

# World Folktales and Fables Lesson Plan

## Explore Multiculturalism, Folktales, Bengali Culture and Holi Festival

**Group:** Early Childhood Education class, grades K-2; a culturally diverse group of English language learners.

**Purpose:** An ELA lesson to be taught as part of "World Folktales and Fables Week," having a focus on literacy skills while exploring multiculturalism.

**Focus of Lesson:** (1) literacy skill: story mapping; (2) multicultural: learn about the Bengali culture and the Holi Festival

### **New York ELA Standards:**

- 3 Identify and describe, with and without prompting and support, characters, setting, and major events in a story using key details (grades K, 1, 2)
- 7 Use information gained from illustrations and words in print text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot (grade 2)
- 9a With prompting and support, students will make cultural connections to text and self (grade 1)

### **New Jersey ELA Standards:**

- RL.K3 With prompting and support, identify characters, settings, and major events in a story
- RL.1.3 Describe characters, settings, and major events in a story using key details
- RL.2.2 Recount stories, including fables and folktales from diverse cultures, and determine their central message/theme, lesson, or moral

### **California CCSS ELA Standards for Reading Literature:**

- 3 Describe characters, settings, and major events in a story using key details, with and without prompting and support (grades K, 1)
- 5 Describe the overall structure of a story, including describing how the beginning introduces the story and the end concludes the action (grade 2)
- 7 Use illustrations, with and without prompting, and details in a story to describe its setting, characters, or events (grades K, 1, 2)

**Objectives:** At the conclusion of this lesson students will: (1) successfully use a graphic organizer to map a story with 80% accuracy; (2) learn about Bengali culture and the Holi Festival

### **Materials:**

- The trade book *Buri and the Marrow* by Henriette Barkow and Lizzie Finlay (in English and Bengali).
- Three pictures: one of a marrow, one of New York City, and one of Kolkata, Bengal--all large enough for all students to see images easily when they are held up or displayed at front of class.
- A graphic organizer for story mapping. (Specific organizer should be appropriate to the grade level of the students being taught. For example, a kindergarten or early first grade class should use a graphic organizer with blocks that allow for drawing a picture, while a later school year first grade class or second grade could use a graphic organizer with more lines for writing words and sentences.)

- Large sheets of white paper or a large roll of white paper.
- Food coloring in multiple colors—enough for class.
- 8-10 ounce paper cups (enough for each student to have 3 cups with 3 different colors of food coloring mixed with water in each cup).
- Large drinking straws (enough so that each student has 2 straws).
- Newspaper (to protect floor or desk behind the white paper during activity)
- Paper towels for clean-up.

**OPENING:** (5 minutes)

Students can be seated in small groups of 4-6.

The teacher will begin by introducing the literature: "Today we're going to share a story called *Buri and the Marrow* by Henriette Barkow and Lizzie Finlay. Does anyone know what a marrow is? [Allow time for answers or no answers.] Well, I've got a picture of a marrow right here to show you [hold up image for all to see]. Have you ever seen anything like this before? What does it look like to you? [Allow students to react and respond for a few moments.]

*Buri and the Marrow* is a folktale from a region in Asia where they speak Bengali. Has anyone ever heard of Bengali? [Allow a few moments for student responses then continue.] Bengali is spoken mainly in a country called Bangladesh and a part of India close to Bangladesh (e.g. West Bengal). It's pretty far away. In fact, if you were going to drive from New York City [holding up a picture of NYC] to Kolkata, West Bengal [holding up picture of Kolkata]—but you really can't drive there because there's a lot of ocean between here and there; so let's pretend you can drive there—it would take eight days of driving non-stop to get there. Non-stop. That means you don't stop to eat, you don't stop to sleep, you don't stop to go to the bathroom. You get on the highway and drive, and drive, and drive for eight days. Raise your hand if you think that's a really long time [teacher raises hand]. I know I do! The city of Kolkata, West Bengal [holding up picture], is about 7,932 miles away from New York City [holding up picture—can also place pictures at opposite places in the room not close to each other]. That's a huge number!"

**ENGAGE:** (5 minutes)

The teacher continues: "Now, back to our story, *Buri and the Marrow*. I'm going to read it aloud and I want everyone in the class to pay attention to the story because we are going to make a map of the story after we read it together. Has anyone ever made a map of a story before? [Allow a moment for students respond yes or no.] Well, story mapping isn't hard. The most important thing in story mapping is knowing what happens at the beginning, in the middle, and at the end of a story. Pay attention so that you'll know what happens at the beginning, in the middle, and at the end of *Buri and the Marrow*."

The teacher reads the story aloud to the class then hands out the story mapping graphic organizer to the students, instructing them to pull their crayons and pencils out from their desks and to remember to put their names on their papers. The graphic organizers should have three boxes and a few lines below so students can draw a picture of their mapping and use words, allowing for varied levels of student English language ability.

**STUDY:** (15 minutes)

The teacher writes "Story Map – *Buri and the Marrow*" in large letters then draws three large squares next to each other horizontally on the board below the "Story Map" title to match the students' graphic organizer. The teacher instructs the students, "First, in the space at the top where it says "Title" I want you to write in the title of the book—pointing to where he/she has written it on the

board—*Buri and the Marrow*. Great. Now, I want you to think of something that happened at the beginning of the story and draw a picture of that event in the first box. Write a few words below your picture explaining what's going on—don't worry about spelling. Great! Now, in the second box I want you to draw a picture of something that happened in the middle of the story. Again, write a few words below your drawing explaining what's going on. Okay, now in the last box I want you to draw a picture of something that happened at the end of the story and write your words about it on the lines below the box. Okay—who wants to share their story map? [Allow several students to say their beginning, middle, and ending events and share their drawings, providing support, correcting, and answering questions as you go.]

**ACTIVATE:** (20 minutes)

*Important: Prepare activity materials in advance! Students will work in their small groups to create a group artwork. Have them put newspaper down on their desks for protection first. Students can each use their own large sheet of white watercolor paper, but the better way is for all the students in each small group to create an artwork together on one sheet (one for each small group) of large white paper from a large roll of white paper. The liquid food coloring can be mixed with water in the paper cups so that each student has 3 cups of their own colors and each student has their own 2 straws to use for the activity—don't want to share germs!*

STEP ONE:

**Before you give out any materials,** the students need to learn a little bit about Bengali culture and the Holi Festival. Explain to the students, "Every year in the spring, usually at the end of February or the beginning of March, Bengalis, and many other people in India and Nepal, celebrate a festival that is called the Holi [pronounced *houli*] Festival or the Festival of Colors. [In 2017, the the Holi Festival is on March 13, 2017.] This is a festival that celebrates the coming of spring and the end of winter, and is also a day of thanksgiving for a good harvest. It's a time to forgive and forget, be with your friends and your family, and have a whole lot of fun. The Holi Festival lasts two days. The night before, there's a big bonfire that everyone gathers around. The next day is when all the fun begins! Ranwali Holi—as day 2 is called—is the day of colors. People, old and young, friends and strangers, carry around with them spritzers and balloons filled with colored water that they spray at each other until everyone is multi-colored and beautiful. No, we're not going to spray each other with colored water today! What we're going to do, instead, is make group multi-colored water color paintings using straws."

STEP TWO:

Give out materials to the students in their small groups. Each student has 3 cups with different colored water and 2 straws. Each small group will have one large sheet of white paper for students to share. Students are instructed to use their straws to first draw colored water from their cups and to then spray the colored water onto the paper.

Remind students: (1) NOT to drink the water and (2) spray the colored water onto THE PAPER not each other by blowing gently through the straw.

> **Addition #1:** If there are any students in the class whose family speaks Bengali, a parent, relative or friend can be invited to join the class for this lesson and read the story aloud in both Bengali and English.

> **Addition #2:** Bengali music can be found online, downloaded, burned onto a CD, and can be played while students are creating their artwork.

For more information about the Holi Festival: [www.holifestival.org](http://www.holifestival.org)  
Details about the Holi Festival in the narrative section above from Wikipedia