

Name _____ Teacher _____

CHARACTERISTICS OF TALL TALES

No matter where they come from, tall tales share similar traits. Tall tales should have most of the following characteristics.

Directions: Choose a tall tale. As you read, check off the characteristics that appear in your story.

- hyperbole or exaggeration
- brave, larger-than-life heroes who accomplish great feats using strength and wits
- heroes often have an animal companion or special object they carry with them
- told as though they were real ("I worked with him once!" or "I saw it with my own two eyes!")
- Still remembered today in ballads or songs, parks, brands, statues, movies, places named after them ("birthplace of...")
- explain origins of a natural landform
- frontier location and time period
- humorous, silly, or outlandish
- survival over harsh or deadly nature (animals, weather)
- based on a real person

