

## Using Fairy Tales to Build Student Understanding and Classroom Community

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### Introduction and Rationale

“Once upon a time...” and “They lived happily ever after...” This familiar story starter and ending pair are what I, as well as millions of other people around the world, have grown up hearing. These are the stories we have heard since we were young, and hence dreamed of similar stories and story endings for ourselves. We all secretly hope to live a life, in which we will have had all of our hopes and dreams come true and live happily ever after. This is one of the reasons why I, as well as the students in my class, and countless others around the world are so drawn to these stories. Fairy tales show stories in which the characters are born into, or soon enter a life with struggle and pain, with hopes and dreams of finding a way to overcome the obstacles which they are dealt. Children, especially, enjoy these stories because it gives them hope in a world which can at times seem hopeless. Fairy tales open up our minds to dream of all the possibilities to overcome adversity and to persevere to reach our goals.

Fairy tales have always been my favorite stories growing up, probably for the same reasons that I mentioned above. This is why teaching fairy tales in the classroom has continually been one of my favorite units of study. Fairy tales fit well into the dramatic structure model, making the stories exciting and engaging to read, write, or act out. In most fairy tales, there is a lesson to be learned.

I work at an elementary school in Bear, Delaware. The school is part of the Colonial School District and serves approximately 1,200 students in kindergarten through grade five. The students that are enrolled in my school come from varying socio-economic and racial/ethnic backgrounds. A number of students receive free or reduced lunch. This upcoming school year, I have 21 students in my class. There are 11 female students and 10 males. There is ethnic and socio-economic diversity within the class. I have one student with special needs in my class and three students receiving ESL services. Due to these reasons, I will have to build and/or activate prior knowledge with my students, in order to give them meaningful instruction within this and other units of study.

Since many of my students come from less than affluent backgrounds, I believe that the fairy tales will resonate well with them. They will likely take the stories to heart, and listen to the underlying message which the story is trying to teach. They will see that no

matter where you come from, there is always a path of hope which can lead them to fulfill their goals and dreams, which of course as an educator, is what you want them to walk away from your class believing.

To enrich our students experience with fairy tales, the second grade teachers have planned a field trip to DuPont Theatre to watch the performance titled, *The Mixed-Up Fairy Tale*, presented by Page Turner Adventures. It is a fractured fairy tale encompassing different characters and parts of tales such as *Cinderella*, *Little Red Riding Hood*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Jack and the Beanstalk*, and more. The study guide for the performance mentions that the creators, Riley Roam and Kenny Mikey, combine Interactive Storytelling and Circus Skills. They enjoy using comedy to make audiences laugh and envision new ways of looking at stories and life.<sup>1</sup>

This performance will be the first encounter with fairy tales that my students have this school year. It will spark their imaginations and leave them yearning to hear and learn more about fairy tales and storytelling. They will enjoy watching the live performance, which may very well be the first time they have even seen a live performance. Their creative and dramatic juices will be flowing. It will create a climate of excitement and they will all want to act out their own stories, which will be the culminating activity for this unit.

This activity will show the students how people must learn to work together to accomplish something amazing. It will provide my students with a sense of community and bring them closer together, which is especially important for my students this year, as they seem to have trouble building and maintaining positive relationships with one another for whatever reason. I think that seeing this performance and discussing how the actors must work together, despite their differences, in order to accomplish their goal is important for the show to be successful.

My class will study fairy tales intensely, noting the different characteristics and elements which make them part of that genre. I want my students to understand that within each story, the characters have problems and that they must find a solution to the problem. They will examine the texts thoroughly to determine the moral or lesson of each and relate the lessons to their own lives in the real world. I also want them to understand that different characters can possess different points of view.

After studying the elements of a variety of fairy tales, I want my students to be able to act out these stories, practicing with the class as a whole, as well as in small groups. Ultimately, I want the students to create their own original folktales or fables, in groups, following the characteristics of the genre. They will work together to bring their stories to life and perform them in front of their classmates, their peers (from other classes), as well as for their parents. This will help them to develop a sense of working together as a

team, using their various talents to create finished products, and developing a sense of community and respect inside and outside of the classroom.

## **Objectives**

Students will be able to:

- Understand that oral storytelling was a huge part of our ancestors' lives and was passed down through many generations.
- Understand that often the stories that were passed down were told for various reasons (to attempt to explain something not easily explained, to share a lesson or a value, to bring community together)
- Recount fairy tales and determine their central message, lesson, or moral
- Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges
- Describe the overall structure of a story/play, including describing how the beginning introduces the story and the ending concludes the action
- Acknowledge differences in the points of view of characters, including speaking in a different voice for each character when reading dialogue aloud

## **Essential Questions**

- Why do fairy tales provide lessons for others to learn? How can we use these lessons to better our own lives?
- How can the decisions a character makes within a story effect the outcome?
- How can understanding the characteristics of a piece of literature help us to better understand the story?
- How can we develop a character and bring that character to life, using theatre?

## **Content**

### **The Oral Tradition**

The oral tradition has existed since before recorded history. Since people of the past were not able to take pleasure in the same luxuries of entertainment available today, they enjoyed entertaining themselves with stories. The stories also brought with them a sense of community among those who shared them. People from all around the world told stories in their homes, around the campfire, while traveling, and more. They tried to explain unexplainable phenomena, such as findings in nature, and the beginnings of mankind and the universe. These early stories are now known to us in the form of myths, fables, legends, and folklore.

According to Robert Leeson (1977), oral tradition in Europe reached its peak during the Middle Ages. It was around this time that castle tales and cottage tales became popular. More ordinary people told similar stories; however the main character was

usually a young or underprivileged person who had opportunities to turn misfortune into fortune, such as using their kindness and wit to go from rags to riches and live happily ever after. Fairy tales, myths, legends, and folktales were sources of entertainment for all ages and some were eventually chosen to be the first books printed in Europe.<sup>ii</sup>

## Dramatic Structure

Dramatic Structure follows a simple outline, according to Professor Leslie Reidel.

**Introduction:** The introduction introduces the conflict or the potential conflict to the audience. If you think of it like a boxing match, it would be the moments before the match begins, where the players are being introduced, sometimes with motivating music to get the players and crowd revved up and ready to go, all while attempting to intimidate the opponent.

**Inciting incident:** The inciting incident the conflict will begin. In boxing, the bell is the inciting incident; at this time, the fight starts, and leaves the crowd excited and wondering, “What is going to happen?”

**Rising Action:** The rising action is the bulk of the story. It takes up approximately 75-85 percent. There is a constant back and forth, tug-of-war type action that keeps building and building. This gets the audience involved and thinking about the story, wondering what will happen next, and how will the characters ever overcome the challenges they are facing.

**Crisis:** Because the rising action cannot keep building and building, it eventually must hit a plateau. At this moment, something else has to happen, and that is called the crisis. The crisis is what you want to happen.

**Climax:** The climax is simply the fulfillment of something, the crisis. It is that moment when the audience feels a release of suspense. They no longer have to hold their breath and wonder what is going to happen.

**Resolution:** The resolution provides the audience with a sense of closure, however it is not the “end” as many people assume; it is actually a time for new beginnings for the characters. It allows them to begin the next chapter of their lives.

The dramatic structure is such an important piece in any story. It is what helps to keep the audience invested in the story, to help them to make connections, and take a piece of the story home with them as they live their own lives.<sup>iii</sup>

## Aristotle’s Elements of the Drama

Aristotle's Elements of the Drama include elements such as the plot, characters, thought/theme, diction, music, and spectacle. The plot is basically the sequence of events, which when articulated becomes the dramatic structure, mentioned above. The characters help to bring you into the plot. You can make connections with the characters which helps the audience come along on the journey of the story. The thought, or theme, is what makes the time you spent on the journey worthwhile. The diction are the words which help to differentiate the characters and bring them to life. The music can help to bring emotion during different scenes. For example, a slow, weepy song may make the audience feel a sense of sadness, while a loud, booming song will push the audience to experience feelings of fear or anger. Finally, the spectacle is the "stuff" such as the scenery, and noise machines. All the Elements of the Drama help to engage the audience and help them make connections to the story they are being told, through the theatre.<sup>iv</sup>

### Grimm Brothers

Wilhelm and Jacob Grimm were German brothers who were the oldest of six children. Both their parents had died by the time Jacob had reached the age of twenty-three. He was left responsible for his five younger siblings. They had suffered social hardships as a result. Wilhelm was more interested in his studies than Jacob, who preferred socializing and enjoyed the arts.

Both boys had attended law school; however, it was during this time period that they were introduced to folk poetry. They took a liking to it. In 1816, after a series of prestigious employment opportunities, the brothers worked diligently to create foundation for the stories that would make them famous. They used the challenges of the social and political changes during this era, as well as folk poetry, to influence their writing. The folk poetry expressed both sorrow and joy, and hopes and fears of humans.

The brothers published their first collection of two hundred stories, in which the intended audience was both adults and children. Their goal was to express the soul, imagination, and beliefs of people over the course of time.<sup>v</sup>

They gathered various folktales that symbolized their German language and beliefs, and listened to stories told by different storytellers within their country. They took these stories kept some features and elaborated on others to create the anthology. By 1823, the stories were published in different languages and read by countless adults and children all over the world.<sup>vi</sup>

### Hans Christian Andersen

Another popular author of fairy tales is Hans Christian Andersen. He was the first author known to generate and publish an original story. He used his own life experiences to create the stories. His life was the perfect set up for a rags to riches tale. He was born in Denmark and grew up poor, but came from a good family. Unfortunately, his father died

at a young age, after he had given Hans a puppet theatre, in which Hans enjoyed putting on puppet shows for others.

Hans went back to school to improve his writing abilities, and was made fun of for his looks. This may have been the inspiration he needed to create one of his stories, “The Ugly Duckling.” Hans became famous after his book, Life in Italy, was published. After that, he began to put together his book titled, Fairy Tales Told for Children.<sup>vii</sup> These stories are still enjoyed by children and adults, today.

### Cinderella around the World

*Cinderella* is a very popular fairy tale and has been retold in many different countries. In fact, there are more than five hundred known versions of this story that brings a young girl from rags to riches. The story likely originated in China around the ninth century from the story, “Yeh-Shen.” The modern *Cinderella*, which most are accustomed to hearing during the past 300 years, was likely authored by French author, Charles Perrault in the 1690s.<sup>viii</sup> The story has also been retold by a plethora of authors around the world.

The story often tells about a young girl who is forced to live with an evil stepmother and stepsisters, after the death of her own mother. Her father is often not present throughout the story, leading to tension between Cinderella and the jealous stepmother and stepsisters. In most versions, there is a ball where Cinderella meets a person of influence, and they are destined to be together after a lost article is found. There are a few versions of Cinderella, including, *The Irish Cinderlad*, which have a male protagonist.<sup>ix</sup>

### Yeh-Shen

The original version of *Yeh-Shen* is believed to be the earliest recorded version of *Cinderella*, written during the Tang Dynasty sometime between 618 A.D. and 907 A.D. The version of *Yeh-Shen* I will be focusing on for this unit was retold by Ai Ling Louie and illustrated by Ed Young in 1982. *Yeh-Shen* is the Chinese version of Cinderella. In this version, Yeh-Shen’s father had two wives. Each wife had a daughter, but then Yeh-Shen’s parents died and she ended up being raised by her stepmother. Her stepmother was jealous of Yeh-Shen’s beauty, so she gave her daunting tasks to complete. She gave Yeh-Shen small amounts of food to eat and Yeh-Shen lived a life of solitude, with the exception of a fish in her pond, whom she became friendly with. Yeh-Shen secretly fed her fish some of her own food, and when her stepmother found out about it, she was unhappy. She disguised herself as Yeh-Shen and killed the fish. Yeh-Shen was devastated, however a man told her that her fish’s bones held secret powers. Yeh-Shen talked with her fish daily and asked her fish for food, at times.

There was a Spring Festival, in which young women went in hopes of finding a husband. Yeh-Shen’s stepmother refused to let her go because she didn’t want Yeh-

Shen's beauty to distract the men from getting to know her own daughter. When her stepmother and half-sister had gone, Yeh-Shen cried to her fish's bones. The bones provided her with a beautiful outfit and small slippers on her feet, and so she headed to the festival. She entranced a man, and then she had to leave and return to the tree she had been ordered to look after when her stepmother got too close. She lost her shoe on her way back to the cave in which she lived, and the man got a hold of it and determined that he would wed the woman whose foot fit into it.

After unsuccessfully trying to find the owner, the king comes up with a plan to leave the shoes in a public place, which is being watched. Yeh-Shen takes the shoe late at night and tries to return the shoes to the fish bones. In that time, the king finds her and Yeh-Shen's fish bones are freed, leaving her with the fortune he had wished for her. Her stepmother and half-sister are dealt an unfortunate fate and are never seen again.<sup>x</sup>

### Irish Cinderlad

*The Irish Cinderlad* is a Celtic Cinderella tale written by Shirley Climo. The interesting thing about this version, is that the protagonist is a male. Typically, as we know, Cinderella is portrayed as a female.

In this version, a young boy named Beacon is left to live with his stepmother and three stepsisters after his mother dies and his father leaves on business. Beacon is teased about his large feet by his new family and barely given enough food to survive. Beacon runs away after his family finds out that he has been getting meals from a magical bull. The bull is his only friend, when the time comes for the bull to meet his destiny and leave Beacon for good, he finds out that the bull's tail is magical and wears it around himself as a belt.

As Beacon travels, he meets up with a giant and ends up with his boots. Soon after, he learns of the ritual of sacrificing a young girl. This year, the young girl happened to be the princess. After he observes and sees that no one will step up to help her, Beacon attempts to be a hero and rescue her, but not before encountering a dragon.

With the help of his magical belt, Beacon is able to rescue the princess, but then he disappears. He left behind an extremely large boot, and the princess stated that she will not stop searching until she finds the one who fits the boot. After searching, eventually, the princess finds Beacon and they are destined to be together.<sup>xi</sup>

### Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters

*Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters* is an African Cinderella Tale written and illustrated by John Steptoe in 1987. It was awarded with the Caldecott Medal for best picture book of that year. This story takes place in South Africa, which is now known as Zimbabwe.

In this version of Cinderella, two sisters, Manyara and Nyasha vie for the heart of the king. The girls, daughters of Mufaro, are both beautiful, however Manyara was jealous of her sister's kindness. She told her sister that she would be queen someday and that

Nyasha would be a servant in her castle. Nyasha was upset that Manyara said that, but she said she would be happy to serve her if that is what came to be.

In the meantime, Nyasha tended to her garden and befriended a small snake, whom she called Nyoka. Sometime later, a messenger came to tell the villagers that the King was searching for a wife.

Both girls headed toward his palace, though Manyara started off ahead of Nyasha in hopes of stealing the King's heart away before Nyasha had the chance. Manyara encountered a series of events, in which she reacted negatively. These events included a hungry boy, an old woman, and laughing trees.

In her travels, Nyasha encountered the very same situations; however, she reacted with kindness and compassion, which changed the reactions of those she passed in her journey. As Nyasha neared the King's palace, Manyara ran out of the chamber screaming that there was a large snake with five heads, and begged her sister not to enter. Nyasha went in anyway, and was greeted by the snake, Nyoka. Instantly, Nyoka transformed into the King and informed Nyasha that he was also the boy and the old woman, in disguise. He said that he knew she was the kindest and most beautiful girl in all the land, and wanted to marry her. Ironically, in the end, Nyasha became the queen and Manyara was her servant.<sup>xii</sup>

## **Strategies**

### Graphic Organizers

Graphic organizers are teaching tools used to help students better visualize and organize information. These tools can be used across all subject areas in a multitude of ways. Within this unit of study, I will use graphic organizers to create storyboards, determine the dramatic structure of the different versions of Cinderella, compare and contrast the different versions of Cinderella on a Venn diagram, discuss character traits, and plan out their own Cinderella story. When children are provided with the opportunity to display their knowledge in an organized manner, they are better able to make sense of it, remember it, and apply it.

### Think, Pair, Share

Think, Pair, Share is a strategy used to allow all students to participate in the given task. All students are given a question or prompt by the teacher, the students are then required to think about the question or prompt in their heads to get an idea which they will share with their partners. After both partners have had a chance to talk, the teacher has several students share out their answers. Students are able to respond to the shared answers for an opportunity for a fantastic discussion.

### Cooperative Learning



Cooperative learning is essentially group work. Working together to achieve a common goal is an important skill for children to learn. This school year, my students are struggling to get along with each other. I have had them work in groups and have mentioned that they have to be respectful of one another, and focus on the task at hand. In this model, students can work in a variety of ways. They have the opportunity to split the work up, utilizing their particular strengths, to complete the given task.

In this unit, my students will need to work cooperatively to analyze the different Cinderella stories we will read. They will also need to work together, as a team, to complete the culminating activity which will be to create their own version of Cinderella and ultimately, dramatize and act it out for their peers.

I am hoping that through the many opportunities for cooperative learning throughout the duration of this unit that my students will become more confident and will be able to find a way to work cohesively with a small group of their peers to successfully complete their tasks.

## Google Docs

Google Docs is an innovative way to incorporate technology, as well as collaborative work within (and outside of) the classroom. Using Google Docs allows multiple students to work on the same document at the same time, using their own devices. The document is live, and saves itself, which is helpful for young children, such as mine, who are just starting to become more comfortable getting used to the keyboard, typing, and using word processing systems. Google Docs is also useful because I, as the teacher, can see exactly what is or was occurring at any time. I can see who is putting forth effort, and who is not putting as much effort into the assignment. The best part is that students and teachers can access these documents from any device at any time. They can work in the classroom, in the computer lab, at home, in the library, and even in the car! My students will be able to share in this unique experience and work together to type their Cinderella tales on Google Docs.

## Classroom Activities

### Activity One- Dramatic Structure

*What is the dramatic structure of Cinderella?*

This lesson focuses on determining the dramatic structure of *Cinderella*.

Activating Strategy: Teacher will determine the students' prior knowledge by asking them if they have ever read or seen the movie *Cinderella*? Chart their responses.

Key Vocabulary: Introduction, Inciting Incident, Rising Action, Crisis, Climax, Resolution

Lesson: The teacher will read aloud *Cinderella* to the class. During and after the reading, the teacher will model how to determine the dramatic structure of the story by filling in a graphic organizer to demonstrate. Students will participate in the discussion, telling how each part fits into the structure. Additionally, literary and fairy tale elements will be discussed and placed onto an additional graphic organizer.

Assessment Prompt: Students will be assessed on their discussion participation, as well as their graphic organizers and summaries.

Summarizing Strategy: Students will write a brief summary of *Cinderella* and submit it through Google Docs.

Activity Two- Dramatic Structure

*What is the dramatic structure of The Irish Cinderlad?*

This lesson focuses on determining the dramatic structure of *The Irish Cinderlad*.

Activating Strategy: Students will recall the story of *Cinderella* read previously, and make predictions based on the title and cover picture of *The Irish Cinderlad*. They will share their ideas with a partner. The students will locate Ireland on a map or Google Earth, and view photographs of important locations in that area.

Key Vocabulary: Introduction, Inciting Incident, Rising Action, Crisis, Climax, Resolution

Lesson: The teacher will read aloud *Irish Cinderlad* to the class. During the reading, the students will actively listen for the elements of dramatic structure. After the reading, the class will discuss the dramatic structure and literary elements together to determine the correct information. This information will be placed on the students' graphic organizers, for them to use to compare at a later date.

Assessment Prompt: Students will be assessed on their participation in the discussion, as well as their completed graphic organizers and summaries.

Summarizing Strategy: Students will write a short summary of *The Irish Cinderlad* and submit it via Google Docs.

Activity Three- Dramatic Structure

*What is the dramatic structure of Yeh-Shen?*

This lesson focuses on the dramatic structure of *Yeh-Shen*.

Activating Strategy: Prior to reading *Yeh-Shen*, the students will jot down their predictions of the story based upon the cover. This may be more difficult task, as the title and cover picture don't show much for them to analyze and make inferences from. The teacher may decide to have the class participate in a "picture walk" through the book to give the students a better opportunity, in which to base their predictions. The students will locate China on a map or Google Earth, and view photographs of important locations in that country.

Key Vocabulary: Introduction, Inciting Incident, Rising Action, Crisis, Climax, Resolution

Lesson: The teacher will read aloud *Yeh Shen* to the class and students will complete a graphic organizer in which the dramatic structure and literary elements are emphasized. The students will share their ideas during a class discussion.

Assessment: Students will be assessed based on their participation in the class discussion, as well as the information they wrote on their graphic organizers and summaries.

Summarizing Strategy: Students will be asked to summarize *Yeh-Shen* on Google Docs and then share it with the teacher and a classmate for commentary.

Activity Four- Dramatic Structure

*What is the dramatic structure of Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters?*

This lesson focuses on the dramatic structure of *Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters*.

Activating Strategy: After looking at John Steptoe's gorgeous cover illustration of *Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters*, the students will talk to their partners regarding their predictions of the story. They will be asked to use their graphic organizers from previous days and discuss which elements may be similar and different to the other *Cinderella* stories read. The students will locate Zimbabwe/ Africa on a map or Google Earth, and view photographs of important locations in that area.

Key Vocabulary: Introduction, Inciting Incident, Rising Action, Crisis, Climax, Resolution

Lesson: The teacher will read aloud *Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters* to the class and ask students to complete both the dramatic structure and literary elements graphic organizers. As a whole, the class will discuss their ideas and be certain that the graphic organizer is filled out correctly.

Assessment Prompt: Students will be assessed based on class discussions, as well as how well they interpret the dramatic structure and literary elements of the story.

Summarizing Strategy: The students will write a brief summary of *Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters* on Google Docs, and share it with the teacher and a peer for commentary.

Activity Five- Compare and Contrast

*How can readers compare and contrast the dramatic structure and literary elements of different versions of Cinderella?*

In this lesson, students will compare and contrast the different versions of *Cinderella*.

Activating Strategy: Students will be asked to recall the different versions of *Cinderella* by reviewing their graphic organizers. They will turn and talk with a partner to tell them which story they liked best and some reasons why.

Key Vocabulary: Compare, Contrast, Literary Elements, Dramatic Structure

Lesson: Heterogeneous groups of four will work together to compare two different versions of *Cinderella* that were read in class. They will use a large Venn diagram drawn on chart paper to document their responses.

Assessment: Students will be assessed in three areas: their ability to find comparisons, their ability to contrast, and their ability to cooperate and work together to complete the task.

Summarizing Strategy: Students will work independently to use the information gathered on their Venn diagrams to write a comparison essay, which details similarities and differences between their group's two *Cinderella* stories. They will share their essays with a partner.

Activity Six- Research and Creating a New Version of Cinderella

*How can the story of Cinderella be adapted to create a new version, using new information researched about a country of origin?*

During this activity, the students will research a country of interest in order to use that information to create their own version of *Cinderella*.

Activating Strategy: Students will be asked to think of their country of origin or another country they would like to visit someday. They will be asked to find three or four classmates who are interested in the same country and form a group. Once in a group, they will brainstorm different things they already know or would like to learn about this country.

Key Vocabulary: Climate, Landforms, Places of Interest, Culture

Lesson: They will be asked to research their group's chosen country, using both books and the Internet, in order to create their own version of *Cinderella*, which will take place in that country. They will be required to provide a dramatic structure outline, which will incorporate different elements of their chosen country.

Assessment: Students will be assessed using a rubric which includes sections on narrative structures, ability to research, and cooperation.

Summarizing Strategy: Students will share their outlines with another group and give feedback in the form of positive work, and suggestions to make it better. Partner groups will ask each other questions they are still wondering about to help the other group improve their story outline.

Activity Seven- Creating Community with Performances  
*How can a play help to bring a community together?*

This activity focuses on bringing a community together by means bringing the students' *Cinderella* adaptations to life.

Activating Strategy: Students will be asked to recall a performance they attended in October titled, *The Mixed-Up Fairy Tale*, presented by Page Turner Adventures, at the DuPont Theatre in Wilmington, Delaware. They will write down three elements of the theatre which they remember on their dry erase boards. They will share these ideas with a partner.

Key Vocabulary: Theatre, Expression, Role

Lesson: Students will work in their groups and use the outline created in the previous activity to create a plan to bring their story to life. The students will be asked to choose roles to act out in their plays and determine how they can portray their story to the class in a meaningful way. They will plan "costumes" using different types of clothing, props, or masks they have at home or create in order to complete their task. The students will have time to rehearse their plays before putting their shows on for their classmates and peers in a kindergarten class.

Assessment: Students will be assessed on their performance, their level of cooperation, and the reviews they write for their peers.

Summarizing Strategy: Students will write a positive review of each group's performance, mentioning areas of strength, and areas to work on.

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## Appendix A

Common Core Standards for Second Grade

Grade 2 Students:

2.RL.3: Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges.

2.RL.5: Describe the overall structure of a story, including describing how the beginning introduces the story and the ending concludes the action.

2.RL.9: Compare and contrast two or more versions of the same story by different authors or from different cultures. (Cinderella)

2.RI.5: Know and use various text features (e.g., captions, bold print, subheadings, glossaries, indexes, electronic menus, icons) to locate key facts or information in a text efficiently.

2.W.3: Write narratives in which they recount a well-elaborated event or short sequence of events, include details to describe actions, thoughts, and feelings, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide a sense of closure.

2.W.5: With guidance and support from adults and peers, focus on a topic and strengthen writing as needed by revising and editing.

2.W.6: With guidance and support from adults and peers, use a variety of digital tools to produce and publish writing, including in collaboration with peers.

2.W.7: Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., read a number of books on a single topic to produce a report; record science observations).

2.SL.1: Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 2 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.

2.SL.5: Create audio recordings of stories or poems; add drawings or other visual displays to stories or recounts of experiences when appropriate to clarify ideas, thoughts, and feelings.

2.L.1: Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

2.L.2: Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

2.L.3: Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

In this unit, students will be using a multitude of grade two Common Core standards. They will determine how characters respond to challenges (2.RL3), see how the introduction of a story introduces the problem and the conclusion solves the problem (2.RL.5), and compare and contrast the dramatic structures of the different *Cinderella* stories read in class (2.RL.9). The students will also delve into text features of nonfiction text while researching for their own versions of *Cinderella* (2.RI.5). Additionally, students will practice their writing skills while writing their own *Cinderella* stories (2.W.3). They will revise and edit their stories (2.W.5), use digital tools to publish their stories collaboratively (2.W.6), and complete shared research (2.W.7). The students will also engage in practicing their speaking and listening skills by conversing with peers in small and large groups (2.SL.1), and clarifying their ideas with audio recordings or visuals (2.SL.5). Finally, the students will use proper English language when speaking and writing as they complete their assignments (2.L.1).

## Appendix B

### *Cinderella Fairy Tale Comparison Chart*



<b>Title</b>	<u>Cinderella</u>	<u>Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters</u>	<u>Yeh-Shen</u>	<u>The Irish Cinderlad</u>
<b>Country of Origin</b>				
<b>Characters</b>				
<b>Hero</b>				
<b>Villain</b>				
<b>Setting</b>				
<b>Magic</b>				
<b>Shoe</b>				
<b>"Three"</b>				



<b>Problem</b>				
<b>Solution</b>				
<b>Author's Message</b>				

Appendix C



*Dramatic Structure Comparison Chart*

Title	<u>Cinderella</u>	<u>Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters</u>	<u>Yeh-Shen</u>	<u>The Irish Cinderlad</u>
Introduction				
Inciting Incident				
Rising Action				
Crisis				

<b>Climax</b>				
<b>Resolution</b>				

**Appendix D**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Dramatic Structure**

<b>Title</b>	
<b>Introduction</b>	
<b>Inciting Incident</b>	
<b>Rising Action</b>	
<b>Crisis</b>	

<b>Climax</b>	
<b>Resolution</b>	

<sup>i</sup> <http://duponttheatre.com/childrens-series/>

[http://duponttheatre.com/downloads/studyguides/fairytales\\_studyguide.pdf](http://duponttheatre.com/downloads/studyguides/fairytales_studyguide.pdf)

<sup>ii</sup> Donna E. Norton 2003 p. 43-44 Through the Eyes of a Child: An Introduction to Children's Literature 6<sup>th</sup> Edition Merrill Prentice Hall Upper Saddle River, New Jersey

<sup>iii</sup> Leslie Reidel DTI Seminar 11/3/14

<sup>iv</sup> Leslie Reidel DTI Seminar 11/3/14

<sup>v</sup> <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/246228/Brothers-Grimm/2874/Beginnings-and-Kassel-period>

<sup>vi</sup> Norton 2003 p.50

<sup>vii</sup> Norton 2003 p. 51

<sup>viii</sup> ALA.org Multicultural Cinderella Stories May 2000 v.9 no. 5 Mary Northrup

<http://d.lib.rochester.edu/cinderella>

<sup>ix</sup> Mary Northrup Ala.org

<sup>x</sup> Louie, 1982

<sup>xi</sup> Climo, 1996

<sup>xii</sup> Steptoe, 1987

**Curriculum Unit Title**

Using Fairy Tales to Build Student Understanding and Classroom Community

**Author**

Leanna Vitti

**KEY LEARNING, ENDURING UNDERSTANDING, ETC.**

This unit focuses on building student understanding of dramatic structure through Cinderella stories. They will compare and contrast different cultural versions of Cinderella, and then use the knowledge gained to research a different country and create their own adaptations of Cinderella, based in the country that they chose. They will ultimately perform their adapted story for an audience of their peers.

**ESSENTIAL QUESTION(S) for the UNIT**

How do readers compare and contrast the dramatic structure of two or more versions of the same story?  
How can research be used in order to create an original fairy tale utilizing the information gained?

**CONCEPT A**

Dramatic structure is important part of stories.

**CONCEPT B**

Comparing and contrasting stories is helpful in gaining a better understanding.

**CONCEPT C**

Research can be used to create a sense of cultural knowledge within an adaptation, which can be acted out.

**ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS A**

How would you describe the dramatic structure of each version of *Cinderella*?

**ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS B**

How can we compare and contrast the dramatic structure and literary elements of different versions of *Cinderella*?

**ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS C**

How can the story of *Cinderella* be adapted to create a new version, using new information researched about a country of origin? How can this story be performed?

**VOCABULARY A**

Introduction, Inciting Incident, Rising Action, Crisis, Climax, Resolution

**VOCABULARY B**

Compare, Contrast, Literary Elements, Dramatic Structure

**VOCABULARY C**

Theatre, Expression, Role, Climate, Landforms, Places of Interest, Culture

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION/MATERIAL/TEXT/FILM/RESOURCES**

*Cinderella*. Walt Disney Productions, 2012. DVD.

Climo, Shirley, and Loretta Krupinski. *The Irish Cinderlad*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1996.

Louie, Ai, and Ed Young. *Yeh-Shen: A Cinderella Story from China*. New York: Philomel Books, 1982.

Steptoe, John, John Steptoe, and Lee Lothrop. *Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters: An African Tale*. New York: Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Books, 1987.