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# USING FOLK FAIRY TALES WITH CHILDREN IN PRIMARY GRADES

by

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A Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Education

Department of Curriculum and Instruction
Faculty of Education
Memorial University of Newfoundland

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Know you what it is to be a child? It is something very different from the man of today. It is to have a spirit yet streaming from the waters of baptism; it is to believe in love, to believe in loveliness, to believe in belief; it is to be so little that the elves can reach to whisper in your ear; it is to turn pumpkins into coaches, and mice into horses, lowness into loftiness, and nothing into everything, for each child has its fairy godmother in its soul.

FRANCIS THOMPSON
"Shelley"

ABSTRACT

Folk fairy tales are as old as man himself. Their origin is a mystery and a source of great concern to the folklorists. Nonetheless, whatever the source and time of their origin, the appeal of fairy tales has indeed been great for children. They are as popular with modern youngsters as they were with past generations of children.

The magical world of fairy tales seems to be far removed from today's reality. However, the world of fairy tales may not be so different from our own world, for these tales deal with universal human problems which are as relevant to today's humanity as they were in the past. In fact, many teachers and educators reject fairy tales on the grounds that they are unreal and untrue and as such misleading and harmful to the child's psychological development. However, fantasy need not be considered harmful, but rather helpful in the growth and development of young children as it develops creativity and imagination.

Fairy tales were not especially created for children but they turn to fairy tales instinctively, because of their closeness to a child's psyche. Similar characteristics between children and fairy tales appear to exist in the areas of morality, egocentricity, animism and magic. These common characteristics bring the child and the tale together and produce, apparently, what Favat calls "the phenomenon of interest". Formal investigations of children's reading interests show that children enjoy fairy tales especially between the ages of five to ten.

In view of children's interests in fairy tales and also the many values that can accrue to children through fairy tales, the author

feels that fairy tales should occupy a central place in any literature program for primary grades. The teacher should introduce fairy tales to provide listening pleasure as well as to develop an appreciation of literature.

This thesis makes suggestions for an effective presentation of fairy tales either through reading aloud or telling. Although exposure alone to stories has its values, children probably achieve greater pleasure and appreciation of literature through active participation in stories. Various creative activities are offered in this thesis, with the intent to help teachers to involve children actively in stories. A selection of appropriate tales for each particular activity has also been provided.

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

### INTRODUCTION

> Once upon a time . . . with the promise of that ritualistic incantation, the traditional beginnings of folk tales invite their listeners and readers to suspend disbelief, to enter into wondrous lands where exciting adventures and impossible happenings are part of the everyday. Where beanstalks grow sky-scraper tall, straw spins into gold, and toads turn back into princes. In a blending of fantasy and reality, good always overcomes evil and everyone- almost always- lives happily ever after (Kirkton, 1971, p.1024).

No one really knows where the most famous fairy tales came from. Their origin is a mystery and was a source of particular concern to the 19th century folklorists. Tales have come down to us from the distant past, and as Jacobs (1968) said in "The Well of the World's End", it wasn't in my time nor your time, nor anyone else's time. The differences between the magical world of fairy tales and the world we actually live in is so striking, that Tolkien (1965) remarks:

> (The tales) open a door on Other Time, and if we pass through, though only for a moment, we stand outside our own time, outside Time itself, maybe (p.33).

Whatever the source and time of their origin, the appeal of fairy tales holds constant. They have ever been and still are popular with most children. Storr (in Tucker, 1963) says:

> In each new generation of children, there are millions to whom these stories are as welcome and necessary as their daily bread (p.65).

Hornyansky (in Eggoff, 1969) points out:

> Our own children are normal young citizens of the 1960's: addicted to television, well informed about Yogi Bear, Hercules, Robin Hood, Fireball XL-5, and so on. And yet, a cause of some surprise, they are also addicted to (even haunted by) the classic fairy stories . . . They read, or rather listen to, stories about machines, zoos, Saturday walks, dolls, magicians, children, and pets, without much apparent discrimination; . . . but the stories they want to hear last thing at night, and especially the stories they remember well enough to tell us, (on the occasions when they decide to switch roles) are "Sleeping Beauty", "Red Riding Hood", "Cinderella", "Snow White", "Jack and the Bean Stalk", and that crowd: stories full of princes, princesses, giants, wicked witches, wolves, dwarfs, and other persons not normally encountered in modern life (p.121).

Sutherland and Abruthnot (1977) express a similar view point:

> For generation after generation, folk tales have continued to be popular with children, modern youngsters, surrounded by the mechanical gadgets and scientific wonders of our age, are still spell-bound by their magic (p.153).

This spell-binding quality of fairy tales is attested to in a statement by Charles Dickens himself. He says:

> "Little Red Riding Hood" was my first love. I felt that if I could have married Little Red Riding Hood, I should have known perfect bliss (quoted by Bettelheim, 1976, p.23).

Chukovsky (1963) maintains that when children are deprived of fairy tales they create their own imaginary companions. He writes:

> Deprived of the folk tale, of a Pushkin fairy tale, or a fairy tale written by a good contemporary poet, children are forced to rely on their own spontaneous compositions (p.123).

Thus, there seems to be a general agreement that fairy tales greatly interest children. As regards the age level at which this interest occurs, Becker (1947) states that most children "listen to fairy stories as soon as they will listen to anything" (p.48). Cass (1967) saying much the same, maintains that children of five or so are ready and eager for the enrichment that the fairy stories, folk tales, or simple myth can provide (p.28).

Experimental studies into children's reading interests and story preferences have also shown that children like fairy tales. A number of these investigations (Terman and Lima, 1931; Witty and others, 1946; Gunderson, 1953; Norvell, 1958; Rogers and Robinson, 1963; Cooper and Smith, 1972; Kirsch et al, 1976; Kelly, 1977) have established not only that children are interested in fairy tales, but also that children are interested in them during a specific period of their childhood. Generally this interest emerges at a pre-reading age and gradually rises to a peak of interest between the approximate ages of six and eight and then declines to a point of non-interest by the time the child is ten years of age (Favat, 1977, p.5). This age group roughly encompasses the primary grade children.

Fairy tales appeal to young children because they are close to their own psyches. Favat (1977) concludes that there are many characteristics common to child and the tale"

> Just as magic and animism suffuse the world of the fairy tale, so do they suffuse the world of the child; just as a morality of constraint prevails in the fairy tale, so does it prevail in the moral system of the child; just as the fairy tale world and its hero become one in achieving his ends, so do children believe their world is one with them; and just as causal relations remain unexpressed in the fairy tale, so do they remain unexpressed in the child's communication (p.38).

It would appear that the child finds a plausible representation of his own world in fairy tales and his desires and wishes are fulfilled through them. Fairy tales--besides providing a pleasurable experience to the child--help in many ways. Bettleheim (1976) maintains:

> For a story to hold the child's attention, it must entertain him and arouse his curiosity. But to enrich his life, it must stimulate his imagination; help him to develop his intellect and to clarify his emotions; be attuned to his anxieties and aspirations; give full recognition to his difficulties, while at the same time suggesting solutions to the problems which perturb him . . . In all these and many other respects, of the entire "children's literature" - with rare exceptions - nothing can be as enriching and satisfying to child and adult alike as the folk fairy tale (p.5).

Considering children's interest in fairy tales and the many values and benefits that accrue apparently to children through these tales (see Chapter V also), one can conclude that fairy tales should occupy a central place in any literature programme for the primary grades. As most children in primary grades cannot read themselves, it is important that the teacher should introduce fairy tales to children.

## Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this thesis is: (1) to suggest how the teacher can

present fairy tales to children through reading aloud or telling; (2) to suggest various creative activities which can be used effectively with fairy tales; (3) to suggest a list of suitable stories for each particular creative activity.

## Significance of the Study

Fairy tales have often been criticized by many teachers, parents and educators on the ground that they are unreal and imaginary and as such are misleading and harmful to the growth and development of young children. Trimmer (quoted by Anderson in Tucker, 1976) was an early objector to fairy tales. She condemned the tales as:

> Only fit to fill the heads of children with confused notions of wonderful and supernatural events brought about by the agency of imaginery beings (p.109).

Traces of this concern are present even today. Yolen (1978) mentions that there are many teachers and educators who dismiss fairy tales as unreal and unrelated to any curriculum. She writes:

> There is an unyielding core of educators who feel, with Mrs. Trimmer, that there is a danger as well as an impropriety of putting such (fairy tales) in the hands of little children whose minds are susceptible of every impression, and from the liveliness of their imagination are apt to convert into realities whatever forcibly strikes their fancy (p.702).

Some writers and researchers have objected to fairy literature because of the supposed effect its violence and amorality can have on children. For example, Tausch (quoted by Aquino, 1977) recorded a study in which children were observed during and after a reading of "Snow

White". Tausch reported that the fairy tale "made an emotionally upsetting and ethically problematic impression on the children" (p.14).

On the other hand, there are many defenders of fairy tales who find that fantasy literature involves basic and universal truths that are essential to human development. For example, Bettelheim (1976) says:

> Fairy tales carry important messages to the conscious, the preconscious, and the unconscious mind, on whatever level each is functioning at the time. By dealing with universal human problems, particularly those which preoccupy the child's mind, these stories speak to his budding ego and encourage its development, while at the same time relieving preconscious and unconscious pressures (p.6).

Lewis (in Haviland, 1973) praises fantasy literature for providing a healthy impetus for a child's mind. He writes:

> A fairy tale stirs and troubles the child with a sense of something beyond his/her reach, and, rather than dulling or emptying the actual world, gives it a new dimension (pp.236,237).

Auden (quoted by Lasser, 1977) responds to those who object to fairy tales and believe that we should give our children only current events and science. He says:

> I find such people so unsympathetic and peculiar that I do not know how to argue with them. Nor do I expect to affirm my belief that the story world is central to what children need and ought to know. Faith, like science, is a way of knowing (p.463).

The present study will attempt to show that children are a natural audience for fairy tales and that their needs, desires and wishes are fulfilled in part through fairy tales. This study will also attempt to list the many values and benefits that accrue to children through fairy tales and how these tales help in the growth and development of

children.

It is hoped that a knowledge about the special characteristics of primary grades children and a knowledge about how fairy tales help in the growth and development of young children will help allay the fears of many teachers about the harmful effects of fairy tales and encourage them to include fairy tales as an integral part of the literature program in their classes.

The suggestions for teaching fairy tales through various creative devices and tehcniques are offered with the intention of helping teachers to use fairy tales more effectively with children in primary grades, thus to supply a selection of appropriate activities for particular tales.

## CHAPTER II

## THE NATURE OF CHILDREN'S INTEREST IN FAIRY TALES

Experimental studies in children's reading interests show that children are interested in fairy tales. To understand why fairy tales appeal to children, it is essential to know about the nature of the child and the nature of the fairy tales.

This chapter is a review of studies in children's reading interests and those aspects of child development which are directly related to their interest in fairy tales. The nature of fairy tales is examined in the next section (Chapter III). The specific aspects of child development considered to be particularly relevant to an interest in fairy tales are: moral development, egocentrism, animism and magical beliefs.

### Experimental Studies in Children's Reading Interests

Over the years, reading researchers, always anxious to offer children reading content that will appeal, have given children's interests considerable attention. Many investigations have been carried out to determine what boys and girls like to read. With regard to fairy tales, a number of these investigations have shown not only that children are interested in fairy tales, but also that children are interested in them only during specific periods of their childhood.

Terman and Lima (1931) polled 2,000 California children in grades I to VIII. The subjects were asked to note in an interest blank those categories of reading, such as travel, history, adventure, poetry,

biography, that they "liked" and those that they "liked very much". The children were asked to name four or five books and magazines they had enjoyed reading during the previous year, and to keep a reading record booklet for the books they read during a period of two months. The researchers found that in children younger than five years of age, there is an interest in talking-beast type of nature and animal story as well as in simple fairy tales. Children of six and seven are most interested in nature stories and enjoy fairy tales. They observed:

> In some children the interest in fairy tales begins at seven years, while in others not until nine, but with most children, it reaches its maximum at eight years (p.45).

Witty, Coomers, and McBean (1946) conducted a study with children who ranged in age from kindergarten through grade eight. They presented questions to 7,879 school children. Children in kindergarten through grade III were asked to name the stories they liked best, while their teachers wrote down the pupils' selections. The results were presented in a ranked ordering of the preferred stories and books. The list compiled from these responses showed that the stories about animals and fairy tales predominated in the list of primary level favourite stories.

Gunderson (1953) worked with 21 second graders to determine their reading interests, by reading 14 books to them and then asking which stories they liked and why. The results showed that these children liked, most of all, stories which contained humour. Their other choices included stories with excitement, suspense, adventure, an element of magic or fancy and a satisfactory ending in which justice triumphs.

Norvell's study (1958) was based upon 960,000 expressions of opinions by 24,000 New York State children in grades three to six. He further drew upon two other similar assemblies of data which brought the total to approximately 4 million expressions of opinion from 124,000. In this study, reading selections which were read and discussed in class, or read in class but not discussed, or chosen and read independently, were ranked by the children as "very interesting", "fairly interesting", or "uninteresting". Norvell produced scores for twenty fairy tales at the elementary and junior-high levels and showed that this type of story is most popular at grade III, continues to be well liked in grades IV to VI, but declines in interest in grades VII to IX. Five tales tested at the senior high school level showed continued decline.

Rogers and Robinson (1963) ascertained the reading interests of 275 first graders through the use of a thirty-two item questionnaire. Children were presented with such questions as "a child who is lost", "a haunted house", and "a day at the hospital", representing four each in eight categories such as humorous situations, family activities, and historic events. The children were asked to circle the words "like" or "not like" in response to a written and oral question about each item - "Would you like to read a book about . . .?" Results showed that first graders ranked first such fairy tale items as "An animal who could talk," "A prince and princess", and "A magic ring"; while they ranked last such real-world items as "What an astronaut does", "A person on T.V.", and "Building a bridge".

Cooper and Smith (1972) conducted a study to determine reactions of teachers to their remembered favourite books of grade VI. Of the 759

elementary teachers who returned the questionnaire, 501 teachers identified their favourite books which they had read before the age of twelve. They identified 136 different titles of remembered favourites. The titles receiving mention ten or more times included "Cinderella", by Charles Perrault; "Little Red Riding Hood", by Charles Perrault ; and "Grimm's Fairy Tales", by Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm.

Kirsch, Pehrsson, and Robinson (1976) looked at reading interests of young children in the first two years of school across ten countries. The children were asked to draw pictures about what they would like to have read to them. They were interviewed for further information about their interests. The researchers found more similarities than differences in interests of the 2,000 children from varying countries and cultures. The children of the ten country groups listed fairy tales and fantasy as their most preferred reading interests.

Kelly (1977) sought to investigate the general interests of students from kindergarten through the VI grade. Questionnaires were developed for elementary school children at the primary (grades K to II) and intermediate (grades III to VI) levels. The questionnaires were distributed to 48 schools throughout America. In considering their interests in books, primary students, as a whole, reported strong interests in books about animals and fairy tales.

Favat (1977) reviewed a number of research studies in children's reading interests from 1921 to 1963 and concluded:

> 1. Children between the ages of 5 and 10 or grades K and 5, whether they select books voluntarily, or are presented with books and asked for their opinion, express interest in the fairy tale.

2. This interest follows what might be called a 'curve of reading preference'; that is, children's interest in fairy tales emerges at a pre-reading age and gradually rises to a peak of interest between the approximate age of 6 and 8, and then gradually declines to a point of non-interest by the ages of 10 or 11.

3. Concurrent with this decline in interest in the fairy tale, there is an emergence of interest in stories of reality (pp.4,5).

Review of these research studies clearly shows that children are interested in fairy tales, and that this interest is fairly universal among children. Children's interest in fairy tales seems to emerge at the age of 5 or so and is highest between the ages of 6 and 8 and then declines gradually. A curve representing children's interests in fairy tales is shown in Figure 1.

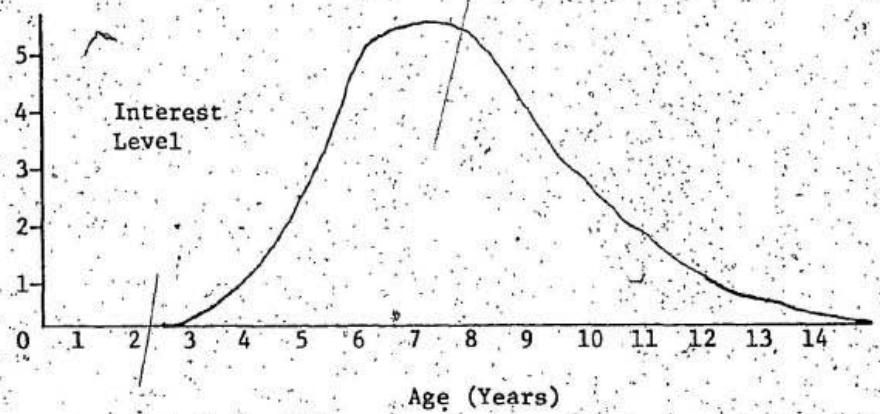



Figure 1: Curve of Interest Level-:-Age of Children

## Moral Development

Piaget (1965) studied children to determine their conception of moral laws and found that children's conception of justice develops in

three distinct stages: moral realism (children up to eight years or so), moral relativism or equality (age 8 to 13 years) and moral relativism or equity (over 13 years). As most primary grades children are in the stage of "moral realism", only this stage of moral development is discussed.

> Moral realism is the tendency which the child has to regard duty and the value attaching to it as self-subsistent and independent of the mind, as imposing itself regardless of the circumstances in which the individual may find himself. . . . Duty as viewed by moral realism, is essentially hetronomous. Any act that shows obedience to a rule or even to an adult, regardless of what he may command, is good; any act that does not conform to rules is bad . . . since he (the child) takes rules literally and thinks of good only in terms of obedience; the child will at first evaluate acts not in accordance with the motive that has prompted them but in terms of their exact conformity with established rules (p.111).

Thus, the moral laws are seen by children as given as real as the objects in the world around them. These laws are transcendental - absolute, fixed, unchangeable and to be obeyed at all times. These laws are made by parents and adults in authority. As such, children before the age of 7 or 8 years receive the rules ready made from adults and accept the prohibitions and sanctions handed down from above and treat them as moral absolutes.

Consonant with this transcendental view of moral laws, young children have an immanent view of justice; that is for them, the proper punishment for any act is immanent within the act itself and must follow it. Punishment is also inevitable; the bad act must of necessity be punished; and the children advocate retributive punishment.

For when they are asked to suggest an appropriate punishment for a misdeed, they usually decree a punishment that is, in the eyes of adults, excessive (pp.263-265).

> In the domain of retributive justice, every punishment is accepted as perfectly legitimate, as necessary, and even as constituting the essence of morality (p.315).

Piaget further indicates that various moralities follow upon one another without themselves constituting definite stages. He says:

> Though we could not point to any stages properly so called, which followed one another in a necessary order, we were able to define processes whose final terms were quite distinct from one another. These processes might mingle and overlap more or less in the life of each child, but they mark nevertheless the broad divisions of moral development (p.175).

Research studies of Kolberg also support Piaget's stages of moral development. Kohlberg has postulated three levels of moral development with two stages at each level. He calls his first level the "pre-conventional" level. The second level is the "conventional" level and the third level is the "autonomous" or "principal" level. These levels are related in a broad sense to Piaget's stages: level one to moral realism, level two to equality, and level three to equity. According to Kohlberg, most children of ten and under (about 70%) operate on level one. Since only this level is relevant to the present study, it is discussed in the following paragraph.

At stage one of the first level (pre-conventional level), morality is identified with social rules which powerful adults have determined. Rewards, punishments and physical consequences provide the

cues to what is right or what is wrong, and one obeys in order to avoid punishment. At stage two, an act is deemed good or bad to the degree that it furthers or hinders satisfaction of needs and desires (in Sebesta, 1975, pp.100-103).

## Egocentricism in Children

From his studies of children's thinking, Piaget (1971) concluded that young children are egocentric. He also holds that a child below the age of eight is almost entirely an individualist. That is to say, his world is very largely centered in his own feelings. He believes that everybody thinks and sees things as he does. He cannot take the point of view of others, since his own needs and wishes are too urgent. Thus, the child believes himself to be the center of the universe.

This egocenterism in the child is brought about by certain conditions of the child and his world. One group of conditions consists of those of an individual nature, that is, those bound up with the consciousness of children as it derives from their own activity. Piaget holds that in the child there is a lack of differentiation between consciousness of the action of self on the self, and consciousness of the action of self on things. The child's mind does not distinguish the self from external world, and thus the world is regarded as a continuous whole with equivalent feelings, desires and the like. The other group of conditions consists of those of a social nature, that is, those bound up with the relations felt by children to exist between them and their parents. Piaget maintains that children see their parents, like the parts of their own bodies, as objects that can be moved in continual

response to their desires. This is especially true of children below the age of five or so, when every need and desire of the child is responded to and catered for by the parents. Even the unexpressed desires of the child are fulfilled. Even up to the age of eight or so, there is considerable continuity between the children's activities and those of their parents. Moreover, children are perpetually surrounded by adults who not only know more than they do, but also do everything in their power to understand them; who even anticipate their thoughts and desires. Children, therefore, are perpetually under the impression that their thoughts, aims and desires are known to adults.

## Animism in Children

Bettelheim (1976) points out that young children's thinking is animistic, that they regard as living and conscious a large number of objects which, for us, are inert. As Benedict (quoted by Bettelheim) puts it:

> The child assumes that his relations to the inanimate world are of one pattern with those to the animate world of people: he fondles as he would his mother the pretty thing that pleased him; he strikes the door that has slammed on him (p.46).

Bettelheim adds that the child fondles the pretty thing because

> He is convinced that this pretty thing loves to be petted as much as he does; and he punishes the door because he is certain that the door slammed deliberately, out of evil intention (p.46).

Piaget's (1976) studies have shown that children's thinking remains animistic until the age of puberty. This is so because

> The child does not distinguish the phychical from the physical world, since in the early stages of his development he does not even recognize any definite limits between his self and the external world (p.169).

Based on his studies, Piaget has distinguished four successive types of and corresponding stages of animistic beliefs in the child:

Stage I (up to age 6 or 7 years): All Things Are Conscious

During this stage, animism is associated with objects that move by themselves or are set in motion. Thus a stone is alive, because it can move as it rolls down a hill.

> The child in this stage certainly never says that everything is conscious. He simply says that any object may be the seat of consciousness at a given moment, that is to say, when the object displays a particular measure of activity or is the seat of some action (p.174).

Stage II (6-7 to 8-9 years): Things That Can Move Are Conscious

During this stage, the child assigns consciousness only to things that can move: that is, only those objects are conscious which are ordinarily in motion or whose special function is to be motion. Thus, the sun and moon, the stars, clouds, rivers, the wind, etc., are all regarded as conscious (p.179).

Stage III (8-9 to 11-12 years): Things That Can Move Of Their Own Accord Are Conscious

At this stage, only those things are regarded as conscious which can move of themselves. During this stage animism is more reflective and characterized by systematic beliefs. Thus, the wind is alive since it blows of its own accord.

> Since no external cause makes the wind blow, therefore, it must do so of its own accord and must be aware of its movement (p.183).

Stage IV (usually reached at 11-12 years): Consciousness is Restricted to Animals

At this stage, consciousness is restricted to animals, people, and insects. The fourth stage is not reached usually before the ages

of 11-12, but several children of 6-7 years are found to belong to it (p.186).

Thus, it would appear that in primary grades children all the stages of animism are present in varying degrees.

## Magical Beliefs in Children

Piaget (1976) observed that children believe in magic by participation. That is, they believe that there is a relationship between two beings or objects and that they have a direct influence on one another even though there may be no spatial contact or causal connection between them. They believe that they can make use of this participation in order to modify reality. A number of such convictions about magic exist in children. Piaget has classified them into four groups:

1. Magic by participation between actions and things: children perform some action believing that it exercises an influence on a particular event they either desire or fear. For example, counting very fast or without a mistake as a means of gaining what one wants.
2. Magic through participation between thought and things: one of these magical beliefs consists of thinking of something to make a particular event happen or not. For example, the children think the opposite of what they really want.
3. Magic by participation between objects: children believe that an object or place can be used to influence another object. For example, the belief that by shaking one's hands or waving a fan, etc. one can "make air" and can even draw air from outside through closed windows.

4. Magic by commandment: the belief that the will of one object can act of itself on that of others. These participations are frequently connected with the idea of the obedience of objects. For example, children believe that they can make the sun, the moon, the stars, and the clouds move in obedience to them.

(pp.132-148)

# CHAPTER III

## THE NATURE OF FAIRY TALES

### Definition

In the English language, the terms "folk tale" and "fairy tale" are often used interchangeably. However, the term folk tale can be legitimately employed in a much broader sense to include all forms of prose narrative, written or oral, which have come to be handed down through the years. Folklorist Thompson (1976) has classified various folk tale forms: the Marchen (fairy tale), Novella, Hero tale, Fable, Saga, Myth, Explanatory tale and Animal tale. These forms are not all that rigid, as "they blend into each other with amazing facility" (p.10). Yet there seems to be a certain body of stories within the general class "folk tales" that can be designated "fairy tales". What exactly, then, is a "fairy tale"?

The Oxford dictionary defines fairy as "one class of beings of diminutive size" and fairy tales as "stories about fairies". But Tolkien (1964) points out that these definitions are too narrow (p.15). The word fairy includes not only "dainty" little creatures, as popularly believed, but the whole range of supernatural beings. Briggs in her "An Encyclopedia of Fairies" (1976) has described a whole variety of fairies. These may be as big as humans and as small as a fingertip or an insect. In addition, elves, pixies, hobgoblins, dwarfs, giants, merpeople, trolls, ogres, witches, monsters and magicians all come under the general class "fairies". Describing their character traits, Briggs (1976) says:

> The fairy people are good and bad, beautiful and hideous, stately and comical and exercise great power over human affairs (p.3063).

Moreover, the word fairy itself originally meant "fai-erie", a state of enchantment - to be carried away to another world where strange things may happen. Thus the word "fairy" includes not only a variety of fairies but also covers the whole area of the supernatural. Tolkien (1964) states:

> Fairy stories are not in normal English usage stories about fairies or elves, but stories about fairies, that is Faerie, the realm or state in which fairies have their being. Faerie contains many things besides elves and fays, and besides dwarfs, witches, trolls, giants or dragons; it holds the sea, the sun, the moon, the skies, and the earth, and all things that are in it; tree and birds, water and stone, wine and bread, and ourselves, mortal men, when we are enchanted (pp.15,16).

Fairy tales might seem to require the presence of fairies, but Thompson (1976) says:

> The great majority of such tales have no fairies (p.8).

Tolkien (1964) also says:

> Stories that are actually concerned primarily with 'fairies', that is with creatures that might also in modern English be called 'elves' are relatively rare (p.16).

Clarke (1963) supports these views. He says:

> Relatively few marchen actually deal with "little people" of the supernatural world (p.23).

Fenner (1957) agrees. She says:

> It is true that in many fairy tales queer little people who perform magic often appear; sometimes they are funny and sometimes they are horrible, sometimes like what we have come to think fairies are - dainty little creatures. But there do not have to be fairies in a fairy tale (p.48).

It appears from these statements that the presence of fairies is not essential to fairy tales. What does seem to be important, however, is the element of the supernatural. The Opies (1974) maintain:

> Although a fairy tale is seldom a tale about fairy folk, and does not necessarily ever feature a fairy, it does contain an enchantment or other supernatural element that is clearly imaginery (p.15).

A majority of fairy tale scholars seem to agree with Opies. Krappe (1964) defines fairy tale as:

> . . . a continuous narrative concerning one hero or heroine, usually poor and destitute at the start, who after a series of adventures in which the supernatural element plays a conspicuous part, attains his goal and lives happily ever after (p.1).

Thompson (1976) defines marchen as:

> . . . a tale of some length involving a succession of motifs or episodes. It moves in an unreal world without definite locality or definite character and is filled with the marvellous. In this never-never land humble heroes kill adversaries, succeed to kingdoms, and marry princesses (p.8).

Sutherland (1977) also reminds us that it is the "magic" that is at the heart of "folk tales".

> These are the stories that justify the children's name for the whole group fairy tales. Fairy godmothers, giants, water nixies, a noble prince turned into a polar bear, the North wind giving a poor boy magic gifts to make good the loss of his precious meal, three impossible tasks to be performed, a lad searching for the water of life - these are some of the motifs and some of the fairy people that give the folk tale a quality so unearthly and so beautiful that they come close to poetry (p.149).

Georgiou's (1969) definition seems to echo the views of all these writers. She says:

> Fairy tale is the term that best describes that strain of folk literature which embodies a universal truth in highly imaginative fanciful form. In its simplicity and lyricism, a fairy tale is not unlike other forms of folk literature are -- a short narrative with an uncomplicated plot. It is its use of extraordinary and supernatural happenings that differentiates it from other tales of folk lore (p.186).

It is clear from these definitions that the supernatural element must be present in a fairy tale. Although all fairy tales lie in the realm of folk tale, what sets them apart from the varying types of folk tales is their element of the supernatural. Heuscher (1963) says:

> The terms "folk tale" and "fairy tale" are used interchangeably. However, it could be argued that there are folk tales which do not contain supernatural beings and miraculous events which usually are part of fairy tales (p.3).

Fairy Tale Versus Myth

Fairy tale and myth are closely related in that the same exemplary figures are found in both and miraculous events occur in both. However, the way these are presented is entirely different. The fairy tale heroes are people very much like us. For example "Beauty" in "Beauty and the Beast". By contrast myths are concerned with gods and demigods. Whatever strange events the fairy tale hero experiences, they do not make him superhuman while the opposite is true of a mythic hero.

Every myth is the story of a particular hero: Theseus, Hercules, Beowulf. Even the parents and other major characters in a myth are given proper names. The protagonists of fairy tales are referred to as a "girl" for instance, or "the youngest brother". If names appear, it is quite clear that these are not proper names but general or descriptive ones. For example "Cinderella", "Little Red Cap". Even when a hero is

given a name, as in the Jack stories, or in "Hansel and Gretel", the use of very common names makes them generic terms, standing for any boy or girl. Nobody else in the story has a name. For example the parents are referred as "father", "mother", "step-mother" (Bettelheim, 1976, p.40).

Although miraculous events occur both in fairy tale and myth, Bettelheim (1976) explains that:

> . . . the dominant feeling a myth conveys is: this is absolutely unique; it could not have happened to an ordinary mortal like you or me. By contrast although the events which occur in fairy tales are often unusual and most improbable, they are always presented as ordinary, something that could happen to you or me or the person next door when out on a walk in the woods. Even the most remarkable encounters are related in casual everyday ways in fairy tales (p.37).

Another significant difference between the myth and fairy tale is the ending. While it is always happy in fairy tales, it is nearly always tragic in a myth. Bettelheim says:

> The myth is pessimistic, while the fairy story is optimistic, no matter how terrifyingly serious some features of the story may be. It is this decisive difference which sets the fairy tale apart from other stories in which equally fantastic events occur, whether the happy outcome is due to the virtues of the hero, chance, or the interference of supernatural figures (p.37).

Fairy Tale Versus Legend

A significant difference between a legend and a fairy tale is that while the fairy tale is a story filled with incredible marvels, legend is presumably based on fact. Thompson (1976) defines legend as:

> A form of tale that purports to be an account of an extraordinary happening believed to have actually occured. It may recount a legend of something which happened in ancient times at a particular place . . . It may tell of an encounter with marvellous creatures which the folk still believe in -- fairies, ghosts, water spirits, the devil and the like (p.8).

Fairy tales on the other hand "move in an unreal world without definite locality or definite character" (Thompson; 1976, p.8). Heuscher (1963) also says:

> Fairy tales are narrations that do not base on or originate from more or less historic persons and events, but which describe the "fantastic", the "mysterious", that which transcends our everyday reality (p.4).

The relation between fairy tale, legend, and myth is well illustrated by Macleod Yearsley (1924). He says:

> Nursery tales, or Marchen, deal with imaginery heroes and heroines like Cinderella, Alladin, Jack the Giant Killer, and Bluebeard. When the same stories profess to deal with real occurrences and the deeds of supposed-ancestral heroes, they shift into the next class, the sagas (legends). These legends may go a step further, and concern themselves with the doings of gods, when they pass out of the sphere of fairy tale and enter into that of mythology (p.23).

Form and Style

Although fairy tales retain the atmosphere of the country and culture from which they originate, there are many elements common to all fairy tales. Lipking (1962) identifies several such common elements:

> They are stories that are strongly patterned, with rhythmic repetition in matching episodes, verbal formulae and recurring songs and charms. Simple in plot and without subplot, the stories move briskly, from action to action, untrammeled by description or exposition. Their moral universe is also simple, though sometimes with

> subtle undertones: the struggle of good against evil, with the weaker protagonist on the side of the good and always winning. While their world is a world of marvels, spacious and mysterious, the foreground is always vividly objectified with homely details. It is a world in which the relationship between human beings and animals and plants and even inanimate things is extraordinarily intimate (p.31).

Introduction

The introduction of the tale is brief almost to the point of imperceptibility. It usually presents the conflict, characters and setting in a few sentences. Time and place are quickly established in the tale. The time is always past and frequently described by such conventional terms as "Once upon a time", "Long ago and far away", "In olden times when wishing still helped one", "A thousand years ago tomorrow", or "Once on a time and very good time too" (Sutherland, 1977, p.153).

Many tales do not begin with a conventional phrase. This characteristic beginning is however implied. Smith (1975) says:

> There is a generally accepted idea, for instance, that all fairy tales begin with the words "once upon a time" and end with the familiar conclusion "so they lived happily ever after". Some fairy tales do begin and end this way, but many do not. Yet this characteristic beginning and ending is implied in almost all these stories even when they begin and end without them. That is to say, they begin simply, they come to the point with brevity, they give only the facts which concern the action of the story and the ending follows swiftly and conclusively (p.57).

For example:

> One day Henny Penny was picking up corn in the cornyard when-whack!-something hit her upon the head. "Goodness gracious me!" said Henny Penny; "the sky's a-going to fall; I must go and tell the king."

> Mr. and Mrs. Vinegar lived in a vinegar bottle. Now, one day when Mr. Vinegar was away from home, Mrs. Vinegar, who was a very good housewife, was busily sweeping her house, when an unlucky thump brought the whole house clitter-clatter, clitter-clatter, about her ears (p.57).

These beginnings are the signals which portend wonder and excitement and convey the reader away immediately into a dream world where all things are possible. The brevity of the introduction is part of the charm of these tales. We are immediately drawn into the story and we ask:

> What will happen next? Interest, concern and suspense are achieved at the very start (Smith, 1975, p.57,58).

For example, in the openings of stories, "Rumpelstiltskin" "Cinderella" and "Big Claus and Little Claus", we are plunged at once into a situation full of dramatic possibilities - the miller's daughter who finds herself a queen, set to an impossible task; the lovely, gentle girl oppressed by her step-mother and step-sisters; the sympathetic boast of Little Claus which lands him in much trouble (Storr, in Tucker, 1976, p.67).

Thus a good introduction whets the appetite for more. This increased appetite leads into the body of the story.

The Development

The development of the story consists of a plot filled with suspense and action. Sutherland (1977) writes:

> It carries forward the note of trouble sounded in the introduction. The quest begins, the tasks are initiated and performed, the flight gets underway, and obstacles of every kind appear, with the hero or heroine reduced to despair or helplessness or plunged into more and more perilous action (p.154).

The plot of the fairy tales moves so fast that Georgiou (1969) remarks:

> With no time to react, the reader finds that everything has started moving. Events occur so quickly that he becomes a part of the action and is drawn on into the story for more entertainment and excitement (p.191).

Repetition is a basic element in many folk tale plots. Frequently, three is the magic number for building suspense. For example, three sons, three daughters, three adventures, three tasks, three witches. In "Three Little Pigs", the wolf gives three challenges to the pig in the brick house - to get turnips, to get apples, and to go to the fair (Huck, 1976, p.166).

Repetition in structure and images ties one incident into another to form a total pattern, giving emphasis and continuity to main idea and leaving the reader with a unified impression. Examples of repeated verbal patterns are:

> Manye, Manye, Timpie Tee,
> Fishye, Fishye in the sea,
> Ilsebil my wilful wife,
> Does not want my way of life.
>
> Oh grandmamma, grandmamma,
> What big ears you've got!
>
> Oh grandmamma, grandmamma,
> What big teeth you've got!
>
> (Georgiou, 1969, p.192).

Conclusion

The conclusion follows swiftly on the heels of the climax and is as brief as the introduction. For example, in "The Three Billy Goats Gruff" the ringing challenge of the biggest billy goat announces the climax. The fight begins, the biggest billy goat wins and the gruffs

are free to eat the grass for the rest of their lives. In the "Sleeping Beauty", the kiss breaks the spell and the wedding takes place quickly. The conclusion ends everything that was started in the introduction. The heroes and heroines achieve a happy end to their struggle and the villains are thoroughly punished (Sutherland, 1977, p.155).

> The endings of the fairy tales have a characteristic similarity which is conveyed by the familiar "happy ever after" termination. Fairy tales may indeed end with these words; many of them do. But, whatever the words, the sense of finality, of having satisfactorily disposed of the characters of the story, is as complete as
>
> Snip, snap, snout,
> This tale's told out.
>
> (Smith, 1975, p.58)

For example:

> From that time forward the robbers never ventured to that house, and the four Bremen town magicians found themselves so well off where they were, that there they stayed. And the last person who related this tale is still living, you see.
>
> The Marquis, with a profound bow, accepted the honour that the kind had offered him, and that very day he married the princess. The Cat became a great lord, and he never chased mice afterward except in the way of sport.
>
> (loc.cit.)

Characterization

The characters in fairy tales are clearly defined, being symbolic of the completely good or the entirely evil. Sutherland (1977) remarks:

> The characters are more or less typed. The good people in these stories are altogether good, and the wicked are so completely wicked that we waste no sympathy on them when, in the end, they are liquidated. So, too, the animals in the folk tales stand for simple traits like loyalty, cleverness, shyness, cruelty (p.157).

Character development is seldom depicted. Krappe (1928) says:

> The hero is supremely good or clever at the outset and obviously remains so till the end. There are but few exceptions to this rule . . . for example, in the tale of the "Golden Bird" the hero repeatedly disregards the advice of his kind helper and gets into trouble in consequence. Only on the last quest does he mend his ways and attain his goal (p.16).

The fairy tale hero is usually the youngest son who is scorned and neglected by all around him, whilst the heroine is often ill-treated by a wicked step-mother or step-sisters. In many tales, the hero is an orphan or else a widow's son. In many tales he is even considered stupid and lacking in ambition by his relatives and neighbours. Often the hero is not even recognizable as a hero; he appears the least likely to succeed. Aquino (1978) points out:

> Often the hero is of no previously discovered distinction, a "little person" who performs brave deed or goes onto great success. The examples of unlikely heroes in fairy tales are the "Valiant Tailor", "Jack the Giant Killer", and "Cinderella" (p.24).

With all his virtues, however, the hero would hardly succeed in his task without the help of friendly powers. Sometimes the friendly power may be a helpful animal as in "Puss in Boots", but more often the helpers are of a supernatural kind as in "Tom Tit Tot". The hero wins their friendship through his good character and actions. Sometimes the part of the animal helper is taken over by inaminate objects. For example, the hero or heroine is asked by a tree to shake down its fruit and he or she is rewarded by the tree's refusal to give information to the pursuing witch. In many tales the hero is given some magical object which makes it possible for him to accomplish his task. For example,

a magic horse, a magic carpet, an inexhaustible money bag or a magic pot may suffice (Krappe, 1928, pp.18-31).

The villains in fairy tales can be grouped into two categories. To the first category belong the hateful uncles, ugly step-mothers, envious brothers or sisters or step-brothers or step-sisters. Under the second category come the giants, dragons, ogres, witches, sorcerers and magicians. The villains in the end meet with their deserved punishment. They are throughout endowed with superhuman strength but their supernatural strength is matched by the hero's nimbleness and wit.

> Evil may prevail over good for a while but . . . love in all of its "goodly and godly" manifestations of kindness, charity, and purity of heart prevails triumphantly over whatever wickedness and evil may be besetting the protagonist of the tale (Gillespie, 1972, p.24).

Style

One of the charms of the folk tales is the language and the manner in which they are told. Sutherland (1977) says:

> For these tales were never read silently; they were told until their form and language patterns were fixed. Consider:
>
> "Little pig, little pig, let me come in."
> "No, No, by the hair of my chinny chin chin."
> "Then I'll huff and I'll puff and I'll blow your house in" (p.156).

The words are suited to the mood and tempo of the story. The dialogue in these stories is so natural that real people seem to be talking. Georgiou (1969) writes:

> The story telling language is conversational, direct, and flowing. In the "Three Little Pigs", the dialogue between the wolf and pigs proceeds as follows:

> "Little pig, I know where there is a nice field of turnips."
> "Where?" said the little pig.
> "Oh, in Mr. Smith's home field, and if you will be ready tomorrow morning I will call for you, and we will go together, and get some for dinner."
> "Very well," said the little pig, "I will be ready. What time do you mean to go?"
> "Oh, at six o'clock" (p.194).

Another characteristic of folk tale style is the use of rhymes. The style implies rhyme as well as prose. For example, Sutherland (1977) writes:

> In "The Well of the World's End" ("The Frog King") alternates prose and verse, with the frog singing over and over the same words except for the request in the first two lines in which he raises his demands each time:
>
> "Give me some supper, my hinny, my heart,
> Give me some supper, my darling;
> Remember the words you and I spake,
> In the meadow, by the Well of the World's End"
> (pp.156,157).

Repetition of responses, chants, or poems is usually a part of the tale. For example, in "Snow White and Seven Dwarfs", the queen repeats:

> "Mirror mirror on the wall,
> Who is faifest of us all."

And in "Giant and the Bean Stalk", the giant repeats:

> "Fee, fi, fo, fum."
>
> (Huck, 1976, p.167)

Miracles

The miraculous is a vital substance permeating the fairy tale. Since the miracle is incorporated into a larger sequence of events, becoming but one of many episodes, it loses its significance and is

taken as a matter of course happening. The world of the fairy tale presupposes a universe where the supernatural happenings are not seen as miraculous, but rather as part of one's everyday experience. For example, Hansel and Gretel are not surprised at encountering a witch in the forest and the princess is not at all shocked to encounter a talking frog who later becomes the prince. Luthi (1976) says:

> . . . the miracle is not a cause of wonderment in the fairy tale . . . it is an essential element permeating all things; it is part of the fairy tale vital substance. Everything can enter into relationship with everything else; that is the actual miracle and at the same time the simple foregone conclusion in the fairy tale (p.76).

Magic

Magical powers are frequently given to persons or animals in folk tales. The transformation of an animal into a person or vice versa is a part of many folk tales. Examples are Beast in "Beauty and the Beast" and the frog in "The Frog Prince". Magic objects are essential aspects of many tales. For example, the magic table cloth is a frequent device for providing food as in "One Eye, Two Eyes and Three Eyes". A ring and a lamp play an essential part in the story of "Alladin". Other magic objects that figure in folk tales are dolls, purses, harps, the hen, the goose and many others (Huck, 1972, pp.172,173).

# CHAPTER IV

## THE CHILD AND THE FAIRY TALE

The previous chapters have established some of the characteristics of children and of fairy tales. A closer look at these characteristics reveals that there are many similarities between the two. This chapter will attempt to point out the matching characteristics that seem to exist particularly in the areas of morality, egocentrism, animism and magic in children as well as in fairy tales. Besides the appeal of the content, interestingly enough, the form and style of the fairy tales also have their appeal for young children. The matching characteristics that exist between child and the form and style of the tales are briefly discussed.

### Morality in Child and Tale

As was discussed in Chapter II, during the primary school years it is the morality of constraint that prevails in children. During this stage the child believes in retributive justice, that is, that rewards and punishments are meted out for merit or guilt. Retributive justice is characterised by what Piaget (1965) calls the child's belief in expiatory punishment, that is, there is no relation between the content of the guilty act and the nature of its punishment. The way of setting things right is to coerce individuals back to their duty and to bring home their guilt to them by means of a powerful punishment. For the children Piaget examined, punishment, as he puts it, must be "smart enough" to make them realize the gravity of their misdeeds. Piaget's subjects consistently thought that retributive justice was most just

when it was most severe. "It is worse" said one in choosing a harsh punishment; "that will punish him most" said another (p.231).

Such examples of retributive justice through expiatory punishment abound in the fairy tales, says Favat (1977). Severe punishments invariably befall the wrong-doers. The servant girl in "The Goose Girl", for pretending to be the true princess, is put naked into a barrel stuck with nails and is dragged along by horses from street to street until she is dead. In "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs", the queen is made to dance in red hot shoes till she falls dead.

During the morality of constraint period, the child's sense of distributive justice - the system whereby reward and punishment are divided among the deserving and the guilty, is almost entirely dependent upon the notion that whatever is commanded by the adult is just. Children do not consider motivation or circumstances in the distribution of justice (Piaget, 1965, p.263).

Favat (1977) shows that the child's belief in adult authority and his lack of concern with motivation are present in the fairy tale. He says:

> For the child, the laws of the world are the laws of the adult, and to violate the laws of the adult is to violate the laws of the world. Similarly, in the fairy tale, the laws of the world are located in the adult or authority figures -- the old kings, the crones along the roadside, the fairy godmothers, the mysterious husbands, and the like. To transgress their rules is actually to transgress the entire world order. Thus for the wife in "Blue Beard" to unlock the last and forbidden door is not merely an act of disobedience to her husband, but is as well a violation of that pervasive rule in the world of the fairy tale that insists that injunctions and other prohibitions be observed (p.34).

Given the evidence supplied by these authorities that motivation and circumstances are not considered in the world of the fairy tale is quite consistent with the child's conception of the world. For example, Piaget's subjects (1965) were told of a story in which one boy, mischievously playing with his father's inkpot, made a small blot on the table cloth, while in another story a boy, helping his father to fill the inkpot, made a big blot on the table cloth. The children judged as naughtier the boy who made a bigger blot. The children judged the actions in terms of their material results rather than in terms of the intentions behind them (p.122).

Similarly, in fairy tales, motivations and circumstances are not considered. Favat (1977) maintains:

> It does not matter that it is because his wife is dying that the husband in "Rapunzul" steals the lettuce from the witch's garden, the theft has angered the witch and the couple's first child must be forfeited. Similarly, the fact that there were not enough gold plates for all the fairies in the kingdom in "Sleeping Beauty" does not lessen the insult to the slighted fairy, and the young princess thus receives not only gifts but a curse as well (p.35).

Egocentrism in Child and Tale

Young children are egocentric. They live with the impression that their thoughts, aims, and desires are known and shared by those around them. Turning to the fairy tale, one finds that the relationship of the hero to his world is much the same as is the relationship of children to theirs. Bettelheim (1976) points out:

> Since the child is self-centered, he expects the animal to talk about the things which are really significant to him, as animals do in fairy tales, and as the child himself talks to his real or toy animals. A child is convinced that the animal understands and feels with him, even though it does not show it openly (p.46).

Just as children are situated at the centre of a universe, so also the hero of the fairy tale exists at the centre of his world. The events, though adverse in the beginning, join together in myriad ways and enable the hero to fulfill his desires. For example, in Perrault's version, Cinderella is delivered from adversity through her godmother's help. In Grimm's version, the hazel tree showers down fine garments upon Cinderella. In "The Golden Bird", the prince fails many times to find the golden horse and fails on many occasions to heed the warnings of the fox. Nevertheless, the fox forgives him each time and continually protects him from danger (Favat, 1977, p.37).

Animism in Child and Tale

Discussion of animism in children has shown that there are four types of animism in children. Favat (1977) maintains that all these types of animism found in children are present in fairy tales. He says that the type of animism in which consciousness is attributed to objects which can be active - objects which move of themselves or can be set in motion, is found in "Sweetheart Roland". Here the three drops of blood from the murdered girl's head speak with human voices.

> In answer to the stepmother's question "Where art thou?" the three drops of blood . . . answer: "Here on the stairs," "Here in the kitchen warming myself," and "Here in bed, sleeping" (p.31).

The type of animism connected with objects whose special function is to be in motion is found in "The Seven Ravens". In this story, the sister travels to the end of the world to seek release of her brothers.

> There she is rebuffed by the hot sun, which devours children, as well as by the dismal and dreary moon. The stars, however, befriend her. Sitting on their own special seats, one of them, the Morning Star, speaks and gives her a little bone which will open the mountain wherein live her brothers (p.31).

The type of animism in which consciousness is attributed to animals is most common in fairy tales. A large number of tales have speaking animals which have been transformed from humans to beasts. The examples are the frog in "The Frog Prince", the bear in "Snow White and Rose Red", the beast in "The Beauty and the Beast". There are many stories in which the animals are not enchanted humans but they can speak like humans. The examples are the cat in "Puss in Boots", the flounder in "The Fisherman and His Wife" and the wolf in "Little Red Riding Hood" (pp.31,32). See also Chapter II, pp. 19, 20 here.

Magic in Child and Tale

Favat (1977) points out that the magical relationship that exists in the child's conception of the world exists in the world of the tale as well. Just as objects, actions, thoughts, words and will can exercise magical influence over events in the child's world, so can they be found to exercise similar influence in the world of the fairy tale. For example, the magical influence of actions on events is found in the ability of the prince, through the action of kissing the enchanted princess in "Sleeping Beauty". The same can be seen in the ability of the enchanted swans in "The Swans", through the action of breathing on one another to restore themselves to their human forms.

Favat further points out that more often this type of magic appears in the tales in connection with a magical object; that is, the object is acted upon or some action is performed with the object and a magical occurrence results. This combined function of magic by action and magic by object appears in stories such as "The Tinderbox", where the tinderbox, upon being struck, produces the dogs that aid the soldier.

In "The Wild Swans", the throwing of nettle shirts over the enchanted swans returns them to human forms.

The magical relationship between thought and things can exist in the form of wishes. Characters wish for something to occur and their wishes are fulfilled. For example, Cinderella in "Cinderella" wishes at the tree and the white bird throws down to her whatever she wants. In "The Seven Ravens", the father who rashly wishes his sons were turned into ravens soon gets his wish fulfilled.

Magic by commandment is found in "The Table, The Ass and The Stick" - the sons command the table by means of the formula "Table be covered", the ass by "Bricklebrit", and the stick by "Stick, out of the sack". In "Cinderella" the young girl commands the hazel tree to dress her, saying:

> "Shiver and quiver, my little tree,
> Silver and gold throw down on me."

Just as animism, morality of constraint, egocentrism and magic characterize the world order of the fairy tale, so do they characterize the real world order as the child believes it to be. Thus, the child finds his own world represented in fairy tales. It is not difficult for him to believe in magical events and talking beasts in folk tales, since they are not far removed from his own beliefs in magic and animism.

Bettelheim (1976) points out that for the young child there is no clear line separating objects from living things. Whatever has life has life very much like our own. He is convinced that the animal understands and feels with him:

> The child expects the animal to talk the things which are really significant to him, as animals do in fairy tales and, as the child himself talks to his real or toy animals . . . since all that

> moves is alive, the child can believe that the wind can talk and carry the hero to where he needs to go, as in "East of the Sun and West of the Moon" (p.46).

Bettelheim further points out that in the animistic thinking of the child, even the stones are alive: to be turned into a stone in the fairy tales simply means that one has to remain silent and unmoving for a time. For the same reason, it is possible for the child to believe in heretofore silent objects beginning to talk, give advice, and join the hero in his adventures. Also, as the child believes that everything has a spirit similar to his own, just so he can believe that a man can change into an animal or vice versa (p.47).

Other Common Characteristics

Besides the appeal of its content, the form of the fairy tale also has a strong appeal for children. The length of the tale itself is appealing to children who have a short attention span. These tales are finished in a single sitting and thus enable children to achieve gratification quickly within an individual tale (Favat, 1977, p.53).

The brief introduction of fairy tales with minimum of distracting details catches the child's attention. The vigorous plots of the folk tale, full of suspense and exciting action, have an appeal for young children:

> Things happen in these stories with just the hair-raising rapidity that children yearn for in real life and rarely find . . . the heroes and heroines do things -- they ride up glass hills, slay giants who have no hearts in their bodies, outwit witches, get their rights from the north wind, or pitch an old witch into an oven she intended for them. Here are no brooding introspectionists but doers of the vigorous sort (Sutherland, 1977, pp.154, 159).

Conclusions in fairy tales satisfy children's eye-for-an-eye code of ethics and do not trouble their imagination. This is so because they include no harrowing details and because everything turns out to be well at the end. Evil is punished and good is rewarded.

The characters in fairy tales are clearly defined. They are marked by one particular attribute: cleverness or kindness, goodness or evil. These striking, permanent qualities of fairy tale characters appeal to children who are not yet ready for subtle character development (Brown, 1971, p.146).

The rhymes in fairy tales are most enjoyable for young children. Children at this age enjoy repetition of language particles.

> Rhythm is natural to the life of the child, and poetry being the most rhythmic use of language, satisfies this desire for rhythm (Brown, 1971, p.132).

Lewis (1967) maintains that children enjoy rhymes because they can be remembered and because, above all, they have a certain communal force: that is, they can be chanted in chorus (p.174). Sutherland (1977) also agrees that children enjoy rhymes. She writes:

> Children are a natural audience for folk material as is shown in the ways they use rhymes in their play, from the two-year-old murmuring nursery rhymes refrains to the older child engaging in intricate counting out games (p.159).

The foregoing discussion has attempted to show a number of principal characteristics of fairy tales are particularly appealing to young children at a certain stage of their development. Children's interest in fairy tales seems to peak between the ages of 5 and 8. After this age, children come to view the tales as improbable or impossible. However, as Favat (1977) points out, there is a resurgence

of interest in fairy tales around the age of 18 to 20 which seems to continue throughout adult life. Any concern for adult interest in fairy tales is outside the scope of this study. Whatever the reasons, the adult interest in fairy tales "never achieves the intensity of the child's fascination" (pp.56,57).

## CHAPTER V

## VALUE OF FAIRY TALES

Originally, fairy tales were probably not intended for children. They were tales to be passed on from one adult to another. Because of the simplicity of its structure and the depth of its emotional processes, the fairy tale has become established as a children's medium. Folk fairy tales are especially enjoyed in the primary grades. Although fairy tales were probably created for adults, it can be argued that children turned to them instinctively, because of their closeness to a child's psyche. Vallasekova (1974) says:

> With their indeterminate time factor: There was once a king, . . . their mysterious setting: In a far off land, . . . their use of types: Kings, princesses, magicians, etc. instead of individuals, their animation and personification of animals and their elements of fantasy, these folklore creations are very close to a child's mentality (p.27).

Fairy tales not only entertain children, but they may also enrich their inner life. They may play a major part in the development of a child's personality. They apparently do stimulate his imagination and help him to develop his intellect and clarify his emotions. They give full recognition to his difficulties, while at the same time they can suggest solutions to the problems which perturb him. Thus, the child develops confidence in himself and in his future.

> In all these and many other respects of the entire children's literature -- with rare exception -- nothing can be as enriching and satisfying to child and adult alike as the folk fairy tales (Bettelheim, 1976, p.5).

Fairy tales are most successful at enriching the inner life of the child because they start where the child is in his psychological and emotional being. Fairy tales, being simple and moving directly to the point, speak to the child in his own language, at his own level. Bettelheim (1976) points out:

> Fairy tales are unique, not only as a form of literature, but as works of art which are fully comprehensible to the child, as no other form of art is. As with all great art - the fairy tale's deepest meaning will be different for each person, and different for the same person at various moments in his life. The child will extract different meaning from the same fairy tale depending on his interests and needs of the moment. When given the chance, he will return to the same tale when he is ready to enlarge on old meanings, or replace them with new ones (p.12).

Many parents, teachers, and educators reject the fairy tale on the ground that it gives the child an unreal view of the world and misleads him as to the reality of present day life. However, the fantastic and the unreal need not be harmful or a source of confusion to the child. Kirkpatrick (1920) points out that the child compares the world of fantasy with his real world and through this contrast gets a better idea of reality (p.118). Chuckovsky (1965) expresses the same viewpoint. He says:

> (Fantasy) not only does not interfere with the child's orientation to the world that surrounds him, but, on the contrary, strengthens in his mind a sense of the real; . . . we can plant realism in his mind not only directly, by acquainting him with the realities in his surroundings, but also by means of fantasy (p.90).

Fairy tales do promise an enjoyable and enchanting escape from the humdrum of everyday life. But this does not mean that fairy tales are "escapist" simply because their world is fantastic one. According to W.H. Auden (1962), a work is escapist only if it claims to portray the real world but its portrait is false (p.214). The fairy tale,

however, never pretends to be a picture of the real world. Heuscher (1963) points out:

> As if to make sure that it speaks directly to the inner-soulworld, the fairy tale uses various devices to avoid confusing its own world with the outward reality, with the "daytime" world. This may be accomplished by the use of remote and fantastic settings, by the avoidance of specifications of time by means of resorting to expressions such as "once upon a time" or by using only the vaguest reference to the location of the plot: "near a big forest lived . . .". Occasionally a slightly bizarre terminating sentence such as "and if they haven't died they are still living", or a frankly odd and apparently incongruous ending such as "the story is ended, here runs a mouse, whoever catches it can make himself a big fur cap", underlines the separation of the fairy tale from the daytime world (pp.187, 188).

Fairy tales do not teach children to retreat into a "fantasy" world of wish fulfilment. A child does not long for fairy land in the same sense as he longs to be the hero of his basketball team. Rather, as Lewis (in Haviland, 1973) points out:

> Fairy land arouses a longing for he knows not what. It stirs him with a dim sense of something beyond his reach and far from dulling or emptying the actual world, gives it a new dimension of depth (pp.236,237).

Born of imagination, fantasy literature encourages imagination and creativity. Poskanzer (1975) says:

> Creativity can be thought of as the rearrangement of known elements into new combinations. Fantasy literature tells of the rearranging of real qualities, develops the idea and sense of the absurd, and allows the mind to try out new combinations of information and events in a non-threatening form (p.473).

Fairy tales do, indeed, provide rich fertile ground for ideas, learning experiences and concepts.

> Seen from the psychological point of view, the fairy tale has the same basis as playing and as the beginning of drawing, except that here, it is not muscular action that is called upon, but active fantasy and thought (Vallasekova, 1974, pp.28,29).

Most educators believe that it is important to start developing the imagination in early childhood. Chukovsky (1955) says:

> Fantasy is the most valuable attribute of the human mind and it should be diligently nurtured from earliest childhood (p.117).

Vallasekova (1974) points out:

> Without fantasy there can be neither science nor art, nor would there be any worldly wisdom or understanding. Realistic stories even if the child was able to understand them fully, would result in the basic human balance of imagination and artistic sensitivity being seriously inhibited (p.29).

The need for fantasy has been emphasized by Sutherland in her book Children and Books. She writes:

> Most children enjoy fantasy as a change from the here and now, as a breathing space in the serious process of growing up. It is a rare child who does not like some fantasies, and most children enjoy many of them. The probable reason is that they provide children with a flight into other worlds, incredible, exciting, satisfying. Fantasy frees children's own imaginations and helps them to face reality with more creativity and spontaneity of thoughts (Sutherland, 1977, p.235).

A serious attack on the fairy tales comes from those who say that fairy tales are too frightening for children. Here we should not confuse fear with childhood phobia, a pathological fear against which ordinary courage is helpless. Lewis states that these phobias cannot be controlled by literary means, but that if fear

> is the knowledge that he is born into a world of death, violence, wounds, adventure, heroism and cowardice, . . . let them at least have heard of brave knights and heroic courage . . . to help

> withstand their inevitable meetings with cruel enemies in the real world (Lewis in Haviland, 1973, p.237).

It is true that fairy tales offer up monsters and grim, terrible figures, but not only do the monsters and other terrible figures have their limitations, but the tales also offer immemorable comforters and protectors. Exactly what the fairy tale does is this, says Chesterton (1968):

> It accustoms him (the child) by a series of clear pictures to the idea that these limitless terrors have a limit, that these shapeless enemies have enemies, that these infinite enemies of man have enemies in the knights of God, that there is something in the universe more mystical than darkness, and stronger than strong fear (p.69).

Furthermore, it can be argued that children get a great sense of power, joy and accomplishment when they meet the monsters and ogres in fear and continue on to conquer that fear, whether that fear be conquered in the first, the second, or the third hearing of the tale. In conquering it, they acquire new courage and renewed confidence in their own ability.

Although fairy tales often contain acts of cruelty and horror, they do not play upon the details of these incidents. Huck (1976) writes:

> No blood drips from the raven's sister's hand when she cuts off a finger, not an "ouch" escapes her lips. The wolf is cut open so the six kids can escape, and the mother goat sews the stones into his stomach without any suggestion that the wolf is being hurt. Children accept these stories as they are - symbolic interpretations of life in an imaginary land of another time (p.171).

Despite any moments of fear, due to ogres and witches, and so on arising during the fairy tales, all is resolved in the end. The fairy tale itself defeats any fear in that the wicked are punished and good

triumphs over evil. Fairy tale endings are deeply satisfying to children. A world without rewards and punishments is a disordered and unjust world. Although some of the punishments might seem lacking in compassion to adults, children are naturally attracted to the law of retribution. It satisfies a child's yearning for order and justice when the wicked are punished and the good are rewarded. Children need to see inflicted punishment that fits the crime. If those who inflict the injury are not punished, Bettelheim (1976) says:

> The child thinks that nobody is serious about protecting him; the more severely those bad ones are dealt with, the more secure the child feels (p.141).

Another criticism against fairy tales is that they teach little about the specific conditions of life in modern mass society; these tales were created long before it came into being. True, on an overt level, fairy tales may teach little about the specific conditions of life in modern society, but more can be learned from them about the inner problems of human beings, and of possible solutions to one's predicaments in any society.

Fairy tales deal with basic problems of human existence; for example, the death of parents, desertion, the desire for eternal life. They teach that a struggle against severe difficulties in life is unavoidable -- but that if one does not shy away, but steadfastly meets unexpected and often unjust hardships, one masters all obstacles and in the end emerges victorious. For example, the wicked step-mother may release the child's terror when his or her own loving mother suddenly, out of frustration or fatigue, may transform into a frightening stranger. The advent of the fairy godmother reassures children that their own lost

loving parents will reappear and protect them; the triumph of the youngest son or daughter promises that one can hope to match the intelligence and success of an older sibling or, more deeply, of the giant and clever race of adults among whom the child feels powerless and inadequate and so on.

Fairy tales make a unique contribution to a child's moral education. They do not preach morality but the advantages of moral behaviour are conveyed subtly through implication only, not through abstract ethical concepts but through that which seems tangibly right and meaningful to the child. Suzzallo (in Hollowell, 1955) says:

> While the fairy tales have no immediate purpose other than to amuse, they leave a substantial by-product which has a moral significance. In every reaction which the child has for distress or humour in the tale, he deposits another layer of vicarious experience which sets his character more firmly in the mould of right or wrong attitude. Every sympathy, every aversion helps to set the impulsive currents of his life and to give direction to his personality (p.35).

The figures in fairy tales are not ambivalent (good and bad at the same time) as we can be in reality. A person is either good or bad - nothing in between. These polarities of characters permit the child to comprehend easily the difference between the two. He understands that there are great differences between people and that, therefore, one has to make choices about who one wants to be. The more simple and straightforward a good character, the easier it is for a child to identify with it and to reject the bad other. Thus, fairy tales help children to develop certain responses towards courage and honesty, faithfulness and honour (Bettelheim, 1976, p.9).

Amoral fairy tales show no polarization or juxtaposition of good and bad person. That is because they serve an entirely different purpose.

Such tales as "Puss in Boots" in which Puss arranges for the hero's success through trickery, and Jack, who steals the giant's treasure, build character not by promoting choices between good and bad, but by giving the child the hope that even the weakest can succeed in life (Bettelheim, 1976, p.10).

Fairy tales help children to grow in human understanding. In them they meet all manner and condition of men and women and when they are older, they will know them when they meet them. This is possible because:

> People in fairy tales behave pretty much as people do in real life. Some life by high principles, some are given over to evil ways; some are kindly in disposition, others practice meanness and persecution; some go adventuring, some stay at home. There are strong and weak people, honest and devious people, people with great intelligence, and many with little or none. And in fairy tales, each type, with the action that represents it, is brought to life objectively, emphatically and consistently (Duff, 1944, p.174).

Fairy tales heighten the particular ability of sharing someone's sorrows and joy through identification with the characters. The child aches with compassion for the prince or princess bewitched by an evil fairy and doomed to exist in some hideous form until rescued by love. They sympathise with Rapunzel and her poor blinded prince, and with Hansel and Gretel rejected by their parents and alone in an unfriendly world (Garvey, 1964).

Through identification with story characters the child can break through the narrow confines of his egocentric interests and feelings and thus acquires socialization skills. Having learned to distinguish the difference between justice and injustice through the behaviours of two

characters in a fairy story, he is in a much better position to conceive of his own behaviour and employ justice and fairness in his relations with other boys and girls (Colgan, 1965).

Last, but not least, fairy tales are invaluable as a preparation for an appreciation of literature in later life. A child cannot appreciate the meaning of great poets if he is unfamiliar with the mysterious forests, the enchanted hills, the solitary castle and the talking animals and birds of the fairy tales (Fenner, 1957, p.55).

Frye (in MacKinnon, 1963) also stresses the importance of folk tales for literature learning in later years. He maintains:

> Literature develops out of, or is preceded by, a body of myths, legends, folk tales, which are transmitted by our earlier classics. In our tradition the most important groups of these myths are the biblical and the classical, and it is essential to acquire some knowledge of both as early in life as possible. One reason for doing so is sheer convenience: these stories are so endlessly alluded to and commented on that one has no landmarks in literature without them. But the really important reason as far as literature is concerned is that there are only a certain number of ways (structural principles) in which stories can be told . . . All stories in literature are developments of fundamental fictional shapes which can be studied most clearly in myths and folk tales (pp.44,45).

Coody (1979) confirms Frye's viewpoint. She mentions:

> More and more modern educators are beginning to view the systematic study of folk literature as a necessary component of the young child's curriculum. It is now believed that high school and college students easily acquire an adequate understanding and appreciation of the great literature introduced at those levels if they have had the advantage of hearing folk tales in early childhood (pp.27,28).

# CHAPTER VI

## USING FAIRY TALES WITH CHILDREN

While primary grades children show great interest in fairy tales, this is also the age when most children cannot read stories on their own. It is, therefore, the responsibility of the teacher to present fairy tales to children. She can do so either by reading straight from the book or telling the story in her own words. A definite time should be set aside everyday for all children to listen to stories read or told by the teacher. This does not mean that children should only listen to fairy tales. Fairy tales as a genre of literature should receive due attention and should be given a prominent place in the literature curriculum for primary grade children.

While listening to stories will provide a source of enjoyment for young children and develop a taste and love for reading, challenging follow up discussions are essential if the story hour is to go beyond mere entertainment. Time should, therefore, be provided for in-depth discussions of stories. This would help develop an appreciation of literature. However, discussion is one way of sharing stories with children and it is not advisable to follow up every story with a discussion. Children need to share their stories through a variety of ways which might include discussion, or interpreting them through drama, art or music.

This chapter focuses on presenting fairy tales to children. These can be presented either through reading aloud or through telling. The techniques of reading aloud and of storytelling are described.

The various creative devices which the teacher can use to

enhance storytelling are also briefly discussed. These are: flannel board, chalk board, puppetry, prop stories. The follow up creative activities which can be used successfully with children to further enhance their appreciation and interpretation of stories are also described.

An attempt has been made to describe those creative activities which the author feels are suitable for use with fairy tales. These are: follow up discussion, dramatics (creative drama, puppetry, story theater), readers theatre, art and music. The layout of this chapter presentation is shown in Figure 2.

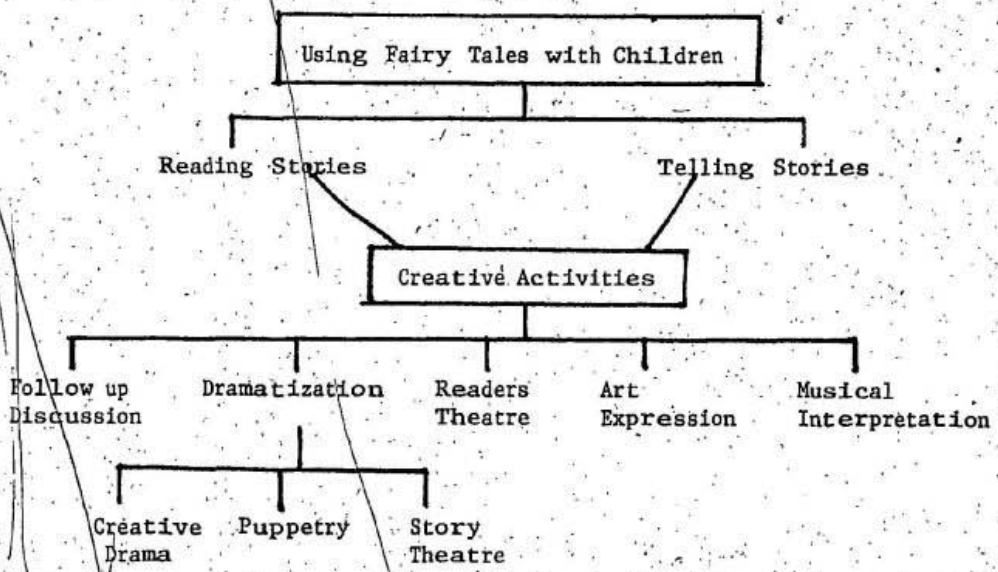



Figure 2: Using Fairy Tales with Children

Reading Aloud and Telling Stories

Fairy tales as part of a literature program can either be read aloud or told to children. The basic difference between reading and telling is that while the reader reads straight from the book, the story teller needs no book to present his material. Both reading and telling provide a source of pleasure and enjoyment to listeners. Speaking of the pleasure that comes from listening to stories, Bamman (1968) says:

> Among all of the skills of communication, there surely is none that has brought greater pleasure to children and adults alike than the skillful telling of stories. Our records of earliest civilization - cave drawings, hieroglyphs, pictographs - tell us that stories have been an integral part of the lives of people throughout the ages (p.97).

Besides providing listening enjoyment, hearing stories introduces children to the world of written language. They hear new vocabulary and varied language structures which help increase their fluency and flexibility in oral expression. Children also get a chance to hear an author's style and to identify with well delineated characters. Thus, they learn to appreciate literature and also develop a desire to learn to read books (Morrow, 1979; Smith, 1967, p.219).

Although reading aloud has value, fairy tales would best be told. The most important reason for telling a story is to create a more intimate experience between the story teller and the listeners. Putting a story into one's own words allows the teller to infuse the story with a personal involvement and immediacy that is not otherwise possible. Moreover, as the story teller does not use a book in presenting material to children, she is free to use her hands for

gestures that may tell more than the words can convey. With no book separating the reader from her audience, this more eye contact allows for greater facial expression and also enables the teacher to attend to the students. Story telling is a more flexible experience, in that a story may be modified to meet varying age levels, interests, and needs, and difficult words or concepts can be explained as the need arises within the context of the story. In short, a teacher can create more intimate contact and rapport through telling stories than through reading them. Kirkton (1971) says:

> Telling folk tales (rather than reading them) enriches and entertains in unforgettable ways. It calls forth involvement of its listeners and invites their active participation, and often times sparks various outlets of creative expression in art, music or drama (p. 242).

Fairy tales lend themselves especially well to telling. These tales come essentially from an oral tradition. Even when written down and printed they maintain their oral quality and have perfect form for narration. Sutherland (1977) comments:

> The form (of fairy tales) is invariable: a clear, brief introduction that launches the conflict or problem; the development or body of the story with a rising action, increasing suspense, and an exciting climax that marks the turning point in the story and a satisfying conclusion that winds up everything - problems, conflicts, and villains - all suitably disposed of (p.528).

Sawyer (1966) also stresses the same viewpoint. She says:

> It is largely because of the firmly knit, universal from of the folk tale that it is both easy to tell and easy to listen to - it has a universal structure, the language is simple and strong - it holds an unquestioned appeal - by the very fact of its universal character, to learn it, to interpret it, comes naturally to most of us (p.152).

She further states:

> I think, with a reasonable tolerance for exception, that all stories successful for telling must be built on this form, especially when the stories are told to young children (p.154).

Even though a wealth of material in folk tales is available, care has to be taken in choosing and presenting the stories. The important points that should be kept in mind in selecting and presenting fairy tales to children as agreed upon by many expert story tellers (Shedlock, 1951; Tooze, 1959; Sawyer, 1966) are briefly discussed.

Selecting the Story

It is important that the story selected should be suited to one's unique personality and style. Even the best and most competent professional story teller cannot tell every story. If the teacher does not like the mood or content of a story, she will be bored with it and this boredom will be transmitted to the listeners. On the other hand if the teacher chooses a story she herself enjoys, she will better interpret the characters and develop a sense of mood. Her enthusiasm about the story will be communicated to children and will help to draw an emotional reaction from them.

Another important factor in selecting tales for children is to keep in mind their ages, interests and past experiences. Young children like a lot of action, conflict, vivid characterization and a fairly fast paced story line that concentrates more on action and less on description. The characters should be interesting to children and ones with whom they can identify. Young children in kindergarten and grade I have short attention spans, usually not more than twenty minutes. They generally prefer short stories that can be completed in one sitting. Second and third graders are prepared for longer stories

Their attention span is usually half an hour or more.

Preparing the Story

To prepare a story for oral reading, it is important to read the story several times before presenting it to the class. This previewing will call attention to the general tone the author uses and also make one familiar with the personality traits of the story characters. This information will be used in interpretation of dialogue. Previewing will also enable one to emphasize particularly well written passages, reading dialogues as conversations and be able to look more frequently to see children's reactions. Choreographing, that is, marking the story to indicate voice inflections, pace and timing is a good way to create the effect one wants. For a sample of choreographed passage, refer to Baker (1977, p.44).

In preparing the story for telling, a story should not be memorized verbatim. It would be too time consuming. Secondly, a memorized story lacks the warmth, naturalness and spontaniety needed to give it life and breath. A practical and realistic plan as recommended by expert story tellers calls for memorizing only certain passages from a story and for learning the rest by scenes or pictures as they appear in the story. This plan is now described.

The opening or introduction to a story should be presented as close to perfect as possible so that it captures the interest and imagination of children. This part should be memorized. A typical folk tale introduction is brief and simple and usually presents the characters, time, the place and the conflict to be resolved. For example, the "Fisherman and his Wife" in Grimm Brothers opens like this:

There was once a fisherman and his wife. They lived together in a vinegar jug close by the sea, and the fisherman went there every day and fished and he fished and he fished.

Another characteristic of the folk tale is a regularly recurring phrase or verse. This repetition is one of the most appealing features in literature. The young children expect to hear a story's refrain repeated accurately each time. So this should also be memorized. For example, in the story of "Three Little Pigs" the regularly recurring phrase is:

I'll huff and I'll puff
and I'll blow your house in.

A well told conclusion is so vital to the success of a story that it should also be committed to memory. A good ending to a folk tale comes immediately after the climax. It is brief, concise, emphatic and conclusive. For example, the end of "Three Billy Goats Gruff" is:

Snip snap snout
This tale's told out.

To become fully prepared requires a thorough familiarity with the story and plenty of rehearsing. Although the story is not memorized, the chronological order of events and a knowledge of the characters should be completely assimilated by the story teller. To accomplish this, two techniques are extremely useful:

1. the creation in the mind of pictures of the characters, setting and events. Once the scenes of a story are clearly in mind, the story teller needs to practice it several times, paying special attention to the introduction, climax, conclusion and rhythmic refrain;

2. the preparation of an outline indicating significant events, which can be used for rehearsal and reviewing.

The outline of the story of "Three Billy Goats Gruff" is shown in Appendix A.

Preparing the Vocabulary

Vocabulary should be prepared in advance only if a lack of understanding of certain words seriously disrupts appreciation of the story. In general, it is better to leave the words alone and let the children encounter them within the meaningful flow of language. Johnson (1979) maintains:

> Struggling to understand a word encountered in the flow of meaningful language is the usual, normal and natural way that children acquire new vocabulary. It gives children practice in doing what they must do when they encounter unfamiliar words in their private reading. The only resources they have are their own abilities and the context (p.41).

The words or phrases whose understanding is crucial to the understanding of the story should be explained before reading. For example, the repeated refrain in the "Fisherman and His Wife" needs to be understood before the full story is comprehensible:

> Flounder, flounder in the sea
> Prythe, harken unto me.
> My wife, Ilsebil, must have her own will,
> And sends me to beg a boon of thee.

Similarly, a simple explanation of the work of a miller may be necessary if young children are to understand the reason for the wolf's visit to the miller in the story of "The Wolf and the Seven Kids".

Physical Conditions

It is important to create a warm, comfortable environment when reading or telling stories to children. Young children can be gathered together to form a semi-circle in a carpeted area of the room. The teacher should be seated on a low chair close to the children so that they can see and be seen at a comfortable eye-level. This would allow actual eye contact with each child from time to time and will make him feel that the story is being told especially for him. If the story is read from a picture book, the book should be held perpendicularly to one side so that the teacher can read the words and allow children to see the pictures at all times. A suitable seating plan is shown in Figure 3.

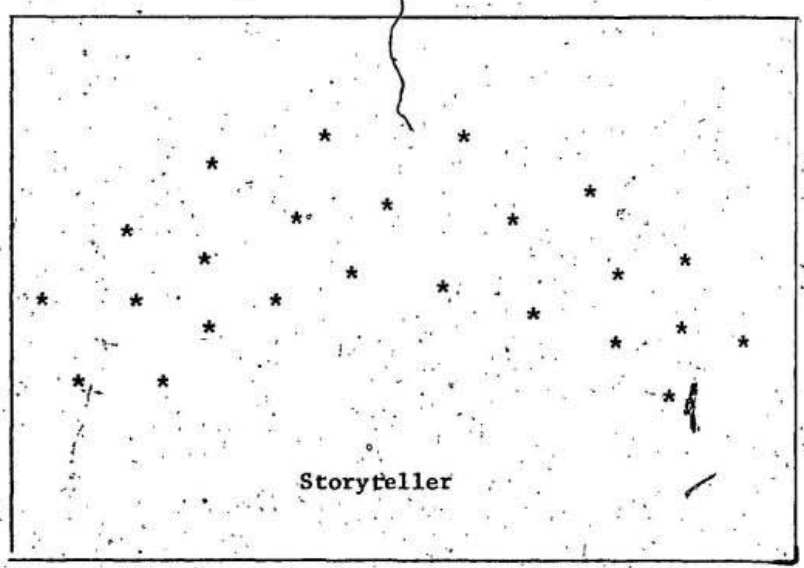



Figure 3: Seating Plan for Story Hour (Baker, 1977)

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Use of Voice

Effective use of voice is very important in both reading and telling stories to children. Colum (1968) feels that the voice of a good story teller has the ability to heighten the impact of a tale and make it remembered long after the telling. He writes:

> The human voice, when it can really charge itself with what it is in a poem or a story, more powerfully than any other agency, can put into our deeper consciousness those lasting patterns which belong to the deeper consciousness of the race (p.21).

Tone of voice should relate to what is going on in the story. The teacher should develop a sensitivity to words so that she feels the appropriate emotion when she sounds the words. The teacher's voice is an instrument for conveying an author's meanings and moods. Through changes in voice tone and pitch, the teacher can convey the author's meaning and express the varying moods that the story may evoke. Humour, mystery, disgust and other feelings can be communicated through the voice.

Few people would disagree with the statement that a story well told is more interesting than one that is read. The technique of story telling has been carried down since the times of early minstrels and has been employed effectively by the world's greatest teachers. Chambers (1970) points out:

> Jesus used it, as did Plato, Confucius, and other great philosophers and teachers. It is an instructional technique that did not belong only in the past. It has relevance to today's teacher, as well. The modern teacher who employs this technique as a teaching tool is using an ancient method that is as modern as tomorrow (p.43).

Story telling is considered an art but it is an art that can be

mastered. Any teacher can become a good story teller with practice and a little enthusiasm. Coody (1979) comments:

> Each potential story teller has a life time of experiences from which to draw, and with practice can become quite successful at using life's experiences to enrich and enliven stories (p.29).

Although much time, energy and effort has to be spent on learning stories, with patience and enthusiasm a teacher can gradually build up her repertoire of stories. Marie Shedlock (1951) advised her students to learn no more than seven stories a year; and she herself learned only three stories a year but learnt them to perfection. Moreover, the teacher should not be afraid to repeat her stories because children enjoy hearing them again and again.

Visual Aids

Story telling can be further enhanced by using appropriate visual adis. Some story tellers believe that the use of any visual aids detracts from the story. For example, Shedlock (1951) says:

> The appeal to the eye and the ear at the same time is of doubtful value, and has, generally speaking, a distracting effect: the concentration on one channel of communication attracts and holds the attention more completely (pp.13,14).

However, primary teachers who are in daily contact with children realize that such devices are often important ingredients in making the story more interesting and understandable. They make frequent use of the flannel board, pictures, puppets, cut-outs and other related objects to illustrate and dramatize a story (Coody, 1979, p.37). Paul Anderson (1964) also defends the use of visual aids to hold the attention of young children. He says:

> When Hans Christian Anderson entertained the children of Denmark with his stories, he used to cut out silhouettes in order to make his characters more vivid. In ancient China the story teller would cast shadows to illustrate the characters in his tales of magic and ancient ways. The modern movie cartoon favourites use a combination of silhouette figures and movement to hold attention. In the modern classroom, the flannel board provides the story teller with the means of achieving similar types of movement, magic and characterization (p.299).

Wagner (1972) favours a judicious use of visual aids to enhance story telling. She says:

> The purpose of using visual aids is to enhance the material being presented and thereby assist in the realization of story's objectives. The use of puppets, flannel board objects, chalk board artifacts and pictures are justifiable to the extent that they clarify a story's content, and do not detract from it (p.85).

The author also agrees that a judicious and appropriate use of visual aids would certainly enhance the meaning and understanding of a story. Suitable visual aids which can be used effectively in telling fairy tales to children are now described.

Prop Stories

The attention of young children can be captured by using "stuffed animals", toys and other articles that represent the characters and things in the story. These are displayed at the appropriate time when mentioned in the story. For example, three stuffed bears and a yellow haired doll can be used to tell the story of "Goldilocks and the Three Bears". Similarly, a Cinderella doll, magic wand and pumpkin could be shown at the right moments in the "Cinderella" story.

Puppets

Hand puppets and stick puppets representing different characters in the story may be used to tell stories with a lot of dialogues. The puppet may become the protagonist of the story. For example, a Cinderella puppet might tell her own story.

Feltboard Stories

To tell a feltboard story, the scenery or character of a story may be made of flannel, felt, pelon or paper, and strips of felt or sand paper may be pasted on their backs so that they cling to the flannel board. As one tells a story, the proper character is placed on the flannel board at the appropriate time. The story should be simple and have few characters. Every incident or scene need not be included. The accumulative tales in which one detail or character is added at a time are particularly effective when told through the feltboard story.

Chalk Talk

In chalk talk, the story teller actually draws the story while telling it. Chalk talks are most effective when done on a large chalkboard so that the story can keep going in sequence from beginning to end. When the story is complete, the children can see the entire episode in front of them. The same thing can be done with mural paper hung across a wall. The story teller uses crayons or magic markers for the drawing instead of the chalk. An overhead projector can also be used with a grease pencil to draw a story. The story should have a simple plot and a few characters. It is not necessary to draw everything in the story. About five pertinent pictures are enough and these should be drawn in one's own way. Simple stick drawings can also be

used effectively.

Creative Activities

The preceding sections have briefly described a few key skills that a teacher can develop and use as she presents stories to children. There are also many related creative activities that can be structured to enrich the literary experiences of children. The purpose of using creative techniques is to make literature an active experience. This helps excite the imagination and gets the children involved in the story. The active role that the child plays in his own learning has been emphasized by Piaget (1970). He maintains:

> Knowledge is derived from action. To know an object is to act upon and to transform it . . . to know is therefore to assimilate reality into structures of transformation, and these are the structures that intelligence constructs as a direct extension of our actions (pp.28,29).

In a similar vein, Huck (1976) says:

> Children learn more about books if they have an opportunity to interpret them in ways that are meaningful to them - through art or music activities, drama, talk, writing or creative games. To act upon the book is to know it, to make it a memorable experience (p.645).

To involve children actively in a literature program, various creative activities have been suggested by many children's literature specialists (Whitehead, 1968; Huck, 1976; Sutherland, 1977; Coody, 1979). These and creative activities provide children with an opportunity to reflect and think creatively about their literature experiences and then to express themselves as individuals. The actitivies that can be integrally tied to the literature program in fairy tales are:

- Follow up discussion
- Dramatization
- Readers Theatre
- Art
- Music

It is not necessary to interpret every story through creative activities. Based on children's reactions to particular stories, the teacher can decide which stories need further interpretation and which ones are better left alone. While some stories lend themselves well to creative dramatics and puppetry, others are more suitable for art or music activities. The activities mentioned above are discussed in the following paragraphs. A list of suitable stories for each particular activity is suggested alongwith.

Follow up Discussion

Follow up discussion at the end of a storytelling period is an important means of providing a rich learning experience. It can improve comprehension and heighten the appreciation of a story. However, this does not mean that every story should be followed by a discussion. Coody (1979) points out that:

> Some stories are so moving that any comment would be superfluous (p.13).

In fact, many stories are just for pure enjoyment and questions concerning the story are unnecessary. Whitehead (1968) maintains:

> Most stories are just for the taking, and questions will ruin the inner joy of the children if the story is plumbed further (p.107).

As such, each teacher should judge for herself which story would be followed by discussion. Also, the questions should not be imposed

but rather grow out of children's reactions to stories. Sutherland (1977) suggests:

> Stories that are worthy of discussion have clearly developed themes of enough depth to raise questions that will encourage children to draw on their own experiences, interests and concerns. Select material that allows children to discuss the humorous as well as the serious incidents in literature. Humorous incidents as well as serious ones can lead children to examine their own values (p.531).

Though the art of asking questions is an important teaching skill, research shows that ineffective questioning patterns frequently occur in classrooms, at all levels, from Kindergarten through High school. The first major study of classroom questioning was conducted in the U.S. in 1912 by Stevens. The findings disclosed that although 80% of classroom talk was devoted to asking, answering and reacting to questions, almost all the questions teachers asked demanded student responses that called only for memory and a superficial understanding of the material. Studies in 1970's also showed that vast majority of questions asked still required only rote memorization for a correct response (Davis and Hunkins, 1966; Davis and Tinsley, 1967).

Of course, questions that call for students to demonstrate their acquisition of factual knowledge are important in the study of literature. Through responses to such questions as who, what, where and when, teachers can assess whether students have gained a basic knowledge regarding who the characters are, what the sequence of events or plot is, what the setting is and where and when the story takes place. However, once this basic knowledge is gained, it is important to ask questions that demand a higher level of student thought.

Bloom (1956) indicates that there is a six level hierarchy of cognitive processes towards which teachers can address their questions. These six levels on which questions can be formulated are:

1. Knowledge - questions on this level require students to repeat information exactly as learned and they often begin with words who, what, where and when.
2. Comprehension - questions demand students to go beyond memorization and show that they have a basic grasp or understanding of the material. These questions often begin with such words or phrases as describe, compare, contrast, explain, put in your own words.
3. Application - these questions ask students to apply previously learned information to a new situation. They often begin with such words or phrases as apply, classify, choose, employ, write an example, solve.
4. Analysis - Analysis questions are exceptionally important in the study of literature particularly to the understanding of characterization. The questions ask students to identify motives or causes, draw conclusions or derive evidence. These are the questions that ask students why, or direct the students to support, analyse or conclude.
5. Synthesis - questions at this level call for the most creative thinking. They ask students to make predictions, produce original communications or solve problems that have more than one correct answer and begin with such words or phrases as predict, produce, write, design, develop, what happens if, how can we solve, and how can we improve.

6. Evaluation - these questions ask students to offer opinions and make judgements, and they begin with such words of phrases as judge, argue, validate, assess, which is better, and give your opinion.

To teach literature to children, it is essential that teachers ask questions on all levels of the taxonomy. The child's response to literature depends as much on what he brings to the active reading of a story as the content itself. There is no correct sequence of questions but Huck (1976) points out:

> Generally, it is recommended that the teachers ask questions that lead children back to the book rather than away from it, at least at first. Discussions that speculate about what might have happened or use the book as a springboard for value clarification seems to be more appropriate for the end of a discussion rather than the beginning. It is very difficult to get young children back to responding to the book if they are busy retelling a different version or relating the story to the time that they were as angry as John Thomas (p.729).

The six taxonomic levels described are designed to elicit cognitive responses from students. However, since the teaching of literature includes areas in the affective domain, such as the enjoyment and appreciation of literature, and the ability to feel empathy for others through vicarious experience, it is important to ask children affective questions as well as cognitive ones. An affective question is one that elicits emotional responses from students (Sadker, 1977, p.389).

Developed this way, the discussion can serve many purposes. It can give children opportunity to vent their feelings about a story. It can give children an insight into an author's purpose and character's

motives. Talking about incidents from a story can help children to develop empathy for people. In general, discussion questions should focus on characters, favourite parts of the plot, on the relationship between episodes, on the author's message, and an evaluation of a story. Some basic question types which can be adapted to many stories are suggested by Sutherland (1977). These are:

- Which story character did you like best? -Why? (evaluation, involvement)
- If you had been a character in this story, how would you have acted if . . .? (involvement, empathy, interpretation)
- Do you think . . . did the right thing when he/she . . .? (evaluation, valuing)
- How else could . . . have handled the problem about the . . .? What would you have done? (involvement, evaluation, valuing, interpretation)
- What important idea (or theme) did you find throughout this story? (interpretation of main idea, literary understanding of theme)
- What was the most interesting or exciting part of the story? (evaluation, involvement)
- How is this story like . . . (another story you know)? (literary judgement, interpretation)
- How did the author manage to make this so funny that you laughed out loudly? What techniques did he/she use? (literary judgement of style, involvement)

(p.536)

Organization for Discussion

Discussion can be arrried out either in large groups or small groups. A large group discussion requires a teacher to maintain a good pace, to encourage many children to participate, and to keep the discussion on the right line. The open ended question especially which asks for a personal involvement with some aspect of the story

or an interpretation based on personal experience, can permit almost every child to respond if enough time is given. The teacher must be able to acknowledge all responses but to keep children's focus on the question. Furthermore, she should remain neutral in conducting discussions and should not give her own opinion.

The teacher guiding the discussion has the responsibility of keeping it going by posing appropriate questions at the right moments or probing an answer more deeply. She should also know how long and when to pause so that students can reflect on the question and synthesize their thoughts to formulate a good answer. A greater time of waiting time leads to responses showing higher levels of thinking about the problem. A factual question may not require a very long wait for answers. It simply requires recalling information. A question regarding interpretation or evaluation, however, requires children to relate their own experiences to the story, and in the case of evaluation, to make judgements based on the synthesis. Children will need a longer time to answer these questions because they require an interaction with the story to formulate an answer and will usually require some reflection. While asking such questions, the teacher should try to pause at least three full seconds before probing with other questions to help children get at the important ideas (Sutherland, 1977, p.533).

Dramatization

Young children have an innate urge to imitate. In their free play, they invariably try on the roles of friends, parents and other grown ups. They even imitate animals as well as inanimate objects like aeroplanes and trains, etc. Imitation is a primary way through which

the child expresses, interprets, reacts and learns about the world. Ward (1960) notes:

> Drama comes in the door of every school with the child (p.1).

By building upon children's experiences with their love of dramatic play, teachers can move children to the dramatization of stories and thus make literature an active, living experience for them. Smith (1967) states:

> Most obvious of all the ways to live literature is through dramatization, which helps the children get the feel of the characters and sense the mood of the story (p.215).

Coody (1979) expresses the same viewpoint. She says:

> The use of dramatization as an educational procedure is unsurpassed as a means of helping children interpret and understand literature (p.45).

Sutherland (1977) agrees. She says:

> Dramatic activities provide marvellous opportunities for children to interact with literature (p.535).

Stories become more real to children as they identify with the characters through drama. Through identification with characters who are alone, unhappy, or scorned, etc., the child gains new insights and understandings of human behaviour and becomes more sensitive to the needs of others. Thus, dramatization helps children to get the feel of the characters and sense the mood of the story. The greatest value of drama, however, lies in the process of doing it, the experience itself. The three forms of dramatization which are suitable for use with fairy tales are: creative dramatics, puppetry, and story theatre. These are discussed briefly.

Creative Dramatics

Creative dramatics may be defined as play-making jointly planned and executed by children and their teacher. There is no written script and no memorization of lines involved. Dialogue is improvised and extemporaneous. Very few costumes or props are used. The entire production depends on creative imagination and spontaneous play. However, children who participate in creative dramatics do need certain technical skills. They must be able to recall the sequence of episodes in the plot; to interpret an author's characterization so as to create real characters and to use vocal ability and body gestures. Children can learn these skills with guidance from the teacher.

Selecting the Story

The folk fairy tales with lively action, strong characterization and plenty of dialogue are well suited to creative dramatics.

Preparation and Presentation

The teacher who guides a creative dramatization has many things to keep in mind. First she should set the mood for the drama by planning warm up activities that will prepare children to move freely and speak easily. A simple warm up activity is pantomiming favourite animals while classmates try to guess what they are. Or else the children can plan the role of characters or pantomime small portions of a scene in order to understand and feel a character more deeply. For example, they can pretend that they are the evil witch from "Snow White" and pantomime standing before a mirror to ask the question, "Who was the fairest in the land?": or the scene in which Goldilocks comes into the bears' house and tastes the porridge. Once a mood for drama has been

set, the chosen story should be told to children.

Next, the teacher should help children to identify the scenes they will need to dramatize and write them on the board. Taking one scene at a time, the children should be helped to break it down into a sequence of smaller actions, thinking of characters who will be needed and the action that is involved. It is important to discuss the story characters -- how they look, how they act, and even what they think. Let all the students pantomime the characters before proceeding to the dramatization of the scene. Children should be given a chance to colunteer for the parts they wish to play. After characters have been discussed and progression of the plot has been reviewed, children should be given some time to rehearse and work out their dramatization in a private place. They should be encouraged to create their own dialogues they think are natural for these characters. The audience members should be prepared to look for good things in the performance and also for some things that they think could be changed in order to improve the quality of the production.

When children have played a scene (or sequence of scenes), they should be engaged in discussion of the performance to help them evaluate the effectiveness of characterization and dialogue. Following this discussion, the scene may be replayed by the same group of children or by another group. As far as possible, the whole class should get the opportunity to take part in the play.

Suitable Stories for Creative Dramatics

1. Goldilocks and the Three Bears
2. Three Little Pigs

3. Three Billy Goats Gruff
4. Jack and the Bean Stalk
5. Sleeping Beauty
6. Fisherman and His Wife
7. Rumpelstiltskin
8. Hansel and Gretel
9. The Frog Prince
10. Snow White and Rose Red
11. The Wolf and the Kids
12. Rapunzul
13. Cinderella
14. Red Riding Hood

Story Theatre

Story theatre is a kind of dramatization in which there is more emphasis on pantomime rather than on formal acting with dialogues. The narrator reads or tells the story while the actors pantomime the action. Inanimate objects like a tree or a house are also represented by the players along with the animal and human characters.

Selecting the Story

Since children will play characters through pantomime only, selections should provide clear distinctions among characters that can be shown easily, through large body movements. The accumulative plot in folk tales works well for story theatre especially with young children who need a fairly simple plot structure. Stories such as "The Three Billy Goats Gruff" and "Three Pigs" are suitable for younger children.

A more elaborate folk tale plot, such as "The Bremen Town Musicians" can be great fun for older children.

Preparation and Presentation

The teacher should first read aloud or tell the story to be dramatized. Next the children should be helped to identify the characters, both animate and inanimate, and decide how they would pantomime each character. Once the characters' actions have been decided, the story plot should be reviewed with the children and they should be given some time to practice actions they plan to use for the pantomimes. As in creative dramatics, no props or costumes, etc. are required. The teacher can read or tell the story as the actors pantomime it. A child may also serve as a narrator especially if the story is read.

Suitable Stories for Story Theatre

1. Three Little Pigs
2. The Three Bears
3. Three Billy Goats Gruff
4. Red Riding Hood
5. Cinderella
6. Sleeping Beauty
7. Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs
8. Tom Tit Tot
9. Jack and the Bean Stalk
10. Bremen Town Musicians

Puppetry

Puppetry is another form of play making that provides experiences in interpreting literature for young children. Schmidt (in Sebesta, 1975) says:

> Place a puppet on the hand of a child and things begin to happen. He or she will wriggle the puppet and speak for it or to it, assuming a voice or accent other than their normal one. These spontaneous reactions springing from the dynamics of puppetry can be used creatively to motivate children to read, discuss, enact, create and enjoy literature (p.487).

The art of puppetry is very ancient and is an effective way of expressing oneself. As in other forms of drama, the goal is to produce a unified visual and auditory effect that will effectively show the plot and the characters, but, above all, it should reflect the mood of the story accurately. A well played puppet show will extend children's appreciation of the stories and make literature a more memorable experience for them.

Puppetry is particularly valuable for shy or timid children who find it difficult to express themselves in creative drama. However, since the puppeteer is not in view of the audience, the voice becomes extremely important as the means of creating the story interpretation.

Activities involving puppetry provide an outlet for different kinds of creativity. Children not only participate in drama but construct the puppets as well. As such a great deal of imagination will go into dressing and decorating puppets and expressing their characters through the puppets' features (Sutherland, 1977, p.550).

Selecting the Story

In selecting stories for puppetry, one should keep in mind that

action is important. Conflict is also desirable though it is not necessary. The number of characters should not be more than five or six and the characters should contrast enough to make the production interesting. The use of puppets tends to make the characters flat, often limiting them to such strong emotions as anger, fear or fury. Folk tales with their relatively flat characters, simple plots, lively dialogues, much action, a conflict to be resolved, a rousing climax and a satisfactory ending, make them ideal for puppets' dramatization (Sutherland, 1977, p.550). Coody (1979) also feels that folk tales are best suited to puppetry. She says:

> The old folk tales with their humanism, their lively plots and realistic themes, are undoubtedly the best sources of material for puppetry. Economy of events and characters in the tales make puppet construction and staging relatively simple. The repetition and rhythmic language offer added appeal (p.53).

Take, for example, "The Three Billy Goats Gruff". In this story there is action consisting of three similar conflicts between the goats and the troll. The progression is easy to follow because of the order in which the goats enter the story -- small to large -- and the ending is easy to remember. The plot structure and the small number of characters make it a good story for puppet production. Since the preparation of puppets is so time consuming, it is important to select stories which the children will want to repeat.

Preparation and Presentation

After choosing a story for the production, it should be read to children, asking them to listen first for the characters they will need to represent by puppets. Children should be involved in a discussion

so that they identify the characters and talk about the personality of each; whether that character's actions are good or bad, whether the character is happy, sad, angry, funny, etc.

The next step is to plan what puppets will be used. If the teacher wants to involve children in the selection of puppets, several different types of puppets should be shown to them. When the puppets have been made, children should be guided in a review of the story in preparation for the show. The review should focus on identification of key episodes which can be portrayed by puppets and the sections of the story which can be told by the narrator. Written scripts are not necessary. When dialogue is created by the children, only one child is needed to operate the puppet and supply the voice. If students read dialogue from the story, they will have to work in pairs, one child reading and the other operating the puppet. Huck (1976) recommends that children should "play out" stories before working with their puppets. She says:

> Playing the story creatively will allow the child to identify with the characters before becoming involved with the mechanical manipulation of the puppet (p.671).

Setting

The kind of setting needed in a story should also be considered. For example, in the "Three Billy Goats Gruff" the necessary additions to a bare puppet stage would be the bridge and a hill with green grass.

Puppet Stage

A table may be used as a stage by turning it on its side or by leaving it upright and covering it with a sheet, the children crouching

out of sight behind it. Another kind of puppet stage can be made by extending a sheet or a large piece of cardboard across a doorway to conceal the actions of the puppeteers.

Puppet Construction

There are a variety of imaginative puppets that are so simple to make that even very young children can be involved in their creation. Following are brief descriptions of puppet types which are easy for primary children to make and handle. The diagrams of these puppets are shown in Appendix B.

1. Ball Puppets

Either a hollow rubber ball or a styrofoam ball may be used to construct a ball puppet. A hole must be cut or a depression hollowed out that is large enough for the puppeteer's index finger. Painted or glued felt pieces can be used to make features on a rubber ball, and coloured thumb tacks may be used for making features on the styrofoam ball puppet. The puppet's costume can be made by draping a handkerchief or similar piece of material over the puppeteer's hand and twisting a rubber band over the third finger and thumb.

2. Fruit and Vegetable Puppets

Fruit and vegetable puppets are created by inserting sticks into carrots, potatoes, turnips, apples, or oranges. Features can be hollowed out or pasted on, or such items as thumb tacks, pins, or paper reinforcers may be used. For costume, the stick can be pushed through a small hole in a handkerchief before it is placed inside the fruit or vegetable. Although these puppets are perishable, they are great fun to make and last for several days.

3. Cylinder Puppets

A 3-inch section is cut from a tube of paper towelling to form the cylinder puppet. Hair, features, and clothing can be drawn or painted or pieces of felt, yarn, and coloured paper can be glued in place. When the child inserts his or her index and third finger inside the cylinder, the puppet moves and bends forward.

4. Stick Puppets

Pictures of people, animals, machines, furniture and toys cut from magazines or children's art work can be pasted on thin cardboard and then cut out again. These sturdy shapes are then taped to a stick or a plastic drinking straw and when the child hidden behind the screen or stage moves the stick, the puppet appears to glide unassisted through space.

5. Paper Bag Puppets

A paper bag puppet is made by drawing or painting the face of a person or an animal on the folded end of a closed paper bag. The upper part of the mouth is drawn on this folded end; the bottom part of the mouth is drawn on the actual body of the bag with fingers inside the folded end. When the fingers move up and down, the puppet's mouth opens and closes.

6. Box Puppets

To make a box puppet, two small boxes are taped together, and the face is drawn or painted on the upper box, with the mouth divided between the upper and lower box. The child's fingers go in the upper box, the thumb in the lower one; as the fingers and thumb move apart and together, the puppet's mouth opens and closes.

7. Sock Puppets

To make a sock puppet, an oval cardboard 3 by 5 inches is inserted into the foot of the sock as an innersole extending from the toe to the heel. The cardboard is then folded across the centre forming the upper and lower jaws of the puppet. The child places his or her hand inside the sock with the fingers above the top fold of the cardboard and the thumb under the bottom fold. As the fingers and thumb are brought together and then apart, the puppet's mouth opens and closes. Features, and clothing may be made by pasting on coloured paper or felt (Sadker, 1977, pp.396, 397).

Suitable Stories for Puppetry

1. The Three Little Pigs
2. The Three Billy Goats Gruff
3. Goldilocks and The Three Bears
4. The Ginger Bread Boy
5. The Wolf and the Seven Little Kids
6. Little Red Riding Hood
7. Hansel and Gretel
8. Jack and the Beanstalk
9. Rapunzel
10. Rumpelstiltskin
11. Bremen Town Musicians
12. Cinderella

Readers Theatre

Readers Theatre is a creative art form which is highly successful with young children who have learned to read well. A story is divided in parts, so that one reader is assigned the narration while other readers handle the dialogue of each of the characters. The narrator provides the description that cannot be handled through dialogue and serves as a bridge between dialogue sections so that the plot moves along clearly. The reading is done in a relaxed and natural manner. The readers do not attempt to become characters through dramatization but merely read each character's lines. A model performance of the Readers Theatre by a scene from the story "The Cock, The Mouse, and the Little Red Hen" is shown in Appendix C.

The chief purpose of Readers Theatre is to increase the understanding and appreciation of literature on the part of those who participate through performing or through witnessing the performance. The division of story into parts can help point up aspects of certain pieces of literature, such as the difference between characters and narrators in stories. Knowledge concerning the basic ingredients of a story -- point of view or position of the narrator in the story, characters, plot, setting and dialogue -- can be enhanced when the narrative is divided into parts and read aloud by a group of students. Besides, a judicious assignment of parts to be performed will enable the low achieving student to handle material with his ability and thus afford him the chance to succeed along with the more adept reader. It also strengthens both reading and listening skills. However, the most important function of Readers Theatre is to provide sheer enjoyment to children.

Selection of a Story

The story should have good characterization and a style that reads aloud comfortably. There should be enough characters to make the reading interesting but probably not more than five or six for a smooth production. Coody (1979) suggests the following points should be kept in mind while selecting stories for Readers Theatre in the primary classroom:

1. The characters should have distinguishing features and personalities.
2. The language should be rich, rhythmic and colourful.
3. The selection should provoke laughter and surprise, wonder and imagination.
4. There should be good storyline with an element of conflict and suspense.
5. The material should be easy to read and should have a great deal of dialogue.
6. The selected material should require a minimum of rewriting.

(pp.60,61)

It appears from the above mentioned points that any material suitable for storytelling is also good for Readers Theatre. For example, "Three Billy Goats Gruff", "The Three Little Pigs", "Cinderella", and the "Bremen Town Musicians" can be easily adapted for Readers Theatre.

Preparation and Presentation

Each reader should be thoroughly prepared. The children who are going to interpret the story must choose the character parts they will play. When character parts have been decided the readers should be encouraged to become familiar with the whole selection so that they identify the themes to be emphasized and are aware of the unique

qualities of the author's style. Each reader should then get to know the character he is going to play and decide how that character looks, acts and talks. The children should then be given some time to practice their parts. The narrator should be a strong reader. In fact, in primary grades, the teacher can read the narrator's part, cuing children if they have trouble following the format.

No stage is required for the performance. The readers can either sit on low chairs and rise to read their parts or they can remain standing before the audience throughout the performance. The narrator should face the readers as well as the audience. A diagram showing a suitable seating plan for Readers Theatre is given in Figure 4.

Suitable Stories for Readers Theatre

All stories that are suitable for story telling to children are equally suitable for Readers Theatre. As such, no special list of stories is provided here.

Art Expression

By nature, all young children have a creative urge. They are imaginative, eager and original. Art expression allows children to express their feelings and ideas in their own way and thus experience a profound sense of relief to their creative urge. As Nancy Larrick (1963) writes:

> Creative activities turn dormant buds into blossoms. Any child or adult expands as he realizes that he is expressing himself in his own way (p.147).

Art can be used effectively to support and enhance stories.

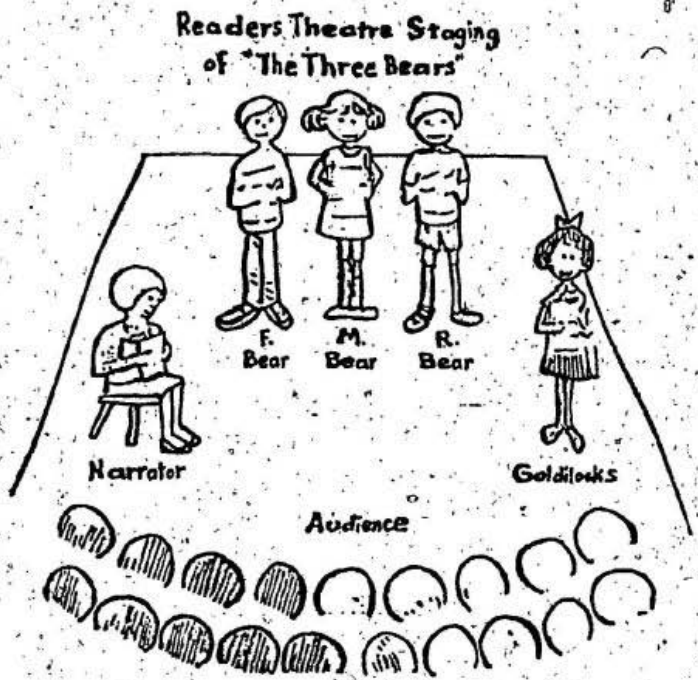



Figure 4: Seating plan for a Readers Theatre (Coody, 1979, p. 61).

Creative art literature experiences occur in the classroom when children are moved by a good story well told or read aloud. In the words of Huck (1976):

> Exciting stories, sensitive descriptions of beauty, and characterization are the stuff of the creative environment that motivate children's responses in art activities (p.646).

Children should be given many opportunities to express their feelings and reactions to stories through varied art activities and media. Sufficient time and space should be provided to allow for free experimentation with the materials. True creativity occurs only when children are free to select art activities and are free to express themselves.

Children can express their feelings about settings and characters through art work of many kinds. A variety of art activities will add zest to daily routine. Artistic interpretation of a story requires the child to evaluate the most exciting or interesting parts of the book and to select those details which seem important and necessary. The child thus becomes involved in interpreting the story and makes it a memorable experience (Huck, 1976, p.646).

The teacher's role is to design a rich environment for creativity by providing materials as well as by challenging children's thinking. Huck (1976) suggests that teachers can help children think about their stories by asking such questions as:

- What would be the most appropriate material for you to use for your pictures?
- What colours can you see while thinking of the story?
- How will you portray the main character? How old is he or she? What does he wear?

- Where does the story take place? When did it take place? How will you convey the setting of the story?
- What do you think is the most exciting, the funniest, the saddest incident?
- Does the story make you think of anything in your own life?
- What do you think happened after the end of the story?

Such questions might well encourage children to go beyond the literal representation of a scene or character to create a new aesthetic visual form (Huck, 1976, p.646).

Folk literature lends itself well to art activities. Coody (1979) writes:

> Folk literature of all types is unsurpassed as a catalyst for creative activity. Elements of folk tales, myths, legends, and fables consistently appear in the spontaneous writing and painting of children. Adults who work with children should not fail to share their knowledge of folk literature with the children and every experience with literature of this type needs to be accompanied by opportunities for the children to give personal expression to the story (p.98).

Suitable art activities which can be used with folk/fairy tales are presented in the following paragraphs.

Easel Painting

Easel painting is always a ready outlet for art expression. The easel should always stand ready in the classroom so that children can use it whenever they feel an urge to create a picture. Plenty of paper, cut to fit the size of the easel, should be made available. A large twelve inch brush is needed for each colour of tempera paint being used so that the colours do not mix. The paint should be thick enough so that the brush can carry a full load of paint. A child may like to paint a character, scene or event from a story.

Dioramas and Table Displays

A diorama is a three dimensioned setting made by arranging objects or figures in front of a scenic background. This technique can be adapted for children's illustrations of scenes from literature. A large cardboard carton placed on one side can serve as a background for the setting. Clay models or paper cutouts can be placed in the foreground of the setting. Plastic wrap placed over the open side will protect the scene. Table scenes and models help children recall incidents in stories. In creating dioramas and table displays every part should be made by children as commercial figures or objects tend to cheapen the display and also lessen the involvement of children.

Murals

A story can be expressed in mural painting very well. Themes, characters and settings of favourite stories may provide the impetus for the creation of cooperatively planned murals. Before the children begin a mural, the teacher should discuss with the children and decide upon the theme to be used, the scenes or characters to be portrayed, the techniques or medium to be employed, the size of the mural, and the contribution of each student to the mural. It should be brought to the attention of the children that a mural is somewhat like a giant painting and requires similar compositional considerations. Children should look for varied sizes of objects and figures of varied heights.

A variety of material can be used for murals. Crayon drawings may be cut out, pinned in place, and then glued or stapled to a large sheet of wrapping paper. This type of assembled mural is made easily and quickly. Chalk and tempera paint is effective in creating large murals. Chalk, paint, crayon and other materials may also be combined

in making murals. A collage mural can be made of yarn, various scraps of paper, seeds, twigs, cloth, bits of sponge for trees, wire, ribbons and so forth.

Planning these murals provides the children with the opportunity for discussing themes, characters, and types of illustrations. Through such discussions, children grow in their appreciation of literature and in their ability to solve problems of construction and organization.

The events in one story can be illustrated in a mural. For example, - a mural of "The Three Bears". A mural may also represent a synthesis of children's favourite characters from fairy tales. For example, "Cinderella, "Red Riding Hood", "Jack and the Beanstalk", etc.

Collage

A collage is made by gluing materials of different textures and shapes onto a flat surface such as paper, wood or cardboard. The collage materials may consist of coloured poster or construction paper, seeds, rice, buttons, multicoloured tissue paper, ribbon, cotton and wood shavings. Story characters and scenes make good subjects for collage projects. The collage technique is especially good for those children who think that art must always be realistic representation. A collage lends itself to abstract and semi-abstract design.

Frieze

Frieze is a long narrow strip of paper on which children can paste their objects and figures. The characters and objects from a story are sketched, painted, and cut out by children and then pasted on. Accumulative tales in which animal characters or events are added one at a time, up to the climax, are especially good for frieze construction.

For example, the "Ginger Bread Boy", "Three Little Pigs", "Three Billy Goats Gruff", etc.

Mosaic

Children can make a picture of their favourite story character employing the mosaic technique. Simple materials such as coloured paper, cardboard, egg shells, pebbles, tile, seeds, linoleum or bits of wood are cut into small pieces and are used to make a mosaic design. The small pieces of material are called Tesserae. Tesserae should not be cut exactly the same size. It would be helpful if the paper strips, originally cut, vary in width from 1/4 to 3/4 inches. These may then be cut in squares, rectangles or triangles.

Children should first select a favourite story character and draw its shape in bold outline on a piece of heavy cardboard or thin wood. The shape is then filled in with glued 'tesserae' using one 'tesserae' at a time. The background is added last. Some sample murals, collages, friezes and mosaics made by children are shown in Appendix D.

Suitable Stories for Art Work

1. Three Little Pigs
2. Three Billy Goats Gruff
3. Little Red Riding Hood
4. Goldilocks and The Three Bears
5. Puss in Boots
6. Sleeping Beauty
7. Snow White and The Seven Dwarfs
8. Rapunzel
9. Jack and The Beanstalk
10. Cinderella

Musical Interpretation

The use of background music with stories would help children appreciate the mood and tone of the story. To create a music story, the teacher should select a story with a limited number of well delineated characters which appear throughout the episode, such as "The Three Little Pigs", or "Hansel and Gretel". To illustrate the use of music with "The Three Little Pigs", the teacher should first select a melody that seems appropriate to suggest the pigs. She should then play this melody each time the pigs are mentioned in the story, or an original tune can be created to represent the pigs and the wolf in the story. Something bright, short, and quick might sound like pigs. Similarly, a tune for the wolf's huffing and puffing and a tune to represent straw and stick houses falling down can be created.

Teachers who do not play an instrument can also create a music story. Through experimentation with such percussion instruments as drums, cymbals, triangles, xylophones and recorders, they can produce appropriate sounds to depict particular characters and scenes in the story. An alternative approach is to select pieces of recorded selections to be played during the telling of stories that seem appropriate for the parts of the story being told. Classical selections are often best for this. Adventures in Music, a record library for elementary schools by RCA Victor, is a series of long playing records containing short classical selections of all moods that can go along with different pieces of literature (Morrow, 1979).

The teacher can also use the music interpretation of fairy tales available in disc recordings and tape recordings. In these recordings, the entire story is told in music and listening to them will greatly

enhance children's appreciation of various moods and tones in the story. The musical interpretation of "The Three Little Pigs" is shown in Appendix E.

In imparting to children a clear understanding of the themes, moods, tone and emotions depicted by music stories, the teacher should first familiarize them with the story on which the music is based. That means the musical interpretation should follow a well told or well read story. Once the interest of children has been aroused by listening to a story, they are prepared to listen to the disc or tape recording of the music. Before playing the music, however, the teacher should discuss with children as to how the music will sound in interpreting specific scenes and events in the story. This will help children to concentrate and listen attentively to the sequence of scenes and events described in the music. After listening to the music, the teacher can help children identify various techniques used to depict characters, scenes and events in the story by asking such questions as:

- Does the music help you to "see" the story in your mind's eye?
- Which sections of the music are played loudly and which sections of the music are played softly, and why?
- Which sections of the music sound lively and which ones sound sad?

Such experiences with music stories will help children to create their own music stories using percussion instruments.

Suitable Stories for Musical Interpretation

1. The Three Little Pigs
2. Three Billy Goats Gruff
3. Goldilocks and The Three Bears
4. Little Red Riding Hood

5. Hansel and Gretel

6. Cinderella

7. Beauty and the Beast

8. Sleeping Beauty

# CHAPTER VII

## CONCLUSIONS

There appears to be sufficient evidence to support that children between the ages of five and ten are most interested in fairy tales and interest becomes most intense between the ages of six and eight. A child likes fairy tales because they are very close to his own psyche. A closer look at the nature of children and the nature of fairy tales reveals that there are many similarities between the characteristics of children and the characteristics of fairy tales. Thus, children can find their own needs, desires and wishes fulfilled through fairy tales.

Many educators and teachers feel that fairy tales are unrealistic and untrue and as such are harmful to children's growth and development. However, this study shows that fantasy need not be considered harmful but, rather, should be thought helpful in the growth and development of young children. Fantasy develops creativity and imagination. Through it children can better understand themselves as well as others.

Moreover, fairy tales form the very foundations of literature, as they possess many of the qualities of good literature. The simple form and style of fairy tales is easy for children to comprehend.

Both our knowledge of the literary interests of the children and our knowledge of child development suggests that during primary grades the emphasis could be on fairy tales. However, the age at which fairy tales most appeal to children and are essential to their growth and development is also the age when most children cannot read fairy tales themselves. Most editions of fairy tales are published for a much older group of children who can read the tales themselves. It is,

therefore, the responsibility of primary teachers to introduce fairy tales to children. Although the teachers can read the stories to children straight from the book, it is best to "tell" the tales as much as possible. A story becomes more alive and interesting through telling. Fairy tales are especially suitable for telling as they come from an oral tradition. Story telling can be further enhanced by using various creative devices, such as puppets, flannelboards, chalk talk, and so on. But the teacher should be careful not to use these devices just for the sake of using them but should use them only if a particular device helps in further clarifying a point or enhancing the interest of the story.

Literature is a matter of reflection and participation. As such children need to participate actively in literature. Through involvement with such activities as discussions, dramatization, art and music, children will be able to act out their feelings and responses and thus develop a better understanding of themselves and of others. However, the teacher should be careful in choosing appropriate activities for her children. While some tales lend themselves best to creative dramatics, others may be more suitable for musical interpretation. Also, it is not necessary to follow each story with some activity. Some stories are much too personal and private to children and they are better left alone.

Taking cues from children's responses to a story, the teacher can decide whether it needs further interpretation and which activity would be most suitable for it. The purpose of using activities should be to allow children to participate actively and creatively and thus develop an appreciation of characters, theme, plot, mood and tone of the story. Children will experience these literary qualities and

apprehend them intuitively and concretely. No attempt should be made to verbalize definition of these terms in primary grades.

It is hoped that the various creative activities suggested in this thesis will help teachers to plan suitable follow up activities for particular fairy tales. These activities may also serve as models for planning similar experiences for children with stories in other areas of children's literature.

The author feels that similar studies should be carried out in several other genres of children's literature: myth, modern fantasy and realistic fiction.



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# APPENDIX A

OUTLINE OF

"THE THREE BILLY GOATS GRUFF"

I. Introduction

Once upon a time there were three billy goats gruff who were to go up to the hillside to make themselves fat and the name of all three was gruff.

II. Development

a. Troll under the bridge

b. Youngest goat's crossing

i. Goat's refrain: "Trip, trap!"

ii. Troll's refrain: "Who's that tripping my bridge?
Now, I'm coming to gobble you up!"

c. Second goat's crossing

III. Climax

a. Third goat's crossing

b. Destruction of troll

IV. Conclusion

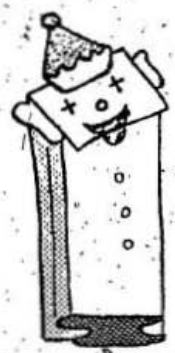
a. Goats reach the hillside

b. Snip snap snout
This tale's told out.

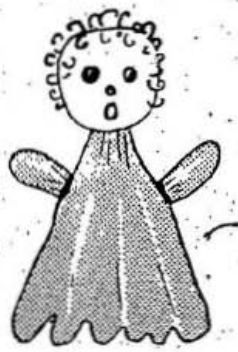
(Coody, 1979, pp. 32, 33).

APPENDIX B

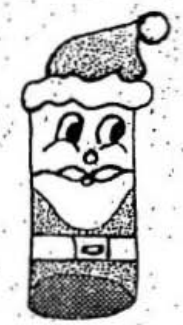
## PUPPET DIAGRAMS



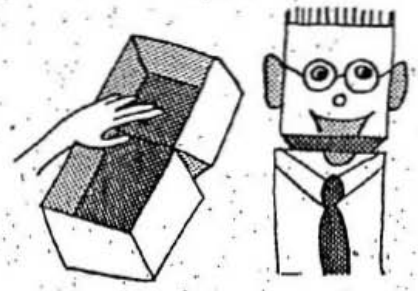
Sack Puppet



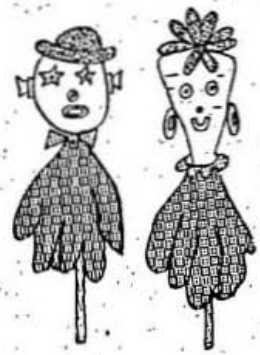
Rubber Ball Puppet



Cylinder Puppet

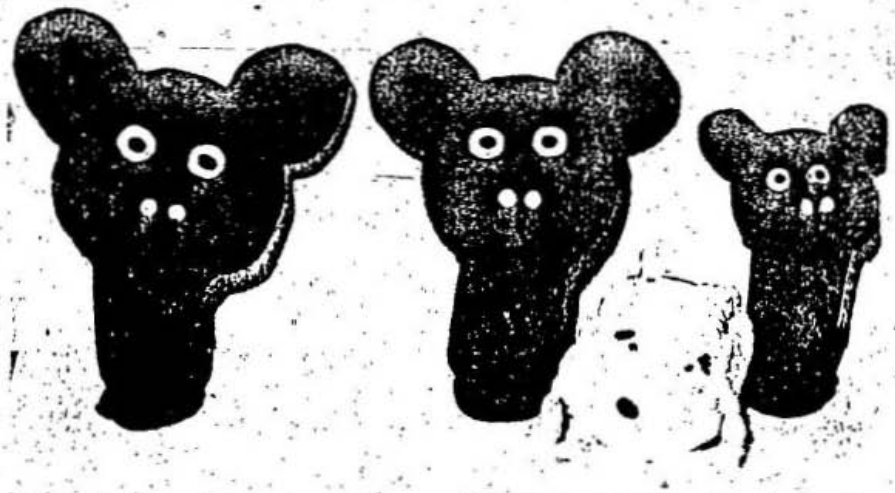


Box Puppet



Vegetable Puppets

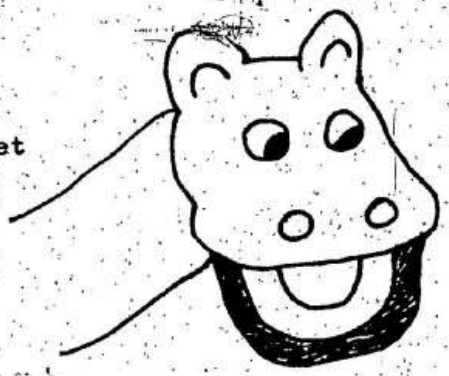
These hand puppets of "Goldilocks and the Three Bears" were made by gluing a series of felt circles together and then attaching them to the toe of a sock.



(Coody, 1979, p.58).

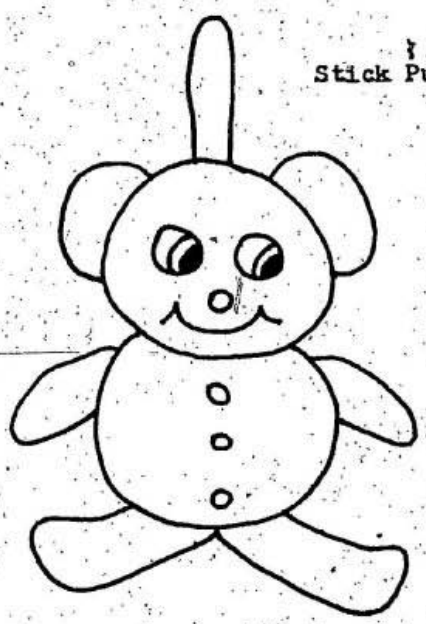
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Hand Puppet



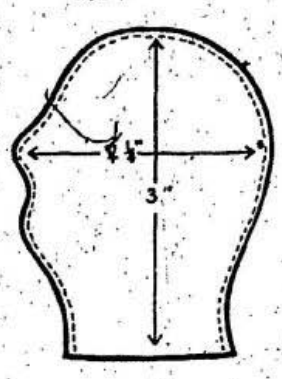
The sock-style hand puppet with its mouth as its main feature acts as a storyteller.

Stick Puppet



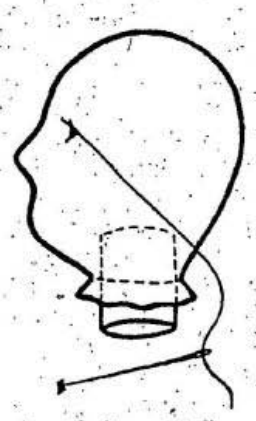
The stick puppet is made from oak tag and manipulated by a tongue depressor attached to its top.

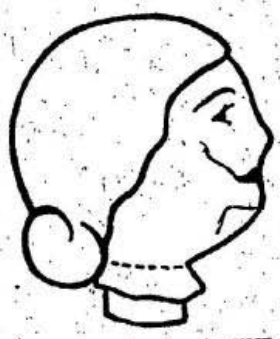
(Morrow, 1979, p.239).




The head is made from stockingette and filled with kapok or similar material.

A cardboard tube 1¼ in. long is pushed half-way into the head and the material gathered round it, thus forming the chin. The eye-sockets are drawn in in the direction indicated.

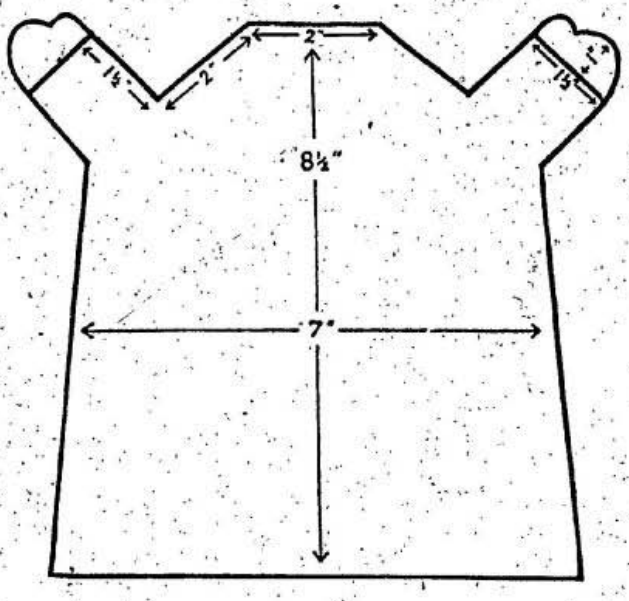




The wig is made of crêpe hair or wool. The eyes, eyebrows, mouth, and cheeks are painted on in oil colour.

THE PUPPET HEAD.

(McCrea, 1952 p.13)

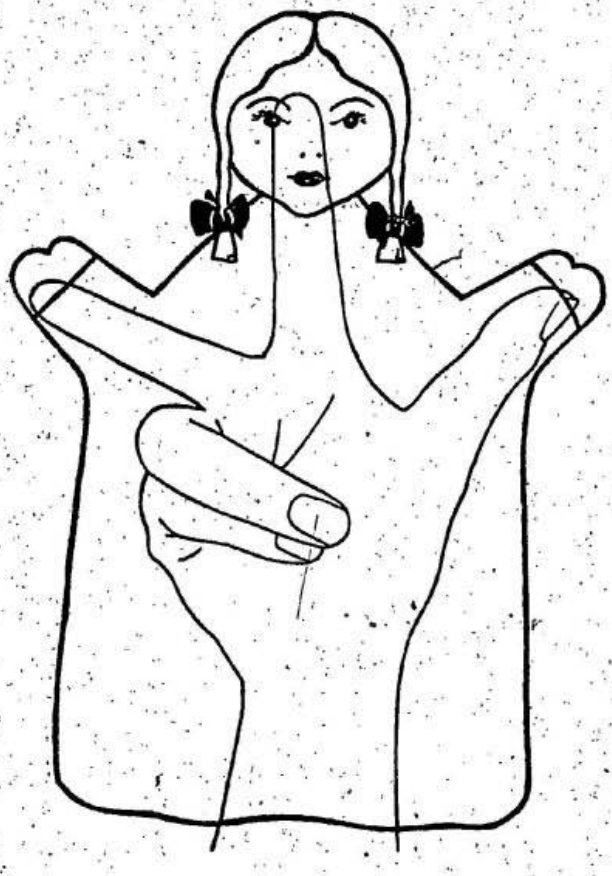



THE PUPPET GLOVE

The measurements are those of the finished glove. The hands are made of stockingette like the head. The whole glove is sewn on the wrong side so that no raw edges show. When finished, the neck of the glove is gathered and sewn securely to the puppet head.

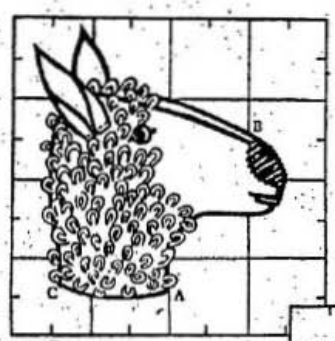
(McCrea, 1952 p.14).

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THE HAND POSITION INSIDE THE PUPPET

(McCrea, 1952, pp515).




## LAMB

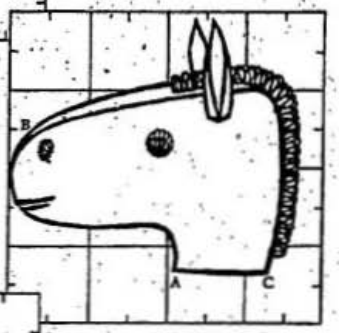
Cut two side pieces and sew them together from A to B. From B to C insert a strip 1 in. wide tapering at the ends. Sew on the ears and embroider the nose and mouth in black. The eyes are black wooden beads.

Material: white felt looped with white wool to give a woolly appearance.

## DONKEY

Cut two side pieces and sew them together from A to B. From B to C insert a strip 1½ in. wide tapering at the ends. Sew on the ears and embroider the eyes in black and white, nostrils and mouth in black. Loops of black wool make the mane.

Material: grey felt. The same pattern, slightly enlarged, is used for the horse, using brown felt and loose strands of fawn wool for the mane.







## WOLF

Cut two side pieces and sew them together from A to B. From B to C insert a strip 2 in. wide tapering at the ends. Sew on the ears and embroider the eyes in black and white, the nose in black, and the mouth in red.

Material: brown felt. The same pattern made up in fur fabric is used for the dog, the shape of the ears and nose being altered according to the type desired.

Each square represents 1 inch.

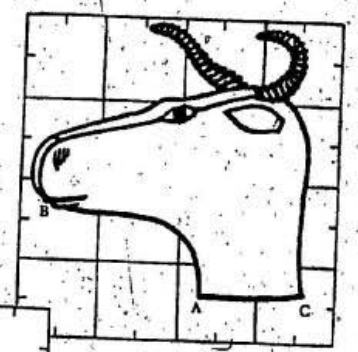
(McCrea, 1952, p.76).

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## COW

Cut two side pieces and sew them together from A to B. From B to C insert a strip 1 in. wide tapering at the ends, leaving openings to insert the eyes. Sew on the ears and a pink patch over the nose. Embroider the nostrils and mouth in black. The horns are a single piece of wire pushed under the felt at the top of the head, bent into position, and bound with brown wool.

Material: brown felt.




## BEAR

Cut two side pieces and sew them together from A to B. From B to C insert a strip 2 in. wide tapering at the ends. Sew on the ears which are a double thickness of material. Embroider the nose and mouth in black. The eyes are black wooden beads.

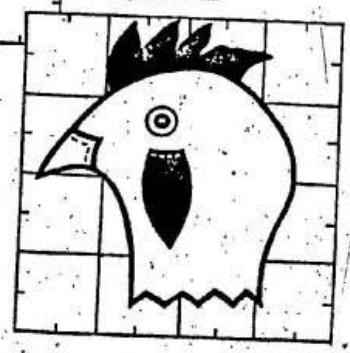
Material: fur fabric of a light fawn shade. The same pattern made up in black velvet and with pointed ears is used for the cat.




## HEN

Cut two side pieces and sew them together, inserting the comb of red felt. Cut the two sides of the beak in yellow felt and sew into position. Sew on the eyes which are circles of felt, black and yellow, and underneath each sew a wattle of red felt.

Material: black felt.



Each square represents 1 inch.

(McCrea, 1952, P.77).

APPENDIX C

A SCENE FROM THE STORY OF

"The Cock, The Mouse, and The Little Red Hen"

The following scene from the story is performed with student #1 reading the narration; student #2, the hen; student #3, the cock; and student #4, the mouse:

(#1) But what was happening to the Cock and the Mouse and the little Red Hen all this time?

Well, sad to say, the Cock and the Mouse had both got out of bed on the wrong side that morning. The Cock said the day was too hot, and the Mouse grumbled because it was too cold.

They came grumbling down to the kitchen, where the good little Red Hen, looking as bright as a sunbeam, was bustling about.

(#2) "Who'll get some sticks to light the fire with?" (#1) she asked.

(#3) "I shan't," - (#1) (said the cock).

(#4) "I shan't," - (#1) (said the mouse).

(#2) "Then I'll do it myself," (#1) (said the little Red Hen).

So off she ran to get the sticks. (#2) "And now, who'll fill the kettle from the spring?" (#1) (she asked).

(#3) "I shan't," (#1) (said the cock)

(#4) "I shan't," (#1) (said the mouse)

(#2) "Then I'll do it myself," (#1) (said the little Red Hen)

And off she ran to fill the kettle.

(#2) "And who'll get the breakfast ready?" (#1) (she asked, as)

She put the kettle on to boil.

(#3) "I shan't," (#1) (said the cock)

(#4) "I shan't," (#1) (said the mouse)

(#2) "I'll do it myself," (#1) (said the little Red Hen)

At breakfast time the Cock and the Mouse quarrelled and grumbled. The Cock upset the milk jug, and the Mouse scattered crumbs upon the floor.

(Post, 1979, p. 263).

# APPENDIX D

MURAL



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(Wachowiak, 1977, p.114).

COLLAGE



*"On Our Street" was the subject of this colorful collage by a first grade child. A preliminary discussion centered around houses, churches, stores, trees, bushes, sidewalks, cars, trucks, telephone poles, traffic signs, pet dogs and cats, and other ordinary, everyday neighborhood sights. The sun "just happened."*

(Wachowiak, 1977, p.146).

COLLAGE

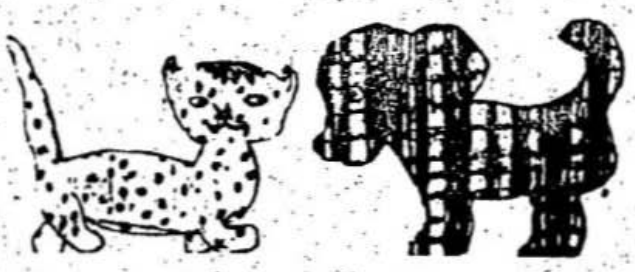


Collage made with cloth remnants

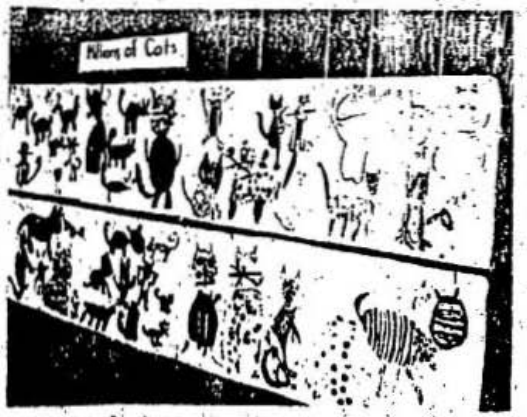
(Wachowiak, 1977, p.149).

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# FRIEZES



Detail of a frieze made by seven-year-olds after hearing Eugene Field's poem, "The Duel." Large pages were first filled with crayon gingham and calico designs. The dogs and cats were then cut from the pages, arranged in pairs and pasted on the border.




Every cat on this frieze made by six-year-olds has a distinct personality; no two are alike.

(Coody, 1979, p.94).

MOSAICS



Pete Rabbit was chosen as their favorite storybook character, and was depicted in mosaic form by a group of six-year-olds. Tesserae were pieces cut from color ads in old magazines. The original shape was sketched by a committee of children using a black crayon on large white wrapping paper.

(Coody, 1979, p.97).



(Wachowiak, 1977, p.154).

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MOSAIC



This mosaic has tesserae of vinyl and linoleum glued to a masonite board.

(Wachowiak, 1977, p.154).

APPENDIX E

## MUSICAL INTERPRETATION

### "The Three Bears"

In Coates musical fantasy, "The Three Bears" theme is heard at the very beginning and at various times throughout the music. The composer has indicated various descriptive passages in his music by printed captions on the score.

(a) "Goldilocks gets out of bed and dresses". Mused brasswinds describe the patter of Goldilocks' feet, while "The Three Bears" theme is played first by the cello and then taken up by other instruments.

(b) "She steals quietly downstairs and stops to listen to the clock ticking. It strikes five." After chime of the clock, the violins describe Goldilocks as she runs into the forest. The tapping of the wood block indicates that she is knocking on the door of the bears' cottage, while the flute imitates the warning trills of a bird. Soft "dream" music, played by the strings, describes Goldilocks as she falls asleep in Baby Bear's bed.

(c) "Enter the Three Bears". Each of the bears speaks with a different voice: the solo oboe representing Baby Bear; the solo clarinet, Middle-sized Bear; and the solo basoon, Great Big Bear. The rhythms played by each instrument clearly indicate the questions being asked by each of the bears. High shivering tones of the violin describe the frightened Goldilocks, and the woodwinds' rapid notes "tell" the listener that she is running homewards. After "The Three Bears" theme is played by the trumphets, the "dream" melody is heard again, played by the full orchestra, and

the fairy tale ends.

Disc Recording: Coates, E. "The Three Bears", Inc.
Fantasy in Music, BOL #67
(Bailey, 1969, pp. 61, 62).