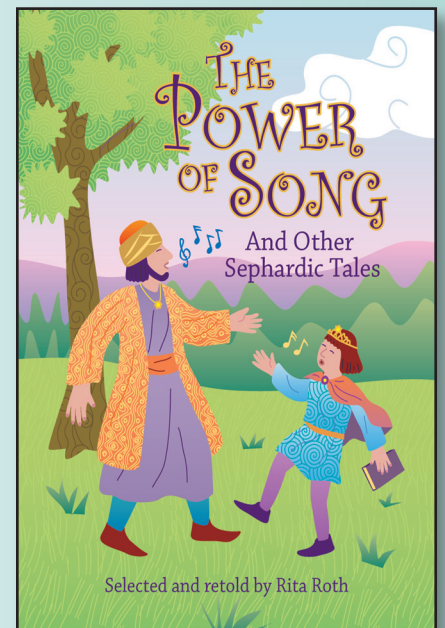


# A Classroom Guide to *The Power of Song*

Sharing their reactions to a story through speaking, writing, art, dance, music, etc., presents children with powerful learning opportunities. It's through this process that children gain a love for stories, for sharing their thoughts about them, and for hearing what others think about them. Below are five strategies that encourage a child's active engagement with the stories in *The Power of Song*.

1. **Jump Rope Rhymes.** Readers create a jump rope rhyme. They can work in small groups and, once their rhymes are ready, share them with the class outdoors, in the classroom, or in the gym. For example, based upon *What Djoha Needed*:

Djoha, Djoha – such a fool  
Always came so late to school.  
How many times was Djoha late?  
One or two or three or four?  
Five or six or seven or eight?  
You can bet that it was more!  
Djoha, Djoha – such a fool  
Always came so late to school.  
How many minutes was he late?  
One, two, three, four, five, six, . . .



2. **Written Conversations.** The "conversation" in this strategy proceeds without speaking. After reading the same story, children work in pairs and take turns writing their reactions to it on a shared piece of paper. Once they have completed the process, they can exchange and compare their conversations with others'. Some possible guidelines to get the conversation started, for example, about *The Color Red*:

Why do you think Ruti made such a fuss over the color red?

When Ruti's father said, "We are different. We are Jews," how do you think she felt? How would you have felt?

3. **Retelling.** Retellings invite children to simply restate the sequence of a tale. Or, they can make their own additions. These can be written, spoken, danced, sung, drawn, acted out, etc. Here are two possibilities:

A. *A Friend for a King* – children could retell the tale and substitute their own riddles:

What can you catch, but not throw? (a cold)

Until I'm measured, I am not known, yet how you miss me when I have flown. (time)

What gets wetter and wetter the more it dries? (a towel)

B. *The Body Parts* – This tale could be retold by having the children take on the roles of the characters and act out the tale, at first as it was originally told, then their own versions. An example: When Hanina asks the lioness for her milk, she could be gobbled up by the lion causing it to have a big stomach ache. When Hanina is spit out, the lion feels so much better that she gives milk to Hanina.

4. Alternate Discourse Forms. After reading or hearing a tale, children can change it from its narrative form into another format: a poem, a play, a newspaper article, a TV news item, a podcast. For example:

a. *Nahum Bibas* - Newspaper article.

YOUNG RABBI MEETS WITH EL CID

Valencia, Spain. A young rabbi, Nahum Bibas, met with el Cid today to negotiate for the safety of the Jewish people living in the area. It is said that a gift of immense beauty and value turned el Cid's heart in their favor.

b. *The Power of Song* – TV news item.

This just in . . . The search for a competent teacher for the king's son is finally over. After months of failed efforts on the part of the king's advisors, a stranger arrived in court singing his way into the prince's heart. We have it on good authority that the prince is beginning to learn the alef bet! Keep tuned to this channel for the most up-to-date information from our reporters on the scene.

c. *Blancanina* – Magazine advertisement.

Full page drawing of Blancanina with the falcon on her shoulder sitting at a table with an ornate chess set. In a bubble, she is saying, "A Blancanina Chess set guarantees a perfect match."

Copy under the picture: For a limited time only, our top of the line chess set is available to you at 50% off.

5. Group Discussions

What did you like best/least about the tale (pick any tale)? Why?

What would you have done if soldiers kept pushing you around to keep you from el Cid?

If you had a friend like Djoha how could you help him?

In the *Contrarian*, why do you think Tarken kept saying things backwards?

In *The Body Parts*, explain how Asilah and Hanina are alike/different?

*The Vengeful Queen* is a pretty spooky tale. Why do you think Princess Aldina and Count Olinos kept reappearing as flowering bushes, as birds, as fish, and as a serpent and a scorpion?

What lessons can we learn from [insert any tale] ?