

Fractured Fairy Tales

study guide



What is a Fairy Tale?

A Fairy Tale is a short story written for children that falls under the Folklore genre.

Fairy Tales often include:

- Magic, enchantments, and mythical creatures
- Talking animals
- A good character/hero and an evil character/villain
- A problem and a lesson learned
- Bookends of “Once Upon a Time” and “Happily Ever After”

What is a *Fractured* Fairy Tale?

A Fractured Fairy Tale is a retelling of a traditional Fairy Tale with changes to character, setting, plot, or point of view. Fractured Fairy Tales often tell a more modern story or updated lesson.

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Jack and the Beanstalk

Activity idea: read the story of Jack and the Beanstalk.

Then, work together as a class to decide what makes this story a fairy tale.

The Milkmaid and her Pail

Activity idea: Read *The Milkmaid and her Pail*.

Decide as a class: what is the problem? What is the lesson learned?

The Tortoise and the Hare

Activity idea: Read *The Tortoise and the Hare* as a class. Then, as a group or individually, “fracture” this fairy tale by re-telling the story from the point of view of the Hare. How does this change the problem and lesson learned?

The Emperor's New Clothes *younger version*

Activity idea: Read *The Emperor's New Clothes* as a class before the performance. Afterwards, compare and contrast the version you read and the version you saw. What changes were made to the plot, characters, or setting?

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Henny Penny

younger version

Read Henny Penny as a class. Then, take some time individually to “fracture” this fairy tale. What changes can you make to the setting, plot, characters, point of view, or lesson learned?

Cinderella

older version

Learn more about the different versions of Cinderella that appear in the show!

Yeh-Hsien

- An ancient Chinese story first published in the Tang dynasty (618–907 CE)
- The protagonist’s mother dies and returns as a fish that comforts Yeh-Hsien, but her new stepmother kills and eats the fish.
- A magical being tells Yeh-Hsien to bury the fish bones and pray to them, which grant her a dress and gold shoes to wear to the ball (in this story, a cave festival.)

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Cinderella

older version, con't

Rhodopis

- Recounted by Greek geographer Strabo sometime between 7 BC and AD 23
- The protagonist is Greek slave girl whose sandal is taken by an eagle, who then carries it to the king of Egypt. The king (or pharaoh) then searches for the owner, eventually finding and marrying Rhodopis

Cendrillon, later anglicized as Cinderella

- Written by Charles Perrault in France in 1697, the Cinderella story we are most familiar with today—complete with a Fairy Godmother, a pumpkin, and glass slippers!

Aschenputtel

- Written by the Brothers Grimm in Germany 1812
- In this version, the protagonist prays to her mother's grave and is brought a dress and glass slippers by birds
- When the stepsisters see their feet will not fit in the slipper, one cuts off her toe and the other cuts off her heel!

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Read the stories

Jack and the Beanstock:

<https://library.nashville.org/podcasts/family-folktales/jack-and-beanstalk>

The Milkmaid and Her Pail:

<https://read.gov/aesop/109.html>

The Fisherman and his Wife:

<https://sites.pitt.edu/~dash/grimm019.html>

The Tortoise and the Hare:

<https://read.gov/aesop/025.html>

The Emperors New Clothes:

https://andersen.sdu.dk/vaerk/hersholt/TheEmperorsNewClothes_e.html

Henny Penny:

<https://www.storyberries.com/fairy-tales-henny-penny-short-stories-for-kids/>

Cinderella:

<https://www.readthetale.com/popular-bedtime-stories/cinderella>