



The Magic of a Good Tale

The folktale genre is as old as time, but still holds up to the test of good story writing. What's the magic of a good tale, old or new? The fact that it is great in bringing to life worlds we never knew existed before.

National Standard > Language Arts

NL-ENG.K-12.2 Understanding the Human Experience * (Grades 4, 5, & 6)

- Read a wide range of literature from many periods in many genres to build an understanding of the many dimensions (e.g., philosophical, ethical, aesthetic) of human experience.

NL-ENG.K-12.3 Evaluation Strategies (Grades 4, 5, & 6)

- Apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate text.
- Draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).

NL-ENG.K-12.5 Communication Strategies (Grades 4, 5, & 6)

- Employ a wide range of strategies as they write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes.

NL-ENG.K-12.6 Applying Knowledge (Grades 4, 5, & 6)

- Apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions (e.g., spelling and punctuation), media techniques, figurative language, and genre to create, critique and discuss print and nonprint texts.

Kentucky: Language Arts

1. Use basic communication and mathematics skills for purposes and situations they will encounter throughout their lives.

Literary Reading (1.2)

1.2 Students make sense of the variety of materials they read.

Grade 4

RD-E-1.0.8 Describe characters, plot, setting, and problem/solution of a passage.

Grades 5 & 6

RD-M-1.0.12 Identify characteristics of short stories, novels, poetry, and plays.

Reflective Writing (1.11)

1.11 Students write using appropriate forms, conventions, and styles to communicate ideas and information to different audiences for different purposes.

Grades 4, 5 & 6

WR-E-1.1

- Strategies used during the development of pieces.
- Techniques and/or strategies used by the student when composing.
- Application of writing process (prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, publishing).

Literary Writing (1.11)**Grades 4, 5 & 6****WR-E-1.3**

- Literary elements of the selected form (e.g., short story--character, poem--rhythm, script—stage directions) (e.g., short story—plot, poem—imagery, script--stage directions).
- Descriptive language
- Literary devices (e.g., personification, end rhyme, similes, metaphors) (e.g., simile, metaphor, flashback).
- Effective ordering of events, impressions, and descriptions.
- Focus on engaging an audience.

Ohio: Language Arts>Reading Applications> Literary Text Standard

- Enhance understanding of the human story by reading texts that represent a variety of authors, cultures and eras.
- Apply the reading process to the various genres of literature.
- Demonstrate comprehension by describing and discussing the elements of literature.
- Explain, analyze and critique literary text to achieve deep understanding.

Benchmark(s) Grades 4, 5 & 6

- F. Identify similarities and differences of various literary forms and genres.

Ohio: Language Art> Writing Processes Standard

- Engage in the major phases of the writing process—prewriting, drafting, revising, editing and publishing.
- Plan writing for different purposes and audiences.
- Apply writing skills in increasingly sophisticated ways to create and produce compositions that reflect effective word and grammatical choices.

Benchmark(s) Grade 4

- A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H and I (see all: writing and editing processes)

Benchmark(s) Grade 5 & 6

- A, B, C, D, E, F, G, and H (see all: writing and editing processes)

Ohio: Language Arts> Writing Applications Standard

- Understand various types of writing require different language, formatting and special vocabulary.
- Learn about the various purposes of writing.
- Use a small range of familiar forms.
- Select text forms to suit purpose and audience.
- Use content-specific vocabulary to achieve communication goals.

Benchmark(s) Grade 4

- B. Write responses to literature that summarize main ideas and significant details and support interpretations with references to the text.

Benchmark(s) Grades 5 & 6

- B. Use narrative strategies (e.g., dialogue and action) to develop characters, plot and setting and to maintain a consistent point of view.

Objective

Students will:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the characteristics of the fairy/folktale genre.
- Demonstrate an understanding of a universal motif.
- Apply the characteristics of the fairy/folktale genre for the creation of an authentic tale.

Assessment

Students will be able to:

- Identify and analyze defining attributes of the fairy/folktale genre.
- Recognize universal motifs embedded in tales of old and modern day children's and young adult literature.
- Write an authentic fairy/folktale with an embedded universal motif.

Sample items to gauge student understanding:

1. Define the term "motif." (*the underlying or dominant theme of a story*)
2. Provide three examples from the play, Hansel and Gretel that demonstrate evidence of characteristics for the fairy/folktale genre. (*e.g., conflict between good vs. evil; presence of a protagonist vs. antagonist; presence of magic and luck, etc.*)
3. Discuss why characteristics of the fairy/folktale genre have embedded elements for good story crafting that modern day authors put to use.

Vocabulary

- Fairy tales
- Characteristics

Materials

- Handout A: Identifying the Characteristics of Fairy/Folktales
- Handout B: Fairy Tale Assessment Checklist

Activity 1

Understanding a Story Genre

Teacher will:

1. Write the following questions on the board for students to answer and share prior knowledge.
 - a. What is a fairy/folktale?
 - b. What are special characteristics of fairy/folktales?
 - c. What makes each fairy/folktale different from another?
 - d. Why do we have so many fairy/folktales?
 - e. Why do so many parents read fairy/folk tales to their children?

2. Facilitate class discussion to introduce/review in-depth characteristics of the fairy/folktale genre to address any misconceptions.
 - a. *Very old tales told for entertainment*
 - b. *Of oral tradition/original author unknown*
 - c. *Includes conflict of good vs. evil (protagonist vs. antagonist)*
 - d. *Presence of magic and luck for problem solving*
 - e. *Usually a happy ending*
 - f. *Lesson or moral embedded in the telling*
 - g. *Things happen in 3's*
 - h. *Action takes place in imaginative places*
 - i. *Appearance of universal human emotions such as love, hate, envy, joy, etc.*
3. Have students identify modern day literature/tales that through time may one day be considered or become 21st Century fair/folktales (e.g., Harry Potter series, Redwall tales, Eragon & Eldest tales, etc.).
Question prompt:
 - a. Even though these tales are considered novels, do they have elements of folktales of old?
 - b. Why do modern day authors borrow techniques and characteristics of fairy/folktales to write a story?
 - c. What is it about genre that makes for a good story, past or present?
4. Introduce the concept of literacy "motif" (*a dominate theme in a literary work*).
5. Have students identify universal motifs as they relate to human activity and emotions.
6. Facilitate class discussion on why such themes are addressed over and over in tales of old and new. Have students identify the motifs/themes portrayed in the stage production of Hansel and Gretel.

Student will:

1. Actively participate in class discussions.
2. Share their prior knowledge regarding the fairy/folktale genre.
3. Identify the use of fairy/folktale characteristics in tales of old, and modern day.
4. Identify universal motifs in tales of old, and modern day.

Activity 2

Creating the Tale

Teacher will:

1. Ask students if they noticed any familiar characters in the Children's Theatre production, Hansel and Gretel. Draw attention to the fact that many of the supporting characters were characters from other folk tales or nursery rhymes. Question prompt:
 - a. *Why did the author decide to use familiar characters (e.g., to gain the audience's attention; to exaggerate the human characteristics and universal themes of human behavior).*

2. Brainstorm a list on the board of the familiar fairy/folktale characters from the stage production.
3. Choose one character to be a main character for a new tale. Choose three other characters to serve as minor characters in the tale. Explain to students their task to create a class fairy tale.
4. Begin the story with the words, "Once upon a time," and then have each student add on a line to tell what happens next in the order of events. (*Emphasize that inclusion of characteristics of a fairy/folktale is a mandated requirement.*)
5. Have students to also include the following:
 - a. A universal theme/motif
 - b. A protagonist; an antagonist
 - c. The presence of the number three
 - d. A happy ending
6. Have student to visually illustrate selected scenes and format the text and pictures as a big book to share with younger students; smaller formats to share with parents.

Students will:

1. Actively participate in class discussions.
2. Identify the host of characters in the staged production of Hansel and Gretel for inclusion in the creation of an authentic tale.
3. Create an authentic tale along with classmates, incorporating characteristics of the fairy/folktale genre.

Writing

Introductory

- Student will create a poster that advertises their favorite fairy tale, emphasizing the universal motif as the selling point.

Intermediate

- Student will read a self-selected version of Hansel and Gretel, and make use of the story text and universal motif to create script for a commercial that advertises the tale. The script will include student rationale for choosing a particular book over others like it, and what makes it the "classic fairy tale."

Advanced

- Students will read a modern day tale (novel) and revamp the format and story into a shorter Grimm like tale, with emphasis on the story motif.

Student Self Selected Reading Suggestions for Further Genre

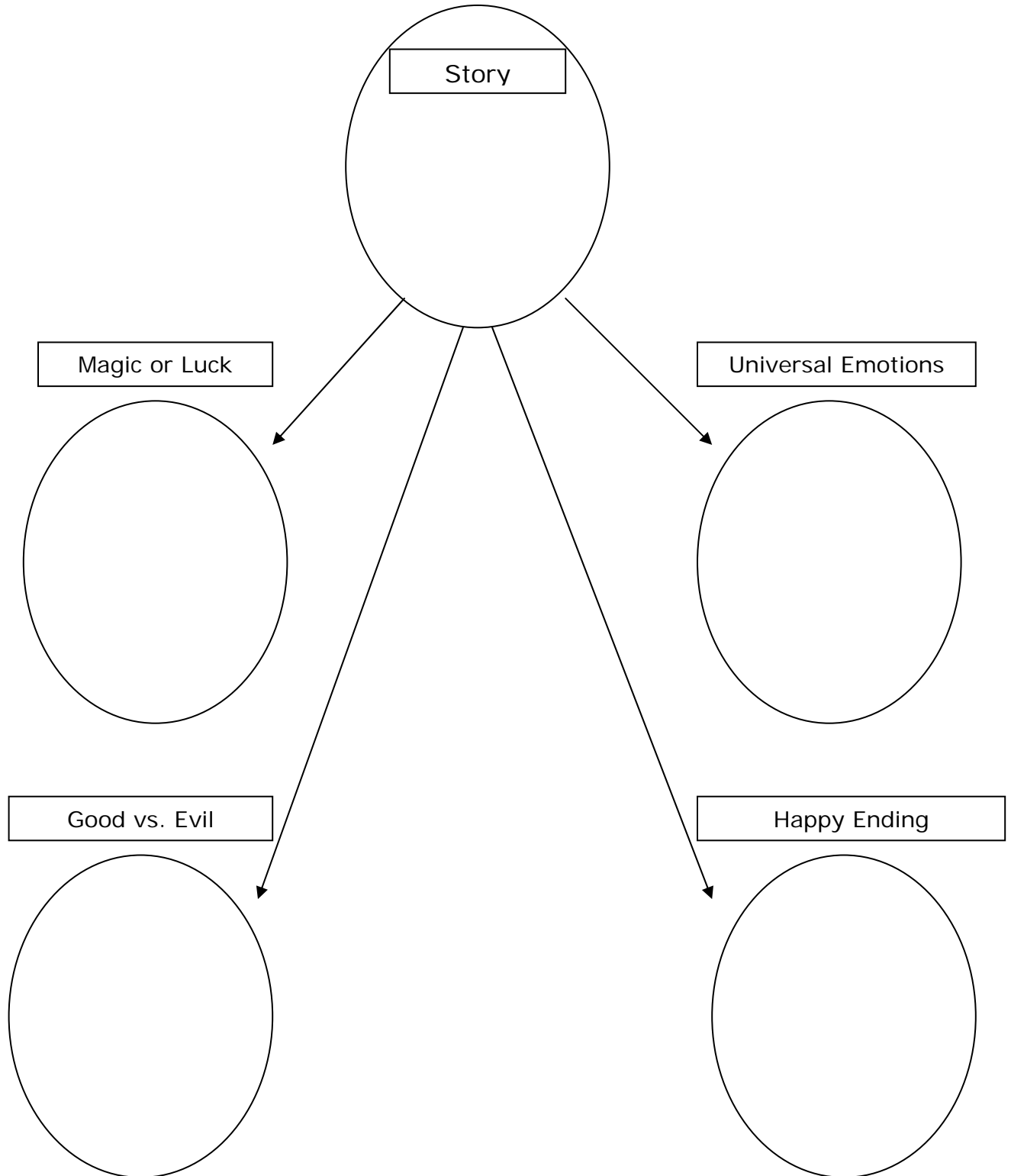
Exploration

- Chase, R., ed. (1948). Grandfather Tales: American-English Folk Tales. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.
- Cole, J., ed. (1982). Best-Loved Folktales of the World. Garden City, NY: Anchor Press/Doubleday.
- Grimm, J. and Grimm, W. (1978) The Brothers Grimm: popular folk tales. New York: Doubleday.

- Lang, A., ed. (1965). "Hansel and Gretel." The Blue Fairy Book. New York: Dover.
- Price, M.E. (1986) A Child's Book of Myths and Enchantment Tales. New York: Macmillan.
- Yolen, J. (1988) Favorite Folktales from Around the World. New York: Pantheon.

Handout A: Language Arts (4-6)
Identifying the Characteristics of Fairy/Folktales

Name _____





Handout B: Language Arts (4-6) Fairy Tale Assessment Checklist

Name _____

Story includes:

Characteristics of a fairy tale

_____ Good vs. evil

_____ Universal human emotions

_____ Magic or luck

_____ Happy Ending

Simple characters:

_____ Peasants

_____ Witches

_____ Royalty

_____ Other

Simple settings:

_____ Villages

_____ Forests

_____ Castles

_____ Other

Simple plot:

_____ Good vs. evil.

Writing Conventions:

_____ Spelling

_____ Grammar