



Heather Whaley

Author/Performer

Storyteller/ Singer and songwriter

Whitby, Ontario

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Born: Thunder Bay (Port Arthur) Ontario; June 22

Family: Married/Two adult children

Current Employment:

Professional Freelance Performing Artist and workshop leader for children and adults

Past Employment:

1989-2002 Whitby Public Library - Adult Fiction and *Children's Services including public service. 1987 – 1990 Volunteer with Kids On the Block - performed weekly in schools and trained puppeteers. Public speaker to organizations interested in sponsoring the program.

Artist Memberships and Affiliations: Durham Folklore Society, Writer's Circle of Durham Region, Storytellers of Canada Storytellers School of Toronto Ontario Directory of Storytellers, Canadian Association of Storytellers for Children, Canadian Society of Children's Authors, Illustrators and Performers, Society of Composers, Authors and Music Publishers of Canada, Pineridge Arts Council, Scarborough Arts Council, Durham West Arts Council.

Biography:

'Heather is an active storyteller, singer-songwriter who performs both traditional and her own stories bringing them to life through singing, the use of props, and playing the guitar'

I am involved in the education and entertainment performance arts and in promoting literacy. My expertise is in creating and delivering performance programs and workshops which include telling traditional, original and personal stories, and incorporating song, verse and poetry into my performances. I am known as a musical storyteller and singer-songwriter to both children and adults, and am often hired for the literacy component of my programming and authorship of songs and some of the stories I tell, and am instrumental in initiating and coordinating programs for the community and in facilitating workshops for youth and teachers.

I perform for all ages, including adults; on stage, in the classroom, for Family Reading /Literacy Nights and Education and Literacy Celebrations and special community events across the GTA and beyond. The stories I love to tell are folktales and personal tales with strong elements of humanity, relationships, and humour. I am also creator of Musical Story and Song Theatre with harpist Kim Michele and present Classic Tales 'The Nightingale' and 'The Nutcracker' as well as original themed sets to suit older audiences and adults.

In middle school and high schools, I like to include original contemporary, folk and blues music with personal tales that are profound or humorous. Tales that inspire teens to want to write, use instrumentation, sing and tell stories to one another. My workshops for students and teachers provide an introduction to the importance of storytelling, using your own 'voice', and model diverse curriculum related stories; folktales, legends & personal tales. These are delivered in both casual and performance (drama) style interspersed with music, props, songs and poetry. I also provide song writing inspiration & participation.

ArtsSmarts Experience 2007-2008 Grade 12 University Writers Craft:

Finding 'Your Voice', Gaining Confidence in Oral Presentation

Students developed comfort and confidence in delivering personal poetry orally through fun, interactive storytelling exercises and activities, and non-threatening open in-class critique discussions. A full professional studio visit and recording of their work was produced. The CD 'Passionate Voices' preserves their poetry.