned a Summa Cum Laude Theater BA from the University of Southern Maine and studied with French mime Marcel Marceau.

Rocha's work is an eloquent mixture of acting, mime and realistic sound effects creating a very dynamic and unique experience. His work has been performed in various countries across six continents and in most States in the USA. For more information about this versatile performer, his DVDs and children's book, you may visit www.storyinmotion.com -



Brazil is a vast tropical country in South America with unique geographical and historical characteristics. It possesses a wealth of natural resources and a dynamic and expanding population of about 200 million people from diverse cultural backgrounds. The largest of the Latin American countries, covering nearly half (47.%) of South America, Brazil is larger than the continental USA (by about the size of Wyoming) and the fifth largest country in the world after Russia, Canada, China and the USA. The Atlantic Ocean extends along the entire eastern side of the country for 4,578 miles.

Brazil was a colony of Portugal for over 322 years (1,500 to 1822). Because of this, the National language is Portuguese although there are many native languages spoken in the Indian reservations.

The Amazon Region- This is the largest Rain Forest in the world, comprising, 60% of the Brazilian territory and expanding to neighboring countries including: Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela and Guiana, Suriname and French Guiana. It contains two-thirds of the world's tropical forests. All of Europe (excluding western Russia) fits within the Amazon Region. The Amazon River is the largest on our planet. It is about 4,000 miles long and at times about 15 miles wide. The Nile River, in Africa, is the longest. However the Nile doesn't hold as much water as the Amazon. Most of the animal and plant life (fauna and flora) in the world are located in Tropical Rain Forests. However, many people use these forests to mine precious stones, harvest rare lumber, and burn it in order to create grass lands for cattle and to turn wood into coal.

The animals, plants, and people subsequently end up paying a great price for it. No matter how far away you live from the Tropical Rain Forests you benefit from them. They regulate the climate, air currents, provide a lot of the oxygen you breath, and countless of other factors that influences our lives in ways we don't even realize such as in medicine research.

The Amazon river is responsible for one-fifth of the fresh water discharged into oceans. The Amazon Rain Forest, for being the largest, is the principal regulator of the “Green House Effect” through photosynthesis. The Rain Forests cover an area of roughly that of the USA. They can be found in parts of South America, Central America, Africa, and Asia.

Storytelling- Storytelling has been a part of our lives since we have been on the face of the earth. It was a way to tell the news, to pass customs and values from one generation to another, teach and entertain. People have always told stories with gesture and voice. You cannot have a friend to whom you have not told or listened to his/her stories.

These days one can find Storytelling Festivals to attend all over the world. There are stories told with music, mime, puppets, masks and all sorts of props. Although stories are told all over the world, one of the greatest centers for this art form is in Jonesborough, Tennessee. The National Storytelling Festival, the oldest in the country, is held there every year and is attended by thousands of people.

There are all sorts of stories out there. Not just personal, but also myths, folktales, ghost stories, fairy tales, fables and more.



Folk Tales: Folk Tales usually involve animals with human problems. Folk tales were usually created to educate and prevent kids from getting into trouble.

Myths: These are creation stories. They include amazing accounts of how things came to be across the universe and on Earth. Incredible creatures tend to be a part of these stories.

Fairy Tales: These stories have magical places, creatures and kingdoms with princesses and princes who overcome amazing obstacles.

Fables: These are usually very short with a simple plot and a strong moral in the end. Aesop fables are very well known including the Hare and the Tortoise.

MIME- “Mime is one of the oldest forms of storytelling – According to mime Marcel Marceau from France, it is the art of gesture and attitude. The English word “mime” comes from the ancient Greek mimos, literally meaning to imitate or to mimic. Tony Montanaro, my former teacher and mentor, defined it as “the art of eloquent movement.” Mime tells a story or situation mostly through movement. In order for the mime to make the invisible visible the performer must identify himself or herself with the world of the story, this is called identification or surrender. First the performer has to observe the real world (nature, machines, situations) and also how the human body interacts with this world. How does the rhythm of an eagle in flight differ from that of a butterfly? Now pretend you see an eagle in flight, now a butterfly. Your head must have two different rhythms one for the scattered flight of a butterfly and the other for the smooth soar of an eagle. Try to move like a soaring eagle and now as a butterfly.

- Pre show activities

The Activities included below serve both Jungle Tales and Cross Roads programs. Feel free to comb through and use it according to your grade level and curriculum needs.

Using a globe please guide your class through the activities below -

1- Show the students South America on a globe and then the country of Brazil, Antonio Rocha's home country.

2- Show the students how far Brazil is from your state in the USA. They do not need to know the exact distance, but just how much room it covers on the particular globe you are using.

3- A very common greeting in Portuguese is to say “oi.” This is the same as saying “hi.” Here is how you say “oi.” Oi sounds just like the opposite of -yo-. Antonio will greet you before the show and you can show how well you learned it in class. Thank you is Obrigado for a male and Obrigada for female.

4- Please review the different types of stories there are, from the list provided above. Then ask the students to listen carefully in order for them to identify if it was a folk tale, fairy tale or perhaps a mimed story.

5- Invite students to watch for ways Antonio Rocha uses his voice, face, hands and body to tell stories. After the show ask students for examples.



Oi!

6- Storytelling is an art that needs good listeners in order for it to take place. A Storyteller without good listeners cannot tell good stories. Please review good listening skills with the students before going to the assembly. You listen well when:

A- You do not talk to other students.

B- You keep your cell phones off.

C- Teachers demonstrate good listening skills to their students by watching the show with them. Remember that you need to listen to the stories in order for you to be able to do the post performance activities.

Thank you - Obrigado

Post Show activities-

Soon after the show, preferably during the same week, please try to engage the students in some of the following activities. Please use your own judgement for age appropriateness and time management since some of these activities are quick while others will take more time.

1- Identify on a globe the continents where the stories came from. Once the continent is found, please pick a country from that area and learn its capital name, what language(s) they speak and a geographical feature such as mountain, ocean or river.

2- What types of stories did Antonio tell. Were they FolkTales? Was there a mimed story?

3- Using a globe, please locate the Tropical Rain Forests of the world.

A good way to find the largest ones is to first locate the line called the Equator. This is the part of the planet that bulges out towards the sun, so it is hot all year around. As you turn the globe along the equator you will notice the major Rain Forests and rivers such as the Amazon in South America and the Congo river in Africa.

Storytelling activity

An effective way to work on telling a personal story is to picture something that has happened to you and then tell the events that led up to what happened, to a problem. You then tell how it got taken care of, how it was resolved. Here are some ideas:

Perhaps you went on a trip that did not go as planned. Something that you did that you were not supposed to do. Something you were supposed to do but did not. Feel free to use your arms and facial expressions to bring the story to life.

Please nurture the telling by asking positive questions. Positive questions trigger more details.

Details make the story grow and make more sense. Details cover the initial holes in the plot creating a cohesive narrative. Once the student can tell for four to five minutes, then you can ask for the student to write it down. You may even start a storytelling club in your class that will promote good listeners, good public speakers, good self esteem and great creativity. Then, when you ask them to write, they will have several stories to draw from.

Bibliography

Portraits of the Rain Forest *by Adrian Forsyth*

Exploring the Amazon *by Helen and Frank Schreider*

Eyes on Mime *by Kathrine Sorley Walker*

Writing as a Second Language *by Donald Davis*

Mimes on Miming *by Bari Rolfe*

Mime Spoken Here *by Tony Montanaro with Karen-Hurl Montanaro*

The Embassy of Brazil web site, <http://www.brasilemb.org/>