

# Tall Tales from the American West

In this workshop we will practice story writing and storytelling and you will learn about life in the Wild West. Do all the tasks carefully and collect useful phrases as you go along. Don't forget that you are doing this workshop in order to improve your English and to expand your vocabulary.

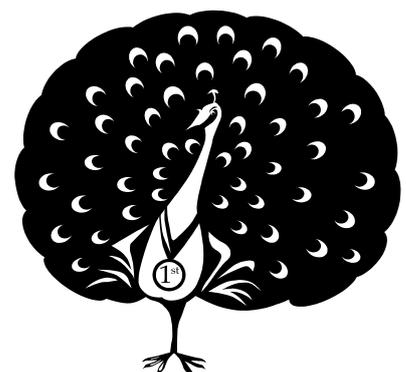
<p><b>Who was Pecos Bill?</b> Walk around in class and share the information on your little info and picture cards. What do all these things tell you about Pecos Bill?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What kind of a person was he?</li> <li>• What kind of problems did he solve?</li> <li>• How did he solve them?</li> </ul>	info cards
<p><b>Song: Pecos Bill</b> Work with a partner and complete the gaps Then listen to the song and check your solutions.</p>	WS 1
<p><b>Reading:</b> Read one of the tales about Pecos Bill. Make sure you understand it really well. Choose a few useful phrases that will help you retell the story later and transfer them into your vocab book. Design a page about this tale in your <b>“Tall Tales Book”(TTB)</b> (see instructions there). Practice retelling your tale orally. You can use your TTB but you must not use the original story sheet.</p>	Colored story sheets 
<p><b>Oral Story telling:</b> Now find two friends who have read a different tale. Share your stories and design a page in your TTB for each story that you have heard. Ask your friends to sign your “story-teller page” in your TTB. (detailed instructions in your TTB)</p>	TTB
<p><b>Pecos Bill: the movie</b> Now let's watch the Disney movie about Pecos Bill. Which of the tales do you recognize? Answer the questions on worksheet ... while watching the film.</p>	Moodle/in class
<p><b>Who was Paul Bunyan?</b> <b>Paul Bunyan's Birth:</b> Text Market</p>	info strips, TTB whole class
<p>Read one of the Paul Bunyan tales that you find on moodle. Design a page in your TTB and collect a few useful phrases in your vocab book. Be prepared to retell your tale to your friends.</p>	TTB ,Moodle 

Find 2 friends who have read a different Paul Bunyan story and share them. Keep working on your TTB as above.	TTB
<b>Writing Tall Tales</b> Do the language tasks and activities in your workshop package very carefully.	
Mississippi Mosquitoes: unscramble the text and copy it into your tall tales book.	WS 3, TTB
Frozen Dawn	WS 3
Comparing	WS 5
Simile Characters and Simile Search	WS 6
Write a tall tale according to the instructions on WS 4 and the yellow tall tale recipe	WS 4, Moodle
Continue the tall tale on WS 4	WS 4. Moodle
<b>Peer Conference:</b> Meet with 2 friends and ask them to give you critical feedback on your tales. Get some feedback from a teacher or Uni-student and revise your tales VERY carefully. Print a final version and stick it into your TTB. Polish and complete your TTB and hand it in for assessment.	
<b>Vocab-Book:</b> Complete your vocabulary collection and study the new phrases with a partner. Use some of the vocab-activities discussed in class. Then ask your teacher or co-teacher to test you.	

Collect all your texts in your TTB (Tall-tales book). Look at the detailed instructions there and make sure you do your best.

You want to be proud of your finished TTB!

**PROUD LIKE A PEACOCK!!!**



# Tall Tales: Pecos Bill and Paul Bunyan

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## *Who was Pecos Bill?*

*Artist: Creek Nickel   Song: Pecos Bill   Album: Little Cowpoke*

Now Pecos Bill was \_\_\_\_\_ cowboy down in Texas

Why, he's the Western Superman to say the \_\_\_\_\_

He was the roughest, \_\_\_\_\_ critter, never known to be a quitter

'Cause he never had no fear of man nor beast

So yippee-i-ay-i-ya, yippee-i-o

He's the toughest critter west of the Alamo

Once he roped a \_\_\_\_\_ cyclone out of nowhere

Then he straddled it and settled down with ease

And while that cyclone bucked and flitted, Pecos rolled a smoke and \_\_\_\_\_ it

And he \_\_\_\_\_ that ornery wind down to a breeze

So yippee-i-ay-i-ya, yippee-i-o

He's the toughest critter west of the Alamo

Now once there was a drought that spread all over Texas

So to \_\_\_\_\_ Californy he did go

And though the gag is kind of corny, he \_\_\_\_\_ rain from Californy

And that's the way we \_\_\_\_\_ the Gulf of Mexico

So yippee-i-ay-i-ya, yippee-i-o

He's the toughest critter west of the Alamo

Now once a band of rustlers \_\_\_\_\_ a herd of cattle

But they didn't know the herd they stole was Bill's

And when he \_\_\_\_\_ them crooked villains

Pecos knocked out all their fillings  
That's the reason \_\_\_\_\_ there's gold them thar hills  
So yippee-i-ay-i-ya, yippee-i-o  
He's the toughest critter west of the Alamo

Pecos lost his way while traveling in the desert (Water, water, water...)  
It was ninety miles across the \_\_\_\_\_ sand (Water, water, water...)  
He \_\_\_\_\_ he'd never reach the border (Water...)  
If he didn't get some water (Water...)  
So he got a stick and \_\_\_\_\_ the Rio Grande

While a tribe of painted Indians did a war-dance  
Pecos started shooting up their little game  
He \_\_\_\_\_ those redskins such a shakeup  
That they jumped out of their makeup  
That's how the Painted Desert got \_\_\_\_\_ name  
So yippee-i-ay-i-ya, yippee-i-o  
He's the toughest critter west of the Alamo

While reclining on a \_\_\_\_\_ high over Texas  
With his \_\_\_\_\_ he made the stars evaporate  
Then Pecos \_\_\_\_\_ them stars declining  
So he left one brightly \_\_\_\_\_  
As the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Lone Star Texas State  
So yippee-i-ay-i-ya, yippee-i-o  
He's the toughest critter west of the Alamo



# Pecos Bill

## Meets Sue



### Part 1

1. How hungry was Bill when he finally found the coyote family?

Old Bill was \_\_\_\_\_ than a woodpecker with a headache.

2. Bill could out-jump the \_\_\_\_\_ and he could out-hiss the \_\_\_\_\_?

3. When Bill first saw Widow Maker he was trying to fight off the buzzards, and the narrator described the fight as an unfair fight of 50 to 1, but one plus Bill made it

\_\_\_\_\_!

4. Bill and Widow Maker stuck together like \_\_\_\_\_ or

\_\_\_\_\_.

5. Bill was the \_\_\_\_\_ critter west of the Alamo.

6. What are some of the great deeds Bill did for the state of Texas?

## Part 2

When Bill had met Sue he was as happy as a \_\_\_\_\_.

Sue made Bill feel unusual, like a slug of rye \_\_\_\_\_.

Bill could not believe his eyes or the pounding sound inside his ears, which was like

\_\_\_\_\_.

On Bill and Sue's wedding day Sue wanted to ride Widow Maker. Unfortunately, the bustle in Sue's dress made her take off like a \_\_\_\_\_.

It kept bouncing Sue \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

And that's how come to this very day coyotes \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.

**The End**

For homework find out about another famous hero of the American West.

Find out about **Paul Bunyan** and bring one of his tales to class.

You will find them on Moodle.

Listen to the following tall tale. Then complete the text.

## Frozen Dawn

retold by  
S. E. Schlosser

One \_\_\_\_\_, it was so \_\_\_\_\_ that the dawn \_\_\_\_\_ solid. The sun got \_\_\_\_\_ between two \_\_\_\_\_, and the earth \_\_\_\_\_ up so much that it couldn't \_\_\_\_\_. The first \_\_\_\_\_ of sunlight froze halfway over the mountain \_\_\_\_\_. They looked like yellow \_\_\_\_\_ dripping \_\_\_\_\_ the ground.

Now Davy Crockett was \_\_\_\_\_ home after a \_\_\_\_\_ night hunting when the dawn \_\_\_\_\_ up so solid. Being a \_\_\_\_\_ man, he knew he had to do something \_\_\_\_\_ or the \_\_\_\_\_ was a goner. He had a \_\_\_\_\_ killed bear on his \_\_\_\_\_, so he whipped it off, \_\_\_\_\_ right up on those \_\_\_\_\_ of sunlight and \_\_\_\_\_ beating the hot bear carcass against the \_\_\_\_\_ blocks \_\_\_\_\_ were squashing the sun. Soon a gush of hot oil \_\_\_\_\_ out of the bear and it \_\_\_\_\_ the ice. Davy \_\_\_\_\_ the sun a good hard kick to get it \_\_\_\_\_, and the sun's heat \_\_\_\_\_ the earth and started it \_\_\_\_\_ again. So Davy \_\_\_\_\_ his pipe on the sun, \_\_\_\_\_ the bear, \_\_\_\_\_ himself down the sun \_\_\_\_\_ before they \_\_\_\_\_ and took a bit of \_\_\_\_\_ home in his pocket.

# Mississippi Mosquitoes

retold by  
S. E. Schlosser

The sentences of the following tale have been scrambled. Cut out the sentences and glue them into your TTB in the correct order.

"Shall we eat him on the bank or in the swamp?" he heard one ask the other.

"We'd better eat him on the bank," said the other. "Or else the big mosquitoes in the swamp will take him away from us."

A visitor to Mississippi decided to take a walk along the river in the cool of the evening.

As he promenaded beside the flowing Mississippi, he heard the whirling sound of a tornado.

But the visitor just laughed and told his host he wasn't to be put off from his evening walk by a few mosquitoes.

Frightened near to death, the man lashed out at the mosquitoes until they lost their grip and dropped him into the river.

He was carried two miles downstream before he was fished out by a riverboat pilot.

His host warned him that the mosquitoes in the area had been acting up lately, tormenting the alligators until they moved down the river.

Looking up, he saw two mosquitoes as big as elephants descend upon him.

The man left Mississippi the next day, and has never gone for another walk from that day to this.

They lifted him straight up in the air and carried him out over the river.

# Writing A Tall Tale

Use this *RECIPE* to plan your first tall tale. Then type your tall-tale and upload it to Moodle.

First choose a tall tale hero. Remember, the key is to EXAGGERATE your hero's characteristics. Make him or her bigger or stronger or faster or smarter than anyone else!

Now you need an adventure for your hero. Once again, the key is to EXAGGERATE. The main event of a tall tale is not something that can happen in real life.

Use the following story pattern to write your story.

..... was the .....

(Name of tall tale hero)

(describe words like: toughest, smartest...)

man/woman in the state of ..... and loved to tell and  
(state name)

retell of his/her amazing feats. Now one day .....

(hero's name)

went to visit ..... had been  
(2<sup>nd</sup> character's name) (2<sup>nd</sup> character's name)

having big problems with.....

..... explained his/her problem. That was all it took.

(2<sup>nd</sup> character's name)

Right away, .....

(how the hero solved the problem)

..... problem was solved, and the folks in .....

(2<sup>nd</sup> character's name)

(state name)

now had a new tale to tell about .....(hero's name.

# Continue the tale...

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## Mull de Grau

Mull de Grau was a wicked witch who once lived on Gully Road in what is now Newark, New Jersey. She took delight in the misery of others, and made things miserable for the folks living near her. If a neighbor slighted (angered) her, she would sour their milk. If anyone called her a witch, she made their dogs turn vicious (bad and aggressive). People were very cautious around Mull de Grau. When a new family moved in, their grown-up son got fed up with the witch's rude behavior toward his mother and told her off. That night, an evil black dog...

Complete the tale. Use your *Tall Tale Recipe* and your *Writing Tall Tales* model sheet to plan the tale. Include several comparisons to show the great dangers, the witch's meanness and your hero's courage. Proofread your tale carefully before uploading it. Bring a printout to class for peer-conferencing.

