

Flipped Fairy Tales



Reagan H., Grade 6, Rockledge, FL



Literacy Draws Upon Art



Introduction

Fairy tales and folktales provide rich cultural insights and often focus on universal themes such as overcoming barriers, justice, and secret strengths. The life lessons are often presented in whimsical ways. These stories have long oral traditions. The classics have endured for hundreds of years as the elders in each generation pass down the tales again and again. Fairy tales and folktales in print and video versions use the arts to help set the tone and convey the key messages.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Children will:

- read or have read to them illustrated versions of folk or fairy tales;
- use SEEK to read the illustrations;
- identify how the illustrators expressed story details;
- create illustrations that flip the classic tale (by inserting themselves as a character or changing the plot); and
- share their modified fairy tale and their imaginative thinking.

Vocabulary

fairy tale	insights	illustration	plot
folktale	modified	character	flip
classic	imaginative	setting	twist

Essential Questions

- What purposes have fairy tales and folktales served?
- What are some examples of how these stories have taught important life lessons on topics such as persistence, coming of age, loyalty, forces of nature, transformation, and new beginnings?
- Why do fairy tales and folktales use magic, mystery, and enchantment to convey their messages?
- Why are the techniques used by musicians and illustrators important in setting the tone of a fairy tale and providing insight about the characters, setting, and plot?

Guiding Questions

- What folktales or fairy tales will we explore?
- How is the “big idea” shown in a cover illustration?
- How can the story be “read” by first reviewing the illustrations without text?
- How do SEEK questions deepen our ways of looking at illustrations?
- What if I modified a folktale or fairy tale by changing the setting or plot or by including myself or my friends as characters in the tale?

Supplies

- Crayola® Watercolors or Paintbrush Pens
- Crayola Crayons, Colored Pencils, or Markers
- Paper (plain or colored)
- Fairy Tales or Folktales (that are illustrated or presented in videos)

Prepare

This project involves reviewing illustrated fairy tales or folktales. These can be found in books or online.

Applying SEEK to this Project

SEE: How do the illustrations set a tone, convey emotions, introduce the characters, help readers predict what will happen, and convey the main theme of the tale?

EVIDENCE: What evidence can you cite about how the illustrations achieve this?

EXPLAIN: How did the illustrator use colors, lines, shapes, proportions, patterns/repetition, and other art elements to convey the mood and inform readers about the characters?

KNOW: What do we know about the tale from the illustrations? What else do we want to know?

SEEK™

SEE

What do you see?

EVIDENCE

Why do you say that?
What is the evidence?

EXPLAIN

What decisions did the artist make? Why?

KNOW

What do you know?
What else do you want to know?



- Discuss folktales and fairy tales that are new or already familiar to children. Search for several versions of these stories in books or online to explore how different illustrators tell the same tale in visually different ways.
- Choose one tale that has illustrations and “read” the images using SEEK™.
- Have children create a new cover or introductory illustration that expresses their newly created twist, turn, or flipped version of the classic tale.



- Have children present the classic illustration and their newly created art using the SEEK questions to help others “read” the images.
- Presenting artists may want to explain why that tale was chosen, highlight the key insights about the original illustration, and describe the process of modifying the tale by creating a new illustration.



- Ask the audience to reflect on their SEEK responses and determine what the story’s big ideas are.
- If children chose classic fairy tales or folktales to modify, ask them to consider why these are classic or enduring stories.
- What do the selected stories teach as life lessons?



- Have children research some classic folktales and fairy tales that have similar themes but are told in slightly different ways or with different characters depending on the country or culture they came from. For example, there are hundreds of versions of the Cinderella story representing many different cultures.



Emily R., Grade K, Chesterfield, MO



- Help children connect the tale’s big idea and life lesson to experiences that are relevant in their lives today. Ask “What would be different if the setting were our community?” “How would the story be different if you were the main character?” “How might the ending be different in a new version of this tale?” Flip several more fairy tales and folktales to help children see how this literacy technique can be applied to other stories.

For Younger Children

- Help young children identify the big idea in each folktale or fairy tale and help them understand the characters and plot. Ask, “What is this story really about?” “Which characters do you care about, trust, or fear?” “What happened in the story that seems like something you have experienced or done?”
- Children enjoy dramatizing stories. They could assign character roles to toy animals, pillows, dolls, or action figures. They could imagine and describe the setting or create sketches of the homes, trees, and other places that are key to that tale. They could use towels, scarves, or napkins as simple costumes.

For Older Children

- Older children can identify and challenge the stereotypes or bias that often appears in classic stories. Have them find examples of bias and stereotype assumptions in the text or illustrations based on the characters’ gender, race, ethnicity, age, and so on. Have children consider “What if...?” as a way for them to restructure the characters’ relationships, opportunities, and fates. They could ask, for example, “What if the hero were female instead of male?” “What if the wealthy person had worse luck than the person who had fewer resources?” “What if the person who had difficulty walking were granted special powers?”
- Flipping the story can empower youth, especially if they use their revised version to emphasize social justice or address equity issues. Encourage them to research the genre of *fractured fairy tales* and then experiment with writing new versions that address contemporary themes, unexpected characterizations, surprising plot twists, or humorous outcomes, bringing their own creative approach to a familiar fairy tale or folktale.



Olivia W., Grade 3

Child Reflections

- What parts of the fairy tale or folktale were most interesting, believable, or enjoyable?
- How did illustrations help you understand the story's big idea? How did details in the illustrations provide additional context and meaning to the story?
- How did you decide what to change when you flipped the tale and created a new version? If you were to modify the same story again what might you do differently?

Adult Reflections

- What stories do you remember from your childhood that you could read or retell to your children?
- How did the SEEK™ questions give us a way to focus on illustrations and “read” the art?
- How can we use traditional or newly created tales to communicate important life messages with children?

Standards and Skill Development

Standards provide an outline of what students should know and be able to do. Standards lists help teachers and families connect everyday learning experiences like storytelling and illustrating to the curriculum's learning objectives. This project addresses the following standards:

LANGUAGE ARTS

- Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to compare perspectives or cultural differences.
- Read closely to determine what the illustrations and text say explicitly and to make logical inferences from them.
- Cite specific evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the illustrations and text.
- Determine central ideas or themes of a text and summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
- Apply knowledge of visual and word-based language to demonstrate understanding of how language functions in different contexts.

MATHEMATICS

- Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
- Look for and use structure, patterns, and regularity.
- Elicit and use evidence of thinking to engage in mathematical comparison and thinking.
- Use mathematics and computational thinking to analyze and create visual relationships and measurements in illustrations.

SCIENCE

- Plan and carry out investigations of how ideas are represented visually.
- Engage in discussing evidence.
- Construct explanations and design solutions based on observation and exploration.
- Obtain, evaluate, and communicate information. Present data in a form that can reveal patterns and relationships that allow results to be communicated to others.
- Recognize visual patterns and designs that suggest relationships worth investigating further.
- Convey designs through sketches, drawings, or physical models.

VISUAL ARTS

- Explain reasons for selecting a preferred artwork.
- Create art that tells a story about a life experience.
- Combine ideas to generate an innovative idea for art making.
- Explore uses of materials and tools to design and create works of art.
- Create artist statements using art vocabulary to describe personal choices in art making.
- Identify and analyze cultural associations suggested by visual imagery.
- Create works of art that reflect community cultural traditions.
- Understand that people from different places and times have made art for a variety of reasons.