



From the Brothers Grimm

A Teacher's Guide

Produced by Tom Davenport

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From the Brothers Grimm

Making Grimm Movies (3 Part Series)

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Using the Guide

The Guide is intended for teachers who use either the book *From the Brothers Grimm: A Contemporary Retelling of American Folktales and Classic Stories*, by Tom Davenport and Gary Carden (Ft. Atkinson, WI: Highsmith Press, 1992) or the ten films or videos that comprise the series *From the Brothers Grimm: American Versions of Folktale Classics* (Delaplane, VA: Davenport Films). Titles in this series include *Ashpet; Bearskin; Bristlelip; Frog King; Goose Girl; Hansel and Gretel; Jack and the Dentist's Daughter; Mutzmag; Rapunzel, Rapunzel;* and *Soldier Jack*. The Guide is divided into eleven parts. The first part is an introductory section intended to provide background for all teachers who use the Guide, book or the films and videos in the series.

Following the introduction, the Guide is divided into ten separate sections for each of the stories in the book and each film or video. Each of these sections opens with general background on the story, and following are sets of lesson plans suggested for use with the book, film or video. The lesson plans for each of four grade levels (grades 2-3, grades 4-6, grades 7-9, and grades 10-12).

ABOUT THE BOOK AND FILM/VIDEO SERIES

From the Brothers Grimm: American Versions of Folktale Classics is a series of ten live-action programs directed by Tom Davenport and produced by Davenport Films. The programs range from fifteen to fifty-three minutes in length. Each is a dramatic interpretation of a folktale from the classic early-nineteenth-century collection by the Grimm brothers or an adaptation of an American folktale. The book *From the Brothers Grimm: A Contemporary Retelling of American Folktales and Classic Stories* was adapted from the films by Tom Davenport and playwright Gary Carden. The book and films are designed to stimulate students' and teachers' interest in the rich cultural heritage of folktales. The series brings to life such universal characters as Hansel and Gretel and

the Frog King in American settings, offering classroom audiences themes which have survived for generations.

Folktales evolved as family and community stories—narratives told and retold by nonprofessionals to audiences composed of children, young people, their parents, and other adults. Perhaps because of these communal origins, folktales by their very nature appeal to audiences of all ages.

In addition, the tales are adaptable to more than one curriculum area. Because the stories were transmitted orally, they have strong skeletons in terms of their literary structure, and are thus apt subjects for a language arts curriculum. They also deal in an unusually compact and meaningful way with “life issues,” or critical life stages, and therefore lend themselves to discussions in the context of a social studies curriculum.

These factors help explain why the stories can be used for teaching at a number of grade levels. While a second-grade teacher might use “The Frog King” to help students learn what “point of view” is, the teacher of a twelfth-grade literature class could use the same program to explore how acknowledging other people's points of view contributes to growth and development. The lesson plans contained in this guide are designed to enable teachers to address the stories and films at levels appropriate to their own students.

The stories and films in this series serve two purposes, then. They bring young audiences into contact with classic folktales—part of our universal heritage—and show the relevance of the tales. The series also provides a way for students to examine essential elements of critical thinking and literature.

These tales all end happily. But it should be emphasized that they do not necessarily have easily-stated morals as do, for example, Aesop's fables. They are concerned with individual growth, and for that reason some of the tales touch on sensitive subjects.

Through their plots, the tales give recognition to the fact that life is sometimes difficult and growth sometimes painful. This may make it clearer to secondary students that folktales are not “just for children.”

ABOUT THE GUIDE

This Guide is provided as an aid to teachers who wish to use the book or series in an instructional setting. The first part contains general information, including background on the Brothers Grimm and on the nature of folktales. Suggestions for further folktale readings for both teachers and students are also included.

The main part of the Guide is divided into ten sections on each story or film/video, containing further background on the specific story and suggested lesson plans, one set for each of four grade-level groupings.

The lesson plans are made available for two reasons. First, they provide a curriculum that can be usefully incorporated into other classroom work.

Second, the subject matter of the tales in this book and film/video series is sometimes strong and in a few cases somewhat controversial. In an indirect, symbolic fashion, the stories deal with issues that are sensitive, but also vital to children and adolescents. A few examples are family dynamics, assuming responsibility, and physical growth. As a balance, the stories also bring a collective wisdom to bear on these issues. This may help students feel that difficult experiences can lead to growth and independence. It is hoped that the lesson plans will provide a framework for addressing such issues (through general discussions or additional reading and writing assignments).

Included in the lesson plan for each story and film/video is a short section (“INTERPRETING THE STORY”) which may help teachers and students relate the tales to modern life. Teachers are encouraged not only to read these interpretive sections themselves before they introduce the stories in the book or see the films, but also to read them again after seeing the films—and even to use copies of them as classroom handouts for upper grades.

The lesson plans are intended to be somewhat flexible. Nevertheless, teachers are encouraged to adjust the lesson plans for their own students. In addition, the series will support learning objectives other than those developed in this Guide. Teachers with different instructional objectives may wish to create their own lesson plans to suit those objectives.

On the next page, a chart sets out the purpose of each lesson at each grade level. This will enable

teachers to see how the suggested lesson plans in the Guide fit into an overall curriculum.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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NOTE: The filmmaker welcomes reactions on the series and the curriculum, and further curriculum suggestions, from both students and teachers. Though every letter may not be answered, all will be appreciated. Comments should be addressed to Tom Davenport, Davenport Films, Inc., 11324 Pearlstone Lane, Delaplane, Virginia 22025.

OVERALL SUGGESTED CURRICULUM FOR THE BOOK AND FILM/VIDEO SERIES

Story Title/Theme	Grades 2-3	Grades 4-6	Grades 7-9	Grades 10-12
<i>The Frog King</i> : Using point of view	People can have different points of view.	Accepting others' points of view as valid is sometimes necessary.	Expanding one's point of view can enhance one's life.	Acknowledging others' points of view contributes to growth & development.
<i>Bearskin</i> : The use of visual symbols in literature	Symbols are used to distinguish good & bad characters.	Symbols indicate that a main character is changing.	Symbols indicate how a character sees a situation or the world.	The symbols indicate personal maturation.
<i>Hansel & Gretel</i> : The use of plot to bring about character development	The plot of a story is the major events:	The plot affects the major characters.	The plot and the characters interact.	The plot can demonstrate possibilities for self-improvement.
<i>Rapunzel, Rapunzel</i> : The use of fantasy in literature	Fantasy & reality are different.	Fantasy is an important element in some stories.	Fantasy can apply to individual elements as well as to a whole story.	Fantasy can be related to life.
<i>Bristlelip</i> : How characters in a story affect each other	The main character's life is changed by other people.	Different characters affect a main character in different ways.	The major characters have an effect on each other.	Other people have major & minor influences both in the story & in life.
<i>The Goose Girl</i> : How characters use events to make important choices	External events cause the main character's problems.	The main character's choices have consequences.	The main character has reasons for her choice.	People can use events in life to clarify their positions on the issues.
<i>Jack & The Dentist's Daughter</i> : Using identification with a story's main character to address life issues	Hero & antagonist have both appealing & unappealing characteristics.	We have personal views of right & wrong.	Unconventional behavior may be justified in some circumstances.	Anti-heroes & tricksters have certain characteristics.
<i>Soldier Jack</i> : Character traits: The courage to live or die	Overcoming fear & learning courage is part of growing up.	The willingness to take risks is an important element of character.	A person's character shapes their attitude toward death.	There are many concepts regarding death and eternal life.
<i>Ashep</i> : Magic & fantasy in the folktales	There are magical & fantastic elements in folktales.	These elements include superstitions, proverbs, riddles and spells.	There are several key motifs which are characteristic of folktales.	Everyone needs to distinguish between their dreams and reality.
<i>Mutzmag</i> : Heroes and heroines: past & present	There are differences between a hero/heroine and other persons.	The heroic tale gives us insight to the characteristics of heroes and heroines.	The symbolism contained in the story increases our appreciation of its meaning.	Today's society requires some different traits in its heroes and heroines.

About Folktales

FOLKTALES ARE FOR EVERYONE

In our culture, folktales are often classified as “children’s stories.” But folktales have always been an important part of our universal heritage, and they are meant for everyone. It has even been said that the Grimms’ folktales rank next to the Bible or Shakespeare’s plays in importance.

The brothers Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm first published *Kinder und Hausmaerchen* in German in two volumes between 1812 and 1815. *Tales for Children and the Home* subsequently went through seven editions in which the brothers added tales and made changes in the text of their original publication. They collected these tales from storytellers among ordinary people and from books. There is some disagreement about how much the Grimms reworked the tales. But in general, folklore scholars feel that their collection (more than 200 tales) faithfully retells the stories as they were handed down among the folk, even though the Grimms stylized them. Some of the videos in the *From the Brothers Grimm* series are based on tales collected by the Brothers Grimm. Others like *Jack and the Dentist’s Daughter*, *Soldier Jack*, *Ashpet*, and *Mutzmag* are American folktales that are related to ones in the Grimms’ collection.

DEFINITION

In English, the brothers’ collection is popularly known as *Grimm’s Fairy Tales*, but the title is misleading because few of the stories are about fairies. A more accurate description of these tales would be “Folktales” because these stories came from “the people” as a whole. They were told out loud over and over again, usually by older people who handed them down to younger generations.

There are folktales all over the world; every culture has stories that its people repeat to each other in homes, villages, and towns. And because they were originally told out loud (transmitted orally), the Grimms’ tales and other folktales are different from stories “written” by one person.

The stories take place in a kind of never-never land where anything is possible. Humble heroes can kill giants and become kings, young people can be bewitched into animal shapes, and castles can vanish overnight or reappear in an instant.

INTERPRETATION

There is no single “right” interpretation of the tales. Folktales have been compared to many-faceted jewels, which show different meanings as they are turned this way and that. Each storyteller, in fact, will retell a folktale differently. A folktale can even change to become more “relevant” for a particular group in a particular time and place, but still keep its basic elements intact. In the end, the meaning of a folktale does not lie in the story itself, but in the minds of the audience. A tale may have different meanings for different people—and all of those meanings may be true.

Because it is difficult to show complicated characters in a story that is told out loud, folktale characters tend to be one-dimensional *types*. Good characters are innocent and/or clever, while bad characters are bad. The important thing in a folktale is the clash of opposing forces, how they interact during the story. There is usually little need for dialogue. Through the growth and development of the main character, good almost always triumphs in a folktale. Justice is very predictable. The bad characters usually get exactly what they deserve—nothing more and nothing less.

“TYPES” AND “MOTIFS”

The fact that a whole society “creates” its folktales means that the symbols, characters and actions in the stories usually have a particular cultural significance. At the same time, the story “types” transcend political and ethnic boundaries. For example, there are hundreds of variations of the popular “Cinderella” tale found in cultures from China to America. Folktales have been classified into recurring *types*, or traditional plots. Within these plot types, many *motifs*—the building blocks of plots—recur.

An example of a common folktale type, or traditional plot, is the true prince or princess wrongly deprived of his or her station in life (as in “The Goose Girl”). Jack’s theft of the wedding ring and bedsheet in “Jack and the Dentist’s Daughter” is a motif found in other folktales where the hero’s ingenuity is tested.

Many of the motifs found in folktales concern objects and events that appear to be charged with meaning even today, such as Rapunzel’s hair and its being cut off. These images come from the unconscious, like dreams. Modern audiences seem to recognize them intuitively, as if they already knew them. The character types, the motifs, the plot types—all these seem to present *archetypes*, emotionally realistic descriptions of universal human experiences.

Folktales often seem to be about critical stages of life. Some people argue that helping children work through their conflicts is one of the folktale’s most important functions.

ADAPTING THE TALES TO FILM AND VIDEO

Because of this, and because there is so much that is universal in the Grimms’ tales, they can be adapted to film and video very successfully.

Many film or television versions of folktales beautify the stories or soften them. This book and video series is unusual because it takes the tales very seriously, presenting faithful versions of the Grimms’ stories or American folktales. The tales are set in America to make them more accessible to modern audiences and give them a fresh “tone.” One film (*Jack and the Dentist’s Daughter*) was adapted from an American variant of a Grimms’ tale while three others (*Soldier Jack*, *Ashpet*, and *Mutzmag*) were American folktales with European origins.

FURTHER FOLKTALE READINGS FOR TEACHERS

The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales. By Bruno Bettelheim. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1977.

The Study of American Folklore. By Jan Brunvand. New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1968.

Our Living Traditions. Edited by Tristram Coffin. New York: Basic Books, 1968.

Folklore and Folklife. By Richard Dorson. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972.

“The Jack Tale: A Definition of a Folk Tale Sub-Genre.” By Paige C. Gutierrez. *North Carolina Folklore Journal*, Vol. 26, No. 2 (1978), pp. 85-108.

Mules and Men. By Zora Neale Hurston, preface by Franz Boas, introduction by Robert E. Hemenway, illustrations by Miguel Cov Arrubias. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1963. Black American folktales.

Once Upon a Time: On the Nature of Fairy Tales. By Max Luthi, translated from the German by Lee Chadeayne and Paul Gottwald, introduction and reference notes by Frances Lee Utley. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1970.

The Folktale. By Stith Thompson. New York: Dryden Press, 1946.

Breaking the Magic Spell: Radical Theories of Folk and Fairy Tales. By Jack Zipes. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1979.

Favorite Folktales from Around the World. Edited by Jane Yolen. New York: Pantheon Books, 1986.

FURTHER FOLKTALE READINGS FOR STUDENTS

GRADES 2-3

Wiley and the Hairy Man Adapted from an American Folk Tale. By Molly Garrett Bang. A Ready-to-Read Book. New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1976. A shape-changing tale.

Cinderella. Translated and illustrated by Marcia Brown. New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1954. Caldecott Medal winner.

Eric Carle’s Storybook: Seven Tales by the Brothers Grimm. Illustrated and retold by Eric Carle. New York: Franklin Watts, 1976.

The Stonecutter: A Japanese Folktale. Adapted and illustrated by Gerald McDermott (Caldecott Award-winning artist). New York: The Viking Press, 1975.

GRADES 4-6

Three Golden Oranges and Other Spanish Folk Tales. By Ralph Steel Boggs and Mary Gould Davis, pictures by Emma Brock. New York: David McKay Company, Inc., 1967.

East of the Sun and West of the Moon. By P. C. Asbjornsen and Jorgen E. Moe. New York: MacMillan Company, 1966. Scandinavian folktales.

The Magic Listening Cup: More Folk Tales from Japan. Retold and illustrated by Yoshiko Uchida. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1955.

GRADES 4-12

The Days When the Animals Talked: Black American Folktales and How They Came to Be. By William J.

Faulkner, illustrated by Troy Howell. Chicago: Follett Publishing Company, 1977.

Hans Andersen: His Classic Fairy Tales. Translated by Erik Christian Haugaard, illustrated by Michael Foreman. Garden City, NY: Doubleday Company Inc., 1976.

North American Legends. Edited by Virginia Haviland, illustrated by Ann Strugnell. New York: William Collins, Publishers, Inc., 1979.

The Coloured Fairy Books. Numerous volumes titled by color, such as *The Blue Fairy Book*, *The Red Fairy Book*, and *The Green Fairy Book*. Collected by Andrew Lang, various illustrators. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., various years (republications of early twentieth-century editions). Note: Several titles in this famous series have recently been edited by Brian Alderson, illustrated by various artists, and issued in hardback by The Viking Press, New York.

GRADES 7-12

The Jack Tales. Taken from oral tellers and edited by Richard Chase, illustrated by Berkeley Williams, Jr., appendix compiled by Herbert Halpert. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1971. Includes references on oral sources and scholarly appendix with information on story parallels.

The Complete Grimms' Fairy Tales. Introduced by Padraic Colum, folkloristic commentary by Joseph Campbell, illustrated by Joseph Scharl. New York: Pantheon Books, 1972

Mules and Men. By Zora Neale Hurston, preface by Franz Boas, introduction by Robert E. Hemenway, illustrations by Miguel Cov Arrubias. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1963. Black American folktales.

The Classic Fairy Tales. By Iona and Peter Opie. New York: Oxford University Press, 1974. Contains illustrations from numerous sources and gives the histories of various tales.

Russian Wonder Tales. By Post Wheeler. Illustrated. New York: Thomas Yoseloff, 1957. Includes historical introduction.

The Magic Orange Tree and Other Haitian Folktales. Collected by Diane Wolkstein, drawings by Elsa Henriquez. Borzoi Books, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1978. Notes accompany the tales.

The Complete Fairy Tales of the Brothers Grimm, translated with an introduction by Jack Zipes. New York: Bantam Books, 1992. This is a paperback edition with ten new tales never before published.

The Pantheon Fairy Tale and Folklore Library. Various editors. New York: Pantheon Books, 1972-1993. Collections of national and ethnic folktales from cultures around the world.

1. *The Frog King, Or Faithful Henry*

INTRODUCTION

“The Frog King” is about the importance of valuing others, as well as the awkwardness of growing up (for both the princess and the frog). It is filmed in an upper-class, late-nineteenth-century American setting, with a wealthy industrialist as the “king.”

When a young princess breaks her promise of friendship to a frog that helped her find a lost plaything, the frog follows her home. The princess’ father insists that she keep her promise despite the frog’s outlandish behavior. Annoyed by the animal’s antics, the princess finally throws him against the wall—and he is transformed into a handsome young prince. The two young people live happily ever after, and the prince’s servant (Faithful Henry) is released from the bonds of his sorrow over his master’s predicament.

INTERPRETING THE STORY

On the surface, this story seems to be about keeping promises. But the most important thing about the tale may be the way the princess treats the frog.

When she runs away from the well without him, she is really saying that the frog “doesn’t count.” “It’s just an ugly old frog,” she tells her father. So when she is forced to keep her promise, she is really being forced to recognize the frog—to acknowledge that he really is there and does count.

Although the princess is the main focus, the frog also needs to grow up. The banquet scene is a reminder of how gawky and awkward adolescents can be when they are learning to act like adults—and how embarrassing to others, like the princess. The frog even seems to want to grow up. He eggs the princess on—almost as if he knows this will eventually force her to take action. (In some folktales, a person transformed into an animal actually begs to be killed so that he or she can return to human form.)

Another reason for the tension between them comes directly from the experience of adolescents. If a boy in eighth or ninth grade likes a girl, he does not give her flowers. Instead, he does something to irritate

her—knowing that if he irritates her enough, she will pay attention to him. The confrontation scene, when the princess throws the frog against the wall, suggests that anger is not always a bad thing. Sometimes it helps important changes take place.

SUGGESTED LESSON PLANS (Grades 2-3)

SUBJECT OF THE LESSON: Using Point of View

This lesson is intended to help students understand that people can view the same situation differently. This is known as “point of view.”

FOCUS FOR STUDENTS

Inform the students that the princess in the story feels one way about a promise, and her father feels very differently. The frog also has feelings about the promise. Ask them to keep track of these three “points of view.”

FOR DISCUSSION AFTER VIEWING THE FILM/VIDEO

- What did you like about the film? What did you dislike? How did it make you feel?
- How did the princess feel about the promise she made?
- How did her father feel about the promise? Why do you think the father thought the princess should keep her promise?
- Why did the princess give in to her father?
- If you were the frog, which would you like better—the princess not paying attention to you, or her getting angry at you?

TO FOLLOW UP

- Hold a class debate in which half the group defends the princess’ point of view and the other half defends the father’s point of view.
- Pick an issue for the class to discuss, such as “Children should be able to decide for themselves when they go to bed.” Have members of the class

take on roles such as that of a child, a parent, a younger sibling, an older sibling, etc. Have them give the point of view of each of these people about the issue under discussion. Why is it helpful to understand what other people think? Can we expect other people always to think the way we do?

- Divide a piece of brown mural paper into four nearly square sections lengthwise. Invite the students to paint their versions of the film's four major scenes (the well scene, the banquet scene, the scene in the bedroom, and the carriage scene). Afterward, invite them to share their own points of view about the story. Why did they show the scenes the way they did in these paintings?

SUGGESTED LESSON PLANS (Grades 4-6)

SUBJECT OF THE LESSON: Using Point of View

This lesson is intended to help students understand that sometimes we must accept other points of view as being valid.

FOCUS FOR STUDENTS

Explain that the princess in the story is faced with two points of view that are very different from her own. Ask students to watch how the princess reacts to these other points of view.

FOR DISCUSSION AFTER VIEWING THE FILM/VIDEO

- What did you like about the film? What did you dislike? How did it make you feel?
- What was the princess' point of view about keeping a promise? The father's? The frog's? If you were the frog, which would you prefer—the princess acting as if you didn't count, or becoming angry at you?
- What made the princess go along with her father's point of view?

Did the princess change her point of view, or did she just give in to her father's wishes?

TO FOLLOW UP

- Invite the students to retell "The Frog King." In their version, the father should not want the princess to keep her promise. Does it make the story less interesting to leave out the difference in point of view?
- Ask the students to write stories about what it would be like if everyone in the world had the same point of view.

- Set up a scenario in which everyone in the class has seen a bank robbery. One person is a customer, another a teller, a third a bank robber, a fourth a bank president, a fifth a police officer, a sixth a person walking by outside, etc. Hold a class vote on whose point of view the students would be most likely to accept. Ask them to discuss this question: Do we respect some people's point of view because of who they are rather than what they say?

SUGGESTED LESSON PLANS (Grades 7-9)

SUBJECT OF THE LESSON: Using Point of View

This lesson is intended to help students clarify how expanding one's point of view can enhance one's life.

FOCUS FOR STUDENTS

Explain that in the story or film the students are about to read or see, facing up to a problem has certain consequences for the heroine. Ask the class to watch for these consequences.

FOR DISCUSSION AFTER VIEWING THE FILM/VIDEO

- What did you like most about the film? What did you dislike? Why?
- How did the princess try to retain her original point of view?
- What made her willing to expand her point of view?
- Would she have listened to her father's point of view if he hadn't been "in charge"?
- Was she a better person for expanding her point of view? Did the story reward her for this action?

TO FOLLOW UP

- In discussion with the students, explore what would have happened to the princess if she had not expanded her point of view. Would her life have been of the same quality as shown in the film?
- Assign an essay on a famous person in history or literature whose life was enriched by expanding his or her point of view. Some examples: Abraham Lincoln, Elizabeth Bennet (the heroine of *Pride and Prejudice*), Daniel Ellsberg.
- Hold a debate in which students present arguments on this statement: *In a moral society, there can be only one right point of view on every issue.*

SUGGESTED LESSON PLANS (Grades 10-12)

SUBJECT OF THE LESSON: Using Point of View

This lesson is intended to show students how acknowledging others' points of view contributes to growth and development.

FOCUS FOR STUDENTS

Instruct the students to keep track of the points of view of every major character—the princess, the frog, the father, and Faithful Henry—and to watch for ways in which their points of view assume importance in the story.

FOR DISCUSSION AFTER VIEWING THE FILM/VIDEO

- What did you like most about the film? What did you dislike? Why?
- What was the princess' original point of view? The father's? Faithful Henry's? The frog's? If you were the frog, which would you prefer—the princess ignoring you, or becoming angry at you?
- Did the change in the princess' point of view lead to greater maturity? How?
- Is acknowledging another person's point of view a more mature way of approaching problems than denying those points of view? If so, why?

TO FOLLOW UP

- Hold a discussion on whether the princess was rewarded for being mean, or whether her mean behavior was a necessary part of growth and change.
- Ask the students to explore the following issue: In a story like "The Frog King," there seems to be room for only one major change in point of view—that of the princess. In life, is it important that both parties to a relationship change their points of view? If so, when and why?
- As a writing project, ask the students to write a script from the frog's point of view.
- Assign an essay on these questions: Do we ever reach a point at which our point of view is so morally and ethically perfect that we no longer have to change it? Is there a state of moral perfection?

2. *Bearskin, or The Man Who Didn't Wash for Seven Years*

INTRODUCTION

"Bearskin" is a story about endurance, force of character in adversity, and spiritual transformation through suffering. It is set after the end of the Civil War.

After making a bargain with the devil, a young man has unending riches—but he must not wash himself or cut his hair for seven years, on pain of losing his soul. He must also wear a bear's skin. At first the young man (Bearskin) lives without care, thinking that his ordeal will be easy. But as the years drag on, his appearance worsens and his life becomes more and more difficult. Just when Bearskin is about to give up, he learns about the importance of giving. His new-found endurance and generosity enable him to defeat the devil and win the hand of a kind and beautiful young woman.

INTERPRETING THE STORY

This story could not take place if the soldier was not willing to take a risk. Because he is young and self-confident, he thinks passing his seven-year trial will be easy. Only after several years have passed and he is isolated from other people does he realize what he committed himself to. Just then, when he is ready to die, his problem is suddenly solved. His heart opens to the suffering of another. This gives him the strength to get through the last years of the trial, as he waits to rejoin his bride.

In a way, then, Bearskin's deal with the devil is like the risks we all take when we are too young to know any better. Ultimately, those risks are necessary. They deepen our characters, and help us develop new strengths to survive the challenges we take on.

Some of the tale's symbols come from our common "mythology" the Judeo-Christian tradition. For students who are not familiar with that tradition, these images (the ring in the glass of wine, for example, or the way the devil can be identified by his cloven hoof) can be a valuable education in themselves.

The devil's attitude at the end of the story could be interpreted as one of "sour grapes" because the two "bad" sisters are so unpleasant, we know that actually he would have gotten them anyway. We almost feel sorry for him, because he has helped the hero immensely. If there had been no devil and no deal, Bearskin would not attain the level of redemption and self-knowledge he does.

SUGGESTED LESSON PLANS (Grades 2-3)

SUBJECT OF THE LESSON: The Use of Visual Symbols in Literature

This lesson is intended to show students how symbols are used to distinguish good and bad characters.

FOCUS FOR STUDENTS

Explain that certain things the students can see in the story or film (such as clothing, people's faces, and physical actions) will show which characters are good and which characters are bad. These characteristics, objects, and actions are known as "symbols." Ask the students to watch for these symbols and remember them.

FOR DISCUSSION AFTER VIEWING THE FILM/VIDEO

- What did you like about the film? What did you dislike? How did it make you feel?
- If the devil was a bad character, what symbols were used to let you know this?
- If Bearskin was a good character, what symbols let you know this?
- Were the old man's two older daughters good characters or bad ones? What symbols were used to let you know?
- Was the youngest daughter a good or a bad character? What symbols helped you decide?

TO FOLLOW UP

- Assign one student the role of Bearskin and another the role of the devil. Ask the student playing Bearskin if he or she would make the bargain with the devil, and have the student playing the devil try to convince “Bearskin.” Explore this question with several different pairs of students playing the two roles.
- Help the students decide what symbols are used in television programs to show the difference between the “good guys” and the “bad guys.” Have the students draw pictures of these symbols and mount them on a display.
- Ask students to describe what they do and wear when they want to make a good impression on someone.

SUGGESTED LESSON PLANS (Grades 4-6)

SUBJECT OF THE LESSON: The Use of Visual Symbols in Literature

This lesson is intended to help students know how symbols are used to indicate that a main character in a story is changing.

FOCUS FOR STUDENTS

Explain that, in the film or story, certain symbols show how Bearskin, the main character, changes during the course of the story. Ask the students to watch for these symbols which indicate change.

FOR DISCUSSION AFTER VIEWING THE FILM/VIDEO

- What did you like about the film? What did you dislike? What did you think about the deal Bearskin made?
- How did Bearskin start out? How did he end up?
- What happened in between?
- What symbols were used to indicate how he changed from the beginning to the end of the story?

TO FOLLOW UP

- Assign a short essay in which students discuss when they liked the main character best (at the beginning as the soldier, in the middle as Bearskin, or at the end of the story as the handsome young man), and why.
- Show the class pictures from magazines or newspapers which show how people’s clothing makes others feel good or bad about them. In a group

discussion, help students explore whether “clothes make the man” (or woman).

- Ask students to identify symbols that are used in school to indicate whether something is good or bad.

SUGGESTED LESSON PLANS (Grades 7-9)

SUBJECT OF THE LESSON: The Use of Visual Symbols in Literature

This lesson is intended to help students understand how symbols can be used to indicate the way a character sees a situation or the world.

FOCUS FOR STUDENTS

Explain to the class that, in the story or film they are about to read or see, certain symbols indicate how Bearskin, the main character, sees the bargain with the devil. Ask the students to watch for these symbols and remember them.

FOR DISCUSSION AFTER VIEWING THE FILM/VIDEO

- What did you like about the film? What did you dislike? Why?
- Bearskin’s looks changed a great deal during the story. How did the changes in his looks cause a change in the way he viewed his situation and the world?
- What other parts of the story or events were used to indicate that Bearskin’s point of view was changing or had changed? (Examples: his being forced to sleep in the barn, or his generosity toward the old man.)
- The youngest daughter wore a black dress after she and Bearskin pledged themselves to each other. What did this indicate about her attitude toward Bearskin and their relationship?

TO FOLLOW UP

- Ask students whether they would have made the deal Bearskin did. Then have them imagine that they have made the same deal—that they must go without washing and wear a bear’s skin for seven years. Hold a discussion on how this would affect them.
- Lead students back to a time when they were ill, broke a bone, had to start wearing glasses or braces, etc. Assign a brief essay on how these events changed the way they saw themselves and the world.

- Have each student select a book (examples: *The Scarlet Letter*, *The Red Badge of Courage*) and write an essay on how symbols show a character's view of a situation or the world.

SUGGESTED LESSON PLANS (Grades 10-12)

SUBJECT OF THE LESSON: The Use of Visual Symbols in Literature

This lesson is intended to help students explore the symbols in the story with respect to development toward adulthood.

FOCUS FOR STUDENTS

Introduce the story of "Bearskin" as one in which symbols suggest a changed approach to life, especially with regard to long-term agreements. Ask the students to think about the change in Bearskin's approach to promises with respect to their own lives.

FOR DISCUSSION AFTER VIEWING THE FILM/VIDEO

- What did you like most about the film? What did you dislike? Why?
- How did Bearskin's initial behavior after making the contract with the devil indicate a particular way of viewing the bargain?
- A ring (especially an engagement or wedding ring) usually signifies an eternal commitment. How did Bearskin's leaving the broken half of the ring with the youngest daughter symbolize a more mature approach toward long-term agreements?
- If Bearskin had been able to win the bargain with the devil in seven days instead of seven years, would his victory have meant the same thing to him? Why or why not?

TO FOLLOW UP

- Ask students to decide what the terms of the devil's bargain would have had to be for them to agree to it. Have each student create his or her own terms for such a bargain and try to convince a classmate to go along.
- Help students identify some long-term commitments they have already made themselves, and symbols that show those commitments.
- As a class project, have the students make a collage of symbols showing issues about which they feel strongly enough to make a long-term commitment in the future. (Some examples: civic issues, a college education, marriage.)

3. *Hansel and Gretel*

INTRODUCTION

“Hansel and Gretel,” set in Southern Appalachia during the Great Depression, focuses on how children’s inner resources and mutual loyalty can help them deal with their fears.

The story is about a young brother and sister. Their family is so poor that their stepmother persuades their father to leave the children out in the woods to starve. At first Hansel is able to foil this plan and the children return home. But the second time, they are lost in the forest. They are captured by a witch, and she decides to eat Hansel. Gretel defeats the witch by turning the tables on her, and then frees Hansel. When the children return home, they find that their stepmother has left, and they are happily reunited with their father.

INTERPRETING THE STORY

Many children go through a stage when they fear being abandoned by their parents. “Hansel and Gretel” addresses this issue very directly. With its dark mood and night scenes, the film is a scary one. But it also seems to reassure children that they are not alone in their fear of being left on their own.

The story shows the children’s— especially Gretel’s— perception of the “united front” that parents present. This explains why young audiences easily accept the father’s weakness and his unrealistic surrender to the stepmother (something adult audiences sometimes question). The tale also seems to point out that home can overwhelm as well as nurture—as when the children are fattened by the witch, only so she can eat them.

Young audiences appear to understand instinctively that the “evil” stepmother is only a symbol—just as they know that she is connected with the witch in some way. (The same actress plays both characters. Although another voice is dubbed in for the witch, children appear to recognize the connection subliminally.)

As in any drama, the hero and heroine can only come out right in the end through conflict. Like the other villains in this series, the witch brings about transformation and growth in the main characters (especially Gretel).

SUGGESTED LESSON PLANS (Grades 2-3)

SUBJECT OF THE LESSON: The Use of Plot to Bring About Character Development

This lesson is intended to help students identify a story’s plot.

FOCUS FOR STUDENTS

Ask the students to watch for the major events in the story—the most important things that happen. These events are known as the “plot.”

FOR DISCUSSION AFTER VIEWING THE FILM/VIDEO

- What did you like about the film? What did you dislike? Was the story scary? How did it make you feel?
- What were the major events in the story?
- How do you know that these were the major events?
- How does a plot affect the people in the story?

TO FOLLOW UP

- Mount a long piece of mural paper and give students the materials to paint or draw the major events, or “plot,” of the story. Assign the students to work in groups, portraying these events from left to right as they occur in the story.
- Ask students to identify the major events in the “plot” of their own lives.
- Discuss with students how the plot in a story is both similar to and different from the “plot” of our lives. To help focus the discussion, ask this question: Is there a beginning, middle, and end to events in our lives?

SUGGESTED LESSON PLANS (Grades 4-6)

SUBJECT OF THE LESSON: The Use of Plot to Bring About Character Development

This lesson is intended to help students understand how the plot affects the major characters in a story.

FOCUS FOR STUDENTS

Ask the students to watch for how the important events in the plot affect the major characters—Hansel and Gretel, the stepmother, the father, and the witch.

FOR DISCUSSION AFTER VIEWING THE FILM/VIDEO

- What did you like about the film? What did you dislike? Was it scary? How did it make you feel?
- How did the major events of the story affect Hansel and Gretel?
- How did the plot affect the stepmother?
- How did the plot affect the witch?
- How did the plot affect the father?
- Who among the major characters was most affected by the major events of the story? How?

TO FOLLOW UP

- Invite the class to retell the story, making the father the “hero”—i.e., the character whose life is most affected by the plot.
- Ask for reports on the plots of students’ favorite television shows. Are the major characters affected by the plot, or do they stay the same? Often the hero (of a detective show, for example) remains constant, but the other characters are greatly changed by the events in the story.
- Have students try to write a story in which no one is affected by the plot at all. Ask them what the result is. Is the story boring?

SUGGESTED LESSON PLANS (Grades 7-9)

SUBJECT OF THE LESSON: The Use of Plot to Bring About Character Development

This lesson is intended to help students understand how plot and characters interact.

FOCUS FOR STUDENTS

Ask the students to focus on Hansel’s way of responding to the abandonment in the forest and on Gretel’s response to the witch’s threat to eat Hansel.

FOR DISCUSSION AFTER VIEWING THE FILM/VIDEO

- What did you like most about the film? What did you dislike? Why?
- How did Hansel react to the crises in the plot?
- How did Gretel respond to the crises in the plot?
- Did it take Gretel longer to become “heroic” than it took Hansel? Which of the two children changed or grew up the most?

TO FOLLOW UP

- Discuss with the students what would have happened if Hansel and Gretel had not reacted as they did to the circumstances presented to them. Would they have become the helpless victims of the witch?
- Hold a debate on this statement: Inner character is more important than outside circumstances.
- Assign an essay in which students write about an event in their own lives to which they wish they had reacted differently. How would their lives have been changed if they had reacted differently?

SUGGESTED LESSON PLANS (Grades 10-12)

SUBJECT OF THE LESSON: The Use of Plot to Bring About Character Development

In this lesson the students will learn how the plot transforms the main characters. They become more knowledgeable and mature.

FOCUS FOR THE STUDENTS

Ask the students to reflect on the change in character in Hansel and Gretel. What did they learn from their encounter with death (abandonment and the witch)?

FOR DISCUSSION AFTER VIEWING THE FILM/VIDEO

- How did Hansel outsmart the witch? What methods would the students have used if they were locked up by the witch?
- Why is the evil stepmother and the witch played by the same actress? How are they connected and what is the importance for the development of the children?
- How do you think Hansel and Gretel felt after defeating the witch? How does this event help them in other events they will encounter as they mature?
- Ask the students if they have ever been in a life threatening situation. If so, how did they

respond? How did they feel when the event was over?

TO FOLLOW UP

- Ask the students to write a diary entry relating an unpleasant experience that helped him/her become more like an adult.
- In groups of four or five, assign the task of writing a sequel to Hansel and Gretel. The enemy in Hansel and Gretel II will be more powerful and evil. How will Hansel and Gretel overcome the events and obstacles in this story?
- Write an original folktale that records some of the important events in your own life. How did you respond at that time? How would you respond now?

4. *Rapunzel,* *Rapunzel*

INTRODUCTION

“Rapunzel, Rapunzel,” set around the turn of the century, is about a young girl’s struggle with independence.

When a witch catches a man stealing rapunzel plants from her garden to help his wife, the witch forces him to promise her the child he and his wife are about to have. When the child reaches the age of twelve, the witch imprisons her alone in a high tower. She uses the girl’s long hair to climb up and visit every day. But a young man learns to use the same means in order to visit Rapunzel at night. Discovering this, the witch cuts off Rapunzel’s hair, banishes her, and uses the hair to trick the boy. He is blinded and wanders for many years until he is reunited with Rapunzel and her tears enable him to see again.

INTERPRETING THE STORY

“Rapunzel, Rapunzel” centers around the relationship of a young girl and her “mother” (the witch). The witch loves the girl, but loves her too much: she feeds Rapunzel like a bird and uses the long hair to “reel” the girl in to her. She also imprisons Rapunzel just when the girl is reaching physical maturity and should be forming other relationships. (The witch is considerably older, which highlights the generation gap.) But the girl herself is rather childish at the beginning of the story (when we first see her in the tower, she is singing a child’s song to her doll). She brings on her own banishment by telling the witch about her new friend, the boy. This shows that she still must learn to bear the consequences of her actions, which is an important part of growing up. Her behavior also seems to indicate the mixed feelings that any adolescent has about branching out from home.

The boy, too, must grow through suffering (which he does by wandering blind in the wilderness) in order to have the reward of finding Rapunzel again.

The story is filled with important symbols. Rapunzel’s hair is a symbol of her growth and maturity, but

it is also the thing that binds her. She must cut it (or it must be cut) for her to be free. The tower shelters her in her adolescence, but it also isolates her from others. In the film, the plants and the dark lighting give a feeling of burgeoning life and development through nature.

SUGGESTED LESSON PLANS (Grades 2-3)

SUBJECT OF THE LESSON: The Use of Fantasy in Literature

This lesson is intended to help students learn the difference between fantasy and reality.

FOCUS FOR STUDENTS

Explain that there are many “pretend” things in the story. Ask the students to watch for examples of things that could not really happen. These things are known as “fantasy.”

FOR DISCUSSION AFTER VIEWING THE FILM/VIDEO

- What did you like about the film? What did you dislike? How did it make you feel?
- What things happened in the story that could not really happen?
- How do you know that these things aren’t real?
- Did it make it harder to follow the story because some parts seemed real and some parts didn’t?

TO FOLLOW UP

- Have students try to tell the story without including the fantastical parts. What things have to be changed?
- Ask each student to choose a book from the school or public library that contains elements of fantasy. Have the students report to the class on which parts of the stories were fantasy and which parts were real.

- Invite students to tell the class their favorite stories containing fantasy. Ask them to explain why they like these fantasy elements so much.

SUGGESTED LESSON PLANS (Grades 4-6)

SUBJECT OF THE LESSON: The Use of Fantasy in Literature

This lesson is aimed at helping students understand that fantasy is an important element in some stories.

FOCUS FOR STUDENTS

Explain that the story or film the students are about to read or see contains numerous elements of fantasy. Ask the students to try and determine why those fantastical elements are necessary to the story.

FOR DISCUSSION AFTER VIEWING THE FILM/VIDEO

- What did you like about the film? What did you dislike? How did it make you feel?
- What were some of the fantastical parts of the story?
- What role did these fantastical parts play in the telling of the story?
- Were they a necessary part of the story?

TO FOLLOW UP

- Ask the students to tell the story leaving out one, two, or three of the fantastical situations (examples: the hair used as a ladder, the witch's powers, and Rapunzel's healing tears). Can the story be the same if told this way?
- Choose a well-known story that includes fantasy, such as one of the Superman stories. Have students write an adventure for the hero in which no elements of fantasy are allowed. Can Superman accomplish anything—is he really Superman—without these fantastical elements?
- Have students keep a log of the television shows they watch during the week, and put an asterisk next to each show that has fantasy in it. In discussing the students' lists at the end of the week, ask them why they are attracted—or not attracted—to fantasy.

SUGGESTED LESSON PLANS (Grades 7-9)

SUBJECT OF THE LESSON: The Use of Fantasy in Literature

This lesson is intended to help students realize that fantasy can apply to individual elements of a story but not necessarily to the whole.

FOCUS FOR STUDENTS

Ask the students to watch for fantastical elements in the story or film and to think about whether the story or film as a whole is a fantasy.

FOR DISCUSSION AFTER VIEWING THE FILM/VIDEO

- What did you like most about the film? What did you dislike? Why?
- What parts of the story or film were fantastical? How did you decide this?
- Did this make the whole story or film a fantasy? If not, why not? How did you decide this?
- How do you distinguish between elements of fantasy and total fantasy?

TO FOLLOW UP

- Divide the class into two groups, and hold a debate on this question: Do elements of fantasy in a story mean that the story has no “reality?”
- Ask the class to create a story which is based on fact—but to which they add fantastical elements. Discuss with the students whether adding these elements makes their story move into the realm of fantasy.
- Have students compile a list of movies, television shows, and books that are based on true events but have been changed somewhat. Ask them how they can determine whether these programs or books retain their reality or become fantasy.

SUGGESTED LESSON PLANS (Grades 10-12)

SUBJECT OF THE LESSON: The Use of Fantasy in Literature

This lesson is intended to help students understand how fantasy can be related to life.

FOCUS FOR STUDENTS

Ask the students to watch for how the fantastical elements of the story or film serve as symbols for realistic conflicts.

FOR DISCUSSION AFTER VIEWING THE FILM/VIDEO

- What did you like most about the film? What did you dislike? Why?
- What purpose(s) did fantasy serve in the film? Was there a realistic situation underlying the fantasy of the story? If so, what was it?
- Did some of the fantasy elements in the story or film symbolize elements of real life? What were

they, and what did they symbolize (examples: Rapunzel's hair, her isolation in the tower, the healing power of her tears)?

- How did fantasy enhance the growth of Rapunzel and the boy? How did it enhance the understanding and enjoyment of the audience?

TO FOLLOW UP

- Have students discuss what realistic techniques could have been used in the story or film to substitute for fantasy as a means of showing time, creating obstacles, or adding to the enjoyment of the audience. Do they think the story would have been as good with these substitutes?
- Hold a debate on this issue: Only young children need to have fantasy in their lives.
- Ask students if they have fantasies in their own lives. What role do these fantasies serve? Are fantasies different than dreams?

5. *Bristlelip*

INTRODUCTION

“Bristlelip,” an adaptation of the Grimms’ tale called “King Thrushbeard,” is set in the Federal period of the nineteenth century (about 1815). It is a comical tale that focuses on the importance of empathy and kindness.

After a rich and haughty girl rejects a series of suitors, one of them—a handsome, wealthy young man—persuades the girl’s exasperated father to trick her into marriage with a poor peddler. The peddler makes the girl come live with him in a hovel and work at unpleasant jobs. Finally, while she is working in the mansion of the handsome suitor she rejected at the beginning of the story, the suitor humiliates her in front of his guests. But then he reveals that he himself pretended to be the peddler, so that she would change her attitude toward other people. The two young people are reconciled and live happily together.

INTERPRETING THE STORY

This tale is not highly symbolic, but rather a more comical story about the relations between men and women. In a way, it is a classic battle of the sexes, in the time-honored tradition of the old Hepburn-Tracy movies or Frank Capra’s “It Happened One Night.”

The heroine of “Bristlelip” learns a lesson that is important for many young people to grasp. That is, she begins by demanding that her spouse be absolutely perfect physically. And that proves her own undoing. But when she finally admits that the peddler has been a good husband to her, she is seeing through appearances to a deeper level. She sees that what really matters is the quality of a partnership. When she does accept the person she has, he turns out to be even better than she thought: he literally has “hidden qualities.” This lesson is a useful one, since relationships based mainly on appearance—a big temptation for teenagers, especially—tend not to last.

The girl is also very sheltered at the beginning of the story, and another important aspect of the tale seems to be how she becomes more practical and able to do something useful.

The film softens the cruelty of the original tale. In addition, it is clearer that Bristlelip and the peddler are the same person something that is not obvious in the Grimms’ version.

SUGGESTED LESSON PLANS (Grades 2-3)

SUBJECT OF THE LESSON: How Characters in a Story Affect Each Other

This lesson is intended to help students identify the most important influence on the heroine of the story.

FOCUS FOR STUDENTS

Explain that there are two main characters in the story. The life of the heroine (one of the main characters) is affected by the other main character. Ask the students to watch for who this other main character is and what he does.

FOR DISCUSSION AFTER VIEWING THE FILM/VIDEO

- What did you like about the film? What did you dislike? How did it make you feel?
- Which character changed the girl’s life the most?
- How did this character change her life? Did this make the person an important character? Why or why not?
- Did the other characters in the story change the girl’s life? If so, how — and how much?

TO FOLLOW UP

- Assign roles from the first scene of the story (the suitors in the front hall) to students in the class. However, eliminate Bristlelip. Have the students act out the scene. Does this change the story? How is it different without Bristlelip?

- Have students discuss some people in their lives who are very important, but that they do not see often. If the students do not see them often, why are these people important?
- Ask students to make a list of the people in whose lives they are an important character. In a second list, have them identify people in whose lives they are a less important character.

SUGGESTED LESSON PLANS (Grades 4-6)

SUBJECT OF THE LESSON: How Characters in a Story Affect Each Other

This lesson is aimed at helping students understand how different characters (including minor ones) affect the heroine in different ways.

FOCUS FOR STUDENTS

Explain that the story or film contains numerous characters, some of them minor (less important) ones. Ask the students to watch for how the different characters treat the girl in the story, and what their ways of treating her do to the story.

FOR DISCUSSION AFTER VIEWING THE FILM/VIDEO

- What did you like about the film? What did you dislike? How did it make you feel? If you were the girl, would you have forgiven Bristlelip?
- How did the suitors treat the girl? How did the father treat her? How did the customers for the pots treat her?
- How did the peddler (Bristlelip) treat the girl? Did his treatment of her make him more important to her than the other characters? More important in the story? How? How did the girl treat Bristlelip?
- What was the difference between the way the peddler (Bristlelip) and the girl treated each other and the way either one of them was treated by the minor characters?

TO FOLLOW UP

- Ask students to choose a favorite book and report on how the main character is treated by the other characters in the story. Is this important in the book?
- Hold a discussion on how characters in some of the students' favorite television shows treat each other. What is important in these relationships? (An example might include two friends in a tele-

vision series who “stick together” and help each other, making continuing adventures possible.)

- Have students list the important persons in their lives, and some less important ones. What might a less important person in their lives do to become a more important person?

SUGGESTED LESSON PLANS (Grades 7-9)

SUBJECT OF THE LESSON: How Characters in a Story Affect Each Other

This lesson is intended to help students explore how the two major characters in the story affect each other.

FOCUS FOR STUDENTS

Ask students to watch for ways in which the heroine of the story affects Bristlelip (the other major character), and for how Bristlelip affects the heroine.

FOR DISCUSSION AFTER VIEWING THE FILM/VIDEO

- What did you like most about the film? What did you dislike? Why?
- How did the peddler (Bristlelip) affect the girl? Did you agree with what he did?
- How did the girl affect Bristlelip? Was the girl important to him?
- Have you ever been deceived the way Bristlelip deceived the girl? Have you ever seen someone do what the girl did at the beginning of the story (treat another person's feelings carelessly)? If so, what did you feel and what did you do?

TO FOLLOW UP

- Have students debate the issue of how the girl allowed others to influence her, and whether she should have stood up for her rights.
- Discuss with students the extent to which others should influence their own lives. What are some areas in which students can benefit from others' influences?
- Assign an essay in which students write about how they influence others—their younger brothers and sisters, their friends, etc.

SUGGESTED LESSON PLANS (Grades 10-12)

SUBJECT OF THE LESSON: How Characters in a Story Affect Each Other

This lesson is intended to help students assess how people are influenced by others, both in the story and in life.

FOCUS FOR STUDENTS

Instruct the students to think about how the heroine of the story is influenced in both major and minor ways by the people around her.

FOR DISCUSSION AFTER VIEWING THE FILM/VIDEO

- What did you like most about the film? What did you dislike? Why?
- Did everyone in the story have an influence on the heroine? If so, how?
- Was the girl herself an influence on others?
- Does this suggest ways in which people in real life influence each other?

TO FOLLOW UP

- Ask students to list the five persons who have influenced them most. Have them indicate the areas of their lives in which these people have influenced them.
- Help the class develop a list of important influences on the lives of adolescents today.
- Assign an essay in which students write about the ways in which they want their own lives to influence others.

6. *The Goose Girl*

INTRODUCTION

“The Goose Girl” is about endurance and the ultimate triumph of virtue through honorable means. Its late-seventeenth-century setting is probably the least identifiably American in the series.

As the story opens, a widow sends her daughter on a journey to be married. Along the way, the daughter’s maid takes advantage of her vulnerability and forces the girl to exchange places with her. The maid also forces the young bride to swear a holy oath of silence. When they reach their destination, the maid tells the bridegroom she is the bride and the real bride is sent to the fields to tend geese. In addition, the real bride’s horse (which can speak) is killed because it presents a threat to the maid. But eventually the bridegroom’s father discovers the deception, the maid is punished, and the true bride takes her rightful place.

INTERPRETING THE STORY

This story might seem old-fashioned—a tale about a sacred promise. But the Goose Girl’s problem (losing her bridegroom to the maid) is something a modern young girl might experience in real life. There might be a girl in her school who gets attention even though she has little to offer but her appearance. If so, the girl with more to offer will find herself in the same dilemma. That is, she will not be able to tell a boy she likes that the girl he thinks so attractive is not as interesting as herself. If she does, she will look self-serving, and she will “lose face” publicly. Only a teacher or another older person will have the experience to see the difference between the two girls.

There are other interesting aspects to the tale. The Goose Girl’s great thirst in the forest shows that she is somewhat childish emotionally at the beginning of the story. The protective handkerchief with blood on it seems to suggest that she is about to undergo a rite of passage, or critical point in her development. The Goose Girl has reached physical maturity and is being sent out into the world. But there is no way for her to anticipate the way the world works. There is

also ultimately no way for her to keep her mother’s protection once she is on her own.

The killing of Falada, the horse, is the maid’s most heinous crime. And, given her actions, it is appropriate that the maid should name her own punishment. Though the ending may seem severe, it appeals enormously to children. As G. K. Chesterton said, “Children are innocent and love justice, while most of us are wicked and naturally prefer mercy.”

SUGGESTED LESSON PLANS (Grades 2-3)

SUBJECT OF THE LESSON: How Characters Use External Events to Make Important Choices

This lesson is intended to enable students to identify the external events in the story that presented problems for the Goose Girl.

FOCUS FOR STUDENTS

Ask the students to watch for two things in the story or film they are about to read or see. First, they should watch for the events that make a problem for the Goose Girl. And, second, they should look for how those events affect the Goose Girl.

FOR DISCUSSION AFTER VIEWING THE FILM/VIDEO

- What did you like about the film? What did you dislike? Was it scary? How did it make you feel?
- What things happened in the story that caused a problem for the Goose Girl?
- Why were these things a problem for her?
- How did the Goose Girl handle these problems?
- Did she make the right decision? Should she have told who she was and what had happened? Was she better for not telling?

TO FOLLOW UP

- Have the students “role play” what they would have done if they had been the Goose Girl.

- Show the class how to make a time line. Then have each student place the important events in his or her own life on a similar line.
- Ask the students how these important events in their lives affected them and how they handled them. Calling on several students will bring out a wide range of answers.

SUGGESTED LESSON PLANS (Grades 4-6)

SUBJECT OF THE LESSON: How Characters Use External Events to Make Important Choices

This lesson is aimed at helping students explore the main character's choices and the consequences of these choices.

FOCUS FOR STUDENTS

Ask students to read carefully or to watch the film closely to see what alternatives are available to the Goose Girl, and what choices she makes.

FOR DISCUSSION AFTER VIEWING THE FILM/VIDEO

- What did you like about the film? What did you dislike? Was it scary? How did it make you feel?
- What choices did the heroine have?
- What would have happened if she had told the bridegroom's father who she really was? What do you think other people would have thought about her if she had told them? How would she feel about herself?
- What happened when she decided to keep silent? Is it possible she would have remained a Goose Girl for the rest of her life? Did she think about this when she was deciding what to do?

TO FOLLOW UP

- Ask students to imagine, and write, another ending to the story. In their ending, the bridegroom's father should not save her—she has to live with the choice she made.
- Read aloud Robert Frost's poem, "The Road Not Taken." Have students write an essay on a choice they wish they had made differently. This choice could be something important, like the Goose Girl's choice, or something less crucial.
- Present a familiar issue to the students (example: a student's friend is getting close to a third person that the first student doesn't like). Ask the class what their alternatives are in that situation. Have the students rank these alternatives and discuss why they are ranked that way.

SUGGESTED LESSON PLANS (Grades 7-9)

SUBJECT OF THE LESSON: How Characters Use External Events to Make Important Choices

This lesson is aimed at helping students explore why the main character makes the choice she does.

FOCUS FOR STUDENTS

Instruct students to watch what choice the Goose Girl makes in the story, and to think about why she makes that choice.

FOR DISCUSSION AFTER VIEWING THE FILM/VIDEO

- What did you most like about the film? What did you dislike? Why?
- What choice did the heroine make?
- Did she weigh the pros and cons of that choice before making it? Do you think she broke her holy oath when she confessed to the hearth?
- Are there situations in which people typically do not weigh the pros and cons of their choices? What are some reasons for not weighing choices? (Examples might include strong religious beliefs of political ideas.)

TO FOLLOW UP

- Have students analyze how the Goose Girl reached her decision and discuss whether they agree with her choice.
- Assign an essay in which students compare and contrast the decisions made by the Goose Girl and the maid—taking sides if they wish.
- Hold a debate on an issue such as whether the school's physical education requirement is reasonable. (More controversial issues could also be addressed in this activity.) Have the students discuss why they feel strongly about their positions.

SUGGESTED LESSON PLANS (Grades 10-12)

SUBJECT OF THE LESSON: How Characters Use External Events to Make Important Choices

This lesson is aimed at helping students understand, through an examination of the story, how external events in their own lives can be used to clarify their own positions on important issues.

FOCUS FOR STUDENTS

Ask students to watch how the events of the story force the heroine to face an inner conflict. Ask them to think about how this process might have relevance for their own lives.

FOR DISCUSSION AFTER VIEWING THE FILM/VIDEO

- What did you like most about the film? What did you dislike? Why?
- What conflict did the heroine of the story face, and how did the conflict come about?
- If the maid had never attacked her, would the heroine have discovered how much she valued her own word? Looked at that way, was the conflict in the story useful to the heroine?
- How do external events in your own life force you to face internal conflicts? How do you usually use these events and the conflicts that result from them? Do such events and conflicts change in your perception as you look back on them? Do events force you to make decisions you would not make otherwise? Are principles sometimes more important than personal happiness?

TO FOLLOW UP

- Aloud or in writing, have students discuss whether the Goose Girl's decision is relevant to society today. Do we still value honor, for example? What about her "sacred oath"? Which is more important today, keeping our word or telling the truth?
- Assign these questions for discussion in written or oral form: Are we the victims of external events, or do we have the ability to control our lives? Are both of these ideas true? If so, which is more important?
- For an essay, ask each student to choose a great man or woman from history. Have the students use their historical figures to write about these questions: Is it the times that make the man (or woman), or vice versa? Would the historical persons they chose still be great today?

7. *Jack and the Dentist's Daughter*

INTRODUCTION

“Jack and the Dentist’s Daughter,” is a specifically American folktale, adapted from a tale in an Appalachian story cycle. It is strongly related to the Grimms’ tale called “The Master Thief.” Featuring a predominantly black cast and set in small-town America during the early 1930s, it is a comical story about a clever hero who wins his true love by using his head.

Jack is a poor farmer’s son who wants to marry Emily, the daughter of the town dentist. The dentist won’t let him do so without a lot of money. Jack leaves home to find work, but circumstances force him to become a “Robin Hood” figure. Stealing from a group of thieves, he returns home well-off. But the dentist breaks his word and demands that Jack “steal” the dentist’s own well-guarded car as a test.

Jack meets this challenge, but the dentist twice more requires that Jack steal something he names. Jack’s last performance is his best, and finally the dentist agrees to the marriage.

INTERPRETING THE STORY

This is a more contemporary, realistic story than some of the others in the series. But under the surface are age-old motifs of testing, ingenuity and persistence. The Grimms’ tale called “The Master Thief” (the source of the Appalachian tale from which this story is adapted) is a darker, more unresolved version of the same work.

Jack, the hero of the tale, is a character “type” called the trickster, found in tales all over the world. Some people feel that this character type goes all the way back to the god Hermes in Greek mythology.

Tricksters have to go outside the usual conventions of society in order to survive or attain their goals, and often they are very roguish or immoral. But in this film, Jack is a Robin Hood character, forced to steal when he cannot find an honest job. He steals from the robbers much as Jack steals from the giant in

“Jack and the Beanstalk,” proving his mettle by outdoing a group of formidable opponents. His “trials” after that incident (there are three trials, as in many tales of this type) help him gain a place in the world and win his true love. But his ingenuity is also enjoyable in itself.

Although the dentist is so respectable, he keeps breaking his word to Jack. He also uses his position in society to dominate poorer people like Jack. He thinks Jack is a common farm boy who won’t amount to anything. In fact, his attitude seems much like that of the princess toward the frog in “The Frog King.”

SUGGESTED LESSON PLANS (Grades 2-3)

SUBJECT OF THE LESSON: Using Identification with a Story’s Main Character to Address Life Issues

This lesson is intended to help students explore which characteristics and actions they liked or disliked about the two main characters in the story.

FOCUS FOR STUDENTS

Ask students to watch Jack, the hero of the story, and decide what they like and dislike about him. Ask them to do the same with the dentist, the father of the girl Jack wants to marry.

FOR DISCUSSION AFTER VIEWING THE FILM/VIDEO

- Did you enjoy the film? What parts did you like most?
- What did you like about Jack? What did you dislike about him? Why?
- What did you like about the dentist? What did you dislike about him? Why?
- How did you feel about the things Jack did?

TO FOLLOW UP

- Help students compare and contrast Jack and the dentist in terms of keeping their word, playing tricks, and being honest.
- Assign students to watch a favorite television program and report to the class on what things they like and dislike about the characters.
- Choose another folktale (“The Goose Girl,” for example) and ask the students to compare and contrast the Goose Girl with the maid.

SUGGESTED LESSON PLANS (Grades 4-6)

SUBJECT OF THE LESSON: Using Identification with a Story’s Main Character to Address Life Issues

This lesson is intended to help students explore their own views of right and wrong.

FOCUS FOR STUDENTS

Ask the students to think about Jack’s behavior as they read the story or watch the film, and about whether they think he is right or wrong in any or all of his actions.

FOR DISCUSSION AFTER VIEWING THE FILM/VIDEO

- What did you like about the film? What did you dislike?
- What did Jack do right in the story? What did he do wrong? What made those actions right or wrong?
- What did the dentist do right in the story? What did he do wrong? What made those actions right or wrong?

TO FOLLOW UP

- Discuss with the students why the dentist kept adding more tasks for Jack to do. Was he justified in doing so? Would the students have given up if they were faced with those tasks?
- Lead the students back to a time when they had difficulty deciding whether to do the right or wrong thing. Ask them whether right and wrong are sometimes determined by a situation.
- Ask each student to write a list of things he or she considers wrong. In discussion, compare the lists and help students find common elements.

SUGGESTED LESSON PLANS (Grades 7-9)

SUBJECT OF THE LESSON: Using Identification with a Story’s Main Character to Address Life Issues

This lesson is intended to help students explore the question of when and how unconventional behavior is justified.

FOCUS FOR STUDENTS

Ask the students to think, as they read the story or watch the film, about whether Jack’s behavior is justified, and if so, why.

FOR DISCUSSION AFTER VIEWING THE FILM/VIDEO

- What did you like most about the film? What did you dislike? Why?
- What justification does Jack’s desire to marry Emily provide for his “stealing” (in the case of the robbers and bootleggers) or “borrowing” (in the other cases)? What justification does Emily’s desire to marry him provide? What justification is provided by the fact that the dentist actually assigns him to steal (or “borrow”) the car, the preacher, and the sheet and ring? Are these good justifications?
- Does the end justify the means in real life? If so, under what circumstances?
- How does this apply to your own life?

TO FOLLOW UP

- “Anti-heroes” are often people who do good, but are unconventional and not necessarily liked. Have students debate whether Jack is an anti-hero. Think of examples in television, films, or literature. (Huck Finn would be one example from literature.)
- Assign a brief essay in which students identify the “wrong” action Jack did that they believe was most justified. Ask them to consider in the essay whether Jack hurt anyone.
- Lead the students to recollect ways in which they learned about right and wrong. Wrong is often learned through punishment—but were students ever rewarded for wrong deeds?

SUGGESTED LESSON PLANS (Grades 10-12)

SUBJECT OF THE LESSON: Using Identification with a Story’s Main Character to Address Life Issues

This lesson is intended to help students explore the issue of anti-heroes, charlatans, and tricksters. An

anti-hero is often one who does good, but is unconventional and not necessarily liked.

FOCUS FOR STUDENTS

Ask students to compare Jack with other story heroes (whether in folktales, other types of printed stories, popular films, or television shows) who skirt or flout social conventions in order to achieve their aims.

FOR DISCUSSION AFTER VIEWING THE FILM/VIDEO

- What did you like most about the film? What did you dislike? Why?
- What makes a hero like Jack appealing? Is he a fantasy character in the sense that he does things the audience often wishes it could do—and get away with? (Teachers might want to remind students of other “trickster” heroes—heroes who flout social conventions in order to accomplish certain goals, often because they must. Robin Hood and Jack in “Jack and the Beanstalk” would both be appropriate examples.)
- If Jack is a “master thief,” that means he commits crimes against property. Would he be as appealing if he committed crimes of violence?
- Are some tricksters more like anti-heroes? Do some of these heroes present serious dangers to society? If so, what problems do you see in the fact that audiences identify strongly with such characters?

TO FOLLOW UP

- Have students reflect on the things they might like to “put over on someone” because that someone “deserves” it. How did the students decide that these people “deserve” being tricked?
- Superman is a hero who is always on the side of “truth and justice.” Ask students to discuss whether Superman is really too fantastic for most people to identify with, compared with an anti-hero.
- Assign a group project in which students create a composite sketch (in words) of the person with whose qualities they would most like to identify.

8. Soldier Jack

INTRODUCTION

Note: "Soldier Jack" has some scary scenes. Teacher discretion is advised with audiences under 8 years old.

"Soldier Jack," an adaptation of an American Jack Tale, is set in rural America after World War II. Jack returns from the war and, through an act of kindness, receives two magical gifts: a sack that can catch anything, and a jar that can show whether a sick person will get well or die. Jack uses the sack to catch a number of things, including three devils plaguing a small-town community. Later, he becomes a national hero when he rescues the President's daughter from a fatal illness by capturing Death in the sack. After many years in a world without Death, Jack realizes his mistake and releases Death into the world again.

INTERPRETING THE STORY

Folktales about death abound. There are tales that create explanations of how death came to be, tales of trying to cheat death, and tales of life after death. "Soldier Jack" could be part of this collection.

According to tradition, the Roman emperors rode in their chariots with a slave behind holding the laurel crown over the royal head and whispering, "Remember, thou art mortal" in the royal ear. "Soldier Jack" and other folktales in like fashion are one way of "whispering in our own ears about mortality."

It is interesting to note Jack's "progress" through this folktale. As the story unfolds, Jack's awareness of his place in the world and his responsibility to others increases. This enlargement of consciousness is a growth process which every person undergoes through life, making this an ideal film to stimulate discussion about life, living, aging, and dying.

The ending of "Soldier Jack" is very different from the traditional "And so they got married and lived happily ever after" of most folk/fairy tales. The necessity for death is seen in the unsentimental and accepting light of folk wisdom, and thus, the film can provide an easy way to involve viewers in thinking and talking about death.

RELATED READING

Tuck Everlasting, by Natalie Babbitt, a novel. (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1985) The Tuck family has drunk water from a rare spring and gained eternal life. They are doomed to remain the same age forever. Due to suspicions that are aroused if they remain in one place too long, they must always move on. A young girl discovers their secret and must decide whether to remain mortal or to gain eternal life with them.

"Tithonus" and "Venus and Adonis," two Greek myths.

"Everything hath a season," from Ecclesiastes, The Bible, Old Testament. A folksong "Turn, Turn, Turn" has the same words.

"The Crystal Moment," by Robert Coffin, a poem.

"Godfather Death" in *Grimms' Fairytales*.

THE JACK TALES

Books

The standard work on the American Jack tales is Richard Chase's *The Jack Tales* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1943). Chase's editing does a brilliant job of making the stories readable while preserving the oral, dialect flavor. He has been strongly criticized by folklorists, however, for tampering with his sources and obscuring the original versions. Still, this book is a good, accessible starting point.

Other sources which contain less "worked over" versions of the tales include:

Leonard Roberts' collections from the mountains of Eastern Kentucky: *Old Greasybeard* (Detroit: Folklore Associates, 1969); *South from Hell-fer-Sartin* (Lexington: University of Kentucky, 1955); and *Sang Branch Settlers: Folksongs and Tales of an Eastern Kentucky Family* (Pikeville: Pikeville College, 1980).

Duncan Emrich's volume *Folklore and the American Land* (Boston: Little-Brown, 1973) contains two tales from Maud Long, a relative of Chase's original

informants and a wonderful teller in her own right. She has also recorded several of the tales for the Library of Congress, and these are available on recordings.

For some Jack tales that found their way into the Afro-American tradition, see Zora Neale Hurston's wonderful Florida collection *Mules and Men* (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1978, originally published in 1935).

Journals

Scholarly folklore journals have printed a number of important collections which are not available elsewhere. These can usually be found in university libraries and can be photocopied for home use. They include:

Journal of American Folklore (JAF) JAF 1 (1888): 227-33 and JAF 3 (1890): 292-95. These are early records of Jack tales from Ohio and Massachusetts, showing the wide distribution of these stories in the last century. JAF 30 (1917): 209-213 contains other examples from Pennsylvania and Maryland. Isobel Gordon Carter's "Mountain White Folklore from the Blue Ridge," JAF 38 (1925): 341-368, is the largest and most important collection prior to Chase's work. Her informant for these tales was Jane Gentry, who was Maud Long's mother.

North Carolina Folklore Quarterly (NCFQ): several recent and important articles on surviving tellers within the Jack Tale tradition, including an issue devoted to Marshall Ward and Ray Hicks, another great teller from that large Beech Mountain clan: NCFQ 26:2 (1978); and a later issue on Ray Hicks, NCFQ 31:1 (1983).

Appalachian Journal, Winter, 1987, contains "Old Jack and the New Deal," an article by Charles Perdue about Richard Chase's early days as a folklore collector with the WPA Virginia Writers' Project. The article also features the original, unedited texts of Jack tales collected by Chase and his co-workers in Wise County, Virginia.

W. F. H. Nicolaisen's useful article, "English Jack and American Jack" appears in *Midwestern Journal of Language and Folklore* 4.1 (1978): pp 27-34.

Related Tales

Some European versions of our Jack tales can be found in volumes such as Jeremiah Curtin's *Hero Tales of Ireland* (N. Y.: Benjamin Blom, 1971), *Irish Folktales* (Dublin: Talbot St., 1956), and *Myths and Folktales of Ireland* (New York: Dover, 1975); Joseph Jacobs' *English Fairy Tales*, *More English Fairy Tales*, *Celtic Fairy Tales* and *More Celtic Fairy Tales* (New

York: Dover, 1967-68); Patrick Kennedy's entertaining nineteenth century collections *Fireside Stories of Ireland* (Norwood, 1975) and *Legendary Fictions of the Irish Celts* (Detroit: Singing Tree, 1968); and, of course, "Godfather Death" and others from the Brothers Grimm.

Background Materials

Books which provide useful background material on the Appalachian people and folkways include *The Foxfire Books* (Garden City: Anchor/Doubleday, 1972-1984), edited by Eliot Wigginton; John C. Campbell's *The Southern Highlander and His Homeland* (New York: Macmillan, 1922), a sympathetic and readable early cultural-geographic study, and, for a woman's perspective, the movingly written *The Spirit of the Mountains* by Emma Bell Miles, originally published in 1919, and reissued in 1975 by University of Tennessee Press. The recent Foxfire-style collection called *I Wish I Could Give My Son a Wild Raccoon* (Garden City: Anchor/Doubleday, 1976) contains an interview with Ray Hicks's cousin Stanley Hicks, also a crack storyteller. And the oral history collection called *Snowbird Gravy and Dishpan Pie* by Patsy M. Ginns (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982) also features Ray and Stanley Hicks, telling tales and talking about their lives.

Films and Videos

North Carolina mountain teller Ray Hicks has been featured in the Appalshop film *Fixin' to Tell About Jack*. The story he tells in this film is "Soldier Jack" on which Tom Davenport based "Soldier Jack."

Recordings

There have been several audio recordings of Jack tales by authentic mountain tellers, and additional recordings by revivalist tellers who have learned the tales from the original, oral sources. Recordings of traditional tellers include Ray Hicks, on the Folk Legacy label (FTA14). Ray's dialect is difficult but his telling is masterful, and the album notes include a booklet with complete transcriptions.

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SUGGESTED LESSON PLANS (Grades 2-3)

SUBJECT OF THE LESSON: Character Traits: Courage to Live and Die

Overcoming fears and learning courage is part of the maturation process of human beings. In this lesson, the focus is on courageous acts.

FOCUS FOR STUDENTS

Relate the idea that Jack's willingness to be adventurous and courageous helps him achieve his goals.

FOR DISCUSSION AFTER VIEWING THE FILM/VIDEO

- What did you like about the film? What did you dislike about it? How did it make you feel?
- Why did Jack give away both of his sandwiches when he had no money or means to get more food?
- What was the result of his generosity? How would Jack's life have been different if he had eaten his sandwiches himself?
- What was so unique about Jack that made it easy for him to stay overnight in the haunted house when most of the residents in the community refused to do so?
- Have you ever done something that most of your friends told you would be too scary for them? What did you do?
- In what ways are Jack's actions, such as staying in the haunted house and rescuing the President's daughter related to his duties as a soldier?

TO FOLLOW UP

- Read "The Story of the Youth Who Went Forth to Learn What Fear Was," a folktale from Germany. Compare this tale to "Soldier Jack."
- Discuss and define the word "courage." Ask the students to write down examples of courageous acts generated from people they know, people in newspaper or magazine articles, or characters in books and movies. What is the difference between being courageous and foolhardy?
- Ask the students to write a short tale in the style of a folktale, in which they are the hero. Like Jack, they must endure certain trials. They are given the sack and glass jar to overcome any obstacles.

SUGGESTED LESSON PLANS (Grades 4-6)

SUBJECT OF THE LESSON: Character Traits: Courage to Live and Die

The willingness to take risks separates Jack from other characters in this folktale. This lesson links his attitude about life to his attitude about death.

FOCUS FOR STUDENTS

Ask the students to trace Jack's attitude toward the events in the story, including the final scene when he opens the sack and dies. The willingness and fearlessness in his actions mark him as a heroic character.

FOR DISCUSSION AFTER VIEWING THE FILM/VIDEO

- What did you like about the film? What did you dislike? How did it make you feel?
- What motivated Jack to capture Death in his bag? Do you think he did the right thing? Why?
- What happens to a person's quality of life as one moves into very old age?
- Why does Jack hesitate before he opens the sack?
- How do you feel about everyone dying after Jack releases Death?
- How is Jack's attitude before he opens the sack similar to his attitude earlier in the story?
- Why is the young boy present in the last scene?

TO FOLLOW UP

- Write a letter to Jack asking him to free Death. Give your reasons for this request.
- Pretend you are the young boy at the end of the story who gets the sack for Jack. Write about your feelings and thoughts as you watch Jack release Death.
- Imagine you are the 206-year-old woman. Write to a friend who is only 12 years old. Explain your feelings, your sorrows and joys. Give the 12 year old advice about growing old.
- Read two or three Jack tales to the class. Discuss the varied personalities Jack exhibits in these stories.

SUGGESTED LESSON PLANS (Grades 7-9)

SUBJECT OF THE LESSON: Character Traits: Courage to Live and Die

This lesson directs the students to highlight Jack's choices and how they shape his attitude about death.

FOCUS FOR STUDENTS

Trace the motivation and direction of Jack's actions leading up to his own death.

FOR DISCUSSION AFTER VIEWING THE FILM/VIDEO

- Did Jack give his sandwiches away so he would feel good about himself? What motivated his actions? What was the result of his generosity?
- After Jack sleeps in the haunted house there is a grand celebration for him in his honor. Did he predict this before he decided to stay overnight? What was his true reward?
- Why did Jack want to save the President's daughter? How did Jack benefit from his action?
- How does Jack's decision to open the sack and release Death compare to his other actions?
- What good comes from Jack's final sacrifice?

TO FOLLOW UP

- Create a radio play that highlights the main incidents of the story. Present it to your class with sound effects, an announcer, and music.
- What if the President's daughter had died while Jack was trying save her life? Write out the possible change in Jack's attitude after her death.
- Read the Italian folktale "Jump Into My Sack" and compare the character Francis with Jack. Compare the way Francis uses the sack to the way Jack uses his sack.

SUGGESTED LESSON PLANS (Grades 10-12)

SUBJECT OF THE LESSON

In this lesson the students will explore Jack's attitude about death and ideas about eternal life.

FOCUS FOR STUDENTS

Ask the students to think about a world where death does not exist. Consider different views about death in different cultures.

FOR DISCUSSION AFTER VIEWING THE FILM/VIDEO

- Inventory attitudes of the group towards death. After viewing, compare and contrast their attitudes towards death with those presented in the story or film.
- Some people view death as the final stage of life. How do you view it?
- Some cultures deal better with death than other cultures. Is death hidden in our culture?

- Are we more interested in the early, younger stage of life that has to do with growth ambition, success, etc., than we are with the stage of decline and letting go? Are both these stages part of life, and should we consider them equally important?
- Why is eternal life a drawback for individuals? For communities? For the world?
- Would eternal life be a drawback in any way if you could always stay the same age?

TO FOLLOW UP

- Ask the students to work in small groups of four or five. Assign a short modern play in which they will determine the exact year and date the main character will die. For instance, one group may choose to have the character die at age 21, another at 30, another at 45, etc. How will the knowledge of the date of death make a difference in the life and attitude of the main character?
- Study attitudes and rituals surrounding death and dying in other cultures and report on these. Investigate the Pygmies of the Ituri Forest, the Eskimos, the ancient Egyptians, and Australian aborigines.
- Learn about euthanasia, especially in Holland where it is legally practiced. Discuss the issues and ethics surrounding euthanasia and relate these to the final part of "Soldier Jack."

9. Ashpet

INTRODUCTION

"Ashpet" is an American version of the Cinderella story, set in the rural South in the early years of World War II.

The title for Tom Davenport's film was borrowed from an Appalachian folktale collected by Richard Chase and published in his *Grandfather Tales*. "Ashpet" derives from the German "Aschenputtel," which is the title of the Grimm brothers' version of the Cinderella tale. The term originally designated a lowly, dirty kitchenmaid who tends to the fireplace ashes. There is also an English version called "Ashey Pelt."

INTERPRETING THE STORY

Ashpet's mother and father are dead, and the deprived and mistreated heroine is kept as a servant in the household of her weak stepmother and slothful stepsisters, Sooeey and Thelma. On the day of the Victory Dance, Ashpet is sent to the conjure-woman "Dark Sally" to fetch love sachets for her boy-crazy stepsisters. Sally reveals the secrets of Ashpet's heritage and arranges for the newly confident girl to "sparkle like a lightning bug" at the dance. A handsome and talented soldier is struck by Ashpet's beauty, and despite the machinations of Ashpet's jealous stepsister Thelma, he and Ashpet fall in love. Eventually, the step family get their come-uppance, and the independent Ashpet gets her man.

Fantasy played an important role in the lives of storytellers and it still does today. Sylvia Cassedy writes about fantasy and fairy tales in her book, *In Your Own Words*, "The ancient myth was fantasy in which gods, goddesses, and monsters provided the elements of magic that lifted it from the world of the real to the world of the unreal. But as men and women gained control over and understanding of their surroundings, their need to believe in a complicated system of deities diminished. With their changing beliefs came a change in the storyteller's treasury of make-believe figures. Gods and goddesses gave way to other, less powerful dealers in magic and enchant-

ment." Folktales continue the tradition of including magic and fantasy exemplified in the story of Ashpet.

CINDERELLA

by Ruth B. Bottigheimer

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In the course of the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries the Cinderella tale became one of the most popular oral folktales and published fairy tales in the Western world. A general book which makes this tale's place in the world folktale tradition clear is Stith Thompson's *The Folktale* (1946; Berkeley: University of California, 1977), a standard textbook of the folktale. ("Cinderella" is treated specifically on pages 126-130 and 255-256.)

Reference books for children's literature also offer a wealth of information about the history of "Cinderella" and the different ways in which the tale has been told. The recent (1984) *Oxford Companion to Children's Literature* by Humphrey Carpenter and Mari Prichard has a fine article on "Cinderella." Iona and Peter Opie's *The Classic Fairy Tales* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974) devotes ten pages to different versions of the tale and includes the first English translation of the Perrault version by Robert Samber in 1729.

The Cinderella tale has also seized the imagination of folklorists. In 1893 Marian Roalfe Cox published what was then an exhaustive study of 345 variants of the tale, which she systematically organized into the categories still used by folklorists (*Cinderella: Three Hundred and Forty-Five Variants of Cinderella,*

Catskin, and Cap o' Rushes...with...Medieval Analogues. London: Folklore Society, 1893). In the same year that it appeared, a flurry of scholarly responses was published in the journal *Folklore* by Alfred Nutt, Joseph Jacobs, and Andrew Lang. Marian Cox's work was carried further by Anna Birgitta Rooth in 1951, when she described and analyzed over seven hundred Cinderella tales in terms of their historical and geographical distribution (*The Cinderella Cycle*, 1951; rpt. New York: Arno Press, 1980).

The oldest documented Cinderella tale is a Chinese story of the ninth century about Yeh-Shen by Tuan Ch'eng-Shih, which has been beautifully retold by Ai-Ling Louie and illustrated by Ed Young (*Yeh-Shen*, New York: Philomel Books, 1982). This and other Far Eastern variants of the Cinderella tale have been described and analyzed by Nai-Jung Ting ("The Cinderella Cycle in China and Indo-China," *Folklore Fellows Communications* 213 [1974]). A broad-ranging set of essays on the Cinderella tale as it appears in different settings comprises *Cinderella: A Folklore Casebook*, edited by Alan Dundes (New York: Garland, 1982). Dundes provides a learned introduction to each of the eighteen essays. Very useful for the general reader are Dundes' reproductions of the texts of the three most frequently quoted historic Cinderella tales, those by Basile (1634), Perrault (1697), and Grimm (1819-1858).

Texts

The oldest of the Cinderella tales can be read in context as part of the tale collections in which they originally appeared.

Basile's tales, written in seventeenth century Neapolitan Italian, have been edited by N. M. Penzer as *The Pentamerone of Giambattista Basile* (2 vols, 1932; rpt. Westport CT: Greenwood Press, 1979). Wonderfully detailed notes for each tale demonstrate the interconnectedness among different tales and tale traditions.

Perrault's tales exist in three easily available paperback editions. The first is *Perrault's Fairy Tales*, translated by A. E. Johnson (New York: Dover, 1969); the second is *Perrault's Complete Fairy Tales* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1961); the third is a recent re-translation by John Bierhorst, *The Glass Slipper: Charles Perrault's Tales of Times Past* (New York: Four Winds Press, 1981).

The Grimms' tales are particularly interesting, because of the extensive changes introduced over the years in which Wilhelm Grimm edited the collection. The first version (published 1812) was essentially a German translation of Perrault, and it was only subsequently (1819 and later) that radical edit-

ing produced the episodes in which the wicked step-sisters cut off their heels and the birds pecked out their eyes. There are a number of complete English editions of *Grimms' Tales* (Pantheon, Doubleday, and Bantam), the last of which has useful notes.

American Cinderellas

In America, two very different Cinderella traditions exist. The more familiar to contemporary readers is the twentieth century one, but far more important to the film *Ashpet* is the nineteenth century American Cinderella who appeared over and over again in inexpensive booklet form from 1800 onwards, "Cinderella: or, the History of the Little Glass Slipper."

Recent work in the field of folk narrative indicates that cheap published pamphlets like these exerted a powerful influence on oral tradition, and thus it is centrally important that the nineteenth century American Cinderella in these chapbooks is a spirited heroine, far closer to Perrault's feisty maiden than to Disney's soppy sweetheart. For other American versions of "Cinderella" see "Ashpet" and "Catskins" in Richard Chase's *Grandfather Tales* (1948; rpt. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1976) for Appalachian Cinderella tales. Two British folk versions are "Ashley Pelt" and "Cap o' Rushes" in Katharine Briggs' *British Folktales* (New York: Pantheon, 1977).

Just as "Soldier Jack" tells the story of a resourceful young man, "Ashpet" recounts a tale of a quick-witted and adroit young woman. Several collections of tales have been published in recent years which stress these characteristics *Clever Gretchen* (Alison Lurie, ed.; New York: Crowell, 1980); *Womenfolk and Fairy Tales* (Rosemary Minard, ed.; Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1975); *Don't Bet on the Prince* (Jack Zipes, ed.; New York: Methuen, 1986); *The Maid of the North* (Ethel Johnston Phelps, ed.; New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1981); and *Tatterhood* (Phelps, ed.; New York: New York University Press, 1978).

FURTHER READING

Satu Apo, "The Structural Analysis of Marina Takalo's Fairy Tales Using Propp's Model" in *Genre, Structure and Reproduction in Oral Literature* (Lauri Honko and Vilmos Voigt, ed., Budapest Akademiai Kaido, 1980)

Ruth B. Bottigheimer, "Cinderella" (57-70) in *Grimms' Bad Girls and Bold Boys: The Moral and Social Vision of the Tales*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987)

Ilana Dan, "The Innocent Persecuted Heroine: An Attempt at a Model for the Surface Level of the Nar-

rative Structure of the Female Fairy Tale” in *Patterns in Oral Literature*. (Heda Jason, ed.; Paris: Mouton, 1977: 13-30)

Cynthia Helms, “Storytelling, Gender and Language in Folk Fairy Tales: A Selected Annotated Bibliography” in *National Storytelling Journal* (Fall 1989); previously in *Women and Language* (10 (1987): 3-11)

Toni McCarty, ed., *The Skull in the Snow, and Other Folktales* (New York: Delacorte, 1981)

James Riordan, ed., *The Woman in the Moon and Other Tales of Forgotten Heroines* (New York: Dial, 1985)

Karen Rowe, “Feminism and Fairy Tales” in *Women’s Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal* (6 (1979): 237-57)

Kay Stone, “Feminist Approaches to the Interpretation of Fairy Tales” in *Fairy Tales and Society: Illusion, Allusion, and Paradigm*. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986: 229-236)

Jack Zipes, *Fairy Tales and the Art of Subversion: The Classical Genre for Children and the Process of Civilization*. (New York: Wildmann, 1983)

SUGGESTED LESSON PLANS (Grades 2-3)

SUBJECT OF THE LESSON: Magic and Fantasy in the Folktale

Witches, goblins, and leprechauns use magic powers to transform princes into frogs or maids into princesses. This lesson will explore the magical and fantastic elements in the story.

FOCUS FOR STUDENTS

Ask the students to watch for the ordinary events and characters in comparison to the extraordinary events and characters.

FOR DISCUSSION AFTER VIEWING THE FILM/VIDEO

- Do you think the stepsisters, Sooeey and Thelma, treated Ashpet like their own sister? Why or why not?
- Why is Ashpet so loyal to her stepsisters and step-mother when they mistreat her?
- Read “Cinderella” and compare the fairy god-mother to Sally in “Ashpet.” Why do you think Sally is portrayed as she is?
- Does Sally put a spell on Ashpet so she will marry William?
- Why didn’t the love sachets work for the stepsisters?

- When Ashpet is dressed in her mother’s gown, she is strikingly beautiful to William. Why don’t her stepsisters recognize her in this outfit? Are they under a spell?
- Are you glad that Ashpet marries William in the end? Why do you think she deserves to fulfill her dream?

TO FOLLOW UP

- Write a modern fairy tale with a not quite human creature. You can make one of your characters a troll, a witch, a goblin, or a genie. Include some fantastic and magical elements.
- Write a modern fairy tale with a human being possessing magical powers. The character could be like Mary Poppins; someone who seems ordinary, but becomes extraordinary when she can fly holding onto an umbrella and cleans up rooms with lightning speed.
- Choose a magical thing and write a story about it. Some stories include magical lamps, carpets, wardrobes, or wands. Select a key, pencil, or toy that has the power to take you on a voyage anywhere.

SUGGESTED LESSON PLANS (Grades 4-6)

SUBJECT OF THE LESSON: Magic and Fantasy in the Folktale

The students will continue to discover the fantastic and magical elements in folklore.

FOCUS FOR STUDENTS

Included in the folklore tradition are superstitions, proverbs, riddles, and spells. The students will identify these elements in “Ashpet” and other similar tales.

FOR DISCUSSION AFTER VIEWING THE FILM/VIDEO

- Why was it so difficult for Sooeey and Thelma to solve Sally’s riddles?
- What superstitions did Sooeey and Thelma believe about Sally that made it difficult to communicate with her?
- Why did Sally insist that the two sisters had to answer her riddles before she would give them the love sachets?
- Did Sally put a spell on the sisters? Who could or couldn’t smell the perfume in the love sachets?

- Sally tells a story about a snake. What is its relevance to the story? Who are the “snakes” in the film? Support your conclusions.

TO FOLLOW UP

- Read “The Goose Girl” and discuss the meaning behind changing clothes in this story and “Ashpet.” What happens if we change our dress radically? Can we become someone we are not by dressing up?
- Read the Russian tale, “Vasilisa the Beautiful,” another version of “Cinderella.” Compare the main characters, especially Sally and Baba Yaga. What is similar or different about their personalities and magical powers?
- Have the students write proverbs reflecting the lessons in “Ashpet.”
- Write several riddles that Sally might have asked Sooeey and Thelma.
- Other characters would view the events in a different way. Rewrite the story from the point of view of Sooeey, the stepmother, Norman, or Dark Sally. What thoughts do they think? What words do they use?

SUGGESTED LESSON PLANS (Grades 7-9)

SUBJECT OF THE LESSON: Magic and Fantasy in the Folktale

The objective for this lesson is to study the elements in the folktale pattern and the important motifs in the story.

FOCUS FOR STUDENTS

Students will be able to identify patterns in folktales. Ask them to comment on some of the motifs:

- Rags-to-Riches
- The Heroine in Disguise
- Sibling Rivalry
- Aid From a Magical Source
- Recognition Through a Token
- The Fantastic Tale
- The Realistic Tale
- The Dance Scene

FOR DISCUSSION AFTER VIEWING THE FILM/VIDEO

- What elements of the folktale pattern does the story follow? For example: good vs. evil, once-upon-a-time and happily-ever-after, the magic

number 3 and 7, reward for good deeds, reclaiming a lost heritage.

- Read “The Goose Girl” and “Vasilisa the Beautiful.” Ask the students to list the elements of the folktale pattern. Why does Vasilisa’s mother give Vasilisa a magic doll? Why does Baba Yaga have three faithful servants? In “The Goose Girl,” the handkerchief the mother gives her daughter has three drops of blood on it. Why?
- Discuss how the film follows these motifs:
 - Rags-to-Riches
 - The Heroine in Disguise
 - Sibling Rivalry
 - Aid From a Magical Source
 - Recognition Through a Token
 - The Fantastic Tale
 - The Realistic Tale
 - The Dance Scene
- What is the significance of the lost shoe or slipper in this story?

TO FOLLOW UP

- Ask a group of students to research the significance of the numbers 3 and 7. Why are these numbers so prevalent in folktales as well as other myths?
- Write a modern tale that includes one or more of the motifs discussed in the section above.
- Imagine you are a fairy or a creature with magical powers. Write a story in which you transform persons into inappropriate forms for their environment. Relate the difficulties the person or persons encounter. For example: You could turn a student into a whale or a rodent.
- Write a feminist version of a well-known fairy tale.
- Ashpet is a circular folktale because it begins and ends in the same place: Ashpet’s home. Write an original circular folktale. Make sure you incorporate several elements of the folktale pattern.

SUGGESTED LESSON PLANS (Grades 10-12)

SUBJECT OF THE LESSON: Magic and Fantasy in the Folktale

This lesson will emphasize the difference between dreams and reality.

FOCUS FOR STUDENTS

Concentrate on the way dreams in folktales have an impact on the realities in thinking and decision-making.

FOR DISCUSSION AFTER VIEWING THE FILM/VIDEO

- Ask the students to relate their views on how the story perpetuates the American Dream, the dream for young women, and the dream that good will overcome evil.
- What brings Ashpet good fortune-magic or inner strength? Or a combination of the two?
- According to James Joyce, an “epiphany” is a moment of truth for a character. Describe the epiphany for each character listed and explain the event(s) that brought about this realization:
Thelma
William
Ashpet
- William discovers Lily (Ashpet) in one evening at a dance. How realistic is it for a person to fall in love instantly? How often does this happen in movies you watch? How often does this occur in real life? Do you think the folktales and movies influence our hopes of falling in love at first sight?
- How do you know Ashpet has entered a better life when she marries William? Think of the sequel to “Ashpet.” Would the sequel start with a scene in which Ashpet is cleaning the fireplace, cooking meals, or ironing clothes? How would the story appeal to you if she did not marry at the end? Instead, she would become a leader in the community, a businessperson, or a soldier herself.

TO FOLLOW UP

- Write the script for a realistic tale like “Ashpet.” Instead of falling in love instantly, Lily would have to date William for seven years. Give your main characters flaws so they appear more human. For example: Lily could be beautiful, but she sings off-key, or William asks Lily to dance and steps on her feet. How does this perspective make the story more or less appealing?
- The instant conversion to fame, beauty, and good fortune that is a theme of the Perrault and Disney versions of “Cinderella” is a dream young people, both male and female, yearn for. Describe an advertisement, a movie, and another story that also have this dream as their theme. Explain how

you feel about this dream. Write about the relationship between dreams and reality. Do dreams distract us from reality? Create future reality by giving us goals to shoot for? Express the reality that we all want but can never achieve? Prevent things from becoming real by providing them in fantasy?

- Design a set of questions that will help you discover whether people believe that individuals triumph through luck or through their own inner strength and determination. Conduct a survey at school and in your community and write up the results.

RELATED READING

“Hansel and Gretel” in *Grimm’s Fairy Tales*

“Cinderella” in *Roald Dahl’s Revolting Rhymes*, illustrated by Quentin Blake. New York: Puffin Books, 1984.

Mufaro’s Beautiful Daughters, an African tale written and illustrated by John Steptoe. New York: Lothrop, Lee & Steppard, 1987

Big Brother by Charlotte Zolowtow, illustrated by Mary Chalmers. New York: Harper & Row, 1982.

The Maid of the North: Feminist Folktales from Around the World, collected by Ethel J. Phelps, illustrated by Lloyd Bloom. New York: Holt, 1983.

The Moves Make the Man by Bruce Brooks. New York: Harper & Row, 1984.

Jacob Have I Loved by Katherine Paterson. New York: Crowell, 1980.

A Summer to Die by Lois Lowry. New York: Bantam, 1979.

10. Mutzmag

Because there are some scary scenes in the film, we recommend Mutzmag for ages ten and up. It is particularly effective in junior and senior high school.

INTRODUCTION

“Mutzmag” is an Appalachian variant of a Scottish tale, “Molly Whuppy,” brought to the United States by early immigrants. It is set in the Appalachian backwoods, circa 1920. Mutzmag is a 12-year-old girl who lives with her mother and her two abusive half-sisters, Poll and Nance, in a tumble-down shack on the edge of a cabbage patch. After their mother dies, the girls decide to leave the mountain shack and “seek their fortunes” in the city. On the way they encounter a witch and a simple-minded, but brutal giant who plot to kill and eat the girls. Thanks to Mutzmag’s quick thinking, the girls escape.

INTERPRETING THE STORY

Mutzmag’s role as the heroine of the story is the central focus. As Joseph Campbell wrote in his book *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*: “A hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won: the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man.” This is true of the adventure Mutzmag encounters too. She, like many heroes and heroines, manages to outwit the simple-minded giant and cruel witch with her own ingenuity and a few simple items.

SUGGESTED LESSON PLANS FOR GRADES 2-3

SUBJECT OF THE LESSON: Heroes and Heroines: Past and Present

The students will learn what distinguishes a hero or heroine from an ordinary person.

FOCUS FOR STUDENTS

Ask the students to highlight the characteristics that make Mutzmag different from her sisters. Relate her traits to current heroes/heroines in literature, movies, or daily life.

FOR DISCUSSION AFTER VIEWING THE FILM/VIDEO

- What did you like or dislike about the story or film? Why?
- Why does Mutzmag work so hard to follow her sisters when they leave home?
- How does Mutzmag know there is something unusual about the witch’s house? Why does she stay awake while her sisters sleep?
- Why does Mutzmag rescue her sisters when they have been so cruel to her?
- List some of Mutzmag’s outstanding qualities
- Make two lists: one of the realistic elements in the story and the other of the fairy and folktale elements. What effect does realism have on the folk/fairy tale aspects?
- Do you know anyone, a friend or a relative who has some of the same qualities as Mutzmag?

TO FOLLOW UP

- Make an illustrated picture map of Mutzmag’s journey.
- Ask the children to play the dinner game. They are to invite three people whom they consider to be heroes/heroines. There is no limit to the invitation. The person can be dead or alive. The students are to write down why they chose the person and what obstacles this person has had to overcome, if any.
- Read other stories about giants such as those listed below:

Inside My Feet: The Story of a Giant. Richard Kennedy, New York: HarperTrophy, 1991.

Iduna and the Magic Apples. Marianna Mayer. New York: Macmillan. 1988.

Jack and the Wonder Beans. James Still. New York: Putnam. 1977.

The Valiant Little Tailor. Jacob Grimm. New York: Oxford. 1980.

The Mysterious Giant of Barletta: An Italian Folktale. Tomi DePaola. New York: Harcourt, 1988.

- What characteristics do other giants have in common with the giant in Mutzmag? How are they different.
- Read Richard Chase's "Mutzmag" in *Grandfather Tales* and compare and contrast Chase's version with Davenport's version. Find reasons for differences between the Davenport story and Chase's story.
- Read passages from *The Great Brain*, a book by John D. Fitzgerald (New York: Dell, 1972) about a ten-year-old boy who outwits his friends. How is Tom (*The Great Brain*) similar to Mutzmag?

SUGGESTED LESSON PLANS FOR GRADES 4-6

SUBJECT OF THE LESSON: Heroes and Heroines: Past and Present

This lesson will introduce the basic framework of the heroic tale and touch on modern examples of heroes.

FOCUS FOR STUDENTS

Mutzmag, a humble 12-year-old outwits the witch and the giant using simple materials and her own ingenuity. This is the trademark of the hero/heroine. Who are modern day heroes/heroines?

FOR DISCUSSION AFTER VIEWING THE FILM/VIDEO

- Why is the giant and the witch portrayed as so evil and cruel? Do you know anyone in real life like them?
- Even though Mutzmag may not have the strength to defeat the giant or the speed to escape the dog, she returns to the house to kill the witch and giant. Why does she return?
- Why are we horrified when evil destroys good and delighted when good destroys evil?

TO FOLLOW UP

- Read the account of Odysseus and the Cyclopes in Edith Hamilton's *Mythology*. Compare the way Odysseus outwits the Cyclopes and the way Mutzmag outwits the giant.

- Think of movies or stories in which the hero/heroine tricks the dragon, witch, giant, or monster with his/her ingenuity and intellect rather than using physical strength. (Some examples: "The Princess Bride," "The Phantom Tollbooth,")
- Read passages from *The Diary of Anne Frank* or *The Miracle Worker* to generate a thoughtful discussion on present day heroines. What obstacles did these women have to overcome to stay alive?
- Ask the students to write a letter to one of their personal heroes or heroines. It could be a sports figure like Michael Jordan, who was cut the first year he tried out for the high school basketball team, or a man like Gandhi, who overcame tremendous obstacles to realize his vision for himself and his country. Tell why the hero/heroine is important.

SUGGESTED LESSON PLANS FOR GRADES 7-9

SUBJECT OF THE LESSON: Heroes and Heroines: Past and Present

The symbolism in this folktale allows the students to explore another dimension of the story.

FOCUS FOR STUDENTS

Highlight the symbolism of the characters, action, and journey. Continue to relate the significance of this story to the present.

FOR DISCUSSION AFTER VIEWING THE FILM/VIDEO

- What is a symbol? What do these symbols represent: a rose, an eagle, a snake, a cage?
- Compare the events that occur during the day with those that occur at night. Find reasons that explain why events occur at different times.
- Explain the symbolic meanings in Mutzmag's journey.
- Is this a feminist folktale? Support the position you take with evidence from the story.
- How does Mutzmag celebrate the ingenuity of Appalachian people?

TO FOLLOW UP

- Write an original legend, folk or fairy tale that incorporates elements of Greek or Roman mythology.
- Ask the students to analyze a film that they have seen that incorporates symbolism and horror. What are the examples of symbolism? Compare

the elements of horror in the film to Mutzmag. One example might be “The Wizard of Oz”

- List some of the modern day characteristics of good characters and evil characters. How are they similar or different to the ones in Mutzmag?

SUGGESTED LESSON PLANS FOR GRADES 10-12

SUBJECT OF THE LESSON: Heroes/Heroines: Past and Present

In this lesson the students will explore the traits that identify a hero/heroine in today’s society.

FOCUS FOR STUDENTS

Review the notion of Mutzmag’s role in the folktale and discuss her heroic qualities. Relate her qualities to people the students consider heroes or heroines. Research the life of a hero or heroine.

FOR DISCUSSION AFTER VIEWING THE FILM/VIDEO

- Why does Mutzmag return to the giant’s house after she has escaped the first time?
- List the traits that single her out as a heroine.
- Why do you think Mutzmag and her two sisters are so different when they grew up under the same roof?
- Read the story of Odysseus and the Cyclopes in Edith Hamilton’s book, *Mythology*. Compare the strengths of Mutzmag and Odysseus.
- Many famous individuals overcame obstacles to achieve their own personal goals. For example: Renoir kept painting when his hands were crippled due to arthritis. Helen Keller overcame her blindness and deafness and learned to communicate with her teacher. Beethoven composed some of his most sublime music when he was deaf. Daily, we hear about or see people overcoming obstacles such as illness, financial setbacks, poverty, and cruelty. What kind of obstacles do you, as students, face in your life? Do they prevent you from reaching the goals you have set for yourself? How do you outwit these obstacles?
- Name some of your heroes/heroines. Could a doctor who treats homeless persons for free be considered a hero? Why or why not?

TO FOLLOW UP

- How could humor, tenderness, or talent (musical, artistic, or dramatic) be used to outwit a giant, witch, or dragon? Write a short play in which the

hero/heroine uses one or all of these traits to outmaneuver an evil giant or monster.

- Choose a hero/heroine from this list and research this person’s life. Give special attention to the goals of the person and the obstacles he/she had to overcome.

Helen Keller	Ludwig Van Beethoven
Anne Frank	Aristotle
Golda Meir	Johann Sebastian Bach
Eleanor Roosevelt	Leonardo da Vinci
Harriet Tubman	Michelangelo
Mahatma Gandhi	Picasso
Cleopatra	Grandma Moses
Daniel Boone	Thomas Jefferson
Thomas Edison	George Washington
Madame Curie	Abraham Lincoln
Albert Einstein	Sitting Bull
Galileo	Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

- Some stories in literature and folktales present women as passive, silent, and unintelligent persons. Try to find stories that portray women as intelligent and strong individuals to compare to the stories that present them as passive. Compare and contrast the stories. Do these stories influence the way young women should behave and think today? Are you inclined to be friends with a girl like Mutzmag?

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The Women in the Moon: And Other Tales of Forgotten Heroines. Retold by James Riordan. New York: Dial, 1985.

Three Strong Women: A Tall Tale. By Claus Stamm. New York: Viking, 1990.

YOUNG ADULT NOVELS WHERE THE MAIN CHARACTERS USE THEIR WITS TO ACCOMPLISH TASKS:

No Kidding. By Bruce Brooks, New York: Harper, 1989.

The Talking Earth. By Jean Craighead George. New York: Harper 1983.

Julie of the Wolves. By Jean Craighead George. New York: HarperTrophy, 1973.

My Side of the Mountain. By Jean Craighead George. New York: Dutton, 1959.

The Endless Steppe. By Esther Hautzig. New York: Harper Keypoint, 1968.

The Contender. By Robert Lipsyte. New York: Harper Keypoint, 1967.

Calling B For Butterfly. By Louise Lawrence. New York: HarperStarwanderer 1982.

The Earthsea Trilogy. By Ursula LeGuin. New York: Bantam, 1972.

Find a Stranger, Say Goodbye. By Lois Lowry. New York: Archway, 1978.

Walkabout. By Jarnes Vance Marshall. New York: Sundance, 1959.

Lyddle. By Katherine Paterson. New York: Dutton, 1990.

Rebels of the Heavenly Kingdom. By Katherine Paterson. New York: Dutton, 1963.

Dogsong. By Gary Paulse. New York: Viking, 1987.

Hatchet. By Gary Paulse. New York: Viking, 1989.

Maniac McGee. By Jerry Spinelli. New York: Little, Brown, 1990.

The Stars Will Speak. By George Zebrowski. New York: HarperStarwanderer, 1985.

