<table>
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<th>Introduction</th>
<th>This technical sheet outlines the methodology behind tales and riddles, activities that are intended to enable children – especially those with psychosocial problems and difficulties – to find some respite from the realities of daily life through the use of their imagination. They can be used in any environment where children are able to meet in groups (centres, camp, playgrounds, etc.) Not only are these useful tools for enhancing the wellbeing of children but they are also useful tools for developing skills in problem solving, educating children on morality and developing children’s personalities – at the emotional, cognitive and intellectual level.</th>
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<td>What is it?</td>
<td>Tales are imaginary and mythological stories, traditionally passed down orally from one generation to the next. They are often short and humorous, but didactic and educational in nature, with moral messages often contained within them. Riddles can best be described as “playing hide and seek with speech”. Since tales and riddles vary considerably from one culture to another, they are tools which can be easily adapted to suit the context and the child’s needs. Generally speaking, they are told to children by a storyteller at night fall, with the idea being that “the night is more favourable to the dream and the creative imagination, and the mind is more clear after the work and diurnal concerns”.</td>
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| Who are the beneficiaries? | **Beneficiaries of tales and riddles are:**
- Youth and children (grouped by age, for example children under 3 years old; children aged 3 to 6 years old; and children aged 7 years and over) from communities involved in development or early recovery projects. |
| What kind of objectives can we reach? | **The main objectives of tales are riddles are:**
- To develop children’s imagination and sense of morality;
- To develop children’s own storytelling skills;
- To develop in children (riddles especially) the ability to think fast and fair;
- To encourage children’s social skills and personality development;
- To strengthen the facilitators and the storytellers as focal persons for the children in that community. |
| What is the specific methodology? | The method includes three steps:

1. **Preparation:**
   - The facilitator or the storyteller should schedule a session with the children, agreeing with them the place, date and time;
   - A book of tales or riddles containing relevant illustrations can be used. It is important to remain flexible and to adapt the stories based on the context and children’s needs and personalities;
   - An activity sheet, follow-up sheet and evaluation sheet should all be prepared and completed by the facilitator – taking into account all activities planned according to the activity’s objectives. |
### What is the specific methodology?

2. **Implementation:**
- At the due date, in the planned place and at the indicated time, children and the facilitator should meet. The children can be seated in a circle or semicircle;
- After initial greetings and short "ice breaker" activities (allocate around 5 minutes) the facilitator should introduce him or herself, explain the activity and make clear to the children the rules to be followed (for example, that children should sit in silence and listen; that children should ask when they want to ask a question; that others should listen when someone asks a question and so on);
- First, the facilitator or story teller proposes a tale or a riddle. Any illustrations can be shown to the children as the story is being told;
- Afterwards, the children should volunteer to present tales and riddles themselves, in turn. The lessons and morals of the stories should be discussed afterwards and the storyteller applauded;
- Particular emphasis should be placed on how to tell, tell a story: use of tone, voice, intonation, gestures, songs bring the tale to life and so on. The children also learn through imitation;
- If you wish, a specialist storyteller can be invited to take part in the activity. In this case, the specialist storyteller and the facilitator should prepare for the activity jointly.

3. **The end of the activity:**
- It is important to agree with the children in advance how long the activity will take;
- On average, the activity should last around one hour. The children should be made aware when the end of the hour is drawing near;
- 10 minutes before the end of the session, the lessons learned should be summarized and every child asked what they liked the most and why, to gauge their emotions. The facilitator should make a note of these points to help plan the future meetings;
- The date and time of the next meeting can be fixed, if appropriate, and the session will end there;
- As children begin to learn the rules of the game and get to know more tales and riddles, the narrator should eventually fade to allow the children themselves to lead the activity and in this way the group will become more autonomous;
- Finally, if a child has a special need then the facilitator should take him or her aside for a separate one-on-one meeting.

### What are the requirements to implement it? (in terms of time, human resources and budget)

- You will need facilitators/social workers (ideally, two or more at once, so that the children’s reactions can be better observed);
- An open space is required, for example a playground with benches or seats arranged in a circle or semicircle. The space should be well-lit if the activity is taking place during night time;
- The number of children may vary from 5 to 20 on average;
- The facilitator or storyteller can come equipped with collections of stories / riddles (ideally with illustrations);
- The facilitator or storyteller should have an activities sheet on which he or she notes down the general objectives and specific objectives, which objectives - these should be both practical and didactic in nature. Different sheets can be made for multiple sessions;
- Children must be informed in advance of the time, place, and duration of the activity;
What are the requirements to implement it? (in terms of time, human resources and budget)

- During the activity, the facilitator must make clear the rules (silence, asking to speak before speaking, etc) and ensure that the children obey these rules;
- Ice breaker activities (songs and games) can be prepared in advance and delivered at the beginning, mid-point or end of the activity;
- Depending on the context, if desired, these ice breakers and/or the story telling itself can be accompanied by one or two musicians to help bring the stories to life;
- At the end of the activity, the facilitator or story teller should allocate some time (15-30 minutes) to meet with some of the children who may require further clarification or have other questions to ask;
- If the child raises any personal concerns, these should be raised during a separate meeting and/or the child should be referred to an appropriate person within the community (teacher, referee, psychologist, grandparents, parents, etc.)

What are the monitoring / evaluation means?

- The facilitator or storyteller should prepare an activities sheet, taking into account the activities under each phase (preparation, implementation, end of activity). Particular attention should be paid to the final stage (end of the activity) to assess the achievement of goals, what worked and what did not work immediately, and why. This helps to evaluate the success of the activity;
- The facilitator or storyteller should also make sure to observe any changes in children's attitudes and behaviors and note these;
- Over time, as the meetings progress, the facilitator or storyteller should support the children and let the group take control. Group leaders should be chosen and the facilitators' role is to accompany these new leaders;
- Finally, the facilitator or the social worker should check with the children after each first meeting, then after 3 or 4 consecutive sessions, what they have learned and how they plan to use it in their every day lives and should support the children on this, possibly with the support of his or her colleagues.

For more info

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Link with other technical sheets

- Compassionate communication or Non-violent communication (NVC)
- Suggestion box
- Youth initiatives
- Parents groups
- Child-to-Child
- Pre school activities
- Star centre
- Recreative activities
- MGS
- Theatre