

A Yoga Storytelling Adventure



Resource Guide

for parents, teachers, librarians, and counselors to
creatively use story and yoga.

Kathe Hudson
Melanie Moyer

A Yoga Storytelling Adventure; A resource guide for parents, teachers, librarians,
and child counselors to creatively use story and yoga.

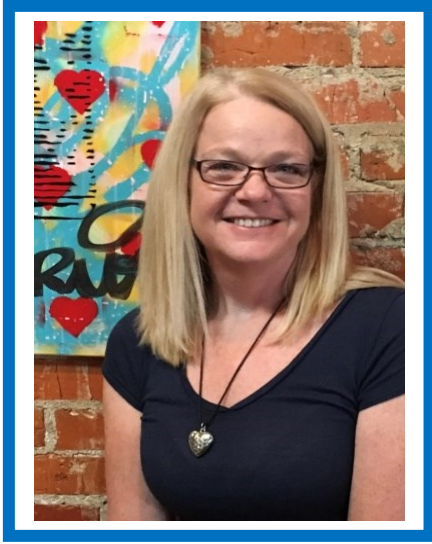
Text Copyright © February 2017 Kathe Hudson and Melanie Moyer

All rights reserved. No part of this work may be reproduced in any form by any
means without written permission from the publisher.

Moving Tale, LLC

www.ayogastorytellingadventure.com





The Twisted Sisters

Once upon time there were two mighty librarians who were passionate about literacy, health, and wellbeing.

We are the founders of *Moving Tale*, a unique program for schools and libraries that introduces children to yoga through story. We now dedicate our time to sharing story and yoga worldwide with our book series - **A Yoga Storytelling Adventure**.

We stretch bodies and minds through wisdom tales told with a yogic twist. These stories instill timeless virtues such as kindness, honesty, compassion, friendship, moderation, generosity, gratitude, contentment, faith, and joy.

Our series, **A Yoga Storytelling Adventure**, introduces kids to yoga offering a unique interactive experience that awakens their curiosity about the world while encouraging their innate creativity and engaging them in mindful movement. Each book includes a full description of yoga poses encouraging kids to make the story come alive!

Our books not only educate, they enchant, entertain and enlighten!

Melanie has a Master's Degree in Library and Information Science. Her experience as a youth services librarian was the catalyst for sharing story and yoga. She is a 200-hour Certified Yoga Teacher and Certified Chair Yoga Teacher.

Kathe has more than 25 years in the fields of Education and Library and Information Science. Story and yoga enchanted her. She is a Master Certified Storytime Yoga Teacher, CYT and LVCYT. She believes we create our lives by the stories we tell.

Social Emotional Learning * Mindful Movement * Imaginative Play

Introduction

A Yoga Storytelling Adventure seeks to instill calm, confidence, and compassion in children.

A fundamental mission of schooling is to educate the whole child. School is one of the primary settings that promote social-emotional learning (SEL). SEL encompasses the processes through which individuals attain and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to identify and manage their emotions; understand another's perspective and show empathy for others; set and achieve positive goals; develop and sustain positive relationships; and make responsible decisions.

In a similar vein, mindfulness seeks to educate the whole child, with a focus on developing awareness, values for moral living, caring for others, learning, and personal growth. Mindfulness is defined as maintaining a moment-by-moment awareness of our thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations, and surrounding environment, through a gentle, nurturing lens.

It is interesting to note that both SEL and mindfulness practices fall under the umbrella of yoga.

Yoga is a holistic system of mind-body practices for mental and physical health that typically incorporates four primary components:

- physical postures/exercises to promote strength and flexibility encouraging a state of awareness
- breathing exercises to enhance respiratory functioning which relieve anxiety and gently brings our awareness to the present moment
- deep relaxation techniques to cultivate the ability to physically and mentally release tension and stress
- meditation/ mindfulness practices to enhance mind-body awareness and improve attention and emotion regulation skills, along with acceptance of self and others

Social Emotional Learning * Mindful Movement * Imaginative Play

Why combine story with yoga?

The magic of story and the wisdom of yoga enhance children's natural curiosity about the world, encourage their innate creativity and engage them in mindful movement. In other words, kids learn through imaginative play!

Our intention is to entertain children while educating and enlightening. Inspiring children to express themselves through story and yoga they become involved physically, as well as intellectually and emotionally.

Story and yoga help us to understand ourselves and the world in which we live. These twin arts bring balance, strength, and flexibility to both body and mind - creating calm, confident, and compassionate children. We suggest you read through the story first and then practice the poses. Parents and teachers need not have any experience with yoga. Basic instructions for each pose are easy to follow. You will benefit as well as the children.

Our kid's yoga stories are adaptations of wisdom tales that we have given a yogic twist. Their universal themes come from the complexities of human experience. The power of these timeless tales speaks to the lives of children today. Through renewed interpretations and meanings universal values are passed along. Children benefit from exposure to these stories, gaining knowledge of traditions as they become familiar with the world.

The tales chosen for our stories come from diverse cultures around the world. The characters and actions lend themselves to effective yoga instruction. All the tales have plots, settings and characters suitable for primary and elementary school age children. Traditional tales illustrate how to live well in the world. Our selections of stories offer values such as kindness, honesty, compassion, moderation, generosity, gratitude, contentment, joy, faith, and friendship. These values unite us with ourselves and others.

The Art of Story

Story is an art we all respond to. It offers a means of communicating thoughts, images, and emotions recognized throughout the world. Stories move us personally; we express our thoughts, fears, and dreams through stories. Stories are also communal; they express shared truths, beliefs, and desires.

Since ancient times, stories have been used in countless ways. Stories were a source of entertainment. They also instructed, helping people learn how to interact with others, developing character and virtues. They were a means of communicating information from one generation to the next, preserving the past and shaping the future.

Language and learning are linked. A child's exposure to language has a profound effect on whether or not they become lifelong learners. Children need to hear complex language to understand the written word. Without a firm foundation in language, learning across the curriculum is impossible. Children need to process a string of words and get meaning from them. Listening to stories expands their understanding of how words can be used. Children who have listened to stories and engaged in conversations are more successful learners. Without this strong foundation in language, comprehension will be difficult.

Children learn the system of sequencing as they participate in gestures and phrases. They begin to anticipate and predict the outcome of the story. Children exposed to stories know that every story has a beginning, middle, and an end.

Critical thinking skills are strengthened by listening to traditional stories. They address many different issues of life. They show us how to face adversity and move through it. Traditional stories also show love, compassion, understanding and courage. Stories are a safe place to experience and understand emotion.

Story develops young listener's imaginations. The ability to use imagination is basic to thinking and learning across the curriculum. Story frees us to see with the mind

and anticipate the outcome, a basic skill of scientific study. Stories connect what children know to new concepts and information. Children experience the transforming power of story and use their imaginations as they enter other worlds.

The Art of Yoga

The word yoga means union. Hatha Yoga is the yoga of postures, breathing exercises, and relaxation techniques. The many benefits of practicing Hatha Yoga are reduced stress, a greater ability to concentrate, improved breathing as well as balance, strength, and flexibility. The practice of yoga not only develops physical muscles but also mental and emotional muscles. Children learn to respect themselves and others, which means an increase in cooperation and a decrease in bullying. Incorporating yoga in the classroom or home is easy with little or no equipment needed. With so many benefits we envision yoga becoming a mainstream instrument in educating the whole child.

When we practice yoga, we learn to pay attention to our bodies and use our breath to calm ourselves. Breathing deeply and moving the body into and out of yoga poses releases stress. Yoga is beneficial, perhaps even essential to kid's physical, mental, and emotional health.

Yoga helps children develop self-awareness and self-regulation. Providing children with an early start on healthy mind body practices can develop habits that contribute to learning, health, and well-being, which progresses to self-awareness thus building confidence. When they become confident, they are better able to connect to others. They look for the best in themselves and in others, developing compassion. The golden rule becomes reality, treating everyone as we wish to be treated.

Children learn to follow directions, developing focus and concentration thereby building mental acuity. Yoga creates a stronger sense of self awareness and awareness of others. Kids feel more capable of handling everyday stresses. They

learn to direct unpredictable energy in positive ways. They learn they can be both calm and energetic, that there is a time and place for both in life.

Yoga is a non-competitive way to involve children in physical activity; yoga is not about being the best, it is about doing your best. It can be done anywhere, and no special equipment is needed. Sticky mats are nice but not necessary. It can be practiced by children of all ages and physical ability. Children vary greatly in their balance, strength, and flexibility. Allow them freedom and fun in attempting the yoga poses.

The Breath

The breath is fundamental to life. One of the main principles that separates yoga from other forms of exercise is awareness of the breath. Paying attention to the breath keeps us strong in the poses and calms the mind.

The breath oxygenates the brain and all the organs, muscles, and cells of the body. Slow full breaths calm the nervous system. Most of us hold our breath when faced with difficulty. Simply learning to take full breaths can help with difficult emotions. Children should take slow full breaths as they move into and out of the poses. The breath should flow in and out through the nose.

Creative Curriculum

Through the magic of story and the wisdom of yoga we will explore language arts, physical and health education, art and science, social studies, and character education.

A Yoga Storytelling Adventure provides experiences for teachers and students to meet the standards set for education. These standards are not only for English language arts but also for literacy in history/social studies, and science.

- Reading - standards that include topics of theme, settings, story structure, sequencing, character development, retelling, story comparison from different cultures, phonological awareness, and many more
- Writing - standards that include narrative, descriptive details, the use of dialogue, sensory detailed language, clear event sequencing
- Speaking and listening - standards that include group discussions and collaborative work, the ability to speak audibly expressing thoughts, feeling and ideas, retelling in many forms, recounting details, creating oral presentations
- Language - standards that include identifying new words and phrases, clarifying meaning, acquiring appropriate language and figurative language.

This curriculum can be used in numerous ways. The activities can and should be adapted to fit your specific needs. Let them serve as a springboard for your own creativity. Our approach to story and yoga has always been experiential, learning as we teach. We encourage you to do the same.

After presenting the story, retell the story with a yoga session. You may then want to introduce the children to other retellings of the same story in picture books and folklore. Open a conversation by inviting children to compare and contrast the settings, characters, and plots of different versions as well as offering concepts to consider.

The following are a few suggestions of how to take **A Yoga Storytelling Adventure** across the curriculum. The stories offer a variety of opportunities to explore the subjects. Each listing can be directly applied to the curriculum requirements for kindergarten through fourth grade. We are confident the addition of story and yoga will enliven your classes while supporting the core subjects of study.

Language Arts; vocabulary, spelling and creative writing

Social Studies; cultures, history, and geography

Science; biology, anatomy, animals and nature

Math; pattern, lines and angles, measurement, mapping, probability

Art; visual arts, dramatic arts

Health and Physical Fitness; Yoga

Concepts to Consider

Here we delve deeper into the 5 parts of a story; what, where, when, why, and instead of who we use how. We put ourselves into the story. The theme of the story is now open for consideration.

What could I do if...?

Where might ...?

When something like this happens...

Why would someone think, do or say...?

How am I like...? How would I feel if...?

These conversations promote higher level thinking. They require more than a mere recounting of what happened in the story. Instead, they require some thought, and they invite differences of opinions.

Use your imagination to open the minds of children.

We love hearing your success stories! Contact us at movingtale@gmail.com

Namaste,
Kathe and Melanie

Our titles are available at www.ayogastorytellingadventure.com, Amazon and wherever books are sold.

FREE Toolkits are available at the website for each title with examples of Creative Curriculum Ideas, Concepts to Consider, and Conversation Starters.