

Trickster Tales

Acrostic Poem

Writing activity

For this activity, kids will write an acrostic poem based on a favorite trickster.

Individual: each child chooses their favorite trickster and works independently on their poem.

Groups: the group chooses one or more tricksters and they complete the poems together.

Supplies

- Pencils, pens, and art supplies: colored pencils, markers, crayons
 - Drawing paper or construction paper: 8-1/2 x 11 (individual activity, 2 sheets per child)
 - Poster paper, or flip chart pad, or dry-erase board (group activity)
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Let's get started

Kids will write an acrostic poem of words or phrases that describes their favorite trickster. Some of the kids may be familiar with acrostic poems, also called vertical poems. They are easy and fun, and give kids a chance to really stretch their vocabulary muscles!

You can demonstrate how to do it, using Coyote as your example. You will write COYOTE vertically, and fill in a word, words, or phrase that begins with the first letter (see below).

Remind the kids to think about opposites as they brainstorm words and phrases. Kids can also include a drawing with their trickster poem if they like.

C conniving, crafty, clever

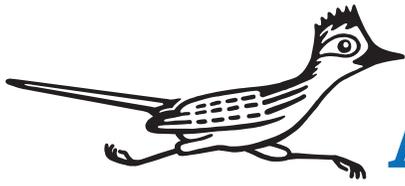
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Mask making

Storytellers and actors from all over the world have used masks for thousands of years to help tell their stories. Invite kids to make masks of the characters from their favorite trickster. You can use ordinary household items or recyclable materials, or make one with papier maché. Find directions at the links below:

- [Milk jugs](#)
- [Cardboard](#)
- [Egg cartons](#)
- [Paper plates](#)
- [Paper bags](#)
- [Papier maché](#)



Sharing our work

Once the trickster poems are finished, gather everyone together in a circle to read their poems out loud. Kids can also choose to memorize their poems and present them without notes — in keeping with the oral storytelling tradition. If you did the mask-making activity, encourage the kids to wear their masks as they share their poems.

Adults can ask the kids to explain some of their word choices and define big words for younger children in the group.

Try this!

Perform It: If you've got a group that loves music (especially rap) you can extend this activity by having the kids write and perform an original rap song based on their trickster character and using some of the words and phrases they've come up with.

For more reading, writing, and learning resources, visit www.StartWithABook.org

