

Joan Leotta
Spoken Word Artist And Author



Encouraging words through pen and performance

For Bookings, Contact:
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Why Story?

Story acts as a natural framework for our thoughts. Historically, cultures have passed along their traditions, legends, and behavior norms in story form. Stories allow listeners to store in their minds while their hearts enjoy vivid descriptions, gestures, sounds and rhythms of a tale. The National Council of Teachers of English says, “Oral storytelling is *‘unsurpassed as a tool for learning about ourselves and about the ever increasing information available to us, and about the thoughts and feelings of others.’*”

Why Joan Leotta?

In more than twenty years of storytelling, Joan has been a featured presenter at schools, libraries, and festivals in Virginia, DC, North Carolina and Massachusetts. Her venues include Smithsonian Museums, Kennedy Center, and The White House in Washington DC. She also teaches storytelling, presentation techniques, and writing. Her own writing has won awards in a Poet in Virginia Award, and NC’s Lower Cape Fear Historical Society award.

What others say about Joan’s performances:

“Many thanks for the fantastic speech and story on Saturday. The NCRA board said we couldn’t have found a better person to speak to the reading/writing issues that we

support. You did a wonderful job.” Pat Fenton, Curriculum Specialist, Jessie Mae Monroe Elementary School, Calabash, NC

“Your storytelling is an unusual and treasured gift...I am delighted that you appeal to all ages!” E. Schoetzau, Principal, Fairfax County.

“Our favorite part of the show was the radio drama (by Joan Leotta)” Spy Museum, Washington DC.

“You had a rapt audience.” Jay Kohn, Kennedy Center.

“We want to hire you again!” Pat Goodwin, Exec Dir. Franklin G. Burroughs-Simeon B. Chapin Art Museum

Programs Available for elementary, middle, and/or high schools:

General folklore presentation

This presentation demonstrates strengthening the relationships between oral literature and written word with both my choice of tales and references for the teachers to use afterwards with the students.

1. Talk to the older classes on how history, one’s own and general, informs and inspires fiction. (This is a popular talk that I have given often in high schools in Northern Virginia.) The talk lasts about a half and hour and features excerpts from my own works in poetry, fiction and non-fiction as well as some general tips on writing and how to develop their own styles—lots of encouragement too. Teachers often select students taking advanced writing to hear the talk but I find that it is good for “non-writers” as well because it often inspires them to write!
2. **Power of Words:** blends the presentation of a folktale (adapted) on the power of words with my own experience and a round of encouragement to them to write well, often, and thoughtfully.

Field Trips without a bus

A variety of curriculum related shows using folklore either folklore of tales from many cultures around a single theme of folktales of one nation on a single subject or selected across a spectrum of subjects to explicate a culture.

Anti-Bullying, Taming the Tongue

Power of Words (*Writing Program*)

Banishing Butterflies (*Program on Speaking Skills*)

Frog Music (*Stories to Respect the Environment*)

Swamp and Forest Friends

Bridging Cultures (*Multi-Cultural, choose among Hispanic, African, Asian, Middle Eastern, Australian*)

North Carolina is Delicious (Good Nutrition)
Ancient Myths (Egypt, Rome, Greece)

Time Travelers

One-woman shows on a variety of topics

The Whaler's Wife

Story of a woman (in the 1840s) who learned to think about the world in a new way.

Belle Boyd's Aunt Recollects

Humorous show about Civil War Spies.

Westward Ho! Narcissa Whitman

The first white woman to travel the Oregon Trail recounts her trip

Molly Speaks!

Colonial indentured servant tells about life in NC during and just after the revolutionary war

WWII on the Homefront Radio personality from WWII gives a short interactive radio show and talks about life on the homefront

Other, custom presentations of stories, one woman shows, writing or speaking skills workshop available on request.