Storytelling has always been an integral part of our societies, from African griots to Māori pūrākau, and European fairy tales. Beyond its intuitive use, let's delve into the practical application of storytelling to transmit musical and cultural heritages to children.

Project Lyra

6 musicians from India, Tunisia, and Brittany, along with a storyteller, embarked on a journey to meet 1300 children across the three countries to tell them "The Fabulous Journey of Arwenn." Their goal: promote intercultural dialogue and ignite curiosity towards musical traditions.

Storytelling as an "icebreaker"

The use of storytelling helped capture the children's attention and alleviate the initial shyness of some, thus facilitating interactions with the participating musicians.

The language barrier

"The fabulous journey of Arwenn" was told in France, India and Tunisia

The involvement of interpreters throughout the story, far from being a distraction for the children, heightened their curiosity and engagement and created a sense of suspense.

The Use of Gestures and Emphasis

Unlike written or recorded stories, oral transmission allows for interpretive freedom. It relies on intonation, the power of the voice, gestures, as well as laughter. And information associated with laughter is more easily engraved in memory.

Williams (1999)

Vocabulary

When the story is told to young children, it becomes necessary to explain certain vocabulary words to prevent misunderstanding from affecting their attention. These narrative "pauses," which might also seem to hinder attention, prove to be assets when used effectively, allowing for connection and interaction.

The children's reaction?

"The moral of Arwenn's story is that in life, we should listen to one another and ask questions."
"Through music, we can come together and become friends."
"Even if we are different, we always find common ground."
"There were beautiful sounds that we might not have known before, so it was quite amusing."

What about you, do you use storytelling ?