

MYTHICAL CREATURES

Lesson Plan

Lost in Translation

Lesson Plan for *Genies*

Grade 3

Objective

To help students understand how retelling a story can cause it to change over time.

Things Needed

- *Genies* book
- Hallway or other area separated by a door
- Lost in Translation Short Story (attached)

Before the Activity

Read *Genies* out loud to students. Print a copy of the Lost in Translation Short Story.

Activity

One popular story about a genie comes from the book *One Thousand and One Nights*. This collection of stories was told and translated many times over hundreds of years. As different people told the stories, the information in them changed.

Today, students will play a game to explore how repeating a story can change it. To start, take a copy of the Lost in Translation Short Story out into the hall. Choose one student to come with you. Read the story out loud to this student. Then return to the classroom. Have the student pick a second student to come out into the hall. Once outside, the first student will repeat the story to the second student. Emphasize that students do not need to remember every detail, but they should do their best not to change the story on purpose.

When the first student finishes telling the story, both students should return to the classroom. The first student will stay inside. The second student will choose a third student to go out into the hall and hear the story. Repeat the process until the last student has heard the story. Ask that student to tell the story to the whole class. Compare the new story with the original. Use the following questions to help the students discuss how the story changed:



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- What details stayed the same?
- What details changed?
- What are some possible reasons why these details changed? (Sample Answers: Some students might have misunderstood the version they heard. Some details might have been forgotten, etc.)
- What similar changes might have happened to the stories about genies? (Sample Answer: People might have misunderstood what the original version meant.)
- Can you think of other changes that might have happened to the stories of genies? (Sample Answer: People might have changed or added details on purpose.)

Evaluation

Could students remember and tell the short story? Could they discuss how and why the story changed? Could they infer how legends about genies might have changed over time?

Standards

This lesson plan may be used to address the Common Core State Standards' reading standards for informational texts, grade 3 (RI 3.1, 3.5), and the National Council for Social Studies' standards 1, 2, and 3.



Lost in Translation Short Story

One cloudy afternoon, a boy was walking home from school. As he passed a tall apartment building, he noticed something shining in the trash. It was a small gold pot with a curvy handle. The boy wondered why anyone would throw such a beautiful object away. He picked the pot up and put it in his backpack. He planned to clean it and give it to his mom for her birthday.

By the time the boy got home, the house was a flurry of activity. His mom was about to leave for work. The boy promised to take care of his brother and sister until their dad got home. The three children settled on the couch to watch a movie. The boy forgot all about the gold pot. After his dad got home, the boy went to his room to start his homework. When he opened his backpack to get a notebook, he found the gold pot again. The boy set his notebook aside. He began scrubbing the pot to clean it. Immediately, a cloud of purple smoke burst through the opened lid.

A huge blue figure floated in front of the boy. Its head nearly reached the ceiling. The boy almost yelled. But he didn't want to scare his siblings. Instead he asked, "Who are you?"

"I am a genie," the blue figure said. "Because you found me, I will grant you two wishes."

The boy thought for a moment. Then he said, "I wish for you to go free."

"Are you sure?" asked the genie, "Then you won't get another wish."

The boy nodded. "As long as I can keep the pot. I need something to give my mom for her birthday tomorrow."

The genie was surprised but happy. "Thank you for your kindness," he told the boy.

The genie cleaned the gold pot until it sparkled. Then he turned back into a cloud of smoke and whooshed out the window. The boy was left in his room with a shining gold pot and an amazing story.

