

Folk Tales and Fables

Retold by Mike Peterson
Illustrated by Marina Tay



Curriculum Guide

by Mike Peterson
and Jennifer Hind

with additional material by Lisa Sax

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Introduction

The stories in this series were collected from authentic folklore sources in the public domain. In making the selections, I tried to find well-researched stories that required minimal changes to conform to the tastes and sensibilities of a modern audience, and that brought with them a sense of old-fashioned story-telling. While some required more editing than others, I did not change any plot points or important elements of any of these stories.

It is a diverse collection, not just in terms of the nations and cultures represented but also in the tone and mood of the stories. Some, like “The White Dog,” (Latvia) have elements of a traditional European fairy tale. Our two Japanese stories are more philosophical, each in its own way. Two of our African stories are mostly fun – the forerunners of the Brer Rabbit stories – but “How The Hawk Chose His Food” is a fable that Aesop might have envied. And the tales that actually include fairies are much more bittersweet than most modern readers would expect.

Back in my reporting days, Arlo Guthrie remarked to me in an interview that, after all, “Folk songs are just songs that folks sing.” He was unconcerned about whether a song was 200 years old or written by the Beatles, and defined folk music by its acceptance rather than its origins.

By the same token, these stories are united not by theme or country of origin or age, but because they have been accepted by the people who tell them. It is this appeal that keeps stories alive, and, for modern readers, is the difference between an old story read for scholarly purposes and one which happens to be old but contains an appealing, engaging sense of universal wisdom, warmth and truth. I’ve gone through many, many stories looking for folk tales and fables that your students will enjoy and that will spark lively classroom discussions, and I hope you like the selection.

This guide contains lesson ideas and exercises you may apply to any of the stories, as well as specific material for use with each story. In the end, however, your use of these fables and folk tales in the classroom, like your use of the overall newspaper in the classroom, will be limited only by your imagination.

If you come up with a lesson plan of your own that works particularly well, I hope you’ll share it with me. We’re all here to learn!



Mike Peterson
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FOLK TALES AND FABLES

Introduction to the genre: How to introduce folk tales to your students

Folk Tale Elements

Information and lesson plans about elements characteristic of folk tales. Specific activities and instructional strategies to teach about each of the elements.

- *Character Development

- *Setting

- *Plot and Themes

Critical Analysis

Teaching students to analyze and interpret folk tales through a critical lens. Develop an understanding of social development, cultural implications and trends in literature.

Skill-based Instruction

Using the folk tales to teach a variety of skills such as decoding, fluency, oral presentation and grammar.

Creative Writing Project

Use the folk tales to teach styles of writing such as persuasive, descriptive and narrative in a fun and educational format – a newspaper!

Cultural studies

Learn more about the various countries and cultures from which the stories come.

The Individual Stories: Writing, Reading, Listening & Speaking

Lessons, activities and strategies based on individual folk tales

This guide is designed for use by 3-8 grade level classroom teachers who are introducing a unit of study on folk tales. The content and suggested activities are meant to be adapted and modified to suit the needs of the intended audience, including younger students who may need more help in reading and understanding the stories. All activities and instructional strategies included in this manual are based on effective teaching models, state- and national- standards and research-based literacy instruction.

The reproducibles are designed for use with individual stories and can be introduced at any stage of this literacy unit depending on the established goals and objectives.

The suggested overview for this unit is intended to help teachers develop a flexible curriculum plan that can be tailored to the amount of time allotted for the unit. Rather than defining the unit of study by use of a timeframe, the unit is structured by a variety of components.

FOLK TALES AND FABLES

Introduction to the genre: Folk Tales

The following activities are suggestions of how to introduce folk tales to students:

- ❑ Write the words “Folk Tale” on an overhead and create a K-W-L Chart to discuss the topic. (A K-W-L chart is a three-column vertical chart with the headings: K for what you know, W for what you want to learn, and L for what you have learned. The L is completed after the unit of study to determine the learning outcomes.)
- ❑ Dress up as a character from a popular or common folk tale such as “Little Red Riding Hood” and ask students to guess who you are. Prompt them to brainstorm and list other folk tales, like Paul Bunyan, Jack the Giant Killer or some local “monster” said to live in a local lake or forest. Create a classroom chart of familiar tales to reference during class discussion.
- ❑ Visit the library and create a display of folk tale books. Ask students to name the genre that is common for all of the books.
- ❑ Create a folk tale survey and discover what students already know about folk tales. Using survey information from whole class create a graph to display the responses.
- ❑ Explain to students that you will be introducing a unit on folk tales and assign them the task of using the Internet to gather information (at least one fact or example) about folk tales. Be sure to document the URL for future reference. Write on index card and create a folk tale tree of facts.

The Only Folk Tale Web Sites You Will Ever Need!

The most useful Web site for locating original texts that we found is called “Sacred Texts” and contains a variety of sources of wisdom from around the world. (It does contain information on world religions, but also a vast collection of non-religious folk tales from every nation and era)

www.sacred-texts.com

Do Not Miss This Resource!

The teaching guide, “When Tortoise Wins: Using International Folktales to Teach Language Arts,” (PDF) is part of a massive, wonderful site at the University of Pittsburgh for teaching about ethnicity and diversity. You’ll be back here often!

http://www.ucis.pitt.edu/pehsc/index_files/fpframe_files/lessons.html

FOLK TALES AND FABLES

Character Development Use the following suggestions with any story from the series

- Create a master character chart and categorize each of the characters by traits and types. For example, list the title, character and types such as: human, animal, hero, villain, trickster, fairy, etc.
(See Appendix for character chart)
 - Select one character to create a profile for. Draw an illustration of the character and list adjectives to describe. For each adjective, use a thesaurus to list similar adjectives.
 - Adopt the point of view expressed by one character and write a letter to another character within the same story.
 - Select a story and divide students into small groups. Assign each group one character to explore. Based on the plot and the students' understanding of the assigned character, rewrite the story exclusively from the point of view of the assigned character.
 - Select a character from one story to compare and contrast with a character from a second story using a Venn Diagram. (See Appendix)
 - Write a story tale from the perspective and point of view of an object within the story. Develop the object and give it human qualities and traits.
 - Choose a character that is similar to yourself and explain your choice.
 - Select a character and discuss how the character changes from the beginning to the end of the story in terms of appearance, attitude and social status.
 - Select a character and create a biopoem (See Appendix)
 - Play character charades. Have students draw random cards and improvise a dramatic mime for the audience to guess what character is being portrayed.
 - Another version of roleplaying: Have students draw a character card and be prepared to answer questions from classmates as they interview the character in order to guess who is being represented.
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FOLK TALES AND FABLES

Setting Use the following suggestions with any story from the series

- Create a master setting chart and categorize each of the settings of each story: castle, jungle, village, etc.
- Compare and contrast settings from several story.
- Identify the place where the story originated. Conduct research on that location and explain the elements of the story that seem typical of that place and culture.
- Read the story and highlight words and phrases that help describe the setting.
- Create a diorama for the story depicting the setting.
- Draw a picture that describes the main setting of the story.

Plots and Themes

- Create a master plot chart and categorize each of the plots/themes of each story: bad luck, impossible task, a villain, a trickster, a magical helper, magic spells, rewards of wealth and/or marriage, hero or heroine in danger or treated badly, etc.
 - Use bookmark strategy to develop plot understanding (See Appendix).
 - Plot development conflict report (See Appendix)
 - After reading the series select a story to dramatize, or divide into groups and have each group dramatize a different story.
 - Conduct a mock trial relying on plot details.
 - Have students create skits based on the plot and have audience identify if the skit depicts the action of the beginning, middle or end of the story.
 - Create a debate chart of ethical issues related to the plot. One column reads "YES" and the other side reads "NO." On each side have student list statements related to the story arguing for or against a plot action.
 - Use a story mapping chart to record information related to the plot (See Appendix).
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FOLK TALES AND FABLES

Critical Analysis

- Analyze and interpret a story that comments on a social attitude. Compare the theme with a modern situation. Write an essay illustrating how the themes are similar.
 - Find another story from the same culture or region and compare their common elements, using the Venn diagram in the Appendix.
 - Explore similarities and differences in traditions and symbolism that exist in cultures around the world as expressed within the story. Select a story and discuss how it would be written differently based on cultural implications.
 - Select a story and discuss the gender roles. Analyze the gender roles and discuss the implications.
 - Go to the library and select a contemporary non-fiction book that discusses the treatment of males and females, gender bias and stereotypical implications. Choose an issue raised by the book and relate it to a story by examining issues such as stereotyping and gender bias. (If you are working with older students you may want to provide students with titles such as: Mary Pipher's "Reviving Ophelia").
 - Critically analyze a story in terms of ethical issues. Discuss the issue, the moral or ethical dilemma and take a position for or against the action taken.
 - Select a recurring theme embedded in these stories and discuss the presence of that particular theme in modern movies and television. Discuss the theme, the story, the movie or television show in terms of how art imitates life or vice versa.
 - Select a story and pretend you are turning it into a live-action Hollywood film. Choose the actors you will cast in the various roles. Discuss and defend your choices as if the class were a committee planning this film. Analyze any trends that emerge in this discussion and talk about the decision to be realistic or idealistic in casting. Analyze for trends involving weight, hair color, ethnicity. As a group, come up with your final casting decisions.
 - Analyze the rewards acquired by the hero or heroine. Describe the underlying philosophy and moral of the story. Relate it to your own views and write a critical analysis of related topics such as: intrinsic vs. external motivation, work ethic, good and bad luck, etc.
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FOLK TALES AND FABLES

Skill-based Instruction

- Select a story to analyze for the use of imagery styles. For example, record and explain the use of simile, metaphor, onomatopoeia and personification.
 - Create similes and metaphors to describe characters and actions of a story.
 - Select a story and rewrite sentence beginnings by using:
 - adjectives
 - adverbial phrases
 - adverbs
 - nouns
 - participles
 - Review a story and highlight or circle assigned parts of speech and grammar. (Ex. adverbs, adjectives, nouns, compound and/or complex sentences.)
 - Create a script of the dialogue between characters in a story. Be sure to use the proper mechanics and conventions.
 - Create a rubric for stories with categories such as: use of common elements characteristic of stories, content and details, and grammar and mechanics.
 - Review a story and create a list of vocabulary words that are unfamiliar. Use the dictionary and define each word. In pairs of two, create a vocabulary quiz to administer to your partner.
 - Brainstorm a list of adjectives to describe a character or setting of a story. Using a thesaurus list antonyms, synonyms and homonyms. (A good book to introduce this activity is "The King who Rained" by Fred Gwynne).
 - Write a business letter to a character involved in the story using the proper style for letter-writing.
 - Select at least ten words from a story. Have students look up the word origin, and dissect in terms of root word, prefix and suffix.
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Folk Tales and Fables

SPLIT DECISION: Robin Hood outshoots Gisbourne on final arrow - Sports, D1

WEEKDAY
September 14, 1354

97th Year, No. XXX
Newsstand price 1 silver piece

Final Edition

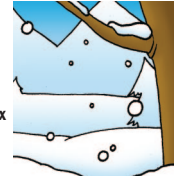
Queenstown, Castlemain

THE TIMES-FANTASY

Your Hometown Newspaper since the dawn of time

THE WEATHER

Cold, with a chance of tanukis.
Details, Page Ax



www.pickafairytales.com

Creative Writing Project-- Folk tales

Deck hed tells a little more, provides another reason for you to read this story

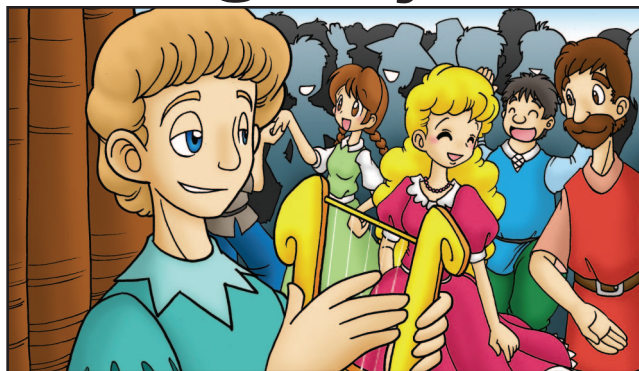
By T.J. Destry
Staff Writer
yourname@folktaleland.com

This project, a complete English Language Arts experience, involves using knowledge of newspapers to create a thematic story newspaper. It can be completed as a whole class project, in small groups or individually.

As an introduction to this project, supply your students with newspapers.

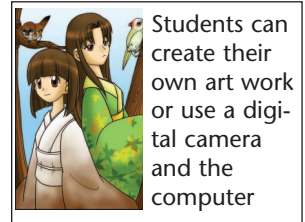
Discuss the various sections and features such as:

- *Front page
- *Classified Ads
- *Display/Retail Ads
- *Sports Section
- *Editorial Page
- *Editorial/Political Cartoons
- *Opinion Columns
- *Advice Columns
- *Arts and



CUTLINE: A cutline is named that because photos and other graphic items were once called "cuts." This is probably because they had to be placed in "cut out" sections on the page separately from the metal type that made up the copy. If there are fewer than five people, the cutline should tell you each of their names. Photographers must remember to get this information when they are taking pictures! Cutlines give brief information about what is going on the photo or graphic. Have your students create illustrations from a story and exercise writing brief cutlines describing the event or setting.

Use a story from the series to create a thematic newspaper



Students can create their own art work or use a digital camera and the computer

By Ace Wordsmith
Staff Writer

ANY TOWN - Have your students write a hard news story using the inverted pyramid structure to answer the 5W's and How.

"I suggest using quotes and proper grammar to truly create a strong writing piece," he says.

"I also recommend a lesson on lead writing," she added.

Look through your newspaper and clip effective leads. Leads entice readers to continue reading.

Hard news stories differ from features stories in several ways. Have your students develop an example of both using a story for information.

English Language Arts Standards addressed with this project....

By Ace Wordsmith
Staff Writer

ANY TOWN -This ELA project incorporates national and state standards.

Students will read, write, listen, and speak for: information and understanding, literary response and expression, critical analysis and evaluation, and social interaction

- Entertainment
- *Local, National and International News
- *Obituaries
- *Comics Section
- *Reviews...Movie, books, restaurant

Discuss the various writing styles and their distinctions:

- Hard News Stories
- Feature Stories
- Editorials
- Opinion Columns

SEE "STORY FACTORS," PAGE A5

GOOD MORNING! [09/14/54]

LOCAL

This box tells you a little bit about a local story you might want to read. The story itself is on **PAGE B1**



THE SCENE



HOME DELIVERY

222-2222

CLASSIFIED ADS

111-1111

Arts/Life.....D1	Comics.....D4	Lottery.....B1	State.....B5
Births.....B3	Dear AtbyD2	Movies.....Scene	Stocks.....D6
Business.....D7,8	Hometown.....B2	Opinion.....A4,5	TV.....E1
Classified.....E2-10	Horoscope.....D2	Puzzles.....D2	Weather.....A6
Calendar.....Scene	LocalB1,3,5,6,8	Sports.....C1-6	

Folk Tales and Fables

Creative Writing Project

OBJECTIVES

- Students will identify parts of a newspaper.
- Students will become familiar with the inverted triangle style.
- Students will write creative pieces using a variety of writing styles such as persuasive, narrative and informative.
- Students will create illustrations to accompany a piece of writing.
- Students will use word processing skills to complete the assignment.
- Students will design a front-page based on their knowledge of newspapers.
- Students will distinguish between fact and opinion.

- Students will create an advertisement using basic design elements.
- Students will use relevant sources to write an editorial.
- Students will use supporting details to support the main idea.
- Students will use the writing process to complete creative writing pieces (pre-writing, revision, editing...)
- Students will listen respectfully as others share their work.
- Students will orally present creative writing pieces.

Editorial ---

IF YOU WANT A DRINK, DANCE FOR IT!

Last week, our community saw an example of everyone working together for the common good. Perhaps we shouldn't be surprised that we also saw an example of someone taking advantage of the work of others.

The current drought has been hard on everyone, so when the animals got together to dance down the riverbed until water emerged, it was an example to all of us. Predators and herbivores can work together!

But there is always one bad apple, and we learned the next day that Hare once more found a way to get what he wanted without lifting a finger to help.

We need more patrols at the new waterhole to guard against those who could be part of our community if they would put half the effort into helping out that they put into finding ways to cheat the system.

Features Story ---

MILLERSTOWN - Know an unusual boy's name? It could earn you a gold coin!

The queen is holding a special contest, in which subjects are invited to submit strange names for boys.

If you come up with a name she's never heard of, she'll present you with a coin made from the famous gold she spun from straw, back before she married His Majesty!

Classified Ad --

Lost -- Double-bit ax. Twenty-five feet long. Last seen at the sawmill. Contact P. Bunyan for reward.

Hard News Story --

ARGIVE BEACH - Talks remained stalled between Greek military leaders and superstar-warrior Achilles, leaving the siege of Troy in limbo.

Achilles walked out 10 days ago in a dispute over the division of spoils from a recent raid.

Patroclus, agent for the invincible son of Peleas, said "Achilles just wants what he was promised. They can resolve this anytime simply by fulfilling the terms of his contract."

But Menelaus, speaking for the Argive leaders, said there will be no compromise on what he called a "demand for a spontaneous bonus."

"Achilles is a valued member of our team," he said, "but I guess he'll have to sit sulking by the ships. We can't delay the war forever over one man."

FOLK TALES AND FABLES

Creative Writing Project (Continued)

After students have become familiar with the parts, sections, functions and news style writing, engage in creating a newspaper using an individual story or several.

Have students write several pieces modeling news style writing using the writer's workshop model of instruction. After a series of pieces has been compiled, students will use computer skills to finalize the project. Depending on the age- and grade- level, resources and time available, students may enhance their newspaper by adding graphics. Although many options exist, a basic thematic newspaper should include several of the following elements:

- 1 - Hard News Story based on the story using quotes, a strong lead and written using the inverted pyramid structure
- 2 - An Advice Column with a relevant question based on a dilemma from the story. The question and answer should relate to the tale and be consistent with the characters' perspective
- 3 - A Features article that relates to an aspect of the tale. Topics might include fashion, food, health, how-to or celebrity interview.
- 4 - A Display Advertisement for something related to the story using the basic principles of design
- 5 - At least one classified advertisement. Must relate to the tale and be brief in content, but other ads based on well-known stories may fill out that part of the newspaper.
- 6 - An editorial written for or against using the conflict, dilemma or resolution of the tale.
- 7 - An editorial cartoon related to the conflict or resolution of the tale

Additional possibilities...

An obituary for a character or object
Horoscopes for the characters
Opinion column

Sports story
Business story
Movie, Book, Restaurant Reviews

FOLK TALES AND FABLES

Creative Writing Project (Continued)

The following background information is designed to help you teach about newspapers.....

Front page – Typically the front page covers the most important news. The decision of what to put on Page One is made during meetings. The most important news is located *above the fold* in broadsheet newspapers (papers that are folded horizontally). The front page of a newspaper contains information such as the name of the paper, its year of origin, the date and often an index.

Classified Advertisements – These ads are within the classified section and are listed by categories (*classifications*) such as homes for sales, automobiles, help wanted, lost and found, etc. They are brief and contain information such as telephone numbers, cost, salary, etc.

Editorial Page – The editorial page contains commentary, usually in the form of columns, editorial cartoons and an editorial.

Editorial – An editorial is an opinion piece that tells how the people who run the newspaper feel about an issue. Editorials appear on the editorial page, but, unlike columns, do not give the writer's name, because they represent the entire newspaper and not just one person.

Editorials have several functions:

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| (1) To interpret | (3) To praise or commend |
| (2) To influence action | (4) To entertain |

Editorials often use persuasive writing to convince others to adopt a view or belief. Persuasive writing often involves three basic steps. First, the opinion must be stated. Second, the opinion needs to be supported with convincing reasons and concrete evidence. Third, the body of the argument should end with a conclusion which can be a prediction, a summary, or a call to action.

Good editorials:

- * Get to the point quickly
 - * Reflect logic
 - * Make the reader think
 - * Use plain language
 - * Use anecdotes, examples, statistics, and facts to support the argument
-

FOLK TALES AND FABLES

Creative Writing Project (Continued)

The following background information is designed to help you teach about newspapers.....

Editorial/Political Cartoons – Editorial cartoons are graphic illustrations that provide commentary on an issue through the use of elements such as symbols.

Display/Retail Advertisements – These are ads for goods and services. They are located throughout the newspaper except on the front page. These advertisements contain pertinent information such as telephone numbers, store hours, sale prices and location of the business or organization. Ads may contain graphic illustrations and/or photographs. They vary in size and shape.

Sports Section – Usually the sports stories found in this section are written using descriptive language and often literary styles such as similes, metaphors, etc.

Opinion Columns – Opinion columns are written by individuals and may not necessarily represent the views of the editorial board. The opinions expressed in the columns are those of the individual column writer.

Feature Writing – Feature articles are written pieces that are not considered hard news. They may be timely if written as a review or highlighting an upcoming event or production but they are usually stories that do not contain “breaking news.” Features stories are often human interest articles and sometimes are strictly informational and process oriented. For example, a story about backyard decks may include a how-to section.

Headlines

A headline tells what the story is about. It uses big letters and just a few words so readers can decide quickly if they are interested in the story and want to read it.

Inverted Pyramid Writing Style

The inverted pyramid style of writing involves writing the most essential details and information at the top and less important details in later paragraphs. The questions answered are often referred to as the 5 W's and How -- what, who, when, where, why and how.

Obituaries:

An obituary is a notice placed by a funeral home to announce someone's death. Until recently, obituaries were considered news and, at most newspapers, subject to the same rules as any news stories. Each newspaper had its own style (rules) about things like what terms could be used, how many surviving relatives could be listed and whether or not hobbies and interests could be mentioned. Today, many papers consider obituaries a type of ad. Families pay to have obits in the paper, but, in return, they can make them much more personal than in the days when they were “news items.”

STORY SOURCES

Some stories required more recasting than others. In some cases, it was necessary to cobble parts of stories together, while in others, we added more explanatory text that would not have been necessary for an audience of the time when the stories were originally collected and published. But some others could be presented with very few changes. Here are the places we found most of our stories. Many can be found either at Project Gutenberg (www.gutenberg.org) or at Sacred Texts (<http://www.sacred-texts.com>)

If your students are particularly taken with a story, it may be worth looking for these collections on-line to see what other stories they might enjoy. Be forewarned, however, that we really chose the most appropriate stories. You may find that others are fragmentary, violent, explicit or otherwise not in keeping with current tastes. (A few might even strike your students as boring.) Remember that folk tales are not necessarily created with young people in mind -- and that most originated before there was a sense that young people ought to be sheltered from the earthier elements of life!

The Kildare Pooka is based on a story retold by Patrick Kennedy in W. B. Yeats' collection, "Fairy and Folk Tales of the Irish Peasantry" (1888)

"Lion and Jackal" was compiled from several Bushman and Hottentot stories collected in South Africa by James A. Honey for his 1910 publication, "South African Folk Tales."

"The Water Dance" is adapted from a Bantu story collected by Alice Werner for "Myths and Legends of the Bantu," 1933.

"The Fairy Wife" is adapted from several versions of the story. One of these is found in "The Welsh Fairy Book" by W. Jenkyn Thomas [1908]

"The Nis and the White Mare" is primarily adapted from "Folk-Lore and Legends; Scandinavian, by Various, Edited by C. J. T., Translated by C. J. T.", found on Project Gutenberg

"Taffy and the Golden Harp" is adapted from "Welsh Fairy Tales" By William Elliot Griffis, 1921

"The Dog, The Cat and The Mice" is adapted from a story in "Rumanian Bird and Beast Stories" by M. Gaster, (London: Folk-Lore Society, 1915)

"The Priest and the Tanuki" is adapted from a story in " Tales of Old Japan" by Lord Redesdale (1871)

"How the Hawk Chose His Food" is adapted from a story in "Folk Stories from Southern Nigeria" by Elphinstone Dayrell (1910)

"The Foxes and the Tiger" is adapted from a story in "Folklore of the Santal Parganas" by C. H. Bompas, (London: David Nutt, 1909)

"The Tulip Nursery" was found in fragments, but originated in "The Borders of the Tamar and the Tavy" by Anna Eliza Bray. (1837)

"The White Dog" comes from "Wonder Tales From Baltic Wizards" by Frances Jenkins Olcott, [1928]

"Dancing Children" and "Sparrow and Woodpecker" came from multiple but less distinct sources.

The Dancing Children

The Onandaga

(People of the Hills)

are one of the Six Nations who make up the Iroquois Confederacy. They originally lived in the center of what is now New York State and their remaining land is near Syracuse, NY. The Onandaga are the "Firekeepers" of the Confederacy and most Grand Council meetings are held on their land.



What happened?

1. Why did the band come to the lake?
2. Why were the younger children allowed to go play instead of working?
3. Who told them to stop dancing?
4. Why did the parents say they couldn't bring food to the lake?
5. What happened to the children?

What do you think?

Does this story have a sad ending, or a happy ending? Why?

Try this!

Get permission to go outside at night. Find the Pleiades in the sky, near the horns of Taurus the bull. Can you see seven stars? (They're very close together. It's hard to count them without a telescope!) Can you see them dancing?

Look it up!

The Onandaga were gathering food for the winter. In those days, there were no refrigerators and people didn't know how to can food. How could they keep fruit from spoiling? How could they keep meat or fish from spoiling? Find out how Indians kept food from going bad. (Have you had food like that?)

Newspaper Activity

Pretend you are a reporter. Write a news story about what happened to the Onandaga children. Who would you be able to interview for your story? Who would you not be able to interview? Who do you think the police would want to talk to that they might not be able to find? Add a "fact box" next to your story, with advice for parents.

What happened? (answers)

1. They needed to gather and preserve food for the winter.
2. The easy gathering of food was over earlier than expected.
3. A strange man.
4. They thought it would be wasteful and they wanted the kids to come back home when they got hungry.
5. They rose into the sky and became stars.

What do you think? (discussion points)

It is sad that the children left their parents and their homes, but to be a star in the sky forever would be wonderful. This could lead to a discussion of ambition and people who go away because there are things they want to do that they can't do at home. There are also people who leave, get training and experience, and then come back home. Leaving might be sad if you don't want to go, but it can be great fun if you do!

Skill Builders:

The people in this story call themselves "Onandaga," which means "people of the hills." In the English language, some names for groups of people are both singular and plural, depending on how they are used. For instance:

If you were at a gathering of Iroquois people, and you were telling someone about a game you had been playing, you might say, "There were three Cayugas and two Senecas and a couple of Onandagas playing." But if you were telling your friend where the game was played, you might say, "It was over by where the Onandaga are staying."

In the first case, you have an exact number of people, and so you use "s" to make the plural. In the second, you are describing an entire group and it doesn't matter how many people are in the group, so the plural doesn't need an "s." But it would also be correct to say "It was over by where the Onandagas are staying," because there aren't very many hard-and-fast rules in this usage.

Names of national and ethnic groups are **collective nouns**, and, like other collective nouns (team, committee, pair) they sometimes take plural and sometimes take singular verbs and pronouns. Most often, the choice between singular and plural is based on idiom and tradition. For instance, if you follow a strict rule, "a pair of twins" could mean four people. But we know that, when someone says "I saw a pair of twins," it means the person saw two people.

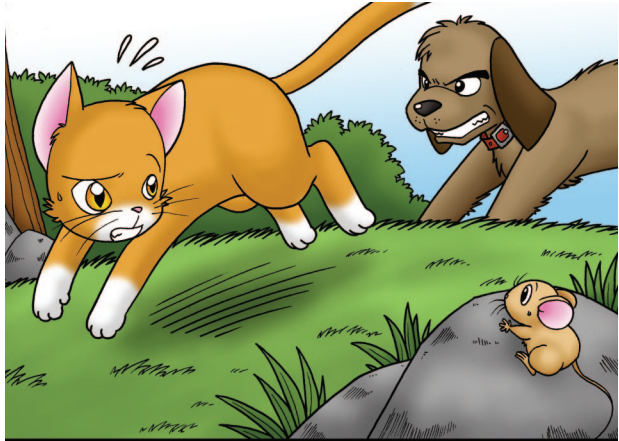
Some names for groups work as both nouns and adjectives, like "English." You might say "Several English people were there," or you might say, "There were several English there." But "German" is only used as a plural noun. "There were several Germans there."

And here's an interesting difference in traditional use of collective nouns: In both England and the US, names of sports teams are often shortened to just their city. In America, that would mean going from a plural to a singular: "The Chicago Bears are hoping to make the playoffs" becomes "Chicago is hoping to make the playoffs." But in Britain, it would still be treated as a plural: "Manchester are hoping to make the playoffs."

Exercise: Some people like to be identified by their ethnic or racial roots, and others prefer not to be. But everyone has identifiers: Southerner, Northerner, tall person, short person, goalkeeper, drummer, city person, country person. In these stories, the people and animals all have strong identities. Choose a list of identifying nouns and adjectives that apply to you. Are some of them collective nouns?

The Dog, the Cat and the Mice

Romania is in Eastern Europe, but people there speak a Romance (Latin-based) language rather than a Slavic-based language as many of their neighbors do. Long part of the Ottoman Empire, Romania came together as a nation only in 1878. After World War II, it was dominated by the Soviet Union, but today is independent and working to rebuild itself.



What happened?

1. How did the dog and the cat share responsibilities originally?
2. Why was the dog unhappy with his side of the arrangement?
3. Why did the dog want to see the written agreement?
4. Where was the written agreement of this arrangement kept?
5. What did the mice do that made the cat angry?

What do you think?

Was the agreement fair? Whose fault was it that it didn't work out? Explain your answer.

Try this!

Does someone in your class keep a pet mouse, gerbil, guinea pig or other rodent? Have that person report about how rodents treat paper or cardboard.

Look it up!

What is the difference between a verbal contract and an oral contract? What kinds of verbal contracts do you have in your class? In your family? Do you have oral contracts as well? When should contracts be put in writing?

News paper Activity

Find a news story in today's paper about a disagreement in which people can't agree on a solution. Did they have a written contract? What went wrong to make them disagree? Do you think they could have created a contract that would have helped them avoid this disagreement?

What happened? (answers)

1. The cat supervised activities inside the house, while the dog watched over and protected the house outside.
2. The cat had little to do and was able to stay warm and dry inside. In addition to having to work in cold, wet conditions, the dog felt unappreciated when his food was left carelessly in the rain.
3. Suspicious that the cat may not have been telling the truth, the dog wanted to know the exact terms of the agreement and who made the agreement on behalf of the dogs.
4. The written agreement was kept in a trunk in the attic.
5. The mice shredded the document on which the agreement was signed.

What do you think? (Discussion points)

(Is it fair?) If the dog were given a warmer corner of the porch or his own doghouse and were treated with more respect, then the terms of the agreement might be thought of as fair. The imbalance came with the cat neglecting his duties – which resulted in mice being allowed to live in the house and damage its contents.

It could be argued that the cat should have taken greater care of the document and kept it in a safer place, or checked on it more frequently, and his neglect of his duties was responsible for his unhappiness.

Skill Builders:

Language arts - vocabulary

Pick out all the words in the story which mean “to see”. Can you think of other words which suggest a) to look at closely and b) to barely notice?

In story: glance, watch, notice, look spy

Other verbs include: a) examine, peer, gaze, stare, gawk, glare, scrutinise, peruse b) peek, glimpse, scan, peep

Language arts – sentence structure

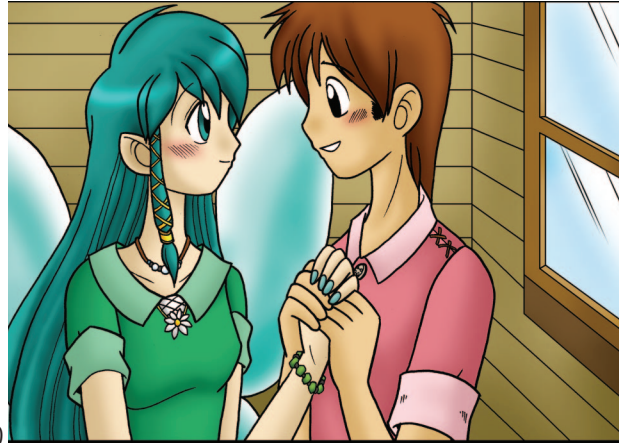
Notice the phrases used to indicate the passage of time. How do they help the narrative?

Years ago, then one day, by now, through the cold, rainy night, ever since that day

They indicate the order of events and help the reader follow the narrative. They also add variety to sentence structure to make the story more interesting.

The Fairy Wife

Wales is a Celtic nation that has fought to preserve its culture since the Roman invasions of Britain. Today, Wales is part of Great Britain. But, although Welsh speakers also speak English, their language remains alive to this day, as does their culture. The Welsh are noted for their choral singing, a tradition that was remarked upon by a visitor over 800 years ago!



What happened?

1. How did the young man meet the beautiful fairy?
2. Why could her family not break down the door to free her?
3. Why did she finally agree to marry him?
4. What promise did he have to make before they could be married?
5. How did he break that promise? What happened?

What do you think?

Do you think the fairy wife wanted to leave her husband? Why or why not?

Talk about it!

The way the young man met his wife seems unfair, but eventually they fell in love. Think of other stories in which this sort of thing happens. Are they realistic? How could you rewrite the story to show their differences but to be more fair?

Write about it!

Pretend you are one of the children in this story and write about how you go down to the lake to talk to your mother. What is the best part of these night-time conversations? What is the worst part?

Newspaper Activity

Read the wedding announcements in the newspaper. (You may have to look for a weekend paper to find them.) What information is contained in them? Now write a wedding announcement for the young man and the fairy. Try to include the same sort of information that is in the newspaper for other weddings.

What happened? (answers)

1. He used to see her dancing with her family in the countryside.
2. The door had iron hinges and an iron latch, and fairies can't stand iron.
3. After she got to know him for a long time, she fell in love with him.
4. He promised never to strike her with iron.
5. He got mad and threw a bridle that had a piece of iron in it. It hit her by mistake, and she disappeared.

What do you think? (Discussion points)

Although at first she wanted to get away from him, by then she was in love with him and wanted very much to stay.

Talk about it! (Discussion points)

Many movies feature love stories that begin with the couple disliking each other, and students may cite some of these. But in fairy tales like "The Princess and the Pea" and even "The Frog Prince" the point is not if the couple is in love but whether one person is worthy of the other. In other fairy tales, like "Cinderella," it is the beauty of a character that makes her worth marrying. None of these are very realistic reasons to fall in love! The element of force in this story is troublesome but common to a class of fairy tale, not only in Celtic but in several other traditions. In these stories, there is some talisman that the immortal partner needs in order to be freed. This story is unusual in that the Fairy Wife no longer wants to leave her husband.

Write about it!

(Please be aware of the teachable moment here in terms of any absent parents your children may be thinking of!)

Skill Builders:

Language Arts: Sentence types.

Using different types of sentences in a story is like using different colors in a painting: It helps add contrast and variety! The type of sentence you choose can also make a difference in the pace of a story. This story is particularly full of complex, compound and compound-complex sentences!

Simple Sentence: "The young man looked hurt."

Complex Sentence: A sentence with an independent clause and one or more dependent clauses. "He was bright and hard-working, but still had a great deal of youth in him."

Compound Sentence: A sentence with two independent clauses, linked by a conjunction or by a semi-colon or colon. "After a time, he felt himself falling in love with her, though he knew it could never be."

Compound-complex Sentence. A sentence with two or more independent clauses, and one or more dependent clauses. "Each day, as he worked in the fields and pastures, he thought of names, and each night, he would try them, and she would smile and shake her head again, until it became almost a game between them."

The Foxes and the Tiger

India is a very large nation made up of many different peoples with many different traditions. This particular story comes from the Santal Parganas, an area north of Calcutta, and was collected by Cecil Henry Bompas, an Englishman who worked for the British Civil Service in India at the turn of the 20th Century.



What happened?

1. Why did the foxes go to town?
2. How many foxes were in the family?
3. What sorts of things did Mother Fox say to flatter the tiger?
4. Why did the tiger say he had to see the kids before he could solve the foxes' problems?
5. Why did Mother Fox take the tiger to the den where the children were?

What do you think?

How did the way the mother fox spoke to the tiger help to fool him?

Look it up!

There are many kinds of foxes around the world. Can you figure out which kind of fox might be in this story? (Here's a hint: The same name is also the kind of tiger in this story!) Make a list of different types of foxes and choose a couple of them to learn more about. What do foxes have in common?

Safety tip!

The mother fox slowly backed down the den instead of running down head first. Why did she choose to go that way? She really IS smart as a fox! She knew that, if you keep facing an animal that is threatening you, and move slowly, they're apt to just keep watching you instead of chasing after you. Remember it if you meet a dog who doesn't seem friendly!

Newspaper Activity

Turn to the classified section of your paper and see if you can find ads for apartments for rent. Do any of them have pictures, and do they tell what good things the apartment building has? Make up an ad for an apartment complex for foxes. What sorts of things can you say about the building that would appeal to Mother Fox?

What happened? (answers)

1. To get food for their family.
2. Seven: Two parents and five children.
3. She called him "uncle" (a term of respect) and she said he was "large and magnificent," "wise and mighty" and "an important person."
4. He wanted the foxes to show him where the children were so he could eat them and the parents!
5. She wanted her husband and herself to be able to get down into the den where they would be safe. She knew the tiger couldn't get in there to harm her children.

What do you think? (Discussion points)

The tiger was fooled by Mother Fox's flattery. He thought she was so impressed with him that she didn't know what he was planning to do. But, in fact, he was so impressed with himself that he didn't know what she was planning to do, until it was too late!

Look it up!

Here's a website for looking up foxes and all their cousins, though most of the information is on PDF files rather than HTML that kids can see right on the screen. However, there are good pictures on the site, and the information, once downloaded, is in depth and good for writing reports!

<http://www.canids.org/species/index.htm>

The Indian or Bengal Fox can also be found at

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/nature/wildfacts/factfiles/144.shtml>

(Note how the Bengal Fox conforms to the description in the story – lives in a burrow and has 3-6 children! Folk tales are often based on observation of real animals.)

This site has information on the Bengal Tiger

<http://www.bangalinet.com/bengaltiger.htm>

Skill Builders:

Language arts - Commas and direct address

Note the use of commas in direct address to set off the person being addressed.

"And at last we have found you, oh wise and mighty uncle!"

"What is it, my niece?"

"Oh, I could never insult such an important person as you, mighty tiger, by turning my back on you!"

Write some sentences using direct address. Will you put the person's name at the beginning, at the end or in the middle? Try some of each!

"

How the Hawk Chose His Food

Nigeria is a nation in western Africa. Calabar was a large trading region in the old days; Today it is a small city on the coast near the border with Cameroon. This story was originally collected for a 1910 book by Elphinstone Dayrell, a British colonial official in that area.



What happened?

1. How is the King of Calabar different from most kings?
2. Why does the king allow the hawk to choose his food?
3. What type of food does the hawk first choose?
4. How do the hawk's friends help him in this story?
- 5 Why is the owl more dangerous than the chicken?

What do you think?

What is the moral of this story?

What do you want to hear? What do you need to hear?

Look up the words "pragmatic" and "idealistic" in the dictionary. How are they different? What type of advice did the hawk's friends give him: Pragmatic or idealistic? Which type of advice do you like to hear better? Which do you think is more valuable? Play act some situations where a person has a problem and some friends offer idealistic advice, while others offer pragmatic advice.

Newspaper Activity

Choose your food! Look in the grocery ads in your newspaper for food that you would like to have for dinner tonight. Have you imagined a meal that provides good nutrition? If you were to purchase enough food for four people, calculate how much it would cost.

What happened? (Answers)

1. He rules over the animals as well as humans.
2. The king wishes to reward the hawk for faithful service, and to make the hawk's life in old age easier.
3. He chooses the owlet, which seems easy to catch.
4. The hawk's friends offer him good advice.
5. While the chicken makes a lot of noise, it does nothing to protect its young. The owl bides its time and takes its revenge when the victim has dropped his guard; it says little but does much.

What do you think? (discussion points)

The moral of the story is that, just because someone makes a lot of noise and fuss, it doesn't mean they're going to actually do anything. Sometimes the people who keep their thoughts to themselves are more effective when they take action. While this story makes it a caution against making enemies, it can also be a more general statement about people who are "all talk and no action."

Skill Builders

Language arts – vocabulary

Look in the passage for the words that indicate the baby owl and baby chicken. –et and –ette are suffixes that indicate a small size or a lesser position. What are the adult animals of the following babies: cygnet, eaglet, froglet, leveret, piglet, pullet?

Language arts – sentence structure and commas

Examine the use of the conjunction to form compound sentences. Note that some examples need commas, while others do not.

"His friends looked over the owlet, and then one them asked him a question."

"The hawk was puzzled, but his friends were all in agreement, so he picked up the owlet ..."

"... when it becomes dark and you have fallen asleep ... "
(no comma here because two very short sentences)

"The hawk swooped down, grabbed the owlet and flew off back to the castle."
(no comma – "flew off back to the castle" is not a complete sentence)

The king of Calabar was not just king of the people but also of all the animals that crawled
and walked and swam and flew.

(no commas in front of the ands as what follow are not a complete sentences)

The general rule of thumb is that if the conjunction is joining two complete sentences, use a comma with the conjunction. If the elements of the compound sentence are not complete sentences or are very short, do not use a comma with the conjunction.

As with most rules in English, it can be broken.

The Kildare Pooka

Ireland has a long tradition of fairy tales, ghost stories and other folklore. You've seen the jolly leprechauns each St. Patrick's Day, but in real Irish stories, leprechauns were not very nice and there were much more pleasant fairy folk around. Pookas are sometimes fun and sometimes scary, but meeting one is always an experience to remember!



What happened?

1. What kept the servants from sleeping well?
2. Why did the scullery boy not to to bed with the others?
3. Why was the pooka being punished?
4. How did the servants react when they learned about the pooka?
5. What happened when they rewarded the pooka with a warm coat?

What do you think?

Do you think the pooka learned his lesson? Do you think the experience of knowing the pooka was good or bad for the servants?

Make some lists!

In the squire's kitchen, food was cooked over a fire in the fireplace, and water was also heated there to wash dishes and clean the floor. What other old-fashioned things were likely part of life then? List some old-fashioned ways of doing common household tasks, and the modern ways we do them today. Include a description of how newer technologies make life simpler.

Newspaper Activity

The pooka was ungrateful for the opportunities he had been given. Look through the newspaper and find photos of people who seem to be grateful. Make a collage of grateful people. How many ways does gratitude show in these pictures? Does it always take the form of saying "thank you," or are there other ways you can tell someone is grateful?

What happened? (answers)

1. They could hear doors slamming and pots and pans clattering in the kitchen.
2. He fell asleep in the corner of the hearth and they didn't notice him when they left.
3. When he was a servant, he didn't work hard and was ungrateful for having a good job.
4. They stopped doing their work, because they knew he would do it again anyway.
5. His punishment ended and he didn't have to clean up the kitchen anymore. Now the servants had to!

What do you think? (Discussion points)

The pooka seems very ungrateful for not at least doing the dishes one more time before he left forever. There is humor and irony in this, of course. In discussing the effect of the pooka on the other servants, students may discuss how lazy those servants became. Could they have done better work with that spare time, instead of just using it to avoid doing anything? If so, who is the "ungrateful servant" now? (The servants were grateful to the pooka and gave him a coat – but were they cheating the squire by goofing off?)

Skill Builders:

Language arts - vocabulary

There are many words to show that someone is talking. Sometimes, using a more specific word that "said" or "asked" makes writing more interesting. It may also add a clue to the emotion of the speaker. But other times, a plain word is less distracting and puts the emphasis on what is said, not on who is speaking.

Substitute some of these words that mean "said" or "asked" in these sentences. Which words seem to work the best? Which do you prefer? Which don't work at all?

*answered, replied, responded, announced, declared, said,
stated, told, shouted, giggled, screamed, laughed, cried.*

(O)ne of the serving girls _____. "Well, if the donkey is going to do all that, what are we bothering with it for?"

As the donkey was getting ready to leave, the boy stepped forward and _____. "Excuse me. Can you tell me who you are, and why you come here to work every night the way you do?"

"I work here now because I didn't work here before," the pooka _____.

"We just wanted to _____ 'thank you,'" the boy _____.

Make up your own sentences using quotes and substituting different words for "said" and "asked."

The Lion and the Jackal

The Khoisan of South Africa found that their lifestyle changed a great deal when the European colonists came to their area. They lost most of their land and lived very hard lives for many years. Today, they are working with the government of South Africa to gain back much that they lost.



What happened?

1. How did Lion and Jackal get an eland to eat?
2. How did Jackal get scratches on his face? What did he tell Lion caused them?
3. Why did Jackal beat an old hide with a stick?
4. What was his wife doing while he hit the hide?
5. Who got to eat the eland for dinner?

What do you think?

Which adjective describes Jackal best – “crafty” or “clever”?

Which adjective describes Lion best – “foolish” or “trusting”?

Jackal's tricks

One of the keys to fooling someone is to distract them so they don't think clearly. For instance, magicians practice ways to get you to look at the wrong hand while they make things “appear” or “disappear” with the other hand.

1. How did Jackal get Lion angry so that Jackal could steal the eland and get it to the top of the tower?
2. When Lion was trying to climb the tower, what did Jackal pretend to do so Lion would be too upset to think of better ways to solve the problem?

Newsaper Activity

Find a story in the paper about a person who was tricked by somebody. In this story, it's funny when Jackal tricks Lion. Was it funny in the story you found? What could the person in the news story have done to keep from being fooled? What lesson can you learn from that person's experience?

What happened? (Answers)

1. They cooperated by hunting together.
2. He put his face into a thorn bush, but he told Lion that Lion's wife scratched him.
3. He wanted Lion to think he was hitting his wife.
4. She was laughing, but also pretending to be hurt.
5. Jackal and his family.

What do you think? (Discussion points)

"Crafty" suggests a negative feeling including trickery and deceit; "clever" suggests intelligence and initiative. Discussion question: What would Jackal have ended up with if he had done things Lion's way?

"Foolish" suggests that Lion took a long time to realize he had been tricked; "trusting" suggests he gave Jackal the benefit of the doubt. Students might also think it was foolish of Lion to think Jackal would be happy with the leftovers when he had helped kill the eland.

Have students suggest other adjectives that carry similar implications.

Jackal's tricks

1. He pretended Lion's wife had scratched him and refused to come when Lion wanted her to. Lion went to find her, and then Jackal could steal the eland!
2. He pretended to be hurting his wife. Lion was so upset that he didn't think clearly and just did whatever Jackal suggested so that it would stop.

Skill Builder

Language arts – sentence structure

In narratives there are two ways of reporting what someone has said. One is to write in quotations marks the exact words he or she used (direct speech). The other is to paraphrase what was said using words that are similar but not necessarily exactly the same (indirect speech).

Compare: "You go get my family," he said. "When they have finished, you can bring your family to eat."

With: Lion told Jackal to call Lion's family to eat, and added that when Lion's family had had their dinner, Jackal could bring his family to eat.

Try it! What changes will you make?

In changing from direct to indirect speech, some words may be changed and some may be added. Have students rewrite Lion and Jackal's direct speech as indirect speech. Discuss the changes they must make in the wording and punctuation.

This becomes that, these become those, here becomes there and so on.

Words indicating time are usually changed so that tomorrow becomes the following day, yesterday becomes the previous day etc.

"Have you got our eland up there?" becomes "Lion asked if Jackal had the eland at the top of the tower."

Note that the question mark is no longer necessary.

The words recorded in direct speech in the present tense ("That's easy," Jackal answered.) are written in the past tense in indirect speech (Jackal answered that it was easy.).

First and second person pronouns (and possessive adjectives) become third person. Names are used to avoid confusion. (You stay here with the food becomes Lion told him to stay with the food.).

In indirect speech a word may be used to link the "he said" with what is said (Lion asked him if he had the eland or Jackal replied that he took the eland up the tower). In direct speech a new paragraph is begun each time someone new speaks. This is not necessary in indirect speech.

The Nis and the White Mare

Denmark is a small country today, but its borders have changed several times over the years, as have those of its Scandinavian neighbors, Norway and Sweden. Scandinavia was once home to the warlike Vikings, but most of the people there were peaceful farmers and fisherfolk, like the farmers in this story.



What happened?

1. How did the nis show its love for the white mare?
2. Why did the first farmer stay away from the barn at night?
3. What kind of work did the mare do for the farmer?
4. Why did the third farmer hide in the barn?
5. Why did each farm end up not doing very well?

What do you think?

Why do you think the second farmer sold the mare and bought a mule? What are some possible reasons?

Vocabulary builder

Some names for things tell you if the person or animal is male or female. Fill in the empty boxes so the words all match. You might have to look some up!

Man	Woman		Cow
	Wife	Billy goat	
Brother		Stallion	

Newspaper Activity

Pretend that you are the farmer who spied on the nis. Now the nis has gone and your farm isn't doing as well as it used. Write a letter to the advice columnist of the Fairyland newspaper. Tell her your problem and ask for advice. Trade papers with a friend and pretend you are the advice columnist. Write an answer to your friend's letter.

What happened? (Answers)

1. The nis groomed the mare, paid attention to it and made sure it was well-fed.
2. He did not want to disturb the nis and make it go away.
3. She pulled the plow in the field and she also pulled the farmer's buggy.
4. He wanted to see the nis.
5. The second farmer shouldn't have sold the mare, because the nis went away with it. The third farmer shouldn't have tried to spy on the nis, because then he went away forever.

What do you think? (Discussion points)

There are many possible reasons. Maybe the mare was old and he thought the mule would work harder. Maybe he's used to working with mules and didn't want to change. But here's something he should not have done: Laughed at the idea that the mare was good luck. Both of the other farmers were able to figure out that there was a nis, but he never gave the mare a chance. (See where THAT discussion might lead!)

Vocabulary builder (Answers): Husband, Sister, Bull, Nanny goat, Mare.

Skill Builders:

A preposition shows the relationship between the noun, or pronoun, that follows it and some other word in the sentence.

Notice how changing the preposition in the sentence below changes the relationship between the verb went and the object of the preposition the farmer's barn.

	preposition	object
The nis went	behind	the barn
	into	
	near	
	beside	
	over	

It is important that the prepositional phrase is next to its object; if it is not, the sense can become confusing. Read these sentences. Which version of each pair is less confusing?

Mother left instructions on how to bake bread in the envelope.
Mother left instructions in the envelope on how to bake bread.

Gertrude served dessert to hungry guests in paper cups.
Gertrude served dessert in paper cups to hungry guests.

Rewrite the following sentences so that they are not confusing.

The young girl was walking her dog in a short skirt.

We read that Janet was married in her last letter.

The library has several books about dinosaurs in our school.

The Priest and the Tanuki

Japan shares some of its ancient history with nearby countries, but for a very long time, the Japanese kept to themselves, and their stories and traditions are very much their own. Although Japan is a rich and successful nation, in folk stories like this one, the moral is less about what is safe or what will make you successful, and more about what is the right thing to do in order to be truly happy.



What happened?

1. How did the priest spend his time?
2. How did his neighbors show their respect for him?
3. Why did the tanuki come to the priest's home?
4. Why did it take so long for the tanuki to get the coins for the priest?
5. How did the priest help protect the tanuki's privacy?

What do you think?

1. Besides wanting to stay warm, why do you think the tanuki kept coming back to the priest's house?
2. Why do you think the priest liked having the tanuki come to his house?
3. Why did the priest ask for the coins, and then say he didn't really want them?
4. How does the tanuki go out of his way to respect the priest's values?

Play the role: The priest was a quiet, very well-behaved, religious man. Tanukis are mischievous, magical tricksters. Yet these two became good friends, even though their friends might not have thought they ought to hang out together. Imagine if everyone knew about their friendship. Act out a discussion among the priest's friends, and another among the tanuki's friends. What sorts of things would they probably say? What sorts of things do you think they OUGHT to say?

Newspaper Activity

The priest and the tanuki had very little in common, and yet they had a very good friendship. Find examples in today's newspaper about people who get along well despite their differences. Cut out the examples and make posters, using these examples and some words that explain how people who are different can get along.

What happened? (answers)

1. Praying and meditating.
2. They gave him food and made sure his home was taken care of.
3. To stay warm in the cold winters.
4. He had to make them by hand.
5. He agreed not to tell anyone the tanuki was coming to his house.

What do you think? (Discussion points)

1. The priest respected the tanuki's privacy. He didn't ask him what mischief he might have been up to, and he didn't try to get him to make any promises or changes in order to share the fire. It also seems that the tanuki understood the priest's values and respected them.
2. He was company, but he didn't bother the priest and make it hard for him to concentrate on his meditation.
3. The tanuki wanted to give him a gift, and the priest wanted to let him do something that he wanted to do. But after he asked for the coins, he felt greedy and was embarrassed.
4. He could have just stolen the coins, but he knew that would be offensive to the priest, so he worked very, very hard to get them in an honest way.

Skill Builders:

Language arts: Suffixes

A suffix can be used to extend a base word so that it can do different jobs in a sentence. –tion or –sion can turn a verb into a noun. In the story the author uses the verb meditate and the noun meditation. The noun attention comes from the verb attend.

Add a suffix to turn the following verbs used in the story into nouns:

complete, admire, provide, admit, possess, imagine, recognize.

Completion, provision, admission, possession, imagination, recognition

Language Arts – Sentence structure

Adverbs can be created from nouns by adding –ly

<i>terrible</i>	<i>terribly</i>	<i>mere</i>	<i>merely</i>	<i>mild</i>	<i>mildly</i>	<i>real</i>	<i>really</i>
<i>true</i>	<i>truly</i>	<i>intense</i>	<i>intensely</i>	<i>quick</i>	<i>quickly</i>	<i>final</i>	<i>finally</i>

What are the rules to form adverbs from adjectives?

Note that adverbs are used to modify verbs, adjectives and adverbs, not nouns.

Note some words ending in –ly are not adverbs but adjectives – e.g. silly person.

Identify & highlight the adverbs ending in –ly in the text. What are the nouns from which these adverbs are derived? Identify the adjective, adverb or verb they are modifying.

Usually just add –ly. Words ending in l will then have lly as the ending. Words ending in ll (e.g. full) just add y. Sometimes the terminal e is dropped.

Adverbs: greatly (great, respected); simply (simple, asked, fulfilled); respectfully (respectful, bowed; raised); easily (easy, could have stolen); truly (true, thankful). NOTE friendly and earthly are adjectives, not adverbs!

Sparrow and Woodpecker

Japan shares some of its ancient history with nearby countries, but for a very long time, the Japanese kept to themselves, and their stories and traditions are very much their own. Although Japan is a rich and successful nation, in folk stories like this one, the moral is less about what is safe or what will make you successful, and more about what is the right thing to do in order to be truly happy.



What happened?

1. Why was the merchant's younger daughter more helpful?
2. What did the merchant save money to buy for his daughters?
3. What did the sisters find out when they went to the tailor's shop?
4. What did the sisters do when the messenger told them their father was sick?
5. What happened to the sisters after their father died?

What do you think?

Many stories talk about poor, ragged girls being turned into beautiful princesses in lovely gowns. How is this story different? What point is the story trying to make?

Science question!

There are sparrows and woodpeckers all over the world, but there are lots of other birds, as well. If this story were written in this country, instead of Japan, what other kinds of birds might have been chosen for the girls to be turned into? Why?

Newspaper Activity

Read some fashion stories in the features section of your newspaper. Most will include descriptions of the clothing, with information about the designer or about how the clothing is worn and why it is special. Write a fashion story about the two kimonos.

Can you provide illustrations for your story?

What happened? (answers)

1. She didn't worry about messing up her hair, her makeup or her clothing.
2. Kimonos.
3. They didn't have enough money for nice kimonos.
4. Suzume ran straight home, but Kitsutsuki stayed to finish coloring her kimono.
5. They became birds. Suzume became a sparrow and Kitsutsuki became a woodpecker.

What do you think? (Discussion points)

In many fairy tales, the mean sisters are also ugly, but Kitsutsuki is not mean to her sister, just thoughtless and self-centered, and she is very beautiful. Also, Suzume doesn't want to be beautiful or rich, and she doesn't feel that she is ill-treated. Nor is there any suggestion that she either envies her sister or disapproves of her.

Their "transition" is different because it reveals, rather than changes, the sisters: They change into who they are, rather than into something else. Note, too, that, in fairy tales, the poor, dutiful daughter is never appreciated until finally a king or prince realizes how beautiful she is. In this story, the father probably knew what his daughters were like all along. Nor does Suzume need anyone's recognition or approval in order to become what she is destined to become.

Although it differs from many well-known fairy tales, this is not an unusual pattern in folklore, but in most stories, the narrator begins by promising to explain how a particular animal became what it is. In this story, we focus on the sisters from the beginning, and their nature as birds is revealed only at the end. This focuses the narrative more sharply on the human dimension of the moral lesson, taking away some of the distance inherent in the more familiar format, where we concentrate on the animal and its human characteristics become more metaphorical.

Science question

Answers will vary, of course, depending on where you live and what birds students are familiar with. This is a chance to see what your students know about birds, and also to gauge how well they have absorbed the lesson of the story. (You might also find some books or web sites about birds such as <http://www.audubon.org/> to extend this lesson into your science curriculum)

Skill Builders

Research and Art

Encourage students to research kimonos and either draw and color a kimono or create one from cloth (possibly scaled down for a doll).

Here is a large, accessible and interesting site on kimonos and other facets of Japanese life:

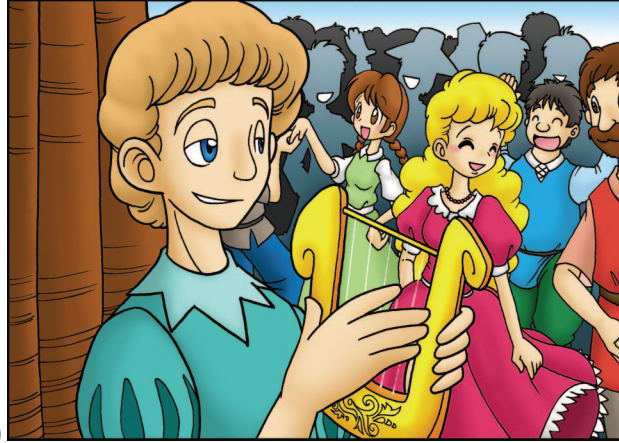
<http://www.japaneselifestyle.com.au/fashion/kimono.html>

There are many pictures on the site, illustrating a large number of kimonos but also explaining how different types fit into different aspects of Japanese life.

Pay particular attention to the furisode, the formal kimono worn by young women when they come of age, but before they are married. This is likely the type of kimono the merchant wanted for his daughters. This web site (which is based in Australia) suggests that a furisode may cost \$15,000. *(A cultural note: In recent years, many Japanese families have given their daughters lavish overseas wedding trips because it is less expensive than hosting a formal wedding in Japan, where the cost of the kimono is only part of the socially-required expenses!)*

Taffy and the Golden Harp

Wales is a Celtic nation that has fought to preserve its culture since the Roman invasions of Britain. Today, Wales is part of Great Britain. But, although Welsh speakers also speak English, their language remains alive to this day, as does their culture. The Welsh are noted for their choral singing, a tradition that was remarked upon by a visitor over 800 years ago!



What happened?

1. What role did bards play in Welsh society?
2. Was Taffy Morgan a skillful musician?
3. How was Taffy rewarded for his generosity to the strangers?
4. How did this fairy gift turn out to be dangerous?
5. What happened to the magical golden harp?

What do you think?

What do you think about how Taffy Morgan used the harp? Was his revenge on the bard fair? Why or why not?

What if Taffy had used the harp in another way? Could he have still gotten back at the bard for making fun of him, but still kept the harp and the approval of his neighbors? How?

Newspaper Activity

Take on the role of a music critic and write a feature story about Taffy's dance concerts. Read some stories about local concerts in your paper to get an idea of what things the writer includes. Taffy doesn't seem to take criticism very well, does he? Choose your words carefully to let readers know if the music is good without hurting Taffy's feelings!

What happened? (answers)

1. They entertained people with their music, and also kept the oral history of Wales.
2. No, he was a very bad musician, though he loved to try to play and sing.
3. They gave him a magic harp that made wonderful music.
4. People who heard the music couldn't stop dancing. It was fun at first, but not after awhile.
5. The fairies took it away from Taffy because he used it to be mean and to get revenge.

What do you think? (Discussion points)

Taffy's revenge was out of proportion to the bard's insults. You may want to direct discussion to the topic of setting an appropriate level of revenge (making the bard dance until he was tired and begged to stop, for instance). But students may also note this: The entire village had to dance while Taffy was punishing the bard, and it stopped being fun for all of them.

An alternative is that Taffy could have simply played nice music for all his friends and neighbors and become very popular and famous. (Students may also point out that an alternative plan is suggested within the story: To open a sort of hospital for music therapy.)

Taffy's fame and success would certainly have puzzled the bard and made up for his cruel jokes. The phrase "Living well is the best revenge" may spark some interesting discussion, particularly if you probe for examples. (Sports fans, for instance, may know of star athletes who were benched or even cut from early teams, while many famous actresses were "ugly ducklings" in high school.)

Skill Builders:

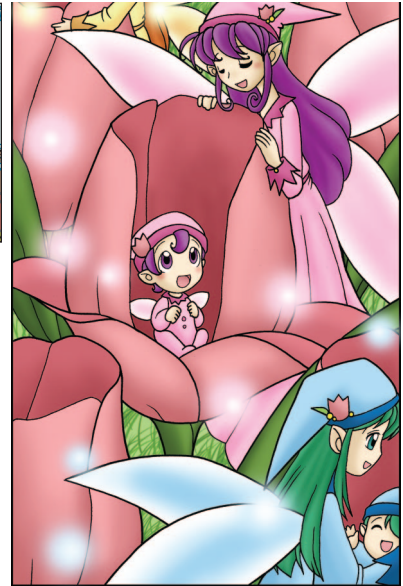
Language arts - imagery

The best writing is writing that is precise and vivid, giving the reader a clear, detailed picture. From time to time authors of narrative and expository writing will take advantage of techniques usually associated with poetry to make their writing interesting.

One technique is the simile, which compares two different things using like or as. In the story the author describes the Welsh villagers as dancing as nimbly as young goats and walking as lightly as children, but later the bard is described as dancing like a puppet on strings. What do these similes tell you about their movements?

The Tulip Nursery

England is not just where the English language came from, but it's also a source of many popular children's stories, old and new, like "Alice in Wonderland," "Peter Pan," and "The Chronicles of Narnia." England was once the center of a mighty empire, and, during that time, spread its culture, and its stories, all around the world. In those years, England also borrowed many stories from other lands.



What happened?

1. What things brought pleasure to the old lady?
2. What sounds did the old lady hear on the night of the full moon? Why were they unusual?
3. In what ways was the old lady self-reliant?
4. Why didn't the old lady just stick her head out the window to see the fairies?
5. How did the man who bought the house ruin the garden?

What do you think?

What made the old lady's garden so attractive to the fairies?

Why do you think the author emphasizes that the old lady was "little" and lived in a "small" village in a "little" thatched cottage with a "tiny kitchen"?

Caution: Words at Play!

Think about the word "nursery." Is there more than one kind of nursery? What kinds of things might you expect to find in one kind of nursery? What kinds might you find in another kind of nursery? How does this fit in with the story?

Newspaper Activity

When the old woman died, she had no family left, but the fairies surely knew that she was gone. Read the obituaries in your paper and see what sorts of information is in them. Write an obituary for the old lady as it might appear in her own paper. Now write another obituary as it might appear in the fairies' newspaper. How will they be different?

What happened? (answers)

1. She enjoyed looking after her vegetable garden and her chickens, but she especially loved the tulips in her garden.
2. She heard children giggling and the sound of soft singing. They were unusual because her house was by itself at the edge of the village and nobody lived nearby.
3. She grew her own vegetables, raised her own chickens and did her own housekeeping. She was sometimes lonely, but she seemed to be happy living alone.
4. She knew that, if the fairy mothers knew she had seen them, they would go away.
5. He wanted to make money from the healthy garden, but it was the fairies who made everything there grow so well. When he took out the flowers, they left.

What do you think? (Discussion points)

The fairies probably liked the idea that the old lady was quiet and kept to herself so there wouldn't be a lot of people coming around. The house was at the edge of the forest, so they could come and go easily. And they liked the well-tended garden as a playground for their babies.

One possible point is that the lady is unimportant and lives in an out-of-the-way place in order to make the presence of the fairies that much more special. They may also feel that special things like fairies don't happen to big, loud, important, busy people because they don't take the time to observe small things. Students may also know country people who live quietly and enjoy good relations with birds and small animals that come to their yards to feed. It's not a long jump from that to the idea of co-existing quietly with fairy folk!

Skill Builders:

Language arts – vocabulary

Authors choose words not only for their meaning, but often for their sound. Words that have soft consonants like s, sh, w, wh and th give an impression of quiet like the sound of singing, soft and sweet. On the other hand, hard consonants like b, d, p, g, and k, can give an impression of noise or harshness like a baby giggling and dug up all the tulip bulbs and planted herbs instead. As you read a story aloud, be aware of the sounds of the words as well as the meanings.

Language arts – sentence structure

Look at the use of commas to separate phrases and clauses within sentences:

A comma is used to set apart a introductory (often adverbial or prepositional) phrase at the beginning of a sentence: *One summer evening when the moon was just about to be full, the little old lady and Instead, from then on, she simply lay*

Commas are used to separate words or phrases of explanation or comment (acting as parentheses in this case). Note commas are used as pairs in these situations, unless coming at the end of a sentence, when the full stop replaces the second comma: *It sounded like a baby giggling, far away, and then another and The next day, as she worked in her garden, she thought*

Punctuate the following sentences correctly

The little old lady who lived alone was never lonely.

Once she had gone to bed the little old lady heard giggling in her garden.

Several months later after he had dug up the tulips the man tried to grow herbs without success.

The little old lady, who lived alone, was never lonely.

Once she had gone to bed, the little old lady heard giggling in her garden.

Several months later, after he had dug up the tulips, the man tried to grow herbs without success.

The Water Dance

The Bantu of South Africa are a large language group that includes many types of people, including the Zulu and Xhosa. Most African-Americans are of Bantu heritage. The stories their ancestors brought to America are often retold as “Brer Rabbit” stories, and are similar to this one.



What happened?

1. How did the lack of rain affect the countryside?
2. Why was it important for all the animals to work together?
3. What was the hare’s “special water” really?
4. Why did the hare not notice the tortoise in the river?
5. How did the hare escape from the turtle’s back?

What do you think?

Do you think the other animals were right to refuse to share their water with the hare?

The hare is lazy, dishonest and annoying. He’s also very funny and clever. How do you feel about the hare? Can you name other characters in stories who are like the hare? How is it different to read about somebody like hare, and to have to deal with somebody like hare in real life?

Is a “water dance” real?

The water dance in this story is made up, of course. Animals don’t really talk, and they still eat each other, even during a drought. But maybe the idea of a water dance isn’t entirely imaginary. Have you ever played in the sand at the beach? Sometimes, when you dig a hole in dry sand, you dig deep enough to reach the water underneath the sand. When rivers dry up, there still might be water under that dried mud. In real life, elephants often dig with their tusks to find it. Then other animals come to drink. After awhile, their walking in the mud to get a drink could make the hole deeper and wider. That’s a sort of “water dance,” isn’t it?

Newspaper Activity

The animals cooperated to solve their water shortage, and they made some rules, too. Imagine that they needed to advertise in the paper to get volunteers for the water dance. Create an ad that will encourage others to come help dance in the dry river bed. Make sure to tell both what can happen if they help, and what will happen if they don’t.

What happened? (answers)

1. The rivers and streams dried up, and even the springs dried up.
2. It would take all of them to “dance” the riverbed down to where the water was.
3. Honey
4. Its shell looked like a rock in the river.
5. He got the elephant to pull him off and swing him around by his tail, which he knew would break off.

What do you think? (Discussion points)

Students may vary on their feelings about the hare, and this might make a good debate topic, or a topic for a mock trial in which a jury debates the fate of the water-thief. Some may go with the hard-line view that he didn't help and doesn't deserve water, others may feel a social obligation to help all animals who need water.

The second question is a continuation of the first. Would the animals be more apt to share water with a quiet, modest hare? How much difference does attitude make in the way people are treated by others?

Skill Builders:

Language arts – vocabulary

Homonyms are words that sound the same but have different spellings and meanings such as beach, the sandy shore at the edge of the sea or a lake, and beech, a tree. Look in the story for the homonyms of the following words: reign, hair, planes, fir.

Language arts – sentence structure

Stories are much more interesting if they contain a variety of sentences rather than sentences that follow the same pattern all the time. A series of short sentences can create a sense of excitement or tension, or in the case of “The Water Dance”, emphasis: First the streams stopped running. Then the rivers dried up. Even the springs ceased to pour water from the rocks.

Whiles these are perfectly good, well-written sentences, a whole story of sentences like these would be very boring. A good author is able to write different types of sentences – including the very simple ones – to change the pace of the story and to make it more interesting for the reader.

Sentences can be combined by turning one sentence into an adverb or adjective.

*The gazelle danced next to the buffalo. The gazelle was tiny. The buffalo was mighty.
The tiny gazelle danced next to the mighty buffalo.*

Sentences can be combined by using a conjunction like and, but, or because.

*All of the other animals gathered in the river bed. They began to dance.
All of the other animals gathered in the river bed and began to dance.*

Sentences can be combined by making one an adverbial or adjectival phrase.

*The moon was rising. The hyena saw the hare. It was coming down the path.
The moon was just rising when the hyena saw the hare coming down the path.*

Use these techniques to combine the four opening sentences of the story into one sentence.

Possible answers:

*One summer when it did not rain, the streams stopped running, the rivers dried up and even springs ceased pouring from the rocks.
When it did not rain one summer, the streams, rivers and even the springs dried up.*

The White Dog

Latvia is a small country on the Baltic Sea that has only been independent for brief periods in history. But Latvia has its own language and traditions, and, today, is an independent nation with a successful economy. One of its most important folk traditions is in a particular kind of folk music that Latvians have sung for hundreds of years. (Maybe that's why the little dog sings!)



What happened?

1. What chore did the young girl have to do every day?
2. How did the old woman make this chore more difficult?
3. What was unusual about the little white dog?
4. What was the response of the wedding guests to the arrival of the little dog?
5. After he turned into a prince, how did the white dog show he was good?

What do you think?

Do you think it was fair to expect the girl to get water for the household every day? Do you think everything about the way she was treated was fair? What are some rules about chores that would be good for everyone involved?

Newspaper Activity

The girl's wedding was supposed to just be a very normal wedding, but it certainly turned out differently! Imagine that you are a reporter assigned to write about this wedding. Nobody thought it would be special, so you weren't assigned to attend it. Now that it's too late for you to be there, you'll have to interview witnesses and write your story that way. Make a list of things that you will need to find out. Make sure you include *Who Where What Why When* and *How*! (Do you think the old woman will describe the wedding to you in the same way the girl will, or the fellow who was supposed to be the groom? How will you sort out the truth and still be fair?)

What happened? (answers)

1. She had to fetch a bucket of water from the well.
2. She punished her for dripping water, so the girl couldn't get the outside of the bucket wet.
3. He could talk, he could sing, he could fill buckets by magic and he wanted to marry a human!
4. They thought he was cute and funny, so they welcomed him.
5. He gave a the young man who was supposed to marry the girl a good job as a reward for his kindness and good manners.

What do you think? (Discussion points)

Answers will vary, but it is hoped that most students will see the need for young people to help out. The question of how appropriate certain chores are, however, will lead into some interesting areas. The Catch-22 position of the young woman – she must fill the bucket without getting it wet – should ring some sympathetic bells among students who often feel they are put in the same position. What are their suggestions for a solution – barring the intervention of a magical dog?

Skill Builders:

Language arts - repetition and structure in storytelling

The white dog's song contains a set structure:

1. The first line begins with the salutation, "Maiden," and then has a command.
2. The second line continues the command and ends with a rhyme for "well."
3. The third and fourth line are:

*Do not turn away from me,
but keep your promise from the well!"*

This is, in part, typical of magical incantation, and also part of a storytelling tradition of repeating a phrase or expression, like "The better to see you with my dear," "The better to hear you with, my dear" and "The better to eat you with, my dear!"

Just as the wolf's replies to Red Riding Hood become more threatening with each variation, so, too, the White Dog's orders to the girl become more insistent and challenging with each repetition: At first, he only wants to come and eat at her table. Then he only wants to ride in the carriage. But, just as we know the wolf intends to eat Red Riding Hood, so, too, we know that the dog wants to collect on the girl's promise and that he will surely foil this arranged marriage.

Ask students for additional examples of repeated phrases in storytelling that help to set a mood, increase suspense or otherwise make a story more interesting. (These repeated phrases are very common in ghost stories told around campfires!)

The structure of the dog's poem can also lead to a poetry activity combining meter and rhyme. If the dog's poem isn't enough, loosen up with some limericks and other short poems in which meter and rhyme are clear and dominant. Then ask the students to create their own poetry.

Can you work the name of your school or your town into the last line of a quatrain and write a series of verses that rhyme with that final line?

Story Map

Use this story map to outline a story or to create your own

Name of story

Setting Description

Characters

Problem/Conflict

Action/ Story Event

Action/Story Event

Solution

Ending

Character Profile Chart

Use this chart to develop a story character report

Name of story _____

Character Name



Picture of Character

Character reminds me of _____
Character is related to _____



Description of Appearance List words.....

Description of PersonalityList words.....

What is the character's role in the the tale?

Character Name



Picture of Character

Character reminds me of _____
Character is related to _____

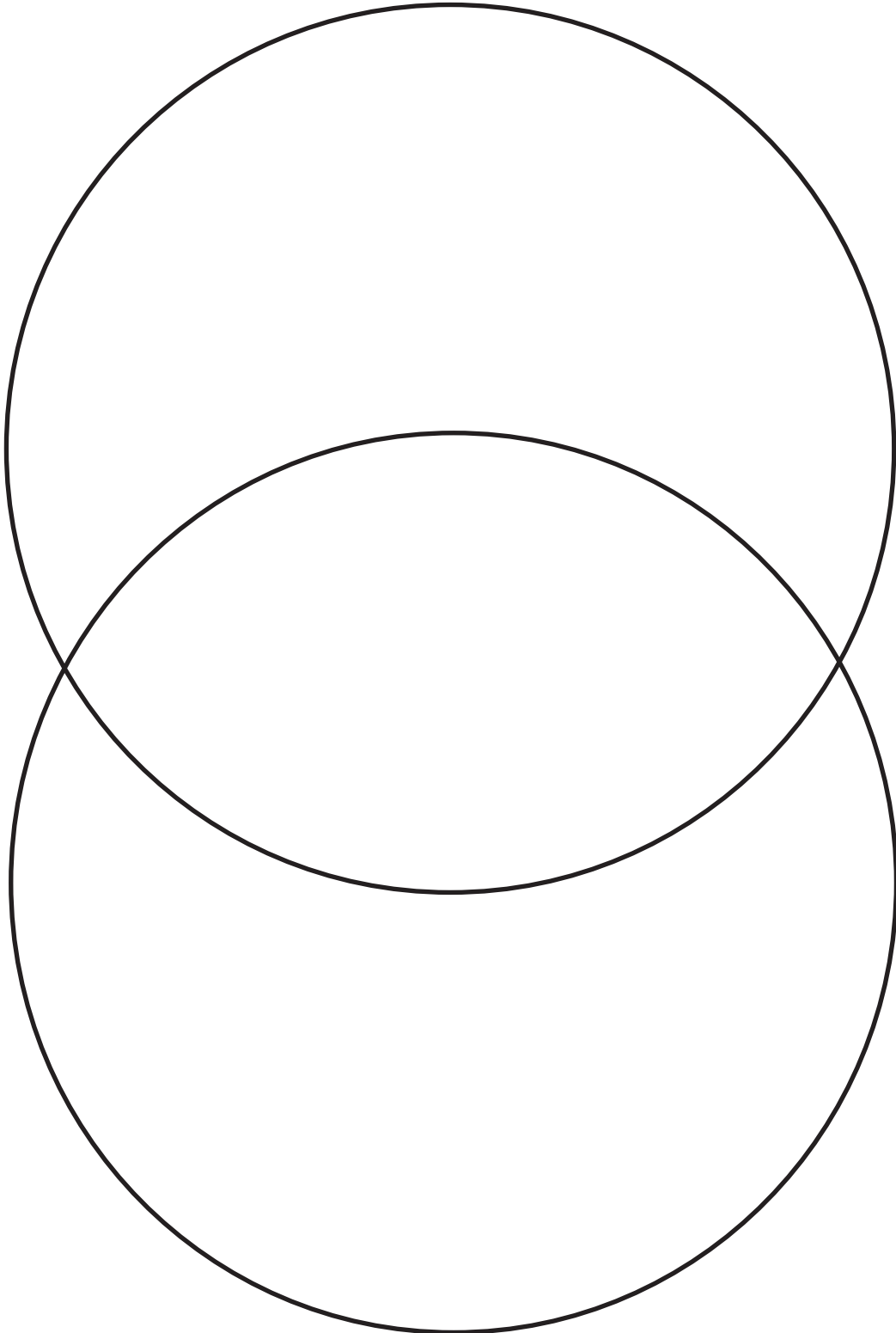


Description of Appearance List words.....

Description of PersonalityList words.....

What is the character's role in the the tale?

Venn Diagram
Use the Venn Diagram to compare and contrast



Character Development: BioPoem

- 1st Line - Character's name
- 2nd Line - "It means..." List 3 adjectives to describe the character
- 3rd Line - "It is the number..." Pick any number that reminds you of the character
- 4th Line - "It is like..." Pick a color that reminds you of the character. Do not name the color rather describe it.
- 5th Line - "Relative of or friend of ..." Name 1-3 people related to character
- 6th Line - "Who does..." Name something unique that the character does
- 7th Line - "Who has..." Name something unique the character possesses
- 8th Line - "Who fears..." Name something the character fears
- 9th Line - "Who wants..." Name something the character wants or needs
- 10th Line - "Resident of..." Name the location where the character resides or describe the setting

story Title: _____

1st Line: _____

2nd Line: _____

3rd Line: _____

4th Line: It is like _____

5th Line: _____

6th Line: Who does _____

7th Line: Who has _____

8th Line: Who fears _____

9th Line: Who wants _____

10th Line: Resident of _____

Bookmark Strategy

Use this strategy to help remember the plot of each story.

Procedure:

1. Create four bookmarks equal in size
2. As you read, make decisions and record specific information on each bookmark, including the place where the choice was located.

Bookmark 1: write or sketch something about the part of the text that was most interesting

Bookmark 2: write or sketch something confusing

Bookmark 3: write a word the whole class should discuss, look up definition in the dictionary

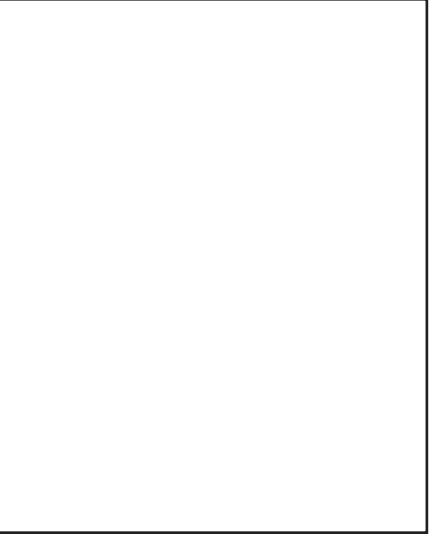
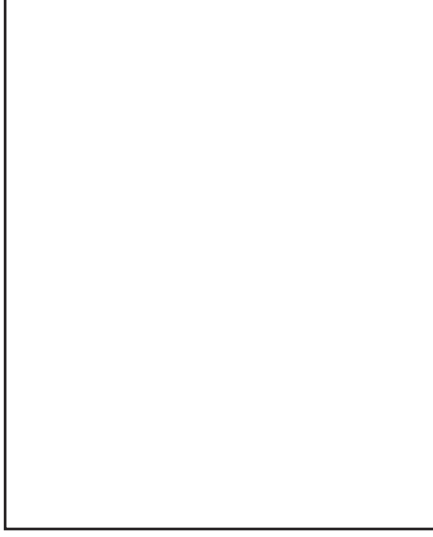
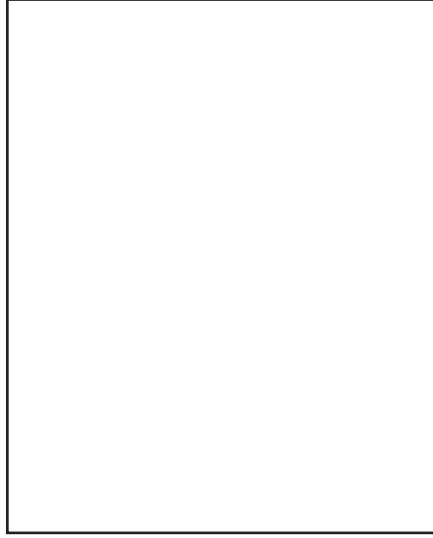
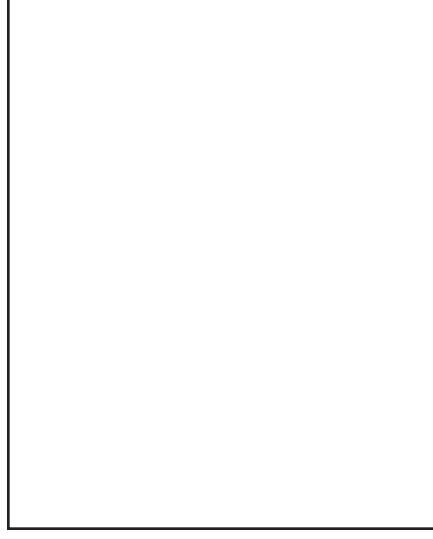
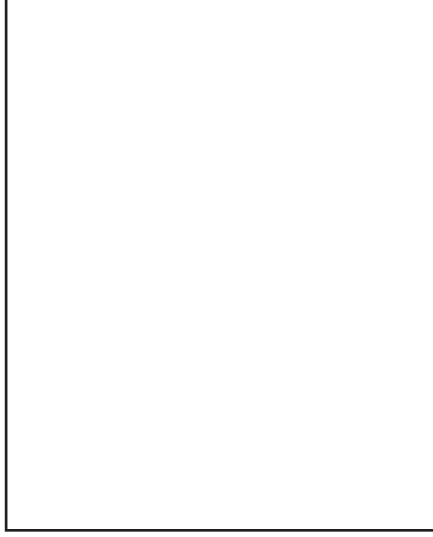
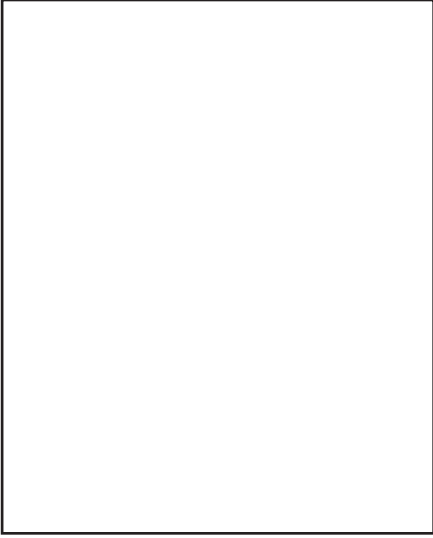
Bookmark 4: student choice (ex. note a favorite quote, vocabulary word, image)

The form consists of a large dashed-line rectangle divided into four equal horizontal sections. Each section is intended for a student to record information for one of the four bookmarks described in the procedure above.

Plot Development Using Comic Strip Cells

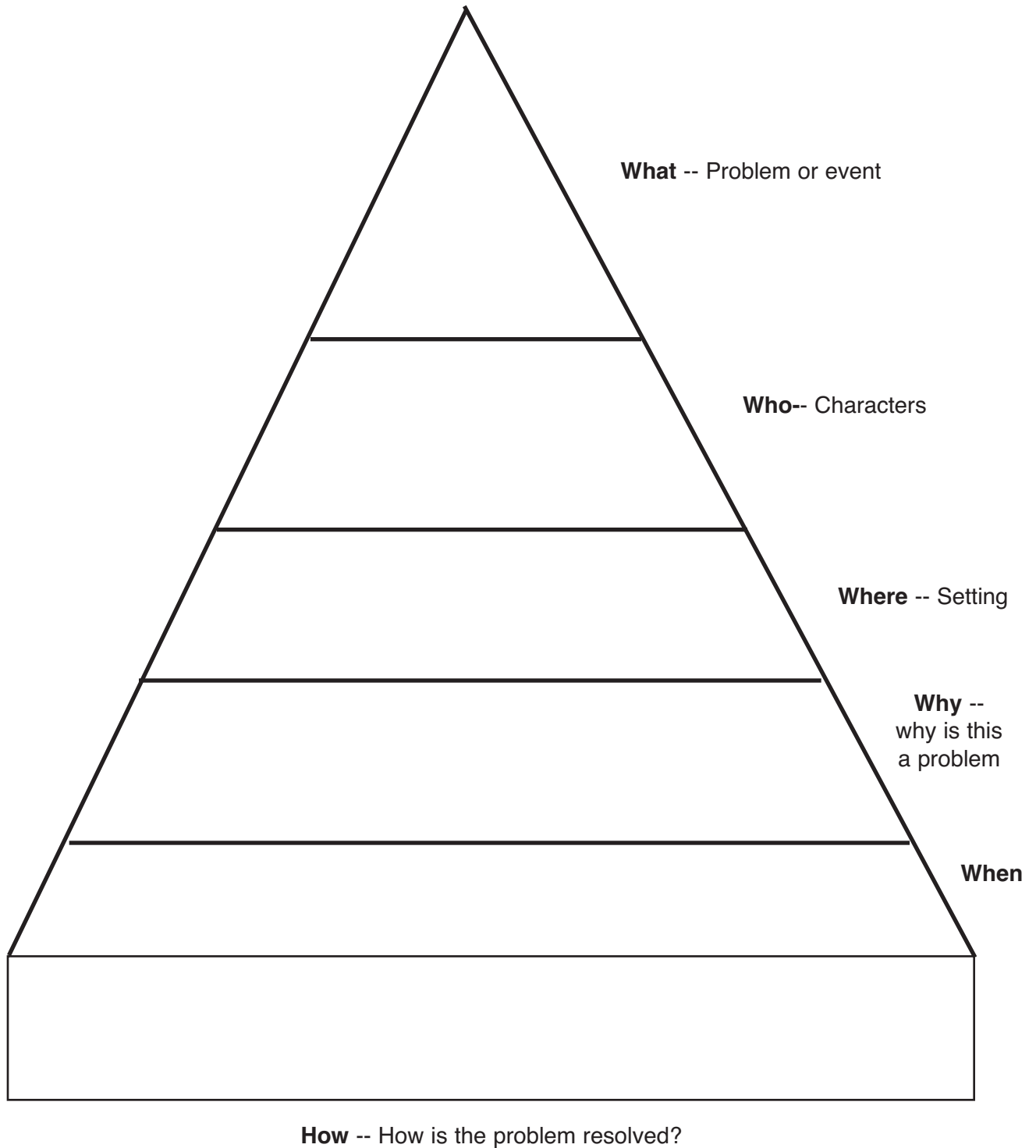
Procedure:

1. Use drawings to retell the events of the story. Place one drawing in each cell, following a particular sequence. Write a statement describing each cell. You can add dialogue in bubbles if you choose to. Number the back of each frame in order.
2. Share comic strips in small groups and explain the plot development leading up to the ending.



Inverted Pyramid

Use this pyramid outline to help chart a story or to frame your thoughts for your own story.



NCTE/IRA Standards for the English Language Arts Matrix

The following matrix is based on English Language Arts learning standards set forth by the National Council of Teachers of English and the International Reading Association. Use this matrix to record the standards addressed throughout this unit of study.

Standard Description	Date	story	Lesson: Topic & Description
Students read a wide range of print and non-print texts to build an understanding of texts, or themselves, and of the cultures of the United States and the world; to acquire new information; to respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace; and for personal fulfillment. Among these texts are fiction and nonfiction, classic and contemporary works.			
Students 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.			
Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They 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).			
Students adjust their use of spoken, written, and visual language (e.g., conventions, style, vocabulary) to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes.			

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<u>Standard Description</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>story</u>	<u>Lesson: Topic & Description</u>
Students 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.			
Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions, media techniques, figurative language, and genre to create, critique, and discuss print and non-print texts.			
Students conduct research on issues and interests by generating ideas and questions, and by posing problems. They gather, evaluate, and synthesize data from a variety of sources to communicate their discoveries in ways that suit their purpose and audience.			
Students use a variety of technological and information resources to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.			
Students develop an understanding of and respect for diversity in language use, patterns, and dialects across cultures, ethnic groups, geographic regions, and social roles.			
Students participate as knowledgeable, reflective creative, and critical members of a variety of literacy communities.			