**TELLABLE TALES: A “STARTER” RESOURCE LIST**

A Companion Piece to “Spellbinders & Virtual Storytelling” Training

**Introduction**: As Spellbinders volunteer storytellers move into the previously uncharted waters of “virtual” storytelling, the importance of avoiding possible copyright violations becomes even more important because we have no way of preventing our stories from being recorded and shared.  Therefore, the picture books and other “literary” tales that many of us have relied on become off-limits—unless we obtain the author’s permission.  Fortunately, there are a wealth of tried and true materials available to us (see below), but we need to be aware that even they must be used with caution because many contain a warning that the author’s permission is needed if we “want to record or publish…these versions.”  Remember, too, that although the original version of a tale (e.g. Aesop or the Brothers Grimm) may no longer be under copyright, a modern author’s version may be.  In the words of storyteller Dovie Thomason, we can use the bones of a classic story, but not the flesh that another teller has added. For that reason, we should find several versions of classic tales and combine them to create our own versions of these classic stories. Used in ways consistent with these limitations, great stories can be found in these resources:

**Books**

* *Ready-to-Tell Tales* and *More Ready-to-Tell Tales* (edited by David Holt & Bill Mooney)
* *Easy to Tell Stories for Young Children* (Annette Harrison)
* *Multicultural Tales to Tell* (Pleasant DeSpain)
* *Twenty-two Splendid Tales to Tell from Around the World* (Pleasant DeSpain)
* *Three Minute Tales* and *Five Minuet Tales* (Margaret Read Macdonald)

**On-Line**

* The “Story Ideas” section of the Spellbinders website ([www.spellbinders.org](http://www.spellbinders.org)) contains many stories that are in the “Public Domain” and are therefore tellable.  This section also references a “Resources” section that contains references and links to a variety of websites, books, and authors.  Many of these resources clearly are not in the public domain, but you will find under “Resources” a list of “Public Domain Resources” where you can find two sites that will provide more than enough stories. They are

[*www.worldoftales.com*](http://www.worldoftales.com)and [*www.gutenberg.com*](http://www.gutenberg.com)

* At least two storytellers with many stories give permission on their websites to tell some of those stories. They are:
  + Aaron Sheppard ([www.aaronshep.com](http://www.aaronshep.com)) offers a section called “Gifts of Story.” Any of these stories can be told for “fun or profit,” but you cannot sell recordings of the stories.  Most of the stories in his “World of Stories” section are copyrighted, but many have detailed notes about the original versions and you might be able to create your own version.
  + Richard Martin ([www.tellatale.eu](http://www.tellatale.eu)) offers a “Permission to Tell” section in which he not only permits but encourages others to tell his stories.  He specializes in folk tales and has a delightful (sometimes bawdy) telling style.

This is, of course, only a sampling of the available resources.  You should find enough stories here for several school years (perhaps a lifetime), but don’t hesitate to broaden your search. Just be sure that you look beyond the stories themselves (e.g. in the Preface or Introduction) to ensure that they are in the public domain or that the teller has granted permission for retelling.

Prepared by Wynn Montgomery (August, 2020)