

Well of Truth: A Folktale from Egypt

Written by Martha Hamilton and Mitch Weiss

ABOUT THE BOOK

GUIDED READING:

I

LEXILE LEVEL:

520L

CHARACTER TRAITS:

Citizenship
Fairness
Sharing

REGION:

Middle East

ISBN:

978-0-874838-80-0

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

NOTE:

Find correlating
Common Core
Standards at the
head of each activity
section.

Outcome

Students will demonstrate an understanding of the story through writing, discussing, drawing, and pantomiming.

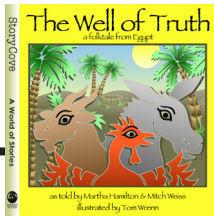
Overview

Students will read and explore a folktale from Egypt while utilizing interdisciplinary connections in language arts, math, dramatic arts, cooking, visual arts, and character education.

Materials

General

- Book, *The Well of Truth*
- World map or globe
- Lined paper
- Pencils
- Blackboard or Whiteboard
- Chalk or dry erase markers
- Poster board
- Markers or crayons
- Books on ancient Egyptian art
- Unlined paper



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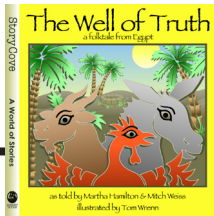
Second Grade

Cooking Activities

- 1 Large mixing bowl
- Large spoon
- Knife to cut pita bread
- Refrigerator
- Paper plates
- Napkins
- 3 TBL Red Wine Vinegar
- ½ Cup Olive Oil
- 2 Cans Chickpeas
- 1 Sliced Cucumber, chopped into small chunks
- 1 ½ Cups Tomato, chopped
- ½ Cup Celery
- 1 ½ Tsp Minced Garlic
- ½ Tsp Dill Weed
- Salt
- Pepper
- Pita bread

Optional: Extension Activities

- Computer with Internet access
- Hamilton, Martha and Mitch Weiss. "The Bell that Knew the Truth." *Through The Grapevine: World Tales Kids Can Read and Tell*. Little Rock: August House, 2001. 19-21.

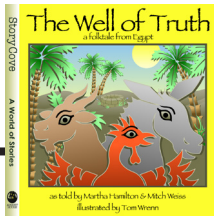


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Introduction

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.

RL.2.4:

Rhythm and meaning

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.

SL.2.1:

Collaborative
conversations

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.

SL.2.6:

Complete sentences

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.

RL.2.1.F:

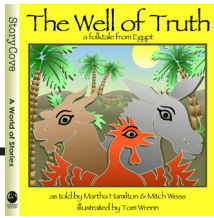
Produce complete
sentences

Introducing the Story

Directions:

Asks students:

- What “truth” is.
- To share any experiences they have had with truth.
- To share any stories they know about truth.
- What a “lie” is and why people might lie.
- What a “half truth” is.
- What a “white lie” is.
- To name situations where they think it would be okay to tell a “white lie” or “half truth.”
- What the phrases “stretch the truth” and “lie through your teeth” mean.
- Tells students that they will play a game called, “Two Truths and a Lie” with the following directions:
 - Teacher tells students that each person will make up three statements. Two statements will be true and one will not be true. (For example: Teacher says: I have three older brothers, I was on my college’s basketball team, and I have a poodle named Charles.)
 - Students take turns guessing which statement (out of the three statements) is not true.
 - Each student takes a turn telling two truths and a lie. That student then calls on classmates, one at a time, to guess which statement is not true.



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COMMON CORE STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.

RL.2.2:

Recount stories, central message

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.

RL.2.7:

Illustrations

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.

RF.2.4.B:

Fluency

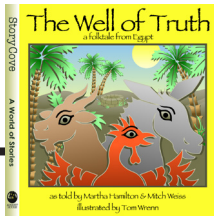
Reading the Story

Materials:

- Book, *The Well of Truth*
- World map or globe

Directions:

- Tells students that they will be reading a folktale from Egypt about truth.
- Helps students locate Egypt on map or globe and points out neighboring countries and bodies of water including the Nile River.
- Shows students the cover of the book and reads the title.
- Asks students to predict what the story is about based on the cover illustration and the title.
- Distributes books to students and asks students to volunteer to read a page aloud.



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Discussion Questions

For Assessing Comprehension

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.

RL.2.1:

Key details

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.

RL.2.3:

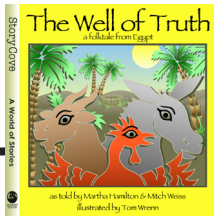
Character response

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.

RL.2.7:

Illustrations

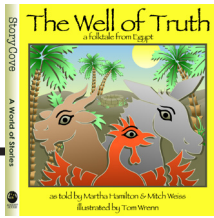
- Who is this story about? What is this story about?
- Where does this story take place? How can you tell?
- What did the characters plant?
- What were the steps they used to plant the clover?
- Once the clover started growing, why did Goat tell Donkey they should wait before eating it?
- The animals agreed to wait until the morning to eat the clover. Looking at the illustration on Page 11, what do you think the animals are doing? Do you shake hands when you make an agreement?
- The night before they were going to feast, Donkey could not sleep. What was he thinking about?
- What did Donkey do when he went to the field by himself that night?
- Did Donkey mean to eat all the clover? Have you ever started out just having a taste or a bite of something and then ended up eating much more than you planned?
- How did Donkey feel the next morning?
- What did Donkey tell Rooster and Goat when they wanted to go to the field and eat the clover?
- How did Rooster and Goat feel when they went to the field and saw that someone had eaten all the clover?
- How could they tell that Donkey had eaten the clover? (Donkey had a swollen belly.) What does it mean to have a swollen belly? Have you ever had a swollen belly after eating a large meal?



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- Where did they take Donkey to test him?
- Why did they jump over the well?
- What happened when Rooster jumped over the well?
- What happened when Goat jumped over the well?
- How did Donkey feel when it was his turn to jump over the well?
- What happened when Donkey jumped over the well?
- How long did Donkey stay in the well?
- What lesson did Donkey learn?
- How is truth important in this story?
- How do the illustrations show that the story takes place in Egypt?
- Could this story take place somewhere other than Egypt or is it specific to Egypt?



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Language Arts

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.

RL.2.6:

Complete sentences

CCSS.ELA-

LITERACY.W.2.3:

Narratives

CCSS.ELA-

LITERACY.L.2.1.F :

Complete sentences

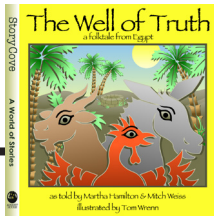
Diary Entry

Materials:

- Lined paper
- Pencils

Directions:

- Tells students that they will be writing diary entries from the point of view of one of the characters in the story.
- Leads a discussion about how each character might tell the story in a different way, depending on their point of view.
- Tells students to choose a character from the story.
- Tells students to choose four of the following days and to write a diary entry for each day.
 - The day that the animals decided to plant the clover. A day when they tended the plants.
 - The night that Donkey ate all the clover.
 - The day that Rooster and Goat discovered that the clover had been eaten.
 - The day that the animals jumped over the Well of Truth.
 - Donkey's first night in the well.
 - VDonkey's last night in the well.
- Asks students to share their diary entries with the class.
- Leads a discussion on how the diary entries are different depending on the point of view.



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COMMON CORE STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-
LITERACY.L.2.4:
Rhythm and meaning
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.
SL.2.6:
Complete sentences
CCSS.ELA-
LITERACY.W.2.3:
Narratives

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.
RL.2.2:
Recount stories, central
message
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.
RL.2.3:
Character response
CCSS.ELA-
LITERACY.L.2.5.A:
Real life connections
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.
SL.2.4:
Facts and relevant details
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.
SL.2.6:
Complete sentences

Apology Note

Materials:

- Blackboard or whiteboard
- Chalk or dry erase markers
- Lined paper
- Pencils

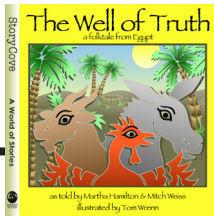
Directions:

- Tells students that there are many reasons to write a note to someone.
- Tells students that if you do something wrong, it is nice to write an apology note.
- Asks students what should be included in any note of apology.
- Writes an example of an apology note on the board and points out proper form for this type of letter.
- Asks students what Donkey might include in an apology note to Goat and Rooster.
- Asks students to pretend they are Donkey and to write an apology note to Goat and Rooster.
- Asks students to share their notes with the class.

Character Education Discussion

Directions:

- Tells students that the book teaches the character traits of citizenship, fairness, responsibility, and sharing.
- Asks students to define these words.



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- Leads a brief discussion about how each of the character traits was taught in the story.
- Divides the class into four groups, assigning each group one of the character traits.
- Asks each group to discuss more thoroughly how the assigned character trait was taught in the story.
- Asks students to discuss how the character trait could be applied in their lives.
- Asks each group to share their discussions with the class and examples of how the character trait could be used in their lives

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-
LITERACY.L.2.4:
Vocabulary acquisition
CCSS.ELA-
LITERACY.L.2.1.F:
Produce complete
sentences
CCSS.ELA-
LITERACY.L.2.1.G:
Legible handwriting

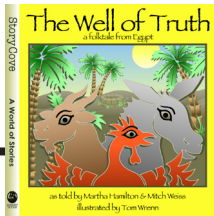
Homographs

Materials:

- Blackboard or Whiteboard
- Chalk or dry erase markers
- Pencils
- Lined paper

Directions:

- Teacher asks students what a homograph is (a word of the same written form as another word, but with a different meaning).
- Writes the title of the story, *The Well of Truth*, on the board and asks students which word in the title has more than one meaning.
- Asks students to define the different meanings of the word “well.”
- Writes the following words on the board: well, bark, bat, calf, duck, fly, fall, fit, hit, kind, letter, like, land,



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- Lie, miss, nail, play, roll, rest, sink, spring, back, bright, change, kid, leaves, set, foot, stick, skip, watch, yard, and space.

- Divides the class into three groups.

Group A:

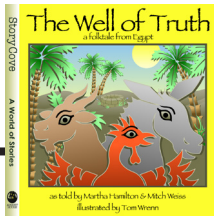
- Works with the teacher to complete the activity.
- Students copy ten words on lined paper and discuss the multiple meanings of each word.

Group B:

- Works with a partner to complete the activity.
- Students copy seven words on lined paper and write at least two sentences with each word, to show the different meanings of each word.

Group C:

- Works with a partner to complete the activity.
- Students copy at least ten words on lined paper and write at least two sentences with each word, to show the different meanings of each word.



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Phonics

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.

RF.2.3:

Phonics and word
recognition

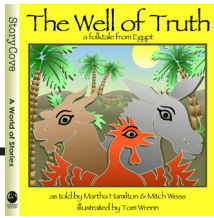
Generating Words by Initial Letters

Materials:

- Lined paper
- Pencils
- Blackboard or Whiteboard
- Chalk or dry erase markers

Directions:

- Teacher tells students to fold their papers in half vertically twice, creating four columns. Writes the following words on the board and tells students to write one of the following story words on the top line of each column: Donkey, Rooster, Goat, Egypt.
- Tells students to write as many words as they can in four minutes that begin with the first letter of the guide word on the top line of each column. (Example: If the guide word is “well,” students might write the words “water,” “window,” “wing,” and “weather.”)
- Encourages students to budget their time so that they do not spend the entire time allotted on one column.
- Asks students to go around the room and take turns naming the words they wrote down for each guide word.
- Records the words each student names for each guide word on the board.
- Tells students to give themselves one point for each word on their paper.
- Tells students to give themselves an extra point for each word no one else had written down on their papers.
- Tells students to add up their scores.



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Math

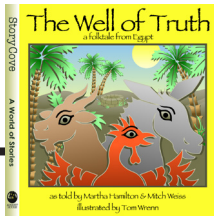
Adding Days in Months

Materials:

- Blackboard or Whiteboard
- Chalk or dry erase markers
- Pencils
- Paper

Directions:

- Teacher asks students to dictate the months of the year in chronological order and writes them on the board.
- Asks students how many days are in each month in a non-leap year and writes the number of days next to each month. (For example: January—31 days; February—28 days)
- Reminds students that Donkey had to stay in the well for two months and one night.
- Asks students to tell how many days (or nights) Donkey was in the well during the following combinations of months:
 - January and February plus one night
 - February and March plus one night
 - March and April plus one night
 - April and May plus one night
 - May and June plus one night
 - June and July plus one night
 - July and August plus one night
 - August and September plus one night
 - September and October plus one night



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- October and November plus one night
- November and December plus one night
- December and January plus one night
- Asks students how the number of days would be altered by a leap year.

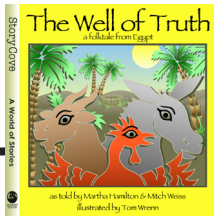
Arrays

Materials:

- Book, *The Well of Truth*
- Chalkboard or whiteboard
- Chalk or dry erase markers

Directions:

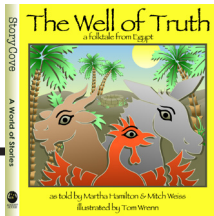
- Tells students that when crops are planted, they are often planted in evenly spaced rows, with an equal amount of space between each plant. Teacher shows Page 13.
- Tells students that when each row has an equal number of plants in it, an array is formed.
- Draws the example of 5 plants in a row and 2 rows on the board.
- Shows students that the number of plants in the array can be written as $5 + 5 = 10$ or as $5 \times 2 = 10$.
- Draws the example of 4 plants in a row and 3 rows.
- Shows students that the number of plants in the array can be written as $4 + 4 + 4 = 12$ or as $4 \times 3 = 12$.



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- Tells students that multiplication can be a shortcut for addition.
- Explores other arrangements with students and how to write equations for the arrays using both addition and multiplication.



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Dramatic Arts

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.

RL.2.5:

Story structure

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.

RL.2.3:

Character response

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.

SL.2.1:

Collaborative
conversations

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.

SL.2.6:

Complete sentences

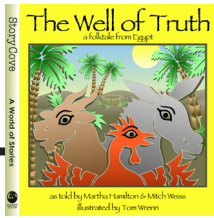
Pantomime the Story

Materials:

- Book, *The Well of Truth*

Directions:

- Teacher reviews the sequence of story events.
- Discusses with students how characters in the story show how they feel with body language and facial expressions.
- Divides the class into groups with eight to ten students in each group.
- Tells each group of students that each group member should choose a character from the story to portray.
- Tells each group to pantomime the story.
- Reminds students that body language and facial expressions are important since they cannot speak during the pantomime.



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Art

Posters of Truth

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.

RL.2.2:

Recount stories, central messages

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.

SL.2.5:

Additional details

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.

SL.2.4:

Facts and relevant details

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.

SL.2.6:

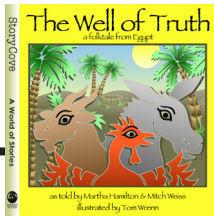
Complete sentences

Materials:

- Blackboard or Whiteboard
- Chalk or dry erase markers
- Poster board
- Markers

Directions:

- Teacher asks students what a “proverb” is (a well-known saying that expresses a truth).
- Asks students what the following proverbs mean:
 - “Actions speak louder than words”
 - “Better late than never.”
- Writes the following proverbs about truth on the board and reviews them with students:
 - “Always tell the truth. That way, you don’t have to remember what you said.”
 - “If it’s not right, do not do it; if it is not true, do not say it.”
 - “When in doubt, tell the truth.”
- Asks students how these proverbs relate to the story.
- Tells students to choose one of the proverbs (or create their own proverb about truth), write it on a poster, and illustrate it.
- Reminds students that proverbs are sayings and that they should be enclosed in quotation marks when written.



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- Asks students to share their posters with the class.
- Displays posters in classroom.

Art Connection

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.

RL.2.7:

Illustrations

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.

RL.2.6:

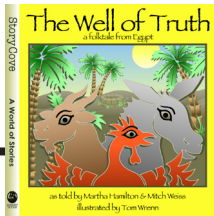
Point of view

Materials:

- Book, *The Well of Truth*
- Books on ancient Egyptian art
- Unlined paper
- Crayons or markers

Directions:

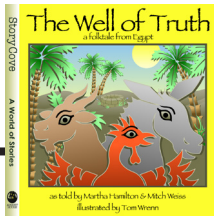
- Teacher tells students that Tom Wrenn, the illustrator of the book, was influenced by the traditional flat art designs found in ancient Egyptian art.
-
- Shows students pictures from Egyptian art books.
- Shares the following information about ancient Egyptian art:
 - Paintings and drawings of ancient Egyptians look flat because simple lines and shapes were used. (Show Page 1.)
 - The figures were often in static poses. (Teacher defines “static.”) (Show book cover and Pages 1, 7, 8, and 25.) People and animals were shown in profile or frontal views. Side views of people and animals included a head that showed a full view of an eye and eyebrow. (Show Pages 1, 8, 10, 14, and 25.)



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- When heads and necks were shown in a frontal view, the rest of the body including arms and legs were shown from the side view. (Teacher demonstrates and students copy these poses.)
- The pictures showed a sense of balance and order. (Show Pages 4, 8, 9, 11, 19, and 24, 26, and 30.)
- Objects that are partially covered by another object are seen as being further away. Objects that are higher up are perceived as being further away than those lower down. (Show book cover, Pages 3, 4, 20, 23, and 24.)
- Compares the pictures in the art books with the illustrations in the book, *The Well of Truth*.
- Tells students to make their own drawings in the traditional flat design.



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Cooking

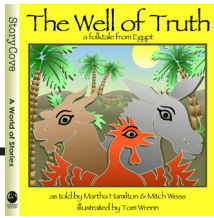
Egyptian Cucumber Salad

Materials:

- 1 Large mixing bowl
- Large spoon
- Knife to cut pita bread
- Refrigerator
- Paper plates
- Napkins
- 3 TBL Red Wine Vinegar
- ½ Cup Olive Oil
- 2 Cans Chickpeas
- 1 Sliced Cucumber, chopped into small chunks
- 1 ½ Cups Tomato, chopped
- ½ Cup Celery
- 1 ½ Tsp Minced Garlic
- ½ Tsp Dill Weed
- Salt
- Pepper
- Pita bread

Directions:

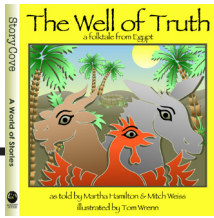
- Teacher reminds students that the Nile River runs through Egypt. The land around the river is very fertile and many fruits and vegetables grow in this area.
- Tells students that they will be making a traditional cucumber salad and enjoying it with pita bread, a popular bread in Egypt.



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- Mix oil and vinegar in a large mixing bowl. Add the rest of the ingredients except salt and pepper to the oil and vinegar mixture.
- Add salt and pepper to taste.
- Chill for at least 30 minutes.
- Serve with slices of pita bread.



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Extension Activity

Technology Connection

Materials:

- Computer with Internet access

Directions:

- Teacher helps students access www.storycove.com.
- Students view the animation of *The Well of Truth*, narrated in tandem by the authors, Martha Hamilton and Mitch Weiss.
- Students think about how the storytellers' voices and expressions are an important part of telling the story.
- Students practice reading the story in tandem, like Martha Hamilton and Mitch Weiss.
- Students explore the animations and activities for other stories on www.storycove.com. Stories with strong compare and contrast opportunities with *The Well of Truth* include: *Growing Gold*, *Anansi and the Pot of Beans*, *Why Koala Has a Stumpy Tail*, *Rooster's Night Out*, and *Anansi and the Sky Kingdom*.

COMMON CORE
STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.

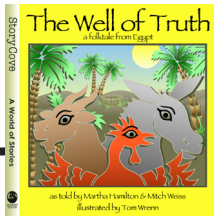
RL.2.2:

Recount stories, central message

Compare and Contrast

Materials:

- Book, *Through the Grapevine: World Tales Kids Can Read and Tell*



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Directions:

- Teacher reads “The Bell that Knew the Truth” on Pages 19-21 of *Through The Grapevine: World Tales Kids Can Read and Tell*. This Chinese folktale tells of a wise judge who used a bell to determine which suspect was guilty of robbery.
- Students compare and contrast the themes of truth and determining truth in this story and *The Well of Truth*.