

# Once Upon a Time

## A teacher's guide for using fairy tales in the classroom

This teacher's guide focuses on the use of fairy tales in the elementary classroom. The following texts have been selected for this teaching guide:

*Little Red Riding Hood* by The Brothers Grimm

*Rapunzel* by Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm

*Snow White* by The Brothers Grimm

*The Ugly Duckling* by Hans Christian Andersen

Fables are stories or tales that have been shared throughout many centuries. Some of the most widely read fables are some that have been derived from Aesop's fables which date back to around 650 B.C. This genre typically has a moral or lesson. Fairy tales are another genre of writing that date back to hundreds of years ago with the Grimm Brothers being some of the most popular fairy tale authors. Many fairy tales have been used as inspiration for scripts of a variety of successful movies. Both writing genres share some common elements such as: elements of fantasy, far-fetched sequences of events, and the use of figurative language.

Fairy tales provide an exciting genre in which to teach Language arts and Reading skills by viewing them in the context of writing. Student learning can be made more authentic by using fairy tales as guides (or writing mentors) to try out writing skills in the actual format of writing. Children learn to write better when they are engaged in the work of real authors.

Preparation: Have as many versions of different fairy tales available for students. They should have plenty of texts available to compare and contrast these tales. Also, if Internet access is available, have several fairy tale websites bookmarked for the students to investigate. There is a list of excellent on-line resources on using fairy tales in the classroom on Appendix pg. 3.

### Little Red Riding Hood:

1. After reading Little Red Riding Hood to the class, discuss point of view. Discuss the point of view that the story is written from. Create another version of this fairy tale that is written from the Wolf's perspective. This could be done in groups or taught by using a Guided Writing approach in the classroom. The teacher will model the writing process by using the students' ideas. Publish this as a class book that can be displayed in the classroom. Assign groups of students different fairy tales to read and then write another version from a different character's point of view. Share with the class.

2. In this version of Little Red Riding Hood, the Hunter rescues Little Red Riding Hood and her Grandmother from the belly of the wolf. He then places stones in the wolf's belly. The wolf awakes to discover that he can barely move from the weight of the rocks and he eventually falls over dead. Have students compare and contrast different versions of this fairy tale. Discuss and make a list of characteristics of fairy tales while focusing on the endings. Students will then write a different ending to this fairy tale. Create a class book that includes the original version of this fairy tale. Place the student endings at the back of the book, so students can share and compare their endings to that of their classmates.

### Rapunzel:

1. Before listening or reading Rapunzel, students will create a K-W-L chart to organize their knowledge about the following vocabulary words: vain, rampion, rapunzel, pined, skein, deceived, bleak, misery, banished, venomous, malice, scornfully, and poverty. A K-W-L chart is a graphic aid that assists students in organizing previous knowledge about a subject (K-What do I already know?), listing questions that they have about a topic (W-What do I want to know?), and concluding with what they have learned on a particular subject (L-What did I learn?). While listening or reading the text, students will write down what they already know about these vocabulary words (K-column). Afterwards, they will fill out the next section (W-column) including things that they want to know about each word. Once the activity is completed, students will proceed to fill out the last section (L-column) of the K-W-L chart to record what they have learned while studying these words. Introduce the vocabulary words to the students. Allow them to work in small groups to explore the meaning of each word. Students will then choose from the websites listed below to choose and publish a form of writing in which they will use a number of the vocabulary words in the correct context. Students will then present their published writing to the class.

ReadWriteThink's Printing Press at:

[http://interactives.mped.org/view\\_interactive.aspx?id=110&title=](http://interactives.mped.org/view_interactive.aspx?id=110&title=)

Students can choose from publishing the following types of writing: newspaper, brochure, flyer, or booklet.

Comic Creator at: <http://www.readwritethink.org/materials/comic/index.html>

Students can create their own comics with text and pictures.

2. Introduce/discuss different types of figurative language and how the use of figurative language can enhance writing. Give examples of each type of figurative language (similes, personification, idioms, onomatopoeia) that can be found in Rapunzel so students have some example to use as a guide. Read Rapunzel to the class and tell the students to look and listen for examples of figurative language. Students can keep notes on the figurative language chart (Appendix pg. 1 ). After the story has been read, discuss the following examples of figurative language in the fairy tale. Talk about the meanings.

A student copy (without answers) is provided on Appendix pg. 2.

1. How dare you come here like a thief to steal my rampion?" (simile)
2. "I'll look after it well and care for it like a mother." (simile)
3. For Rapunzel had beautiful long hair, as fine as spun gold, and wore it in a braid. (simile)
4. He rode home, but the song had touched his heart so deeply that he went out into the forest every day to hear it. (personification)
5. At first Rapunzel was terrified when she saw him, for she had never seen a man before, but the prince spoke kindly to her, telling her how her singing had so moved his heart that it gave him no rest, and he had to see her for himself. (personification or idiom)
6. "Aha," she said scornfully, "so you've come for your darling wife, but the pretty bird has flown the nest and won't sting any more, for the cat caught her and will scratch your eyes out too." (idioms)
7. In her anger, she grabbed hold of Rapunzel's beautiful hair, took a pair of scissors, and snip, snap, off came the beautiful braid. (onomatopoeia) Have students work in groups to make posters with examples of the different types of figurative language that have been found in the text.

### The Ugly Duckling

1. Read The Ugly Duckling to the class. Discuss elements and writing techniques that can be found in fables (animals as characters, exaggerations, morals, etc.). Have students work with a partner to determine what the moral or lesson is in this text. Students will then use the features of fables to write their own fable that has the same moral or lesson as this story. Share with the class.

2. After reviewing the text, discuss the life cycles of ducks and swans. Provide pictures to show students the difference between the appearances of the two animals. Discuss the different types of metamorphosis (complete and incomplete) that certain animals go through. Students will then recreate life cycles of animals such as frogs, butterflies, and grasshoppers. Provide pictures and supplies for students to provide a visual representation of their animal's life cycle. Descriptions of each stage in the life cycle should be included. Display the posters for the class to view.

### Snow White

1. After sharing the story with the class, review story elements from Snow White (main characters, settings, conflict, climax, resolution, theme, etc.). Make sure that students have a decent understanding of the story. Split the class into groups to perform a Reader's Theatre based on this story. Assign each group of students a different part of the story. Review the importance of speaking

clearly when presenting to an audience. Performances could be videotaped or recorded for Podcasts for viewing and/or listening to at a later date.

2. After reading Snow White, make a chart of the elements of a fairy tale for future reference. If Internet access is available, the following website provides a step-by-step guide for writing “fractured” fairy tales: <http://www.readwritethink.org/materials/fairytales/>. Students will choose from a selection of different versions of a certain fairy tale. Compare and contrast the versions using a Venn Diagram. Students will have the opportunity to write their own “fractured” version of this fairy tale. After going through the writing process with this collection of student created fairy tales, ask the school Media Specialist if the students’ books can be displayed in the library for all students to see or check out. This will provide a sense of ownership for each young author in your class.

### Figurative Language Chart

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Book:

Idioms are funny sayings that cannot be taken literally. Ex: I had butterflies in my stomach.

Onomatopoeia is used when the sound of a word literally makes what the word means. Ex: Crash, Crunch, Splat

Personification is used when a nonliving object is given human or animal qualities. The wind howled through the cool wintery day.

Similes are comparisons that use “like” or “as”. Ex: The giraffe seemed as tall as a skyscraper.

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List the examples of figurative language that you found in the text.

| Idiom | Onomatopoeia | Personification | Simile |
|-------|--------------|-----------------|--------|
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|       |              |                 |        |
|       |              |                 |        |

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Appendix 1

Figurative Language from Rapunzel

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Underline and identify the following examples of figurative language that were found in Rapunzel. Then explain the meaning of the figurative language in each sentence.

1. How dare you come here like a thief to steal my rampion?" \_\_\_\_\_
2. "I'll look after it well and care for it like a mother." \_\_\_\_\_
3. For Rapunzel had beautiful long hair, as fine as spun gold, and wore it in a braid.  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. He rode home, but the song had touched his heart so deeply that he went out into the forest every day to hear it. \_\_\_\_\_
5. At first Rapunzel was terrified when she saw him, for she had never seen a man before, but the prince spoke kindly to her, telling her how her singing had so moved his heart that it gave him no rest, and he had to see her for himself. \_\_\_\_\_
6. "Aha," she said scornfully, "so you've come for your darling wife, but the pretty bird has flown the nest and won't sting any more, for the cat caught her and will scratch your eyes out too."  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. In her anger, she grabbed hold of Rapunzel's beautiful hair, took a pair of scissors, and snip, snap, off came the beautiful braid. \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix pg. 2

Internet resources:

1. Animated Grimm Fairy Tales  
<http://www.grimmfairytales.com/en/mainTales>
2. Teaching About Story Structure Using Fairy Tales  
[http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson\\_view.asp?id=874](http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=874)
3. Once Upon a Time: Lessons for Teaching About Fables, Fairy Tales, Folktales, Legends, Myths, Tall Tales  
[http://www.education-world.com/a\\_lesson/lesson/lesson279.shtml](http://www.education-world.com/a_lesson/lesson/lesson279.shtml)
4. Scholastic's Fairy Tale Genre Study  
<http://www2.scholastic.com/browse/collection.jsp?id=482>
5. Once Upon a Time at Teaching Heart  
<http://www.teachingheart.net/f.html>

Original versions of the texts:

The Ugly Duckling [http://hca.gilead.org.il/ugly\\_duc.html](http://hca.gilead.org.il/ugly_duc.html)

Snow White <http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/type0709.html#snowwhite>

Rapunzel <http://www.bartleby.com/17/2/6.html>

Little Red Riding Hood <http://www.authorama.com/grimms-fairy-tales-22.html>