

# Adam Booth

Appalachian Storyteller & Musician

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## 2024 Storytelling Workshops for Students Adam Booth

### Building Characters from Personal Experience

*Suited for school-Aged Persons*

This workshop inspires students to create characters based partly on themselves. Using a method adapted from the work of George Ella Lyon, students will work together to have an understanding of who lives where they do and what their shared experiences are. As we move toward developing individual characters within that space, students will draw from their own traits. Using this groundwork, we will then explore our imaginations to think about what these characters might do, where they might go, or what they dream about, leading toward a character that can then move through the action of a to-be-written story.

### The Most Wonderful Characters!

*Suited for school-Aged Persons*

When we think of traditional stories, what we often imagine are **wonder tales**: stories of *once upon a time* that take place *far away and long ago* filled with difficult journeys, royalty, magic, and fantastic creatures. This workshop begins with Adam telling an example of an Appalachian wonder tale. Then, we explore the conventions of this genre found within the sample story. We build upon these observations to create our own world and characters who might exist in such a tale, with a focus on depth, necessary imperfection, and creative characterization. This workshop concludes with an exploration of whose characters might inhabit the same story so that students can continue to build stories beyond the workshop.

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## **Learning Stories from Jack: Structure**

*Suited for school-Aged Persons*

Our familiar Appalachian character Jack is here to teach about storytelling structure. In this workshop, Adam begins by sharing a traditional Jack tale. Next, we explore what makes the story traditional, and what that means in our regional culture. Then we break apart the structure in order to see how story narrative works, using it as a guideline to create our own traditionally-rooted story. This workshop includes group and individual work and encourages students to speak, draw, write, and share their work.

## **Why? Why? Why? Exploring the Pourquoi tale.**

*Suited for school-Aged Persons*

Traditional Appalachian storytelling is filled with **pourquoi tales**: *stories that try to explain the existence of something or why it exists a particular way*. These tales explain how the deer got its antlers, why the chipmunk has stripes, why the possum's tail is bare, and more. This workshop starts with Adam telling a pourquoi tale. After analyzing the story for comprehension, we explore the natural world around us in order to identify particular subjects for an original pourquoi tale. We then work through creative exercises to come up with reasoning before constructing our own tales that explain why something exists in a particular way.

## **The Appalachian Tall Tale**

*Suited for school-Aged Persons*

The **tall tale** is one of the great genres of story to come from Appalachia. This workshop begins with Adam telling an example of Appalachian tall tale. Then, we explore what makes story "tall" and which elements might have been stretched. Next, we examine the tools of tall tale with focus placed on convention, story development, and skills of exaggeration. Students will use personal experience as the basis of a newly-created story.