



THE
Storyteller
EVAN TURK

HLAYKIA
Elders as Storytellers:
An Interview Activity

"Teaching youth is like carving in stone."
—Moroccan Proverb

HLAYKIA
Elders as Storytellers:
An Interview Activity

Hlaykia are the public storytellers of Morocco. They have been learning, preserving, and sharing stories for nearly one thousand years. These stories have been passed down from generation to generation and have become a part of the cultural fabric.



Every culture has a tradition of passing stories from the older to younger generation. While *hlaykia* spend a lifetime perfecting their craft, every person we encounter has a story to tell.

Can you prepare a classroom assignment or a cross-generational public program where young readers can interact with and interview older members of the community? You will, of course, create your own fine ideas and connections. Below are simply suggestions for an experience related to **The Storyteller**.

Interview Questions

In keeping with the themes of the picture book, elders could be asked about:

A time when they:

- Ran out of something important and found an interesting way to replace it.
- Made something with their hands and shared it with their community.
- Told a story and saved the day.
- Felt hope because of a story that was told to them.

Introduction Sheet

We have provided a sheet that will introduce the book and project to your elders. Look for an adaptable version of that sheet in Word on the “Inspiration & Resources” page of TheStorytellerBook.com.

Capturing Voices

Decide how you want to capture those stories. How can you integrate active listening into the interview process?

Capturing Faces

Can you incorporate photography or portrait drawing into the interview process?

The Storyteller

We have provided a sheet that is topped with the words, “The Storyteller.” Consider having your readers do their final write-up of their interview on this page, reinforcing that we are all storytellers.

Note on Moroccan Arabic

Any words on this sheet in *bold italic* can be heard on an audio pronunciation guide on the “Inspiration & Resources” page of TheStorytellerBook.com.



Dear ,

We have been reading and discussing a book called **The Storyteller** by Evan Turk (Atheneum). The illustrated book is set in Morocco, where the tradition of *hlaykia* or public storytellers goes back nearly one thousand years. The *hlaykia*'s stories have been passed down from generation to generation and have become a part of Morocco's cultural fabric.

The book is ultimately about the power of storytelling and our thirst to hear stories from one another. We are thirsty for *your* stories.

Would you be willing to have one of our readers interview you? We have selected some topics based on the themes of the book. You can pick one of these four topics below or choose your own story.

Could you tell your young interviewer about a time when you:

- Ran out of something important and found an interesting way to replace it?
- Made something with your hands and shared it with your community?
- Told a story and saved the day?
- Felt hope because of a story that was told to you?

Include contact information, permissions, use of photography, and so on!

THE Storyteller