



Black Applied Behavior Analysts

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Tales By Moonlight

Abstract

Everyone can recount the stories that our parents or aunts told us growing up. The stories, though entertaining, often carry a special message that helps us throughout our lifetimes. Storytelling is a cultural practice that is used to pass down important information about one's culture, environment and historical events, "stories are a means of preserving common characteristics of a culture and passing them on to subsequent generations (Gates, 1989)." From a behavior analytic perspective, storytelling is a form of verbal behavior that functions to convey contingencies. For each listener, based on their history of learning and experiences, stories enable a unique type of learning about the contingencies, the reinforcers, and punishers within their cultural context. In African American oral tradition, storytelling was and still is important in preserving the identity, safety and wellbeing of African Americans. For many reasons, storytelling is a meaningful area of study; to understand the effects on the listener and the speaker and to contribute to the preservation of an important cultural practice. The purpose the present study was to understand the effects of a storytelling curriculum on participants living in a South-Western black community. The curriculum includes an overview of the importance and role of storytelling in the black community. The participants included children, their elders and respected community leaders. The dependent measures include the interactions and relationships between children and elders, the information shared during interactions, and the descriptions and reflections of children, elders, and community leaders of the process and outcomes.

Learning Objectives

To understand the effects of a storytelling curriculum on participants living in a South-Western black community (interactions and relationships between children and elders, the information shared during interactions, and the descriptions and reflections of children, elders, and community leaders of the process and outcomes).



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