

Kids and Cultures presents



[www.KidsAndCultures.com](http://www.KidsAndCultures.com)

Dear teacher,

We are excited to perform at your school! Together with you and your students, we look forward to learning about other people and places through the folktales that have been passed down to us. This letter is a “heads up” of what to expect, as well as some ideas for what you can do to maximize the learning for your students.

Before we come, you and your students could:

- Discuss what a folktale is, and the role folktales have played in societies.
- List familiar folktales that you have grown up hearing.
- Visit the folktale section (j 398.2) of your school library.
- Discuss the various genres of folktales (such as pourquoi and noodlehead).
- Use a map or globe to locate the countries featured in our stories.
- Find out what you already know about these countries. You could begin a Know/Want to know/Learned chart with them, and update it afterwards.
- Prepare to listen for something in the show that you did not know, and recall it later.

As your class enters the performance area, if time allows, you may join our “pre-show trivia game show.” This multiple-choice event allows students to learn about other places and cultures while cheering on fellow student contestants. We may also ask you as the teacher to select a student or two to help us act out part of the show.

Once the show begins, our hope is that you will enjoy it as much as your students, and that we can all learn together. Please interact with us during the show, and encourage your students to do the same. Folktales are best given and received with an involved audience!

The show we will be performing for you is called ***Treasures of the World***. It features stories told for generations from different parts of the world, all of which contain character traits (“heart treasures”) that will be highlighted in our performance. We hope that through the stories, we will all be encouraged to become better people.

After the show, you can:

- Invite students to re-tell the stories.
- Ask students to list the treasures from the treasure chest and what they represent.
- Invite students to tell or write about a time that they displayed one of the “heart treasures.”
- Allow students to write their own folktale about a character trait, using information from their own culture, or another culture with which they are familiar.
- Use the characters in one of the stories to create a new folktale.
- Visit [www.TreasuresOfTheWorld.org](http://www.TreasuresOfTheWorld.org) to download related activity sheets.
- Review the handout that we will provide at the assembly (see the attached sample) with your students and send it home so other family members can find out what the students experienced today.

## ***Treasures of the World***

### Story Specs

***The Roly-Poly Rice Ball*** from Japan. In this story, a kind man and a greedy man who are neighbors to each other each have an encounter with a mouse after dropping rice balls in the woods. The kind man is rewarded with a magic box which provides for him and his wife for the rest of their lives. The greedy man receives a box of scorpions, snakes, etc. Treasure=Kindness.

***Gecko*** from the Lango and Acholi people of Sudan and Uganda is the story of a determined little gecko that keeps stomping for water in spite of his small size and funny looks. His persistence not only provides water during a drought, but also wins him the lion's treasure box! Treasure=Determination.

***The Apple Dumpling*** from England is the story of a generous woman who is hungry for an apple dumpling. She shares the plums she has. Throughout the story, she gives away what she has, and receives something in return, ending up, of course, with an apple and the joy of having helped many others along the way. Treasure=Generosity.

***The Barking Mouse*** from Cuba is a short and funny story about two mice who disobey their parents and tease the local cat. They are saved by their mother, only because she speaks "dog" and scares the cat off. Treasure=Courage.

Additional "Treasures" stories available upon request:

***Clever Katya*** is a Russian story of how a wise little girl helps her father answer the Tsar's riddles, and keep a colt that his brother tried to claim as his own. Treasure=Wisdom.

***Old Joe and the Carpenter*** from Appalachia. Old Joe and his former best friend and neighbor Jess have an argument over a calf that leads to one of them digging a "creek" between them and the other hiring a carpenter to build a wall. After the carpenter builds a bridge, they offer each other forgiveness. Treasure=Forgiveness.

***Chardae's Thousand and One Nights***, popular in Iraq, is an adaptation of the story from which the 1001 Arabian Nights tales spring. Treasures=Courage, Wisdom, Creativity.

***The Singing Snake*** is a folktale about how Snake tries to win a singing contest in Australia by trapping Lark in his throat. Treasure=Honesty.

Each story is about seven to 10 minutes long and includes information about the culture or country from which it comes.

Sample Handout (inside panels)

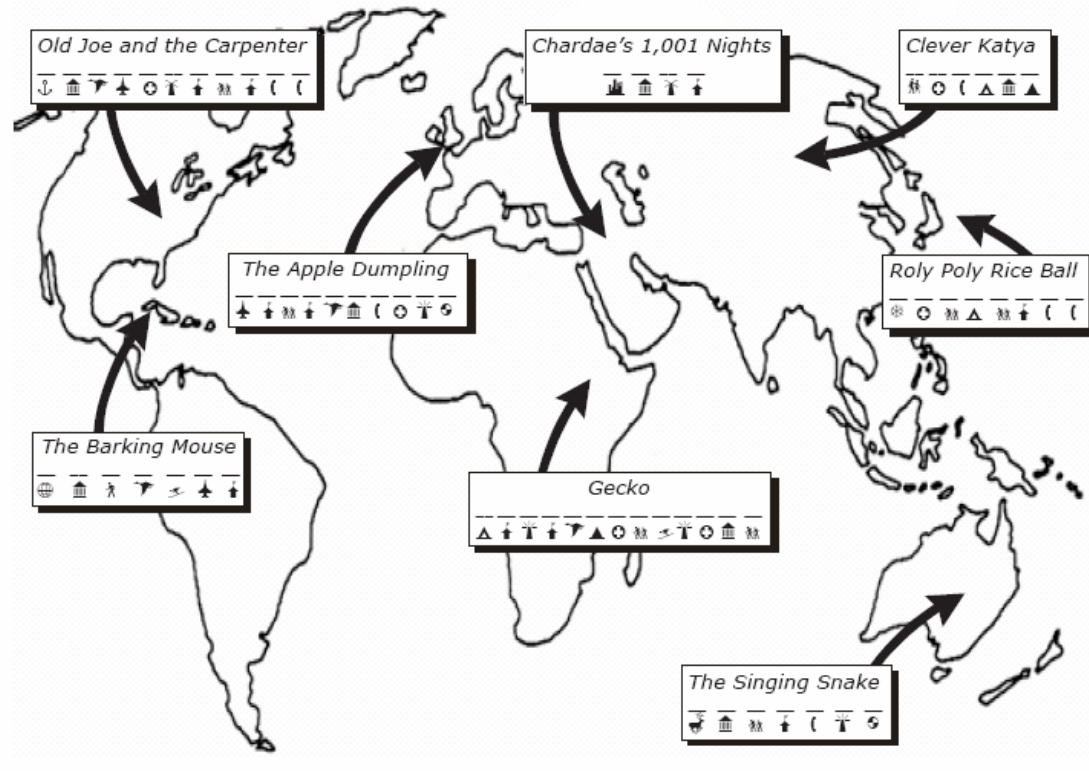
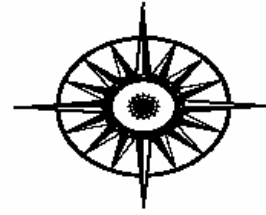
On the map, label the locations of the *Treasures of the World* stories.

Australia Japan  
Cuba IRAQ  
England Russia  
Appalachia  
SUDAN&UGANDA

**DID YOU KNOW?**

- That many Australians celebrate Christmas with picnics at the beach.
- There is so little rain in Sudan that many people take their beds outside to sleep.
- Many Cuban people like to play dominoes at tables in the outdoor parks.
- Russia is so large that it covers 11 time zones.

The compass coordinates are missing! Add North, East, South, and West.



Use this **KEY** to decode the treasure in each story.

	A		I		S
	C		K		T
	D		L		U
	E		M		V
	F		N		W
	G		O		Y
	H		R		

**TRY THIS**

- Draw blue waves around the island where the didgeridoo was made.
- Draw a water hole where there may be a drought.
- Draw a crown at the place where a girl outsmarted a ruler.
- Color green the place where people have "gardens," not "yards."
- Draw a picnic basket where you would take hot food along for your picnic
- Draw mountains where you could learn to make a button hummer.

**SAY WHAT?**

Use every other letter to decode quotes from JRR Tolkien and St. Augustine. The first word of the first quote is circled.

(A) T (L) H (L) E T W H  
 O A R T L I D S I  
 G S O K E A L S N N D  
 O T T H G O L S I D  
 E N O T W T H T E O A T L E  
 N O O N T T H E O A T L E  
 T L R T A H E V O L E O Y E  
 S L E R W N H L A D O Y E  
 D W O A N N E S R  
 E O R G A N A S  
 A L G O E S T

Sample Handout (outside panels)



Dear parent,

Today your child experienced the Kids and Cultures interactive storytelling show *Treasures of the World*. Each of the folktales in the show comes from a different country.

Invite your child to retell a favorite story from today's show. To get started, you could ask about:

- a mouse with two boxes
- a snake's singing voice
- a girl who wore a fishnet
- a woman who gave away plums
- a girl who got tired while telling stories
- the animal who won the lion's treasure
- a mother who saved her family from a cat
- a carpenter who saved a friendship

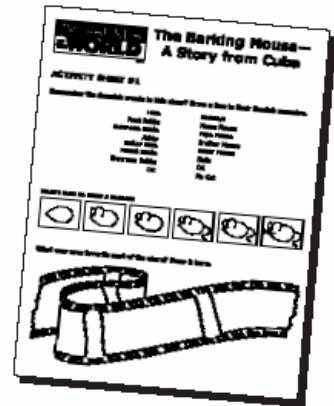
*(not all stories are told at each performance)*

The stories in this show contain virtues—"treasures that no one can take away from you"—that we encouraged your child to work on in his or her life. Ask your child which treasure he or she wants to work on, and find ways to help your child do so. Kindness, honesty, love, determination, wisdom, generosity, courage, and forgiveness are treasures worth seeking!

Our hope is that your child enjoyed today's show and was encouraged to work at being a better person while learning a little about other people around the world.

*Kids and Cultures is a non-profit educational organization that introduces children to the cultures of the world, promoting awareness, understanding, and responsible action as world citizens.*

You can download related activity sheets, recipes, and games at [www.TreasuresOfTheWorld.org](http://www.TreasuresOfTheWorld.org).



Visit [www.KidsAndCultures.com](http://www.KidsAndCultures.com) for our online directory of resources and to learn about our other storytelling shows, including *Why Why Why in the World?*

