

Story Telling.

It is best to wear plain neutral colours with no jewellery or watches so that nothing distracts from the telling of the stories.

Get the group – as far as they are physically able- to sit on the floor in an arc around the story teller. If the floor is not carpeted cushions can be helpful. There is a totally different dynamic about sitting at the same level on the floor.

The spreading out of the cloth will draw the attention of the group and signal that the story is about to begin. You are laying out your canvas on which you will be painting your picture. You may like to look around the group just before you begin as a means of drawing them in.

When you are physically ready compose yourself or centre yourself before beginning. Your stillness will still the group. You are going to enter into the story yourself. Realize that as well as the words and movement you will be communicating spirit to spirit with the group.

As you tell the story keep your eyes focused on the cloth and the objects you are putting down. **Do not** make eye contact with the group as you tell the story. This may sound surprising but it has the effect of drawing the group into the story with you.

The pace of the story is measured. Dwell on it, allow space. Take time to look at the picture you are building. There are moments in these stories when it is as if you are creating a work of art as people watch. The picture will be different each time you do it. Use the video clips to learn the movements and where to place the objects. The objects are as important as the words. When you are not moving an object keep your hands still. Otherwise they will distract people from the story.

Do I need to learn the words by heart? Yes, if you can. Rehearse the stories with the objects until you are completely familiar with them. The objects then help you to remember the words and the sequence in which they come.

The video clips were recorded in the kind of venue you are likely to use – an ordinary living room. They were filmed without an audience so the vital ingredient of the sense of people watching and entering in is missing. This presence makes a slow pace possible as you can feel the people thinking about the objects and reflecting on the story.

Do not let any wondering questions which might follow the stories become teaching times. **This really is a time for wondering.**