

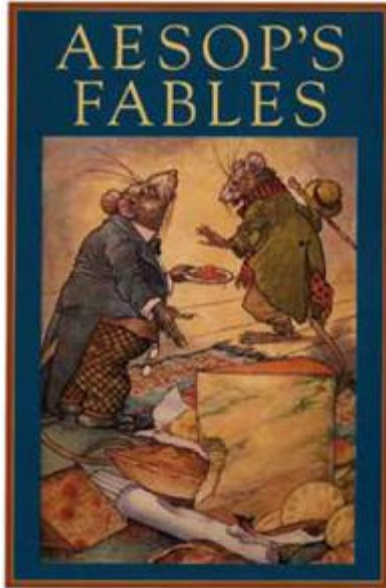
**Topic – 005: Story Telling & Performing Art**

Stories have existed long before recorded history, and the telling of stories has changed forms drastically throughout the ages. From cave painting to novels to movies, stories have always fascinated mankind. Although the methods have changed, the desire to tell and hear stories has remained unchanged, and still greatly impacts the way we look at life.



The earliest form of storytelling that has been discovered is from the Lascaux Caves in the Pyrenees Mountains in southern France. Discovered in 1940 by a group of French children, a series of cave paintings that date back to sometime between 15000 and 13,000 B.C. depicted a variety of animals and one image of a human being. When closely examined, this mural of sorts actually follows a very simplistic series of events. It tells of rituals performed and hunting practices. It tells a story.

Flash forward to 700 B.C. The first printed story, the epic of Gilgamesh, was created and began to spread from Mesopotamia to other parts of Europe and Asia. The story was carved on stone pillars for all to see, which spread the story around very quickly.



In the 200s B.C., Aesop's fables were written down, and continue to teach lessons today in many areas of life. Aesop lived in the 500s B.C., but his stories were remembered for hundreds of years without a single shred of paper or other printed material. Isn't that amazing? Oral storytelling was so powerful and people remembered Aesop's tales so well that even 300 years later the stories were revered enough for mass production.

Storytellers began to arise as very important figures in a community. The ability to tell stories effectively and memorably was a very valuable skill. Why? As wars were fought and valiant deeds were done, the people needed some way to remember them. Instead of simply stating what happened, stories began to emerge as a way to preserve the raw emotions and sequence of events of the actual event.



The Bible's Old Testament spoke of men and women, of tales and lessons learned that occurred many, many years before they were written. A majority of the books relied on solid resources for their writings. What were these resources? Stories. People witnessed events, heard the stories and kept them alive through word of mouth. They told their friends, families and communities about the events, and a chain was formed, one link, one storyteller, at a time.



Shakespeare's plays and sonnets weren't meant to be published, but his status became legendary once they were. He was known as a great storyteller to many of his close friends, but soon became immortalized in the pieces that he produced. From a young street rat in London to being taught in every school hundreds of years later, he made his mark on literature forever. How did he do it?

History is nothing but a series of stories that, when told correctly, can teach us lessons, give us insights into a variety of concepts, or entertain us. Every story serves a purpose, even if to simply relay a message. Without history, without chronicled stories, mankind would never learn from his mistakes, would never dream to emulate past heroes, would never see anything but the now. We would be clueless to the past, and therefore helpless for the future.

## **Performing Arts**

In art, **performance art** is a performance presented to an audience, traditionally interdisciplinary. Performance may be scripted or unscripted, random or carefully orchestrated; spontaneous or otherwise carefully planned with or without audience participation.

The performance can be live or via media; the performer can be present or absent. It can be any situation that involves four basic elements: time, space, the performer's body, or presence in a medium, and a relationship between performer and audience. Performance art can happen anywhere, in any venue or setting and for any length of time. The actions of an individual or a group at a particular place and in a particular time constitute the work.