

Strongest Boy in the World

This story framework can be used in a variety of ways and is still being developed. Here is one way, but please tell us if you think of others. We have included a text of the story which comes from the Mi'kmaq nation in Nova Scotia, Canada.

We have provided tellings of the story from the point of view of all the characters except Sabadis. We have also provided a filled-in grid with the sequence of the journeys and events in the story, a blank version of this grid, a story map framework, labelled and unlabelled. We thought pupils could work in groups of six, each pupil with a different character's version of the story. The cards from the grid could be cut up and the story map framework enlarged to A3. They could share the information to work out the sequence of events in the story, produce their storymap and maybe make some props/masks etc. They could then tell the story to the rest of their class in their own words taking turns to share the presentation. We have provided some pictures, but would encourage you to encourage pupils to draw their own when they construct their story map.

We think that this framework would work well for other stories. If different groups had say four or five different stories to work on in this way, then the presentations would be varied and colourful. Maybe you can suggest stories for which props could be developed. We would also welcome drawings of the characters and drawings for the grids and maps. If your pupils produce lively visual story maps please send these too.

The Strongest Boy in the World

Once in the Old Time, an orphaned boy named Sabadis went to live with his uncle, a man too cross and lazy to get a wife and too mean to hire a housekeeper. which is why he was willing in adopt a strong boy like Sabadis who could do his work for him.

The lodge of Sabadis and his uncle stood behind a great rock pile, which got in the way of the view. The uncle, being stupid as well as lazy, instead of moving the wigwam to a better place, gave Sabadis the task of removing the rock pile, stone by stone. Sabadis the opposite of his uncle in all things, made no complaint but cheerfully did as he was told. Being strong to begin with, the work made him stronger, and by the time the job was done. Sabadis was seven times as strong as his uncle and might easily - if he had wanted to - have tossed the old man into the river. Since Sabadis was as gentle as he was strong, the thought never occurred to him.

It was some time before the uncle noticed what had happened in his nephew. Then one day he saw the boy lift a huge tree trunk and toss it aside as if it were a chip. Then he noticed how the village people had got into the habit of coming to watch Sabadis as he did his work, and this made him think of a way to make more profit from the boy.

“We will travel around the land of the Wabanaki and we will show the people the strongest boy in the World. Wherever we go, we will be welcomed and fed and I shall not have the trouble of hunting any more. Come, boy, pack up the wigwam, put food in the canoe.”

“No, Uncle.” said Sabadis quietly, and the answer shocked the uncle so much he lost his breath for a moment. “You disobey me?” he gasped.

“Sorry, but I do not care to be shown off before strangers,” said the boy “Nor can I stay here where people think my strength peculiar and fearing it, deny me their friendship. I must go out into the world and find friends of my own.”

And he walked away. “Come back!” shouted the angry man, hurling sticks and stones after him, but the boy took no notice and soon was lost to sight. And after that the uncle had to get his living by himself for a change.

Sabadis walked on, with hope for company. He had always been lonely. Now, soon, he might find a friend. He travelled far many days and came at last to where the land showed itself like a bowstring along the sea. Here he paused to watch a tall man lift a canoe with many people in it. When the man had got it above his head he grinned and dropped it, people and all, and if Sabadis had not waded in and picked them out of the water, they would all have been lost

This man was strong. Perhaps, thought Sabadis, he is the one I have been looking for.

“Will you be my friend?” he asked the man.

Now the man, whose name was Wiskum, would not have troubled himself with the friendship of a boy, yet having seen Sabadis’ strength and quickness, he did not like to say no. So they went along together and Sabadis thought to himself happily. “What pleasure there is in friendship!” The next day they saw a man rolling a mighty rock up a hill and when he got it to the top he purposely let it go. It rolled down toward the village and would certainly have killed all the people if Sabadis had not caught the rock in time and tossed it into the lake. The man’s surprise was great, to see such strength in a mere boy.

“Will you be my friend,” asked the strongest boy, “and travel along with us?”

“All right,” said the man, whose name was Woltes. “I don’t mind if I do”

And they all went along together, Sabadis joyful in his new found friends, sure he would never be lonely again. They came at length to a hardwood ridge where they decided to make camp. A hardwood ridge is always a good place for Indians to live, for it provides plenty of birch, ash, and other woods useful in making housekeeping articles.

The morning after their arrival, Sabadis and Wiskum went hunting, leaving Woltes in charge of the camp and the cooking. Just as the sun was at the edge of noon, the one who had been left in camp looked out the door and saw a stranger, a small hairy boy, very thin and wretched looking. He wore a belt much too large for him, "Give me food quickly," begged the boy, "for I starve!" And indeed he looked as though he had not had a meal in many days

"Be off" said the strong man roughly, "There's only enough for ourselves,"

The elf-boy laughed, went to the fire and helped himself, while Woltes by some strange enchantment found himself rooted in the ground, without even the power of speech. The boy ate all the dinner there was, all the stew prepared for three, not leaving a scrap. Then he simply walked into the hardwood ridge the way a man might walk into fog, and vanished. Watts found he could move and speak again, only now it was too late, He spent his fury in shouting useless threats and overturning the pot on the fire. When the others returned and heard why there was no dinner, they could scarcely believe him.

"A likely story!" shouted Wiskum. "You ate all the food yourself."

And if Sabadis had not stepped between them, there would have been broken heads. The next day the Strongest Boy in the World and Woltes went hunting leaving Wiskum at home. He had just got the venison simmering nicely when the little fellow appeared again quietly from nowhere.

"Please give me something to eat for I am starving."

"Oh no you don't" said Wiskum. "Stay away from that pot!"

But suddenly he was as if bolted to the earth and had to stand and watch in bitter silence while the boy disposed of the food. Having eaten the last bit the boy laughed and vanished into the ridge leaving the man free again but in such a temper he danced and tore his hair. When he told the two that night, he had to listen to the taunts of Woltes and again Sabadis was obliged to make peace between them. On the third day, it was Sabadis' turn to stay in camp.

"Watch out for the boy," they warned him.

Sabadis prepared the meal and waited— and sure enough, just at noon the starving child came and began to beg piteously.

"I am starving! Please give me food."

"Very well," said Sabadis, "the pot is full, Help yourself but eat as others eat, and no tricks"

The boy grinned. "No tricks very well but I cannot eat as others eat. I must eat all. Stop me if you can."

And he reached for the food. No bonds held Sabadis as they had the others and he rushed at the elf. They wrestled for possession of the pot and Sabadis was amazed to find that this thin and weak looking boy was his equal in strength. Struggling with him he felt the excitement and pleasure of contesting with an equal. Face to face, laughing, the two fought until the sun was low in the sky and at last the elf-boy cried.

"Enough! We are well matched. You may keep your food."

"Who are you?" demanded Sabadis seeing there was more to this boy than he first suspected!

"I am Marten, the Megumoowesoo the boy answered, "the servant of Glooscap who sent me to test your strength, your courage and Mindness. Now ask what you wish and by the power of Glooscap's belt which I wear, I can give it to you."

"Be my friend," said Sabadis eagerly, but Marten shook his head with regret. "We are of different worlds. Would a sister do instead?"

Sabadis was disappointed but tried not to show it. "I have never had a sister," he admitted. "Thank you" "Follow me," said the little Megumoowesoo. and he walked straight into the ridge, Sabadis, anticipating a painful collision, shut his eyes but it proved an unnecessary precaution. For he easily followed the boy through rock and wood and entered a vast cave. There Marten put fine new doeskin garments on Sabadis and led him to an inner cave where a girl his own age, very slender and delicate waited shyly.

"This is your sister," said Marten. "Her name is Welahé",

"My friends will want a sister too," said Sabadis.

"They must want." said Marten, "Beware Sabadis of easy friendships, and never trust your life to ones so fond of death." Saying this he gave a skip into the air, spun round three times, and vanished,

“Come. my brother.’ said Welahe. “I will show you the way” and she led Sabadis out through an invisible door. It had seemed only a moment to Sabadis that he had been in the cave, but on looking around he saw that the camp was deserted. The two men had gone, taking weapons, food, and implements with them, his as well as their own. The ashes of the fire were cold but not yet disturbed by wind or rain, so the men could not have been long gone.

“They have taken my blanket and food with them’ said Sabadis,”so that being less burdened I can soon catch up with them.”

Welahe said nothing. She loved this gentle youth already and did not like to disagree with him, but it seemed to her that taking a man’s blanket and food was not the act of honest men. Sabadis studied the tracks on the ground.

“They have gone towards the great cliff. Come we must hurry to catch up.”

Before the sun reached the horizon, they arrived at the bottom of the cliff, and Sabadis saw dim figures standing on top. Wiskum! Woltes! Wait for me.”

“Is that you Sabadis?” He heard Wiskum’s voice call down in surprise. “We thought you were lost. Don’t take the path,” shouted Woltes. It will be quicker if we send down a rope and pull you up”

“Very well” said the Strongest Boy in the World. He could barely see the men now, and they could not see him and Welahe at all because of the cliff’s overhang.. He waited for the rope to descend.

“Tie a stone to the rope,” whispered Welahe,”and send it up first.”

“No, said the boy. “Such suspicion is unworthy of you, my sister. They are my friends.”

“Then let me go up first,” she begged,

He hesitated. “Very well There is nothing to fear.”

He made sure she was securely tied to the rope and watched her slight figure move slowly up the face of the cliff. He smiled, thinking how surprised the men would be. Welahe was only a darker shadow now, moving upward, almost to the top. Now it stopped moving, hung motionless for a moment and then suddenly with terrible speed, it came tumbling down and Welahe was dashed to pieces on the ground. As Sabadis stood frozen with horror he heard Wiskum’s voice drift down from the cliff top,

“That’s done it.” “Yes, “-said Woltes. “We’re rid of the boy at last,”

Then Sabadis knew that neither of the men had been his friend. and that the only one who had really cared for him was dead.

“Welahe,” he wept. “my sister my friend!”

”Yes, said the voice of Marten, “she was your friend.”

Sabadis turned with leaping hope to the little megymoowsoo. “But Glooscap can bring her to life again?”

“Not to this life,” said Marten slowly, and he smiled at Sabadis “This world is not ready yet for two of your sort. I shall take you to a better place.” And touching his magic belt Marten wished them all in the back of the Northland in a lodge at the end of the sky.

“Arise now. Welahe, make arrows for your brother.”

Then Welahe arose as lovely as ever. She smiled at her brother and Sabadis knew he would never be lonely again. And since that day whenever coloured spears of light shoot in splendour out of the dark Autumn sky most people say, “Ah, the Northern Lights,” but the Indians know better.

“It is the Strongest Boy in the World,” they say. Shooting the arrows made by his sister.” And so Kespeadooksis—another tale is over.

Welahe

My name is Welahe. The first thing I remember is that I was waiting in cave. A small hairy man called Marten came in with a handsome strong man the same age as me. The small man told me that the strong man, Sabadis, was now my brother. Sabadis asked if his friends Woltes and Wiskum could also have sisters. Marten refused and gave Sabadis a warning. "Be careful of easy friendships and don't trust men who treat others badly" Then Marten disappeared. I took Sabadis out of the cave and back to his camp. The two other men had gone and taken everything with them including Sabadis' blanket and food. I thought that these men must be wicked and dishonest. We tracked them and caught up with them when they were climbing a cliff. They offered to pull Sabadis up on a rope. I did not trust them and told Sabadis to tie a rock to the rope first. He refused. I begged him to be allowed to go up on the rope first.



Woltes

I'm called Woltes. I am quite strong and like making sure others see it. A while back I was pushing a rock up a hill. I let it go at the top so that it would roll down on top of a village. I liked to see everyone trying to get out of the way. I don't care if people get hurt. But the rock did not destroy the village. A boy jumped out and stopped it. He must have been very strong! He was with another man and asked me if I would be their friend. I thought that was a good idea since it did not want to have to have such a strong enemy. Being with Wiskum and Sabadis had its problems. There was a strange little boy who tried to steal our food. One day Sabadis just vanished. So we took his things and went off. After we had climbed a cliff, we heard Sabadis calling up to us. We sent down a rope and told him we would pull him up.





Wiskum

I am strong and I like playing tricks on people. One day I was showing some villagers how strong I was. I lifted a canoe with several villagers in it and dropped them and it in the water. A boy came along and saved the people from drowning. He just waded into the water and pulled them out. He asked if we could be friends. I thought he might be useful to me so I agreed to travel along with him.

A strange thing happened when I was guarding our camp one day, a funny little boy came and tried to steal the food. When I tried to stop him my feet would not move. It made me very angry. He ate all our food and I could do nothing. When it was Sabadis' turn to stay in the camp, he disappeared. Woltes and I took everything and left. We did not care what had happened to him.

Glooscap

I am a god and Marten is my little servant. He looks for people who have strength, courage and kindness. I had heard about Sabadis and his search for friends. Marten gave him a sister, but he trusted Wiskum and Woltes and even tried to get sisters for them. But they stole his things. They ended up killing Welahe when they were trying to kill Sabadis.



I think the best thing is for Sabadis and Welahe to leave this world. They are too kind. They can go to the back of the Northland and live forever. Welahe can make arrows and Sabadis can shoot them through the dark sky.

Human people will call their arrows the Northern Lights.

Marten

I am small and hairy and belong to another world. I am the servant of the god Glooscap. A few days ago I found a human camping and cooking food. I went up to the man and asked for food. He rudely told me to go away. I enchanted him so that he could not move at all and ate every scrap of food in his camp.

The next day I came back and the same thing happened with another man.

The next day when I came back the third person, a boy, said I was welcome to eat. I explained that I could not eat gently and had to eat everything. I told him he had to try to stop me. He rushed at me and we fought and fought all day, but could not beat each other. I eventually told him to stop. He wanted to know who I was so I told him my name, Marten.. I told him I was strong because I was wearing a magic belt and my job was to test peoples' strength courage and kindness. I told Sabadis I could grant a wish. His wish was to be my friend. I said I could not be a friend because I was not human and offered him a sister instead.



Uncle

I struck lucky when my nephew, Sabadis, was orphaned. Unlucky for him, but very lucky for me. He was obedient and willing to do everything I told him to. He was such a quick worker he could do any job in no time at all. He wanted to mix with all the children in the village, but I kept finding more work for him to do.

There was a great rock pile in front of my wigwam. I told him move the rocks out of the way. I noticed that this work was good for him because it made him stronger. One day I saw him lift a huge tree trunk. I noticed the other villagers admiring his strong arms so I thought there was money in this.

I told him that I was going to stop hunting and start taking him around the countryside to show the other villagers how strong he was. I'd make them pay to watch him.

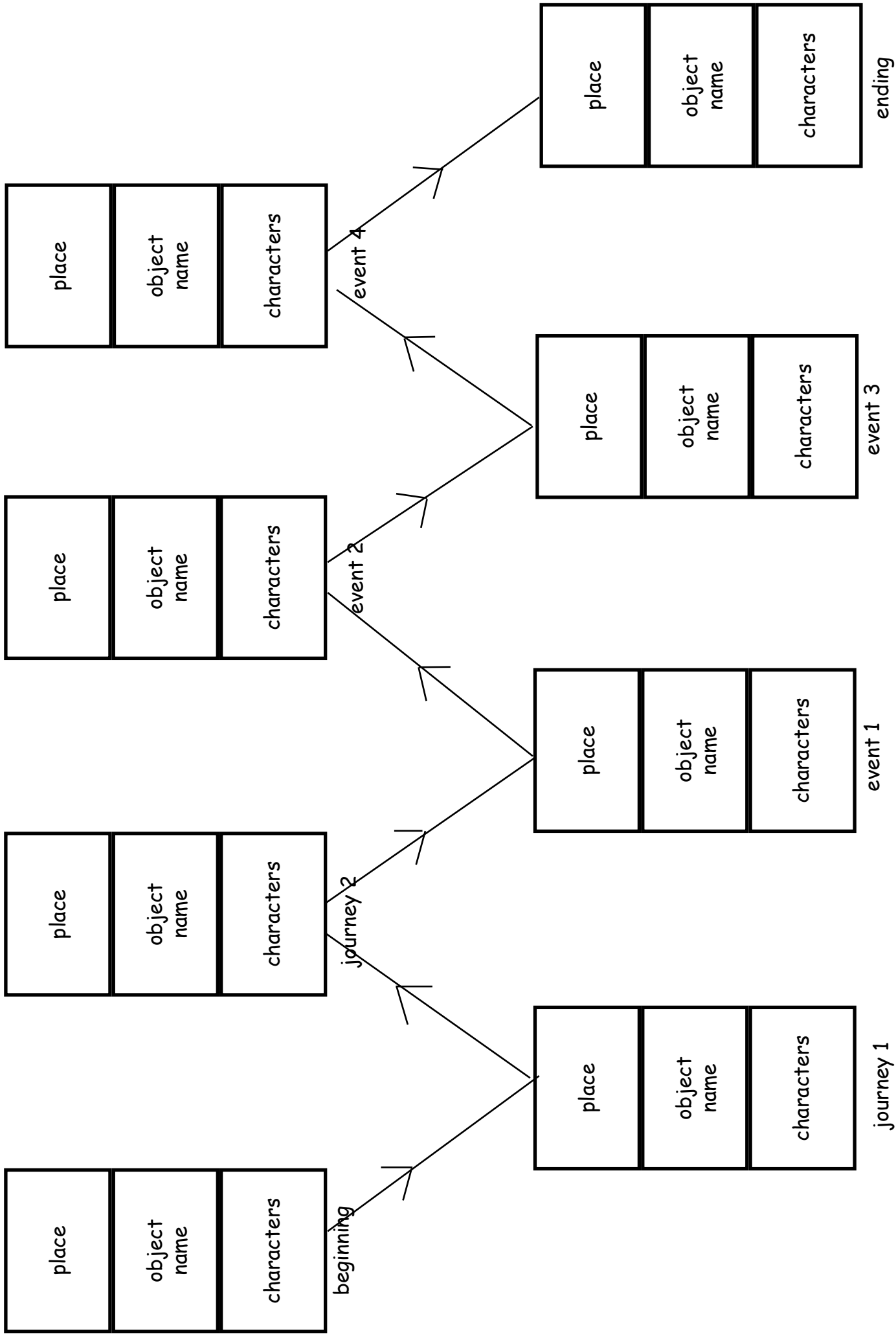
The boy was dreadful. He refused to do this and even worse he said he wanted to find friends and was going to leave me. I couldn't believe how ungrateful he was. I was furious with him.



	beginning	journey 1	journey 2	event 1	event 2	event 3	event 4	ending
object name	rockpile	canoe	big stone	pot of food	magic belt	a sister	a rope	Northern Lights
picture								
place	wigwam	sea shore	big hill	campfire	camp	cave	cliff	back of the Northland
characters	uncle	Wiskum	Woltes	Marten Woltes Wiskum	Marten Sabadis	Marten Sabadis	Welahe	Glooscap

	beginning	journey 1	journey 2	event 1	event 2	event 3	event 4	ending
	object name							
	picture							
	place							
	characters							

Strongest Boy in the World - Story Map



Strongest Boy in the World - Story Map

