

Tall Paul Bunyan | Lesson Plan

How can we use our unique gifts and talents to help others and make a positive impact on our community?

Through *Otto's Tales: Tall Paul Bunyan*, students will understand how Paul Bunyan used his talents to help his community and identify ways they can use their own talents to help others.

Learning Objectives:

- Explain the importance of using unique talents to serve communities and country.
- Discuss the theme of using talents for community service.
- Identify key vocabulary related to *Otto's Tales: Tall Paul Bunyan*.

Key Vocabulary:

- **Folktale:** A traditional story passed down through generations, often with a moral or lesson.
- **Tall tale:** A larger-than-life story with exaggerated descriptions to make it entertaining.
- **Paul Bunyan:** A legendary and larger-than-life figure in American folklore. He is often depicted as a giant lumberjack with extraordinary strength and abilities.
- **Lumberjack:** A person who cuts down trees for wood.
- **Gifts:** Special abilities or talents that someone has.
- **Thoughtful:** Showing consideration for the needs of other people.

Educational Standards: CCRA.RL.1, CCRA.RL.2, CCRA.RL.7, CCRA.SL.1, CCRA.SL.2

Academic Subject Areas: Life Lessons, America, American Values

What You'll Need

- Video: *Otto's Tales: Tall Paul Bunyan* (Click [Here](#))
- Worksheet: *Otto's Tales: Tall Paul Bunyan* (Click [Here](#))
- Pictures of Paul Bunyan

Lesson Plan (45 mins.)

Warm-Up: (10 mins.)

1. Begin by explaining who Paul Bunyan is and the concept of a tall tale.
2. Show a picture of Paul Bunyan and discuss what makes him a unique and larger-than-life character.
3. Ask students if they know of any tall tales or other larger-than-life stories or characters.
4. Have students complete the following sentences in an exaggerated, larger-than-life way. This activity helps students understand and practice the concept of exaggeration (also known as hyperbole), which is a key feature of tall tales:



- I caught a fish that was so big that it...
 - I was so hungry I could eat...
 - My dad is so strong that he could...
 - I ran so fast that I...
 - The mountain was so high that it...
 - The pancake was so big that it...
5. Now that students have had fun with exaggerations, switch to a discussion about the real gifts and talents that people have. Explain that everyone has God-given gifts (a natural ability to do something well).
 6. Explain to students that today, they will be watching a folktale about how Paul Bunyan used his gifts to help his community.

Watch and Complete: (25 mins.)

1. Play the video *Otto's Tales: Tall Paul Bunyan*.
2. Pause at key moments to ask questions and check for understanding of the elements of the story:
 - Who are the main characters of the story?
 - Where does the story take place (setting)?
 - What are some legends about Paul Bunyan?
3. After the video, continue discussing the following with students:
 - What things about the story are exaggerated that make this a tall tale?
 - What kind of lesson does Paul Bunyan teach us about being helpful to others?
 - Can you think of a time when you used your abilities to help someone?
4. Highlight the key points about using one's unique gifts and talents for the benefit of others.

Wrap-Up: (10 mins.)

1. Explain that the next activity will help students understand the concept of exaggeration through a "possible, not possible" worksheet.
2. Distribute the worksheet and explain how to fill it out. If necessary, read the statements to the students. Have them check the box to indicate whether the statement is possible or not.
3. Discuss the completed worksheets as a class, ensuring that everyone understands the concept of exaggeration.
4. Evaluate students based on their ability to:
 - Retell a portion of the folktale in their own words.
 - Explain the value learned from this story.
 - Define the key vocabulary terms with simple definitions or examples.
5. Close with an encouraging call to action. Motivate students to practice using their unique gifts and talents to help others in their community.

Extension Activity:

A great extension activity for this story would be to have students create their own tall tales, featuring themselves as the main characters with exaggerated abilities or characteristics. Encourage them to think about their own unique talents or interests and amplify these traits in a fun and imaginative way. Students can write and illustrate their stories and then share them with the class, fostering creativity and reinforcing the concept of tall tales. This activity not only enhances their understanding of the genre but also allows them to reflect on and celebrate their own gifts, mirroring the lesson learned from Paul Bunyan's story.

Don't have time for the complete lesson? Quick Activity (15-20 mins.)

After watching the video, distribute the coloring page *Otto's Tales: Tall Paul Bunyan* and allow students to discuss their favorite character or part of the story.