

Once Upon a Time: Exploring Fairytales and Folktales (Lesson 1)

Welcome to Forest Charter's **Once Upon a Time: Exploring Fairytales and Folktales** Enrichment Block Class! This first lesson will lead you to introducing the history of fairytale and folktales to your student. Each lesson that follows this will further examine a diverse collection of fairytales and folktales from around the world.

1. To begin, read this article with your student. This will help front load some valuable history about this genre of literature. [Origins of Fairytales](#)
2. Next, discuss the defining characteristics of fairytales and folktales. Below are some of the distinguishing characteristics of the two genres, but have your student add to this list of descriptors.
 - A **fairytale** is a traditional folktale involving imaginary creatures such as fairies, wizards, elves, trolls, gnomes, goblins and fire-breathing dragons.
 - A **folktale** is an anonymous story passed on through generations by word of mouth. Folktales are often timeless and placeless, with formulaic openings like: 'Once upon a time, in a faraway kingdom, there lived an old man and an old woman in a small cottage in the forest...' Folktales were told as a form of entertainment. 'Folktale' is a general term that can include a wide range of traditional narratives, such as myths, legends, fables and fairytales.
3. Create a list of fairytales and folktales that your student is familiar with. Write the responses on a whiteboard or piece of paper.
4. Next, you will read with your student an example of both a folktale and a fairytale (*Goldilocks and the Three Bears* and *The Princess and the Pea*). Don't define for them what genre each of the stories is upon reading. Have them guess based on their understanding of what a folktale and what a fairytale is after you finish the stories.
5. After reading each story, have them write 3-4 sentences about what they noticed while listening. What characteristics did each story possess that defined it as either a folktale or a fairytale?
 - [The Princess and the Pea](#) (fairytale)
 - [Goldilocks and the Three Bears](#) (folktale)
6. Extension Activity: Have your student draw and color their favorite scene from one of the stories. Because the two versions don't have pictures included, this will offer them a challenge to interpret what they imagined the scene looked like.