

## Spiffy Nifty Stories

I grew up with the word "nifty" as a standard descriptor in my vocabulary. It alluded to the uniqueness and stylishness of the subject being described. As time passed, I heard the word used in a wider range of conversations, including nifty evenings out, nifty concerts, and nifty songs. Later still, it cropped up in conversations about more "cultural" experiences: nifty books, nifty poems, and nifty stories.

Whenever I heard the word I assumed it meant something good, something attractive. Still, I did not really define the word until I found myself using it to refer to the stories I tell to audiences and on recordings. Actually, I hit the books when a listener said my stories were nifty. The current Wiktionary defines the word as "good; a general term for anything that is good, useful or beneficial." The standard reference Compact Oxford Dictionary states: "particularly good, effective, or stylish."

What makes nifty stories nifty? The stories I tell always have a message, a lesson, a bit of perspective, and they are, indeed, particularly good and rather effective at making their point. To me, nifty stories are a blend of entertainment and education, or what some call "edutainment." There needs to be a message beyond a witty punch line.

Any story with a moral at the end sends the listener a clear message. It teaches using a concrete example. On the other hand, many stories are not so obvious in the lessons they offer. The characters may act out the meaning of the story. It is up to the listener to decipher the message. And there may be a different message for each listener. Stories such as these are inclined to be more widely popular. The subtler lessons tend to come from longer tales. Epic stories have many layered lessons. Think of the difference between an Aesop fable and a tale from the Arabian Nights. Which one appeals to you? My personal penchant is for finding my own lessons when I listen to a story. Check out my World Full of Stories and Fables in Four Minutes CDs for some examples of nifty stories with more subtle lessons.

Nifty stories edify. Nifty stories are memorable. Nifty stories carry a message that applies to all people. Nifty stories are always in vogue. These stories are naturally very attractive. Any stories of worth are nifty stories. See here also [Kids stories](#) ... [Inspirational stories](#) ...

## About the Author

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