

MORE THAN ONE STORY



More Than One Story is a card game inspired by the Ted Talk “The Danger of a Single Story” by the Nigerian story teller and writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie.

https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story

“Power is the ability not just to tell the story of another person, but to make it the definitive story of that person.”

Stories matter. Many stories matter. Stories have been used to dispossess and to malign, but stories can also be used to empower and to humanize. Stories can break the dignity of a people, but stories can also repair that broken dignity.”

This game of cards has been published by Irenia (www.irenia.net) (a group of professionals who promote multicultural education among young people through stories and games) and SCI-Catalonia (www.sci-cat.org) with the purpose of sharing human experiences among people of different ages, cultures and backgrounds and therefore raising awareness of empathy, solidarity and peace building among the participants.

It is a simple game consisting in picking a card where each player will find a topic related to a human experience which they will have to retell in their own words. Players take turns and listen to each other’s stories and anecdotes.

More Than One Story could also be used for English language learning purposes developing speaking, listening and even writing skills.

Some teaching tips:

- Since most of the topics are about past experiences this game would ideally be suitable for students of intermediate and advanced levels. Pre-intermediate students could also prepare the topics with the teacher’s guidance once they become familiarized with past tenses. They might need some time to prepare their story so it would not be a spontaneous performance but useful nevertheless.
- The cards could also be used to expand the students’ vocabulary. You could include 5 to 10 topic related words on their card and ask them to use a few words depending on their language level.
- Students could also have the choice to make up a story which could either be **True or False**. The other students would start asking questions to guess what stories are true and which ones are false and justify their decision with some evidence. (The person

might blush, feel insecure or give inconsistent information when being asked questions and that might give him/her away.) How can we spot a liar?

- With more advanced students this game could be used to prepare 5 minute presentations reflecting on structure, body language, eye contact, intonation, rhythm and stress. One student would present a topic and the rest would have to ask questions. Peer assessment and feedback on each presentation would provide a constructive class debate.

Did he use body language and eye contact?

Was the presentation well-structured?

Did he/she stress key words?

Did the use of falling and rising intonation make the presentation interesting?

Did he/she use any sense of humor?

Were the words clearly pronounced?

- Another interesting activity for B2, C1, C2 students after playing the game would be to listen to the Ted talk of The Danger of a Single Story and reflect on the connection of the game and the talk.
- To develop listening and memory skills the teacher could ask questions on the following session.

Who got a pair of running shoes as a present? He did.

Who was very scared about a creepy spider? Maria did.

Who went to Australia to visit a relative? I did.

Who used to live in a small village by the sea? Nobody did.

Why did Maria feel so proud of herself? Because she..

How did Elsa feel when she opened her present? She felt...

Where did David meet his friend? They met on a train.

- To use the cards for a further writing practice or homework each student could choose a partner, take notes on his/her anecdote to produce a little story which could be used to teach narrative strategies: structure, connectors, adverbs, adjectives and past tenses.
- Finally, these precious stories enable us to talk about the language of feelings and emotions. Synonyms, antonyms, idioms.

How was Pau feeling when he unwrapped his present?

Disappointed, frustrated, angry, jealous

Nouns: disappointment, frustration, anger, jealousy

Idioms: He was feeling green with envy.

Lead on questions: In what other occasions can we feel disappointed?

Has anyone felt jealous about a gift?