Fairy Tales

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Fairy Tales – Good to Know Information

Fairy tales have been around for thousands of years, beginning with oral traditions. These fictional stories come from all cultures, and many have their own versions of well-known tales in the English world.

Sometimes fairy tales are thought to have historical accuracy. That is, they come from a culture where certain elements are thought to be real (such as ogres, witches, etc.).

Fairy tales were originally told/written as much for adults as for children. Modern fairy tales as we know them have been rewritten to take out certain “unwholesome” references so that they can be read to children.

Adaptations of fairy tales continue today, and the nature of the fairy tale makes them particularly appealing for children. Young children’s minds are best taught through storytelling, and fairy tales enhance a child’s ability to “make a movie” in his or her mind while listening, thus improving comprehension.

Common elements found in fairy tales are:

- They are set in the past
- Use a “Once upon a time” beginning (or something similar)
- Include fantasy or make-believe elements
- Setting is enchanted, and can include forests, castles, water or kingdoms
- Clearly defined good and evil characters
- Involve magical elements
- People can take unusual forms (giants, witches, dwarfs)
- Animals often talk and can have special abilities
- Most often include objects, people or events in threes
- Clearly defined problem and climax
- Most often have a happy ending based on resolving the problem
- Usually teach a lesson that is of importance to the culture it comes from

Fairy Tales do not have to include a fairy!

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The Fairy Tale Unit

Reading aloud many fairy tales is essential to beginning a fairy tale unit. Begin by collecting at least 15-20 books to use as read alouds and to put out for browsing. Be sure to get the “original” fairy tales as well, not just the more modern versions. I first always read from The Complete Grimm’s Fairy Tales and use reciprocal teaching while reading it out loud (be careful what stories you read from – some are quite scary).

While reading a fairy tale aloud, point out the elements that make put the story in the genre of fairy tales. These should be charted on an anchor poster. An anchor poster is simply a large piece of chart paper that allows you to record each element of the story as the children notice it. As well, each child should anchor the elements on their own chart that they keep in their Fairy Tale Study Journal.

Allow the children to read some of the fairy tales on their own or with a buddy. During their reading, encourage them to record the elements they find in their book, then allow them to share with the class.

This unit is assuming that you will read aloud and discuss all of the stories for the comprehension questions. As well, this unit is not exploring fairy tales from different points of view. It is working on adaptations of the original texts.

Once the children have become quite adept at recognizing fairy tale elements, you can begin going deeper into comprehension questions, comparing fairy tales from different cultures, completing “The Jolly Postman” letter writing activity, and having the students write their own fairy tales.

I always like to have my students write a fractured fairy tale based on The Three Little Pigs. This fairy tale is well known, lends itself to creativity and is highly successful. Younger children find it difficult to write a fairy tale from “scratch.” They need a story to anchor their thoughts in and work from.

Fairy Tales Online:

http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/stories/theme/fairytales/

http://www.grimmfairytales.com/en/main

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Elements of a Fairy Tale: Anchor Chart

Write the title of the fairy tale. As you discover each element, put a check mark in the box. Not all fairy tales will have all the elements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Once Upon A Time...</th>
<th>Magic and/ or Enchanted Setting</th>
<th>Good wins over Bad Characters</th>
<th>“Threes”</th>
<th>Teaches a Lesson</th>
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Copyright 2009 Primary Education Oasis
Listen to the story “Little Red Cap” from The Complete Grimm’s Fairy Tales.

Write a summary for Little Red Cap.

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Little Red Cap

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fairy Tale Element</th>
<th>Yes</th>
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<tr>
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What lesson do you think Little Red Cap learned?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Why do you think the wolf was a good choice for the bad character in the story?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Did you like the story? Explain.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
1. Listen to the story *Pretty Salma*.

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<tr>
<th>Characters</th>
<th>Setting</th>
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<th>Problem</th>
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Write a summary for *Pretty Salma*.

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Pretty Salma

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<tr>
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</table>

Use the T-Chart to compare and contrast **Pretty Salma** and **Little Red Cap**.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Little Red Cap</th>
<th>Pretty Salma</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*Taking food to her sick grandmother</td>
<td>____________________________</td>
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<tr>
<td>____________________________________</td>
<td>*A dog is the bad character</td>
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<tr>
<td>*Sharp teeth to eat Little Red Cap</td>
<td>____________________________</td>
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<tr>
<td>____________________________________</td>
<td>Tried to eat grandmother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*The hunter saves them</td>
<td>____________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Learned to obey her mother</td>
<td>____________________________</td>
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</table>
Listen to the story Little Red: A Fizzingly Good Yarn

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Write a summary for Little Red: A Fizzingly Good Yarn.

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Little Red: A Fizzingly Good Yarn

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1. Name two ways the character of Little Red is different from Little Red Cap.

_________________________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________________________

2. What is the time period setting for Little Red?

_________________________________________________________________________________________________

3. How do you know? Name three things that support your answer.

_________________________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________________________

4. How is the place setting the same as Little Red Cap?

_________________________________________________________________________________________________
5. In all three versions, grandmother is eaten by the bad character. Is she rescued in the same way in all three? Explain.

____________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________

6. At the end, Little Red saves himself. How is this different from the endings in *Pretty Salma* and *Little Red Cap*?

____________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________

7. Why is *Little Red: A Fizzingly Good Yarn* a good title for this story?

____________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________

8. Which version did you like the best? Why?

____________________________________________________________________________________________

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____________________________________________________________________________________________
Jack and the Beanstalk
retold by: Ann Keay Beneduce

Fairy Tale Element | Yes | No
---|---|---
Once upon a time... |  |  
Magic or enchanted setting |  |  
Good character wins over bad |  |  
Threes |  |  
Teaches a lesson |  |  
Talking animals |  |  
Happy ending |  |  

1. Name the three things Jack takes from the giant.
   __________________________
   __________________________
   __________________________

2. Do you think Jack was right to steal from the giant? Explain.
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
Jack and the Beanstalk Context Clues

Complete the story for Jack and the Beanstalk. Use these words:
giant  magic beans  Jack  cow  mother  farmer  beanstalk
fairy  gold coins  golden eggs  axe  magic harp  father  giant's wife

Once upon a time there was a little boy named ________. He and his mother were starving, so he sold their _________ to a ___________. The ______________ gave ______________ some ________________ in exchange for the cow.

________’s __________ was not pleased with the ________________, so she threw them out of the window. They grew into a magic _________________. ____________ climbed the ________________.

At the top, ___________ found a ________’s castle. The _______ was very bad, so the ________________ helped hide ____________.

First, ________ stole some ________________ that had belonged to his _________________. Next, he took a hen that could lay _________________. Finally, he stole a _________________.

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The ____________ woke up the __________ by calling for help. The evil ___________ chased ___________ down the ___________. ___________ chopped it down with an ______. ___________ and his ____________ lived happily ever after and never went hungry again.
The Three Billy Goats Gruff

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The Three Billy Goats Gruff

1. Why did the goats want to cross the bridge?

____________________________________________________

2. What did the troll want to do to the goats?

____________________________________________________

3. How does the author help you hear the sounds of the goats crossing the bridge?

____________________________________________________

4. How do the first two goats trick the troll?

____________________________________________________

5. How does the biggest goat solve the problem in the story?

____________________________________________________

6. What lesson can be learned from The Three Billy Goats Gruff?

____________________________________________________
Hansel and Gretel

Coloring Page courtesy of Print Activities.com

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Listen to the story “Hansel and Gretel” from *The Complete Grimm’s Fairy Tales*.

**Characters**

**Setting**

**Problem**

**Solution**

Write a summary for *Hansel and Gretel*.

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Hansel and Gretel

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1. Who do you think is worse, the step-mother or the witch? Why?

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2. Why does the witch have a candy cottage?

________________________________________________________________________

3. “Hansel was very clever.” Write two ways that Hansel showed he was smart.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

4. “Gretel was very brave.” How did Gretel show bravery at the end of the story?

________________________________________________________________________
Hansel and Gretel
retold and illustrated by: Rachel Isadora

Original Story

Rachel Isadora version

Forest in Norway

Jungle in _____________

Main Characters:

_____________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________

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How did Rachel Isadora’s illustrations help you see the setting in your mind? Name three ways.

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Copyright 2009 Primary Education Oasis
Long ago there lived a King and Queen who said every day, "If only we had a child!" But for a long time they had none.

One day, as the Queen was bathing in a spring and dreaming of a child, a frog crept out of the water and said to her, "Your wish shall be fulfilled. Before a year has passed you shall bring a daughter into the world."

And since frogs are such magical creatures, it was no surprise that before a year had passed the Queen had a baby girl. The child was so beautiful and sweet that the King could not contain himself for joy. He prepared a great feast and invited all his friends, family and neighbours. He invited the fairies, too, in order that they might be kind and good to the child. There were thirteen of them in his kingdom, but as the King only had twelve golden plates for them to eat from, one of the fairies had to be left out. None of the guests was saddened by this as the thirteenth fairy was known to be cruel and spiteful.

An amazing feast was held and when it came to an end, each of the fairies presented the child with a magic gift. One fairy gave her virtue, another beauty, a third riches and so on -- with everything in the world that anyone could wish for.

After eleven of the fairies had presented their gifts, the thirteenth suddenly appeared. She was angry and wanted to show her spite for not having been invited to the feast. Without hesitation she called out in a loud voice,

"When she is fifteen years old, the Princess shall prick herself with a spindle and shall fall down dead!"

Then without another word, she turned and left the hall.

The guests were horrified and the Queen fell to the floor sobbing, but the twelfth fairy, whose wish was still not spoken, quietly stepped forward. Her magic could not remove the curse, but she could soften it so she said,
"Nay, your daughter shall not die, but instead shall fall into a deep sleep that will last one hundred years."

Over the years, the promises of the fairies came true -- one by one. The Princess grew to be beautiful, modest, kind and clever. Everyone who saw her could not help but love her.

The King and Queen were determined to prevent the curse placed on the Princess by the spiteful fairy and sent out a command that all the spindles in the whole kingdom should be destroyed. No one in the kingdom was allowed to tell the Princess of the curse that had been placed upon her for they did not want her to worry or be sad.

On the morning of her fifteenth birthday, the Princess awoke early -- excited to be another year older. She was up so early in the morning, that she realized everyone else still slept. The Princess roamed through the halls trying to keep herself occupied until the rest of the castle awoke. She wandered about the whole place, looking at rooms and halls as she pleased and at last she came to an old tower. She climbed the narrow, winding staircase and reached a little door. A rusty key was sticking in the lock and when she turned it, the door flew open.

In a little room sat an old woman with a spindle, busily spinning her flax. The old woman was so deaf that she had never heard the King's command that all spindles should be destroyed.

"Good morning, Granny," said the Princess, "what are you doing?"

"I am spinning," said the old woman.

"What is the thing that whirls round so merrily?" asked the Princess and she took the spindle and tried to spin too.

But she had scarcely touched the spindle when it pricked her finger. At that moment she fell upon the bed which was standing near and lay still in a deep sleep.

The King, Queen and servants had all started their morning routines and right in the midst of them fell asleep too. The horses fell asleep in the stable, the dogs in the yard, the doves on the roof and the flies on the wall. Even the fire in the hearth grew still and went to sleep. The kitchen maid, who sat with a chicken before her, ready to pluck its feathers, fell asleep. The cook was in the midst of scolding the kitchen boy for a mess he'd made but they both fell fast asleep. The wind died down and on the trees in front of the castle not a leaf stirred.
Round the castle a hedge of brier roses began to grow up. Every year it grew higher until at last nothing could be seen of the sleeping castle.

There was a legend in the land about the lovely Sleeping Beauty, as the King's daughter was called, and from time to time Princes came and tried to force their way through the hedge and into the castle. But they found it impossible for the thorns, as though they were alive, grabbed at them and would not let them through.

After many years a Prince came again to the country and heard an old man tell the tale of the castle which stood behind the brier hedge and the beautiful Princess who had slept within for a hundred years. He heard also that many Princes had tried to make it through the brier hedge but none had succeeded and many had been caught in it and died.

The young Prince said, "I am not afraid. I must go and see this Sleeping Beauty."

The good old man did all in his power to persuade him not to go, but the Prince would not listen.

Now the hundred years were just ended. When the Prince approached the brier hedge it was covered with beautiful large roses. The shrubs made way for him of their own accord and let him pass unharmed.

In the courtyard, the Prince saw the horses and dogs lying asleep. On the roof sat the sleeping doves with their heads tucked under their wings. When he went into the house, the flies were asleep on the walls and the servants asleep in the halls. Near the throne lay the King and Queen, sleeping peacefully beside each other. In the kitchen the cook, the kitchen boy and the kitchen maid all slept with their heads resting on the table.

The Prince went on farther. All was so still that he could hear his own breathing. At last he reached the tower and opened the door into the little room where the Princess was asleep. There she lay, looking so beautiful that he could not take his eyes off her. He bent down and gave her a kiss. As he touched her, Sleeping Beauty opened her eyes and smiled up at him.

Throughout the castle, everyone and everything woke up and looked at each other with astonished eyes. Within the month, the Prince and Sleeping Beauty were married and lived happily all their lives.
Sleeping Beauty

1. Underline the problem of the story in BLUE.

2. Underline the solution in RED.

3. Circle the setting in GREEN.

4. Circle the bad character the **first** time she appears in YELLOW.

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How would the story be different if the King had found a thirteenth golden plate?

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Listen to the story *Sleeping Bunny.*
Compare and contrast the story with Sleeping Beauty.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sleeping Beauty</th>
<th>Sleeping Bunny</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seven golden plates</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fifteenth birthday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evil fairy</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Pricked her finger on a spinning wheel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Handsome prince</td>
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<tr>
<td>Problem solved by Mildew bringing eight plates</td>
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</table>
Writing Activities

The Jolly Postman – Or Other People’s Letters

1. Read the book The Jolly Postman by Janet and Allan Ahlberg.

2. As you read fairy tales out loud, have the students write to the main characters, as in The Jolly Postman.

   Suggested writings that follow this unit are:

   a. Letter of apology from the wolf to Little Red Riding Hood
   b. Postcard from Jack to the giant
   c. Note from the Troll’s lawyer – suing the Gruff Goats for personal injury
   d. Catalogue page from a baking catalogue for witches
   e. Love letter from the Prince to Sleeping Beauty

3. Put all of these letters into envelopes, have the students write clever mailing and return addresses, then single-hole punch all 5 letters to combine onto a ring. Alternatively, you could make a large book out of construction paper, glue the envelopes onto each page, and write your own story of the Jolly Postman – just like the book!

The Three Little...

Students write their own version of The Three Little Pigs. Read it out loud first and discuss it. Chart the story. You could also read other versions of it, such as The Three Little Javalinas or Three Little Hawaiian Pigs and the Magic Shark.

Provide a story map for students to brainstorm their story on. Encourage them to stay true to the elements of a fairy tale, but change the characters, setting and some events. Stick to the basic plot line of The Three Little Pigs.