



Presents

Storytelling, Poetry, Puppetry and Music

So Many Ways To Share A Story

Soon you will see a live concert that shows many different ways of sharing stories. There will be lots of singing, more than 10 different musical instruments, a puppet fable and maybe even a new dance!



Timmy and Susana Abell travel around the country giving concerts for kids and families. They tell stories in many different ways - by singing them, writing them, telling them and acting them out with their puppets.

Hi!
We're really looking forward to seeing all of you!
Here are a few things to think about as you get ready to enjoy our concert.
See you soon!

Susana and Timmy

Write it... Show it... Sing it... Tell it!

Sing Stories

Timmy is a songwriter and some of his songs tell stories. Sometimes the stories are true, sometimes they are funny and sometimes they are stories that Timmy made up from his imagination. He also sings old folk songs which have been passed down to children from their parents, grandparents and great-grandparents. Many of these old folk songs tell stories which help us understand our culture and the world around us.

Write and Tell Stories

Timmy is a storyteller and Susana is a writer. Timmy sometimes likes to tell a fairy tale that Susana wrote called *The Girl Who Cried Diamonds*. As a writer, Susana sometimes gets stuck while she's working on a story. Brainstorm some ways you might use to get "un-stuck" when you are writing.

HINT: It helps to know the different parts of a story - what are they?



Here's Timmy "spinning a yarn". A "yarn" is a special kind of story. It starts out with a little piece of the truth that gets stretched and pulled and twisted the way that people used to spin wool into yarn.

Read Stories!

In some of their concerts Susana and Timmy sing a song called *The Unicorn*. It is a poem by Shel Silverstein that tells a very old story. You are invited to sing a part of the song (the chorus) at the concert. Read the words to the chorus (lyrics) so you'll be ready to sing along.

Look for the book called *Where The Sidewalk Ends* in your library and read the whole story of "The Unicorn."



This is Manito. He is the main character in the story of "The Gardener"

Act Out Stories

During the concert you will see a puppet play called *The Gardener*. It is a story told without words. You will understand the story just by watching what the puppet does. *The Gardener* is a special kind of story called a fable. Fables are stories that teach a lesson. After the performance try to tell or write the story of *The Gardener*. Use words that describe what he does, how he does it and how he feels.

What is the lesson or moral of the story?

What are some other ways to share stories or ideas without using words?

Chorus:
(Sing with us!)

There were green alligators and long-necked geese,
Humpty-backed camels and chimpanzees,
Cats and rats and elephants and sure as you're born,
The loveliest of all was the unicorn!

Instruments help to tell stories ...



Guitar

Timmy plays guitar on many of the songs which he has written, and with some of the old folk songs, too. He started playing the guitar when he was in the 5th grade.



Banjo

You will hear Timmy play the old "clawhammer" style of banjo. African banjo players brought this instrument to America 200 years ago.



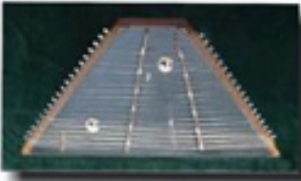
English Concertina

In the same family as the accordion, it's a little squeezebox which uses air and thin metal "reeds" to make a beautiful musical sound. By the way, there are no batteries necessary.



Bowed Psaltery

It's played with a bow made from horse hair (like violin bows), but this one is much easier to play than a violin.



Hammered Dulcimer

This is the instrument which Timmy plays to help tell the story of "The Gardener", a story with no words. He also uses a wood block, cymbal, drum and triangle for extra effect.



Lap Dulcimer

Sometimes known as the Appalachian dulcimer because it has been a favorite instrument for the mountain people over the last 200 years.

... with their own special voices.



Penny Whistle

A simple woodwind instrument with six finger holes, easy to learn how to play. Timmy will ask you to listen to this one with your eyes closed.



Raggedy Man

Not just a puppet, this percussion instrument keeps a steady beat as the little man dances the old-fashioned "buck dance" on his paddle.

P.S. Timmy doesn't actually play the BANANA!

In the story of "The Gardener", the music gives clues about each character...

Music is often used to make a story more dramatic.

When you hear music along with a story, think about how it changes the way you feel. Next time you watch a movie, listen for how the music matches the mood of the story.



Susana is a PUPPETEER.

Here is Susana with one of her favorite puppets. She makes her own puppets out of paper mache', cloth, yarn, cotton, foam and anything else she can find. What kinds of puppets have you made?

Stories are told in many different languages



"Quick" is a hand puppet, a sloth from South America. He is extremely shy and he only speaks Spanish.

Does anyone in your class speak Spanish? "Quick" might need a translator in the performance!



About the Artists

Timmy and Susana performed separately for many years. After they were married in 2005, they created a new program which combined Susana's puppetry with Timmy's music and storytelling.

Timmy started playing music when he was in the fifth grade. Susana has always liked to sing, but didn't really start learning about puppetry until after college. They both love to write songs, stories and poetry, but they say it's not always easy:

"Writing is really exciting when you get going and your ideas are flowing and everything's coming together, but usually there's some place where you get tangled up. Some things you keep, some you throw away - the most important thing is to keep going, take chances, keep revising and make sure you're having a good time in the process!"

Susana used to be in a traveling circus in Europe



Timmy used to live in a giant teepee that he built himself!

Son LOCOS!

Timmy once wrote a song about ... SECRETS. Here are a couple of theirs. Shhhh!

About You, The Audience

"Performing for you is our favorite thing to do!"

You will see that a live performance is very different from watching TV or a movie. At our performance we want the audience to be part of the show. Sometimes we will ask you to clap, or sing, or move. Sometimes we will ask you to be very, very still and quiet. Whether you are quietly listening or participating, we all get to have fun.

Enjoy the Show!



RESOURCES:

ON THE WEB:

www.silvertrout.org

Lesson plans, study guides, curriculum tie-ins and anything having to do with our workshops and performances.

www.timmyabell.com

Song lyrics and music, information on instruments and history, study guides, order CDs, and much more!

www.puppet.org

The Center for Puppetry Arts in Atlanta, GA - includes outreach and distance learning.

www.folklife.si.edu

Free downloadable lesson plans, multicultural learning, vast folk music archive.

www.puppetools.com

Lots of great puppetry ideas tailored to the classroom.

storytellinginschools.org

Lesson plans to integrate storytelling into core curriculum areas.

IN YOUR LIBRARY:

Where The Sidewalk Ends
by Shel Silverstien - look for "The Unicorn" on page 76!

The World of Puppets

by Bil Baird; *A fabulous history of the art form across many cultures.*

ON CD:

Woody Guthrie, Pete Seeger, John McCutcheon, Cathy Fink & Marcy Marxer and, of course, anything by Timmy Abell!

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