

# Creating Fairy Tales, Folk Tales and Myths

by

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**Title of the Lesson:** *Literacy and Global Awareness through Fairy Tales, Folk Tales, Fables and Myths*

**Grade Level:** 9-12

**Length of Lesson:** 10-13 days (Project Based Learning)

**Overview of the Lesson:** *Students will be able to use a fairy tale, folk tale, fable or myth to explore the values/customs of various cultures.*

## **Learning Goals:**

- Use a fairy tale, folk tale or myth to explore the values/customs of various cultures.
- Develop/enhance critical thinking skills by examining what the story reveals about the culture and customs/historical time period
- Develop awareness of various cultural values as related through literature
- Practice written and oral communication skills
- Use technology as a means of collaborative communication/writing
- Use Web 2.0 tools to illustrate the story – use blog/wiki to post illustration

Optional Goals – partner with a sister school in a foreign country doing the same/similar lesson.

- Develop relationship with students in sister school via blog/wiki
- Prepare a mind map illustration of a fairy tale/folk tale or myth provided by sister school students.

## **NC Common Core Standards Being Addressed:**

Literature 9-12: CCR 1-6; 10

Writing 9-12 : CCW 3a-e; 4,5,6

Speaking & Listening 9-12: CCSPL 1 a,c,d; 4,5,6

Language 9-12: CCL 1a,b; 2a,b,c; 3; 4b,d; 5a,b

## **Materials Needed:**

- *Handout on Fairy Tales, Fables, Folktales and Myths for students.(follows)*
- *Handout of Daily plan for students with resource links and progress checkpoints.(follows)*
- *Computer and internet access for students.*
- *Post-evaluation form for students (follows)*
- *Rubric for teacher (follows)*

## **How the Lesson Will Flow:**

### **Day 1:**

- Divide into teams
- Go to the following website and choose a myth from one of the countries to view:  
[http://mythicjourneys.org/bigmyth/2\\_eng\\_myths.htm](http://mythicjourneys.org/bigmyth/2_eng_myths.htm) - Myths of different regions  
This is one example of what a final project can look like.
- Using the list of elements above, each team will identify/elaborate which elements were present in the story viewed.
- Each group will share with the class.

### **Day 2:**

- Each team will identify a current cultural value or more to convey through an *original* story.
  - Examples:
    - Red Riding Hood = stranger danger
    - Beauty and the Beast/Shrek – don't judge by appearances
    - Odyssey – overcoming hardship to achieve goals
- Each team will brainstorm ideas for their own story.
  - Using the list, students will identify the key elements to incorporate in the story.
  - The target audience for the story will be elementary school aged children. If students have an adult theme to communicate, it must be done in a way that is appropriate to tell to elementary school children.

### **Day 3:**

Pre-writing activity: Students will post on a *google doc* the cultural value/more and the elements they will use to convey their story. Graded assignment.

### **Day 4:**

TECHNOLOGY TEACHER will demonstrate web 2.0 storytelling tools  
<http://storybird.com/>  
<http://www.toondoo.com/>

### **Day 5:**

TEACHER feedback on the pre-writing activity will be complete.

### **Day 6:**

Begin first draft of story using *google docs*. TEACHER will provide input on request.

**Day 8** – Final draft due on google docs.

### **Day 9:**

Computer lab time to work on project.

### **Day 11:**

Computer lab time to work on project

**Day 13:**

Final project link to be posted on *google doc*

**Assessment:**

*The final product posted to the google doc will be graded according to the rubric established by the teacher.*

*(Rubric – get this from Megan Poole!)*

**Sources for the Lesson:**

Gokturk, V. "The Elements of a Fairy Tale." *Welcome to Ms. Gokturk's English Page*. Web. 2011. <Source: <http://www.surfturk.com/mythology/fairytaleelements.html>>.

Samples of student work from the Project:

1. Writing activity:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1kV2sCBxC3zbVoomH0LeX35YhY-1Q1YdRaRgCcnqPxAA/edit>

Digital story: <http://storybird.com/boo1asks/pixie-dust-2/?token=rzpfb3>

2. Writing activity

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ps74dCEgs6CGhVL7WJcT7X0E7yxn4-5TLFiyj8Y\\_UvM/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ps74dCEgs6CGhVL7WJcT7X0E7yxn4-5TLFiyj8Y_UvM/edit)

Digital Story: <http://storybird.com/books/i-am-me-16/?token=7hj5bm>

## Fairy Tales, Fables, Folktales and Myths

Parents tell their children fairy tales, fables, myths and folktales as part of an oral story telling tradition to impart values of the culture to the children.

A **fairy tale** is a fictional story that may feature folkloric characters (such as fairies, goblins, elves, trolls, witches, giants, and talking animals) and enchantments, often involving a far-fetched sequence of events.

The term is also used to describe something blessed with unusual happiness, as in "fairy tale ending" (a happy ending) or "fairy tale romance," though not all fairy tales end happily. Fairy tales are a genre in literature. They have their roots in the oral tradition.

Fairy tales with very similar plots, characters, and motifs are found spread across many different cultures. Fairy tales also tend to take on the color of their location, through the choice of motifs, the style in which they are told, and the depiction of character and local color.

A **fable** is a brief, succinct story, in prose or verse, that features animals, plants, inanimate objects, or forces of nature which are anthropomorphized (given human qualities), and that illustrates a moral lesson (a "moral"), which may at the end be expressed explicitly in a pithy maxim.

A **folktale** is a short story that also comes from the oral tradition. Folk tales often have to do with everyday life and frequently feature wily peasants getting the better of their superiors. In many cases, the characters are animals with human characteristics.

A **myth** is a made-up story that explains the existence of a natural phenomenon — such as where thunder comes from or why snow falls from the sky. Myths — which often include gods and goddesses and other supernatural characters who have the power to make extraordinary things happen — are popular even when people know the actual reasons for natural phenomena.

### Ways Fairy Tales Have Been Interpreted

When you think fairy tale, you think, "children." But pay close attention to the stories and you will see bigger meanings meant not just for children.

- **Jungian Archetypes** - man's collective subconscious, collective dream, shared experiences, deepest desires, fears
- **Freudian Psychoanalysis** – the id, the ego, the superego are always warring – our primal needs at odds with our consciences
- **Feminist Theory** - aims to understand the nature of inequality and focuses on gender politics, power relations and sexuality; themes: fertility, discrimination, stereotyping, objectification (especially sexual objectification), oppression, and patriarchy
- **Morphology** - analyzes the *function* of each character / action = a tale is composed of thirty-one elements and eight character types; Vladimir Propp, Russian fairytales

- **Historic Analysis** - seeing tales a way to preserve history, legend, and customs
- **Moral Lessons** - Charles Perrault's versions all end with a lesson

Source: <http://www.surfturk.com/mythology/fairytaleelements.html>

Attachment: Handout #1 p. 2

## Elements Found in Fairy Tales

### Special beginning and/or ending words

- Once upon a time...and they lived happily ever after. Sometimes, there's a surprise ending...

### Good character

- Do you see a kind, innocent character? Is the good character clever? Is s/he helped by others?

### Evil character

- Do you see a witch? A demon? An evil stepmother? A sinister gnome?

In the end, the evil character usually loses somehow...

### Royalty

- Is there a castle? A prince? A princess? A king? A queen?

### Poverty

- Do you see a poor working girl, a poor family, a poor shepherd? – Do you see poor people trying to eke out a living to have enough to eat

### Magic and Enchantments

- Do you see magical things happening? Do you see talking animals/objects? You might see fairies, trolls, elves, goblins, etc.

### Reoccurring Patterns / Numbers

- Do you see any patterns? Often, you'll see things, phrases, tasks appear in "threes," "sixes," and/or "sevens"

### Universal Truths

- The tale probably touches on some universal experiences (i.e., coming of age) or hopes (i.e., to have enough food and love)

### Common motifs

- Talking animals / objects
- Cleverness / trickster / word games
- Traveler's tales
- Origins ~ where do we come from?
- Triumph of the poor
- Human weakness explored (i.e., curiosity, gluttony, pride, laziness, etc.)
- Human strengths glorified (i.e., kindness, generosity, patience, etc.)
- Trickster (sometimes a hero, sometimes on the side of evil but humans benefit)
- Tall story (slight exaggeration – hyperbole)
- Magic words or phrases; repetition of phrases/words (*abracadabra!*)
- Guardians (fairy godmothers, mentors, magical helpers, guides, etc.)

- Monsters (dragons, ogres, evil creatures, etc.)
- Struggle between good and evil, light and dark
- Youngest vs. Oldest (sons, daughters, sibling rivalry)
- Sleep (extended sleep, death-like trances)
- Impossible tasks (ridiculously mind-numbing, fantastic effort needed to complete, etc.)
- Quests
- Gluttony / Starvation (there's a fine line between eating for survival and succumbing to temptation)
- Keys, passes (opening new doors)
- Donors, Benefactors, Helpers

Attachment: Handout #1 p. 3

Your assignment:

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What you see here is one example of what your final project can look like.

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- Examples:
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- You will brainstorm ideas for your own story.
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**Handout #2 – Post-project evaluation for students**

**Team evaluation sheet: Title of Story**

**Authors:**

**As a result of this process what did you about writing:**

**about digital storytelling:**

**about team work:**

**As far as team work and accomplishing the goals of the assignment, what did the team do well;**

**As far as team work and accomplishing the goals of the assignment, what would the team do differently next time:**

**Rate your team on a scale of 1-10, 1 low—10 high and explain your rating.**

**Handout #3 - Rubric**

**Rubric for final digital story**

**10 points grammar, spelling, punctuation**

**10 points appropriate digital illustrations that bring the story to life**

**10 points theme is clear and leaves the reader with an important main idea about life**

**10 points dramatic reading/audio in storytelling fashion**