

*Discovering the Story:
A City and Its Culture*

*IMAGINARY PLACES
AND BEAUTIFUL VASES*

A Language Arts Lesson
for Grades 4-8



Mary Louise McLaughlin (1847-1939), The Cincinnati Pottery Club (1879-1890), Frederick Dallas Hamilton Road Pottery (1865-1882), United States (Cincinnati)
Ali Baba Vase, 1880
Gift of the Women's Art Museum Association, 1881.239



Maria Longworth Nichols Storer (The Rookwood Pottery Company)
Aladdin Vase, 1882
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. James J. Gardner, 2002.94

The lesson *Imaginary Places and Beautiful Vases* is based on

Aladdin Vase

by Maria Longworth Nichols Storer

and

Ali Baba Vase

by Mary Louise McLaughlin

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Imaginary Places and Beautiful Vases

A Language Arts Lesson for Grades 4-8
Based on *Aladdin Vase* by Maria Longworth Nichols Storer
and *Ali Baba Vase* by Mary Louise McLaughlin

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CONCEPT

The Museum's large earthenware vases, the *Ali Baba* by Mary Louise McLaughlin and the *Aladdin* by Maria Longworth Nichols Storer, will begin an exploration into the genre of folktales for students in grades 4–8. As students look at McLaughlin's vase, they will learn that its name was derived from *The Tale of Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves*. As a class, students will discuss favorite folktales. Students will read the folktales of *The Tale of Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves* and *Aladdin* and then define elements for the genre with the assistance of a graphic organizer. Finally, students will write folktales using one or both of the CAM vases in their narratives.

OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn about the universal genre of folktales.
- As students read folktales and look at the Museum vases, they will learn that authors and artists follow steps to create.
- Students will read two folktales from the *Arabian Knights* and compare/contrast story elements through use of a graphic organizer.
- Students will create original folktales using one or both of the CAM vases in their narratives.
- Students will include essential storytelling elements in their folktales, including main character(s), plot and setting, sequenced events, descriptive details and a moral or lesson.

"Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once he grows up."

Pablo Picasso

Teacher Preparation

CLASS PERIODS REQUIRED

- 1 to 2 (30-50 min.) periods for Pre-Lesson Activities
- 1 50-min. class period for Videoconference
- 1 to 2 (30-50 min.) periods for Post-Lesson Activities
- 1 to 2 (30-50 min.) periods for Art Enrichment Activity (optional)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Refer to [Background Information](#) for more on the *Ali Baba Vase* and the *Aladdin Vase* and the artists who created them. Background Information has been written for teachers to review before the lesson and then share with students.

VIDEO

Share the [ceramics video](#) with your students prior to the videoconference. The video depicts archival film from Rookwood Pottery and an interview with a Museum curator on the two vases. This video is an excellent resource that will help to prepare students for the videoconference.

Video Duration – approx. six and a half minutes.

"Art is idea. It is not enough to draw, paint, and sculpt. An artist should be able to think."

Gordon Woods

PRE- VIDEOCONFERENCE

VOCABULARY

Definitions can be found in the [Glossary](#) on the [Discovering the Story](#) Website.

Climax
Complication
Exposition
Folktale
Genre
Moral
Plot
Resolution

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- What is a folktale?
- What steps does a visual artist use to create a finished piece?
- What steps does a writer use to create a finished piece?

MATERIALS

- Photos of the Museum's [Ali Baba Vase](#) and [Aladdin Vase](#)
- Books or online text of *The Tale of Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves* and *Aladdin*

PROCEDURE

Teacher will:

- Look at photos of both vases. Discuss with students what they see, think and feel about each vase.
- Inform students that the McLaughlin vase is called the *Ali Baba Vase*, which comes from a famous folktale, *The Tale of Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves*. Read or allow students to read this folktale, focusing on the part about the oil vessels, large enough to hide the thieves. After reading the text, ask students why they think the large vase by McLaughlin was called the *Ali Baba Vase*.
- Inform students that the Storer vase was named the *Aladdin Vase*. This vase was also

named after a folktale, *Aladdin*. Read or allow students to read this folktale. Follow with a discussion of why they think the Storer vase is called *Aladdin*.

- Review the definition/elements of folktales. List other examples such as *Little Red Riding Hood*, *The Three Little Pigs*, *Rapunzel*, *Puss in Boots*, *The Three Billy Goats Gruff*, *Beauty and the Beast*.
- Using a graphic organizer, students will compare/contrast the *Aladdin* and *Ali Baba* folktales.

“Culture is something that evolves out of the simple, enduring elements of everyday life; elements most truthfully expressed in the folk arts and crafts of a nation.”

Thor Hansen

VIDEOCONFERENCE

OBJECTIVES

- Students will interact with the Cincinnati Art Museum staff through a sixty-minute [videoconference](#).
- Students will learn about Cincinnati history from 1850 to 1900.
- Students will use Museum objects to reinforce activities completed in preparation for this [videoconference](#).

CONCEPT

A [videoconference](#) conducted by the Cincinnati Art Museum staff extends student learning through emphasis on the viewing and discussion of art objects. During this [videoconference](#) with the Museum, students will explore Cincinnati art history and the methods and practices of many of the artists working in the city.

SCHEDULE

- **5 minutes** Introduction to CAM staff (*This is also buffer time in case of connection complications*)
- **10 minutes** Brief discussion of student pre-videoconferencing activities.
- **10 minutes** Museum staff will lead an interactive discussion with students on the history of Cincinnati from 1850-1900
- **20 minutes** Museum staff will lead students in an in-depth investigation of selected Museum objects.
Objects Include
 - [Bedstead](#) by Benn Pitman, Adelaide Nourse Pitman, and Elizabeth Nourse
 - [Reception Dress](#) by Selina Cadwallader
 - [Aladdin Vase](#) by Maria Longworth Nichols Storer
 - [Ali Baba Vase](#) by M. Louise McLaughlin
 - [Vase and Dedication Medallion](#) by Tiffany & Co.
- **10 minutes** Questions and student sharing of art projects.
- **5 minutes** Closing (*This is also buffer time in case of connection complications*)

POST- VIDEOCONFERENCE

MATERIALS

Photos of the Museum's [*Ali Baba Vase*](#) and [*Aladdin Vase*](#)

PROCEDURE

Teacher will:

- Discuss with students what they learned through the videoconference about the creation of the earthenware vases.
- Review the elements of a folktale with your students as well as essential elements of all narratives (character, setting, plot, etc.)
- Allow students time to write their own folktale, including one or both of the vases in their narratives.
- Encourage students to share their original writings in small- and/or large-group settings.

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

Folktales will be assessed on originality, inclusion of the Museum's vases or their motifs, use of descriptive words and vivid language, character development, moral or lesson, plot development and successful conclusion.

RESOURCES

BOOKS ON THE ARABIAN NIGHT TALES

- Early, Margaret. *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1989.
- Kimmel, Eric A. *The Tale of Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves*. New York: Holiday House, 1996.
- Mayer, Marianna. *Ali Baba and the Enchanted Lamp*. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1985.
- McCaughrean, Geraldine. *1001 Arabian Nights*. Great Britain: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- McNulty, Walter. *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1987.
- Philip, Neil. *The Arabian Nights*. New York: Orchid Books, 1994.
- Riordan, James. *Tales from the Arabian Nights*. New York: Rand McNally and Company, 1985.
- Wiggin, Kate Douglas. *The Arabian Nights: Their Best-Known Tales (Scribner Classics)*. New York: Atheneum, 1993.

ADDITIONAL FOLKTALE RESOURCES

- Bordewich, Fergus M. *Peach Blossom Spring*. New York: Green Tree Press, 1994.
- Caduto, Michael J. *Earth Tales from Around the World*. Golden, CO: Fulcrum Publishing, 1997.
- Gavin, Jamila. *Our Favorite Stories*. New York: DK Publishing, Inc., 1997.
- Ingpen, Robert and Barbara Hayes. *Folktales & Fables of the Americas & the Pacific*. New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1999.
- Leeming, David Adams. *The Dictionary of Folklore*. New York: Franklin Watts, 2002.
- Martin, Rafe. *Mysterious Tales of Japan*. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1996.
- Matthews, John. *The Beautiful Book of Giants, Ghosts and Goblins: Traditional Tales from Around the World*. New York: Barefoot Books, 1999.
- Milford, Susan. *Tales Alive: Ten Multicultural Folktales with Activities*. Charlotte, VT: Williamson Publishing, 1995.
- Miller, Moira. *The Moon Dragon*. New York: Dial Books for Young Readers, 1989.
- Pearson, Maggie. *The Fox and the Rooster & Other Tales*. Waukesha, WI: Tiger Lily Press, 1997.
- Shannon, George. *The Oryx Multicultural Folktale Series: A Knock at the Door*. Phoenix, AZ: Oryx Press, 1992.
- Sierra, Judy and Robert Kaminski. *Multicultural Folktales: Stories to tell Young Children*. Phoenix, AZ: Oryx Press, 1991.

WEBSITES

Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves

<http://www.2020site.org/robbinhood/alibaba.html>

<http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/alibaba.html>

Aladdin: <http://lang.thefreelibrary.com/Arabian-Knights/1-28>

Folktales

http://teacher.scholastic.com/writewit/mff/folktale_allfolktale.htm

<http://www.pantheon.org/areas/folklore/folktales/articles.html>

ACADEMIC CONTENT STANDARDS

NATIONAL STANDARDS: LANGUAGE ARTS

Grades 4- 8

Standard 1: Uses the general skills and strategies of the writing process.

Benchmark 7: Writes narrative accounts, such as short stories (i.e., engages the reader by establishing a context and otherwise developing reader interest; establishes a situation, plot, persona, point of view, setting, conflict and resolution; develops complex characters; creates an organizational structure that balances and unifies all narrative aspects of the story; uses a range of strategies and literary devices such as dialogue, tension, suspense, naming, figurative language and specific narrative action such as movement, gestures and expressions; reveals a specific theme).

Standard 6: Uses reading skills and strategies to understand and interpret a variety of literary texts.

Benchmark 1: Uses reading skills and strategies to understand a variety of literary passages and texts (e.g., fiction, nonfiction, myths, poems, fantasies, biographies, autobiographies, science fiction, tall tales, supernatural tales).

Benchmark 2. Knows the defining characteristics of a variety of literary forms and genres (e.g., fiction, nonfiction, myths, poems, fantasies, biographies, autobiographies, science fiction, tall tales, supernatural tales).

OHIO STANDARDS: LANGUAGE ARTS

Concepts in Print, Comprehension Strategies and Self-Monitoring Strategies: Students develop and learn to apply strategies that help them to comprehend and interpret informational and literary texts. Reading and learning to read are problem-solving processes that require strategies for the reader to make sense of written language and remain engaged with texts. Beginners develop basic concepts about print and how books work. As strategic readers, students learn to analyze and evaluate texts to demonstrate their understanding of text. Additionally, students learn to self-monitor their own comprehension by asking and answering questions about the text, self-correcting errors and assessing their own understanding. They apply these strategies effectively to assigned and self-selected texts read in and out of the classroom.

Benchmark B: Applies effective reading comprehension strategies, including summarizing and making predictions, and making comparisons using information in text, between text and across subject areas.

Literary Text: Students enhance their understanding of the human story by reading literary texts that represent a variety of authors, cultures and eras. They learn to apply the reading process to the various genres of literature, including fables, folk tales, short stories, novels, poetry and drama. They demonstrate their comprehension by describing and discussing the elements of literature, analyzing the author's use of language, comparing and contrasting texts, inferring meaning and

responding to text in critical and creative ways. Strategic readers learn to explain, analyze and critique literary text to achieve deep understanding.

Benchmark A: Describes and analyzes the elements of character development.

Benchmark B: Analyzes the importance of setting.

Benchmark C: Identifies the elements of plot and establishes a connection between an element and a future event.

Benchmark F: Identifies similarities and differences of various literature forms and genre.

Writing Process: Students' writing develops when they regularly engage in the major phases of the writing process. The writing process includes the phases of prewriting, drafting, revising and editing, and publishing. They learn to plan their writing for different purposes and audiences. They learn to apply their writing skills in increasingly sophisticated ways to create and produce compositions that reflect effective word and grammatical choices. Students develop revision strategies to improve the content, organization and language of their writing. Students also develop editing skills to improve writing conventions.

Benchmark C: Clarifies ideas for writing assignments by using graphics or other organizers.

Writing Applications: Students need to understand that various types of writing require different language and formatting, and special vocabulary. Writing serves many purposes across the curriculum and takes various forms. Beginning writers learn about the various purposes of writing; they attempt and use a small range of familiar forms (e.g., letters). Developing writers are able to select text forms to suit purpose and audience. They can explain why some text forms are more suited to a purpose than others and begin to use content-specific vocabulary to achieve their communication goals. Proficient writers control effectively the language and structural features of a large repertoire of text forms. They deliberately choose vocabulary to enhance text and structure their writing according to audience and purpose.

Benchmark A: Uses narrative strategies (e.g., dialogue and action) to develop characters, plot and setting and to maintain a consistent point of view.