



ACTIVITY OVERVIEW



Q2 • Story Telling • High School • ALL School

Storytelling Across Generations

Activity Overview

This All School activity introduces high school students to storytelling as a powerful way of understanding history, culture, and perspective. While history is often presented through written records and formal texts, New Mexico's diverse cultures have long preserved knowledge through oral traditions. These storytelling practices offer meaningful insight into the state's Native, Puebloan, Spanish, and Mexican roots and their contributions to the broader history of the United States.

Through listening to a storyteller and reflecting on the experience, students examine how stories preserve cultural memory, convey values, and shape understanding of place, identity, and national history.

Activity Options:

Option A: Professional New Mexico Storyteller

Students listen to a professional New Mexico storyteller share stories connected to culture, history, or place. This option emphasizes oral tradition, attentive listening, and respect for cultural knowledge.

Option B: School or Community Storyteller

A member of the school or local community serves as the storyteller, sharing a selected story that reflects New Mexico's cultural traditions. This option highlights community voices and local perspectives.

Before the Activity

Educators determine the storyteller and prepare for the assembly as outlined in the Checklist. Teachers may introduce oral storytelling as a cultural practice, provide historical or cultural context, and review audience etiquette with students in advance.

Students may engage with supporting materials such as short videos, articles, or readings to deepen background knowledge and prepare for thoughtful listening.



During the Activity

Students gather for a shared All School experience.

- The cultural significance of storytelling in New Mexico is introduced.
- The storyteller is introduced and shares expectations for the audience.
- Students listen as the storyteller presents one or more stories.
- Teachers model respectful audience behavior and support student engagement.

After the Activity

Classroom discussions or written reflections allow students to analyze the story and its cultural significance. Educators may guide reflection using questions such as:

- What does this story reveal about the culture it comes from?
- How does knowing this story help us better understand New Mexico?
- How does this story enrich the history of the United States?
- How did hearing the story orally change your experience compared to reading or watching it?

Classes may collectively or individually create thank-you notes to honor the storyteller and reinforce the importance of gratitude and etiquette.

Educator Notes

This activity is intentionally flexible and may be adapted for different schedules and school settings.

Follow-up discussions may be brief or extended depending on classroom needs.

Additional background resources, storyteller guidance, and cultural context are available in the Educator Resources document.

The goal is critical listening, cultural appreciation, and reflection, not content mastery.

Connection to Statewide Theme

The *Storytelling Across Generations* activity highlights New Mexico's contributions to the nation by honoring diverse cultural traditions and ways of remembering history. Through oral storytelling, students gain a deeper understanding of how local histories and perspectives contribute to the broader American story.