



ASSEMBLY DATE: _____
ASSEMBLY TIME: _____
FOR STUDENTS IN: _____

Young Audiences of Maryland Teacher Assembly Guide
LOL: Literacy Out Loud!

TAHIRA



Assembly Description

TAHIRA, an international and critically acclaimed storyteller, will leave your students on the edge of their seats and excited about sharing stories!

TAHIRA entralls students with her tickle-your-funny-bone tales and delightful sing-along songs. Delivered in her signature high-energy style, TAHIRA captivates young audiences with stories rooted in the oral tradition of the African Diaspora. The interactive program utilizes stories and songs to teach literacy skills, as students join in the performance through an engaging Q&A woven into the fabric of the stories.

***Please pass along the attached teacher program guide to all participating classrooms**

"She was truly amazing and inspirational. She had both groups of kids (K-2 & 3-5) in the palm of her hand the entire time."
- PTA President

Program Description:

In this assembly program, TAHIRA opens with an introduction of the call-and-response in the “Ga”



language of Ghana. Call-and-response, one of the essential components of African and African American storytelling, is both spontaneous and requested exchange between the storyteller and the audience.

Seamlessly weaving story and song, TAHIRA’s dramatic storytelling style invites the students to make predictions, ask questions and share their thoughts and feelings about the story. TAHIRA is masterful at creating a space for students to react and respond to her performance without losing a step in the story.

Setup Requirements

- One 3-prong grounded electric outlet with 10 feet of the performance space.



Maryland

“LOL: Literacy Out Loud” TAHIRA

- Small table (student’s desk is perfect).

Artist arrival time

At least 30 minutes before performance time

Suggested Introductions

“Boys and Girls, this performer has been creating and telling stories since she was old enough to hold a pencil! Please give a warm welcome to Ms. TAHIRA as she presents LOL: Literacy Out Loud!”

Inclement Weather

DON’T WORRY! Artists will follow school closings and delays and will work with you to reschedule the performance if necessary.

Young Audiences Contact Number: 410-837-7577

Call 410-837-7577 and follow the prompts to be connected with a staff member on call for After Hours or Emergency.





“LOL: Literacy Out Loud” TAHIRA



Artist Bio

TAHIRA is a storyteller, vocalist and musician with a Bachelor of Arts degree from Temple University's School of Communication and Theatre. She has been writing since she was old enough to hold a pencil!

Since 1996, TAHIRA has been a full-time performing and teaching artist. Whether performing her original works or her vast repertoire of stories from the African oral tradition, she brings to her audience messages of courage, hope and spiritual strength. Blending song, poetry and story in a high-energy performance TAHIRA captivates and entralls audiences in schools, libraries, festivals and social services organizations nationally and internationally. In December 2015, TAHIRA performed in Ghana, West Africa at the internationally acclaimed festival, PANAFEST. TAHIRA is renowned for using storytelling in non-traditional settings, such as with victims of trauma and juveniles in correctional facilities.

Inside this guide:

- Artist Bio
- Standards
- Vocabulary
- Resources
- Pre-Performance Activities
- Performance Highlights
- Post-Performance Activities

TAHIRA is the 2000 Recipient of the Delaware Division of Arts Fellowship in the Established Professional category for her outstanding contributions to Oral Literature. TAHIRA is an advocate of using the arts to bring about social change saying, "My mission as an artist is to use story to empower young people to think critically, choose wisely and believe fervently in their ability to succeed."



“LOL: Literacy Out Loud” TAHIRA

Common Core Standard:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.3 - (Reading) Key Ideas and Details:

Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.2 - (Speaking and Listening) Comprehension and Collaboration

Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

National Core Art Standards:

Theatre/Responding

Anchor Standard: Perceive and analyze artistic work.

TH.RE.7.4: a.) Identify artistic choices made in a theatrical work through participation and observation.

Vocabulary

Ago: *In the Ga language spoken in Ghana, West Africa, it is a call for attention.*

Ame: *In the Ga language spoken in Ghana, West Africa, it is the response to the call for attention. It lets the “caller” know you are ready and willing to listen.*

Oral Tradition: *To pass down information and values through the spoken word from one person to another; one generation to another.*

List of Resources

Books for Teachers

Talk that Talk: An Anthology of African-American Storytelling. (edited) Marian Barnes and Linda Goss

Jump Up and Say. Linda and Clay Goss

Sayin’! Somethin’/–/National/Association/of/Black/Storytellers/



Maryland

“LOL: Literacy Out Loud” TAHIRA

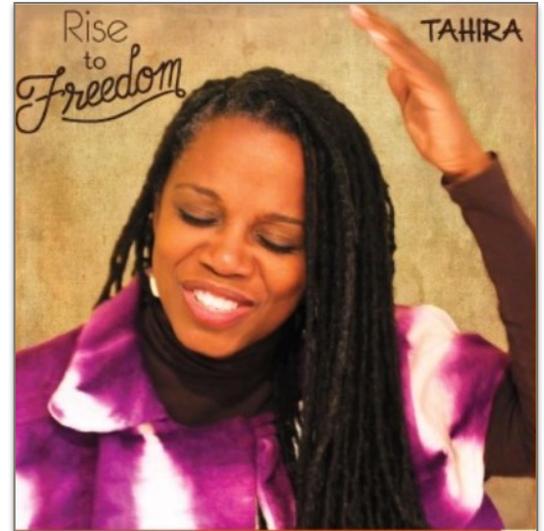
A Treasury of African Folklore. Harold Courlander

Links for Teachers and Students

<http://www.nabsinc.org/heroes-sheroes>

<https://nabs.memberclicks.net/assets/2016%20song%20swap%20resource.pdf>

<http://www.storynet.org/resources/>



Audio for Teachers and Students

Rise to Freedom - CD by TAHIRA available at <http://www.tahiraproductions.com/products.html>

Pre-Performance Activities

Background information or concepts students should know about the topic in order to understand and appreciate the performance:

1. Read several folktales with your class. If you can, include an Anansi story, a tall tale, and a story that explains natural phenomena, such as "Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ears." Try to find two versions of the same story. Have the children listen and make comparisons.
2. Encourage students to tell — not read — a story with which they are familiar. Discuss the differences between telling and reading a story.
3. Have your children brainstorm what they think a storyteller might do to make a story interesting to an audience. Encourage them to watch and listen carefully during the performance to see what TAHIRA does to make the stories interesting and fun.
4. Many of the stories and songs that TAHIRA shares are passed down through the generations.
 - Discuss how cultural history and ethnic traditions are preserved within a family.
 - Ask students to share any stories, songs or special customs particular to their own families or culture.



“LOL: Literacy Out Loud” TAHIRA

- Point out how the oral tradition plays a vital role in defining history and heritage.

Performance Highlights for Audience

Pay attention to what the movements and interactions look like to you. When you return to your classroom you will be asked to come up with descriptive words and phrases that best express what you experienced.

Notice how there are many different artistic elements that merge together to form this African-Brazilian art form? When you return to your classroom we will try and name them.

Post-Performance Activities

1. Have students illustrate one of the stories heard.
2. Have students think of a special message or lesson they would like to share, then create a story that illustrates that lesson and read it or tell it to the class. See if the class can guess the lesson or message before the student reveals it.
3. Make a story cloth. Have the students select a story of their choice. Students may draw or cut out construction paper figures that represent characters or aspects of the story selected. Sew or glue each figure on a large piece of burlap. Students can use the story cloth to retell the story to another class. Story cloths can be displayed.
4. Using a story from the performance or another of their choice, students may act out a story in the form of a skit or using puppets.

Classroom Discussion Questions: Follow up questions related to the assembly/residency.

1. Discuss the specific stories and songs in the LOL Program that held the students' attention most.
2. Ask students if any of the stories had lessons or left them with something to think about. Ask them to



“LOL: Literacy Out Loud” TAHIRA

identify the stories and the lessons learned.

3. Ask how the performance would have been different if the storyteller had sat down and read the same stories.

Classroom Handout:

See Crossword Puzzle

Lesson Plan:

See below

Background Information on African Storytellers for Students:

The Jali tradition has been passed down for centuries in the present-day West African countries of Mali, Gambia, Guinea, Burkina Faso and Senegal. The Jali (or griots in French) are the embodiment of their countries’ societal histories. In contrast to written literature, the African oral history is composed to be verbally performed and is an integral part of spoken word performance, theater, dance and music. The Jali, through their public and private performances of story and music, transmit historical facts from one generation to the next.

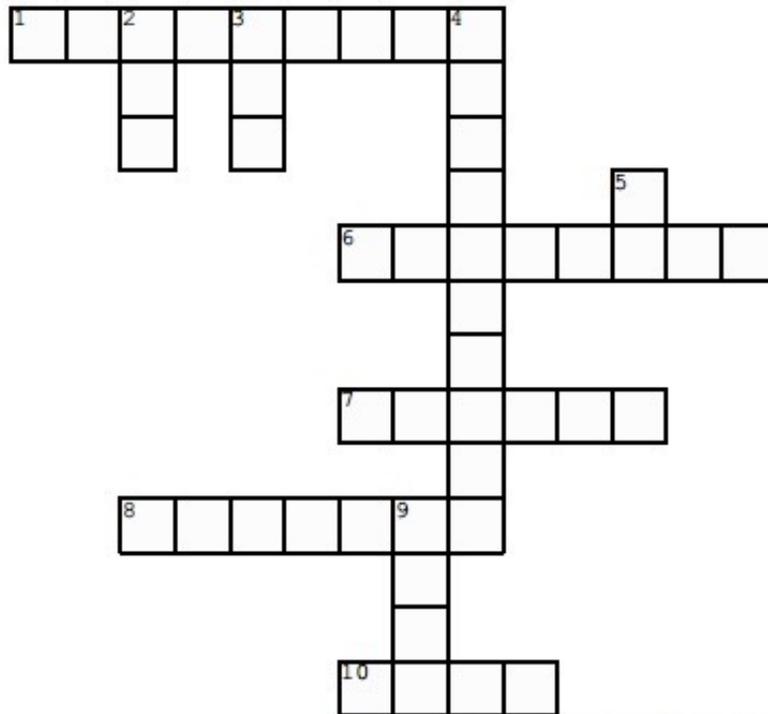
In traditional African societies, some professions are primarily conditioned by family heritage. The Jali are one example of this tradition. Future historians are born, raised and imbued with the education and skills necessary to serve their societies. Other families in the societies employ the services of a Jali as a personal historian. The Jali spends much time with the employer’s families recording important events while at the same time passing the history and the job on to his or her children so that the history of the employer’s family stays alive for all times. Most importantly, the Jali ensures that the historical recordings of his or her employer are passed on to the future generation of that family through story and music performances at family gatherings.

One of the attributes of the Jali tradition that remains today is the respect for the Jali as a chronicler and competent commentator of social events. The Jali has retained the right to openly criticize all social classes. The freedom to criticize is unlimited and his/her criticism is almost always accepted.

Name: _____

Literacy Out Loud Storytelling

Complete the crossword below



Created with TheTeachersCorner.net [Crossword Puzzle Generator](#)

Across

- 1.** It can be a human or animal in the story
- 6.** Story passed on by word-of-mouth
- 7.** Turning point in the story
- 8.** A different way of telling a traditional or familiar story
- 10.** Sequence of events in a story

Down

- 2.** Call for attention in the Ga language
- 3.** Response to the call for attention in the Ga language
- 4.** Solution of the plot
- 5.** Language spoken in Ghana
- 9.** The ancient method by which stories are passed on from one generation to another



Maryland

“LOL: Literacy Out Loud”

TAHIRA

Storytelling Lesson Plan: Making A Story Skeleton

Objectives:

- To engage students in the art of storytelling
- To promote reading comprehension
- To listen, read and retell a story
- To articulate the main points of a story
- To use oral language with clarity and voice to communicate a message

Teacher's Prep:

Choose 2 or 3 stories well known to your students (Example: Goldilocks & Three Bears, The Three Little Pigs)
Commit one story to memory to tell to the class. (Feel free to use the books listed in Teacher's Guide)

Activity:

- Discuss the three parts of a story which is called the story skeleton: Beginning, Middle & End. Discuss how a skeleton is the main framework of a story. It holds everything together. If any part of the skeleton is missing, the entire story falls apart. (Optional: use a graphic of an skeleton to drive home the point about the framework. Discuss the analogy of the role of the skeleton to the body vs. the role of the story skeleton to the story.)

Ask for the following questions about the story selected:

- What happens first? Who are the characters? What is the setting? Does the setting change? What are the challenges or problems do the characters face? How do they overcome these challenges or solve these problems?
- Ask students to tell you where they would place those questions on the *story skeleton*. Where would each question be placed (Beginning, Middle or End)

Tell the story you committed to memory. Have students make a skeleton of that story. (Optional: Divide class into groups. Have each group do the story skeleton and then have each retell the story to the class using the story skeleton.)