



PENGUIN
YOUNG READERS
GROUP

FOLKLORE AND FAIRYTALES

A guide to using traditional tales
and reimagined classics

ALIGNED TO COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS FOR GRADES K-3 AND 4-8





DEAR EDUCATOR,

Folklore has an important place in the classroom under the Common Core standards. The tales are perfect for reading aloud or for new independent readers, already familiar with the basic stories, to read alone. The standards call for students to pay close attention to words and illustrations, and learn to identify characters, setting, and plot. The many illustrated books in this brochure offer pictures that repay careful study and language enriched by imagery and the rhythms of oral tradition.

Folktales work beautifully for the Common Core emphasis on comparing and contrasting, an analytical exercise enhanced by graphic organizers. Even kindergarten students can point to key similarities and differences between the traditional song “Old MacDonalD Had a Farm” and Rachel Isadora’s delightful African version, *Old Mikamba Had a Farm*. Middle grade students will be able to analyze how fairy tales enrich novels like Jane Yolen’s *Snow in Summer: Fairest of Them All* and Nikki Loftin’s *Nightingale’s Nest*.

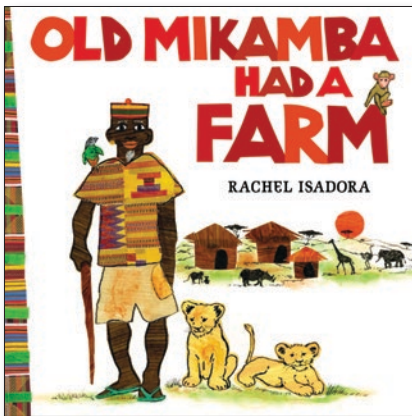
The stories revolve around themes children can understand and discuss, whether it’s the hard work of the third little pig or the sense of belonging in a version of “The Ugly Duckling.” The tales also connect readers to other countries from the Russian setting in Jan Brett’s *Cinders: A Chicken Cinderella* to the Chinese region of Xi Shuang Ban Na in *The Real Story of Stone Soup*. Teachers can keep a map of the world up and add a flag or pushpin for each international setting.

This brochure highlights traditional folktales, fairy tales, and modern takes on folklore. Organized by grade ranges of K-3 and 4-8, it offers succinct descriptions of each book along with activities that tie in with the Common Core State Standards. The activities encompass discussions, writing projects, art responses, oral presentations, and more, geared to different learning styles and the need for variety in classrooms. Keep in mind, too, that upper elementary and middle school students still love being read to. Folktales are perfect for reading aloud to older students with well-honed language skills to spark discussions about themes and language, and to use as a model for writing.

We hope you enjoy uncovering new spins on familiar tales and reimagining classics with your students today.

★ ★ ★ PENGUIN SCHOOL AND LIBRARY ★ ★ ★





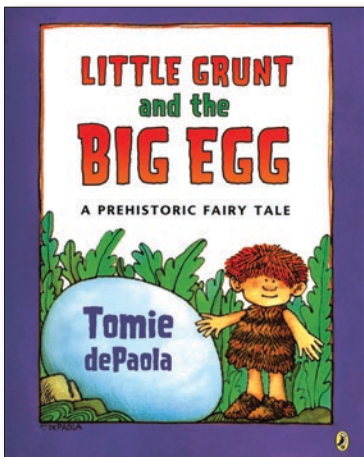
OLD MIKAMBA HAD A FARM

BY RACHEL ISADORA
9780399257407 • \$17.99
GRADES K-2

In this appealing combination of the familiar and unfamiliar, Isadora sets the folk song, “Old MacDonald Had a Farm,” on the plains of Africa. The farmer, Old Mikamba, has animals like baboons, elephants, and zebras instead of cows, sheep, and pigs. Children will recognize the rhythm and use it to learn new animal names and sounds. Isadora’s large, colorful illustrations work well for reading to a group. The mixed media pictures add information and emotion to the story. The final two pages recap each animal with a small picture and several intriguing facts.

RL.K.2 WITH PROMPTING AND SUPPORT, RETELL FAMILIAR STORIES, INCLUDING KEY DETAILS. Read this book with your students, sharing the pictures. Review with them the traditional song, “Old MacDonald Had a Farm.” Discuss the animals presented in Old Makimba, having students identify animals they recognize. Then divide the class into pairs or small groups, one for each animal in the book, and read aloud the information at the back of the book about each animal. Give each group a sign with the name of the animal and the sound it makes, or have them make the sign. Then have each group practice speaking their animal’s name and sound aloud. Read the book again while students arrange themselves in a line or circle, following the sequence in the book. Then sing the song as a class, with each of the pairs or small groups taking the lead when it’s their turn in the song. To add an art component, have students create simple masks to wear of their animal’s face.

AUTHOR TIE-IN: Rachel Isadora has retold several traditional tales, setting them in Africa and illustrating them with a style similar to *Old Makimba*. Gather these books and have children compare the illustrations for similarities and differences among the books.



LITTLE GRUNT AND THE BIG EGG: A PREHISTORIC FAIRY TALE

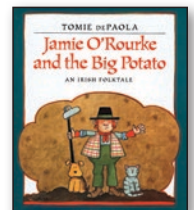
BY TOMIE dePAOLA
9780142411438 • \$6.99
GRADES K-2

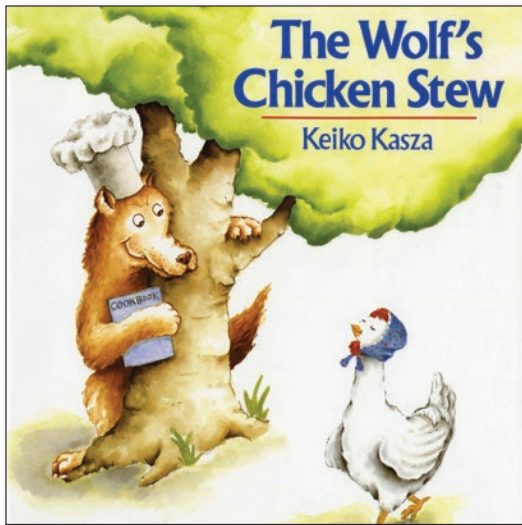
When his mother tells the caveboy, Little Grunt, to go gather eggs, the only egg he can find is huge. He drags it home where, to everyone’s surprise, it hatches out a baby dinosaur. Chief Rockhead Grunt lets Little Grunt keep the dinosaur until it grows too large. The boy and the dinosaur, named George, are heartbroken to part but they meet again just when it matters most. Only with the help of George can Little Grunt and his family survive the eruption of a volcano. The tidy illustrations create a vivid setting and add to the humor of this entertaining tale.

RL.K.3 WITH PROMPTING AND SUPPORT, IDENTIFY CHARACTERS, SETTINGS, AND MAJOR EVENTS IN A STORY. Read the book aloud to the class, sharing the pictures. Create a large chart on a whiteboard or flipchart that contains columns for setting, characters, and major events. Read the story again, telling students to pay attention to where the story takes place, and how they know. After this reading, ask students what they noticed about time and place in the story. When the group agrees that an answer or detail is right, put it on the chart. Do the same thing for characters and major events. After the chart is complete, divide students into small groups to draw a large picture of one of the events in the story. Then as a class, put the pictures in the right sequential order on a bulletin board.

AUTHOR TIE-IN: The non-profit website Reading Rockets has a video interview with Tomie dePaola. (readingrockets.org/books/depaola) It is broken down into small sections. Kindergarten students may especially enjoy the final, four-minute section, “Tomie dePaola Reads an Excerpt from Tom,” about his childhood and his relationship with his grandfather.

FOLKTALE TIE-IN: Students may also enjoy hearing dePaola’s *Jamie O’Rourke and the Big Potato: An Irish Folktale*, and comparing it to *Little Grunt and the Big Egg*.





THE WOLF'S CHICKEN STEW

BY KEIKO KASZA

9780698113749 • \$6.99

GRADES K-2

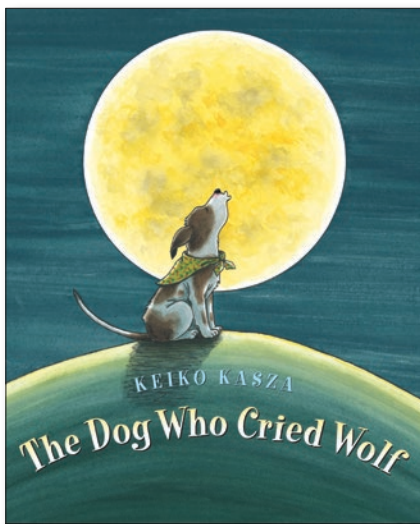
A wolf who loves to eat sets his heart on chicken stew. He spots a likely chicken but decides to fatten her up first. In a series of funny pictures, he bakes pancakes, donuts, and a tall layer cake and secretly delivers them to her house. Each time he proclaims, “Eat well, my pretty chicken. Get nice and fat for my stew!” But when he goes to capture the chicken, she and her many chicks welcome him with thanks for all the great food—and invite him to “a nice dinner.” The feel-good ending has him planning to bake cookies for the chicks.

RL.1.1 ASK AND ANSWER QUESTIONS ABOUT KEY DETAILS IN A TEXT.

Before reading the book to the class, lead a discussion about questions they might ask about any storybook. Students may come up with questions like: Who is in the story? What do they do? Where does it take place? Is it funny?

Sad? Exciting? Write the questions on a flipchart or white board. Add more questions that you think are important. Then read the story aloud, showing the students the pictures. After the first read-through, go through the questions with the class to see if they have answers. Then collect questions specific to the book that arose during the reading. Re-read the book aloud and have students answer those questions. For example, the wolf shows different emotions through facial expressions and body language which could lead to a question like: What is the wolf feeling on different pages? Use the general questions again for other books you read aloud, and have students compare some of the answers to see how stories are similar and different.

AUTHOR TIE-IN: Have students read some of Kasza’s other books and compare them to *The Dog Who Cried Wolf*. Here are some possibilities, along with *Wolf’s Chicken Stew* described above:



THE DOG WHO CRIED WOLF

BY KEIKO KASZA

9780399242472 • \$16.99

GRADES K-2

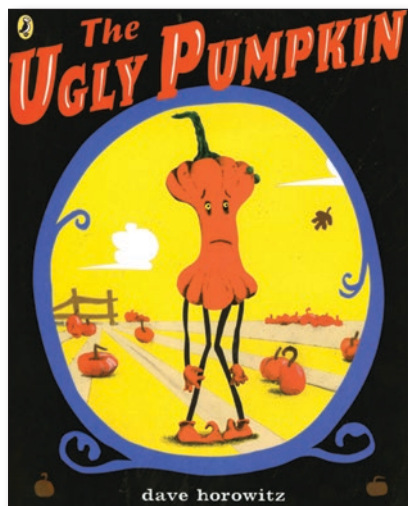
Life is perfect for the dog Moka, who enjoys his quiet life with a girl named Michelle, until one day she reads to him about wolves. Suddenly life in the wild, with its hunting and howling, looks attractive to Moka. So he sneaks away and runs off to the mountains, only to find that hunting for food is hard and real wolves are scary. Dashing back home, Moka has a joyful reunion with Michelle....until she reads him a book about monkeys. Pen-and-watercolor illustrations show a personable little dog both in his cozy home and venturing into the outdoors, where two-page spreads of the dark night make his adventure just a little frightening.

RL.2.7 USE INFORMATION GAINED FROM THE ILLUSTRATIONS AND WORDS IN A PRINT OR DIGITAL TEXT TO DEMONSTRATE UNDERSTANDING OF ITS CHARACTERS, SETTING, OR PLOT.

Read the story aloud to the class, without sharing the pictures with them. Have a discussion about how they saw the story in their

mind. What did the dog look like? What did Michelle and her house look like? Then read the book again, sharing the pictures, and follow up with how the pictures were similar and different than students had expected. Have the students break into small groups to study the pictures carefully. Ask them to come up with one thing not mentioned in the text that the illustrations add to each of three categories: character, setting, and event. For example, Moka runs away to a “high mountaintop,” but the text says very little about how it looks. The pictures show meadows and widely spaced trees. Gather together again as a class and have each small group share what they found.

AUTHOR TIE-IN: Keiko Kasza’s website has an extensive teacher’s guide with curriculum connections for many of her books: www.keikokasza.com/keiko/tguide.pdf



THE UGLY PUMPKIN

BY DAVE HOROWITZ

9780142411452 • \$6.99

GRADES K-2

With eye-catching illustrations, an animated orange vegetable tells a story of rejection and acceptance like that of Hans Christian Andersen's ugly duckling. The first person voice opens, "I am the ugly pumpkin," but readers who know their vegetables will recognize that the speaker is a squash. The poor vegetable is rejected three times in a row as a Halloween pumpkin, first by kids in costumes, then a skeleton, then finally a grove of scary trees. Only in November, near Thanksgiving, when it lands in a garden full of squash does light dawn and happiness follow.

RL.1.2 RETELL STORIES, INCLUDING KEY DETAILS, AND DEMONSTRATE UNDERSTANDING OF THEIR CENTRAL MESSAGE OR LESSON. One of the best ways

for young students to demonstrate their understanding of a story is through drawing pictures and using them to retell the tale. This story falls naturally into five visual panels:

the squash among the pumpkins; the three rejections from the costumed kids, skeleton, and trees; and the happy ending with the squashes. Alone or in groups of five, have children use a different piece of paper for each of the five panels, focusing on drawing the characters rather than the action. Then have them arrange the panels in the correct sequence and tell the story in their own words. Create an Ugly Pumpkin bulletin for the picture sequences. As a group, discuss the message of the story.

FOLKLORE TIE-IN: Since this book is so closely related to the Andersen tale, another approach would be to read both versions and have a class discussion comparing them. Two possibilities are *The Ugly Duckling* by Rachel Isadora and *The Ugly Duckling* illustrated by Robert Ingpen. As a class, use a Venn diagram to highlight similarities and differences.



THE THREE NINJA PIGS

BY COREY ROSEN SCHWARTZ, ILLUSTRATED BY DAN SANTAT

9780399255144 • \$16.99

GRADES K-3

Students will recognize the story of the three little pigs while enjoying the jazzy new setting and details. Frightened by the big wolf, three pigs—two boys and a girl—take up martial arts to be able to defeat him. The first pig tries aikido, but he gets bored. The second likes jujitsu but doesn't want to study hard. The third pig persists at karate lessons for months, so she's ready to take on the wolf if need be. Catchy rhymes tell how she defeats him without a fight, inspiring her brothers and winning the day.

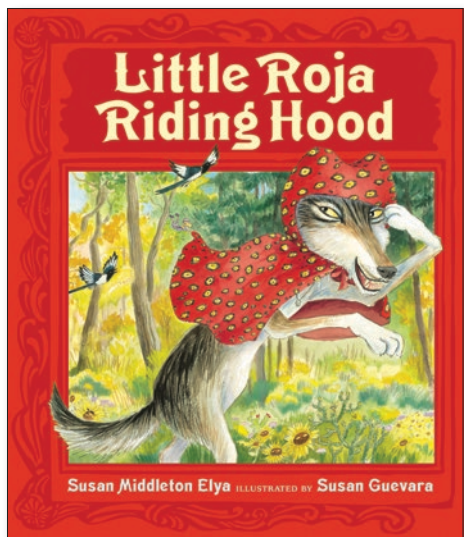
RL.2.2 RECOUNT STORIES, INCLUDING FABLES AND FOLKTALES FROM DIVERSE CULTURES, AND DETERMINE THEIR CENTRAL MESSAGE, LESSON, OR MORAL.

W.2.1 WRITE OPINION PIECES IN WHICH THEY INTRODUCE THE TOPIC OR BOOK THEY ARE WRITING ABOUT, STATE AN OPINION, SUPPLY REASONS THAT SUPPORT THE OPINION, USE LINKING WORDS (E.G., BECAUSE, AND,

ALSO) TO CONNECT OPINION AND REASONS, AND PROVIDE A CONCLUDING STATEMENT OR SECTION. Read the story aloud more than once, or have students who can read it on their own do so. Then have students write a paper about what they believe to be the "central message, lesson, or moral" of this folktale. Discuss with students how to approach a simple opinion essay with the basics described in the writing standard. A graphic organizer called a sandwich chart is a good starting point. It is shaped like a sandwich or hamburger with bread on top for the opening statement describing the central message; three sandwich fillings for reasons they think that's the message; and bread again for the concluding statement. When the students have finished their writing, have them share their papers orally to hear each other's opinions.

FOLKLORE TIE-IN: Encourage students to read Schwartz's *Goldi Rocks & the Three Bears* or Jon Scieszka's *The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs* and compare them to *The Three Ninja Pigs*.





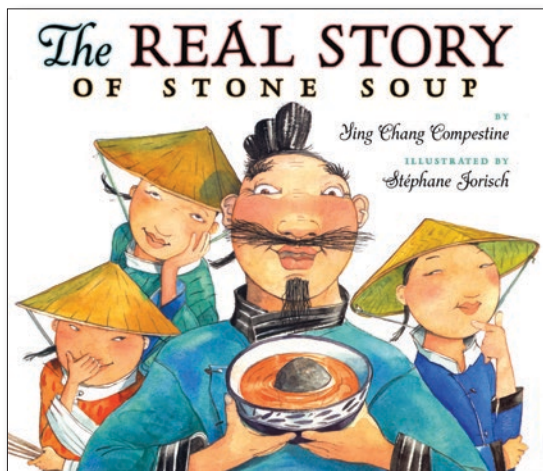
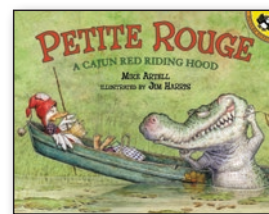
LITTLE ROJA RIDING HOOD

BY SUSAN MIDDLETON ELYA
ILLUSTRATED BY SUSAN GUEVARA
9780399247675 • \$16.99
GRADES K-3

This snappy version of “Little Red Riding Hood” opens with a Spanish/English glossary, preparing readers for the many Spanish words woven seamlessly into the rhyming text. A stylish girl in a colorful red cape and cowboy boots sets off on an ATV to bring her ailing grandmother some soup. She meets the wolf and starts to pick flowers while he sidles off, hoping to fool Grandma, who’s in bed using her laptop. Colorful energetic pictures extend the story that ends happily (with a new security sistema for Abuela’s house).

RL.2.9 COMPARE AND CONTRAST TWO OR MORE VERSIONS OF THE SAME STORY (E.G., CINDERELLA STORIES) BY DIFFERENT AUTHORS OR FROM DIFFERENT CULTURES. This version of a familiar story lends itself to comparisons to the traditional tale and other versions such as *Petite Rouge*

Rouge: A Cajun Red Riding Hood by Mike Artell. First review the basic story, having students recall the details that they know. Then read *Little Roja Riding Hood* aloud after showing them the glossary and explaining the role of Spanish in the book. Stop when necessary while reading to be sure the class understands unfamiliar words. Then read *Petite Rouge* aloud. It also starts with a glossary and intersperses Cajun words into the rhyming verses. Have the students re-read or look through the books on their own and then as a class discuss the similarities and differences in the three versions. Follow up with an art project where students take a word from the glossary, print it in Spanish and English, and illustrate it with a drawing for a “Visual Glossary” bulletin board.



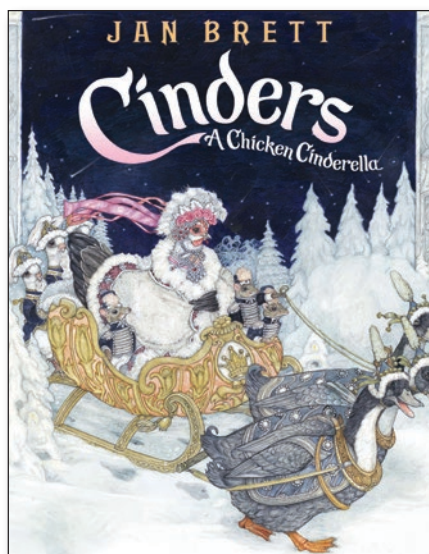
THE REAL STORY OF STONE SOUP

BY YING CHANG COMPESTINE
ILLUSTRATED BY STÉPHANE JORISCH
9780525474937 • \$16.99
GRADES K-3

One day, legend has it, some Chinese fisherman had to make lunch on a beach without so much as a cooking pot. How did they manage? This droll tale gives the answer, a different story than the European version of “Stone Soup” about travelers or soldiers who have only a cooking pot. In this case, the narrator, who owns a fishing boat, goes out with three helpers, the Chang brothers. When it’s time for lunch, the narrator explains how he invented stone soup, but the humorous ink-and-watercolor illustrations tell a different story.

RL.3.6 DISTINGUISH THEIR OWN POINT OF VIEW FROM THAT OF THE NARRATOR OR THOSE OF THE CHARACTERS. This tale presents a wonderful lesson in point of view. Read it aloud to the class once, showing the pictures. Discuss who is telling the story. Have students explain how they can tell it’s a first-person point of view. Then have them re-read the story on their own or in small groups, paying careful attention to the differences between what the narrator says and what the pictures show. For example, he repeatedly calls the Chang brothers lazy, yet the pictures show them working hard while the narrator lounges around. The Chang brothers’ facial expressions also show different emotions than their words do. Have students mark some of these differences with sticky notes, then meet again as a class to discuss what they’ve found.

GEOGRAPHY TIE-IN: Find a detailed map of China to share with children and locate the region of Xi Shuang Ban Na, which is the setting of this story.



CINDERS: A CHICKEN CINDERELLA

BY JAN BRETT
9780399257834 • \$17.99
GRADES K-3

In this sumptuous version of the Cinderella story, an outcast chicken called Cinders attends a ball and wins the love of Prince Cockerel. The large pages are filled with beautifully detailed pictures set on a Russian country estate in the past. Two pages open outward to create a four-page spread at the ball of the female chickens in gorgeous gowns and the males in elegant evening wear. The story plays out in the familiar pattern with Cinders losing a crystal slipper just before her carriage reverts to a pumpkin. In characteristic fashion, Brett adds to the story in detailed borders. A delightful variation on a well-known tale.

RL.3.4 DETERMINE THE MEANING OF WORDS AND PHRASES AS THEY ARE USED IN A TEXT, DISTINGUISHING LITERAL FROM NONLITERAL LANGUAGE.

Read the story aloud once, sharing the pictures. The story is familiar but Brett uses many words, some related to the unusual setting, that may be new to readers. Then

have students read it alone or in groups, jotting down words that are new to them. Have them try to understand the word in context and write down a possible meaning. Then come back together as a group to share and discuss the words. Have students choose a word to define and illustrate. Create a Word Wall for the book.

AUTHOR TIE-IN: Jan Brett's extensive website is loaded with ideas and activities for the classroom, some related to specific books and others for general use: http://janbrett.com/activities_pages.htm

Penguin's comprehensive guide to Jan Brett offers lesson plans and book pairings for teachers to integrate:
Penguin.com/commoncore

Have students read some of Brett's other folklore-related books:



TRADITIONAL TALES

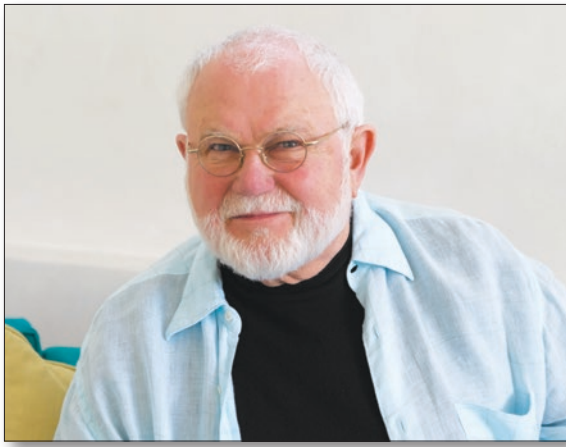


Beauty and the Beast by Jan Brett, *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* by Mark Buehner, *The Little Match Girl* by Jerry Pinkney, *Puss in Boots* by Jerry Pinkney, *The Little Red Hen* by Jerry Pinkney, *Rapunzel* by Paul Zelinsky, *Rumpelstiltskin* by Paul Zelinsky, *Hansel and Gretel* by Paul Zelinsky

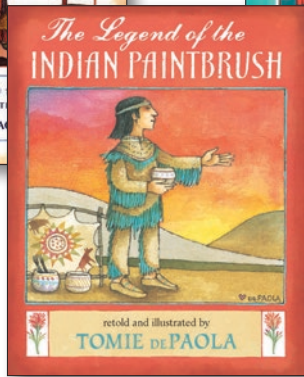
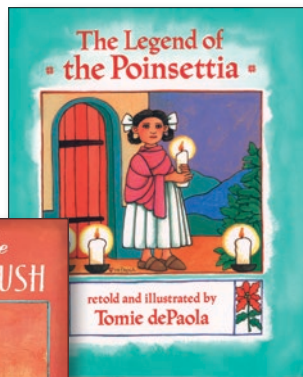
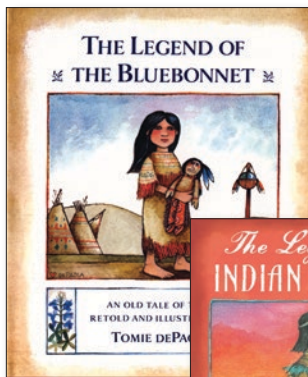
FRACTURED FAIRY TALES



Three Little Cajun Pigs by Mike Artell, *The Gingerbread Man Loose in the School* by Laura Murray, *The Gingerbread Man Loose on the Fire Truck* by Laura Murray, *The Stinky Cheese Man* by Jon Scieszka, *Falling for Rapunzel* by Leah Wilcox, *Waking Beauty* by Leah Wilcox



AUTHOR STUDY: TOMIE dePAOLA



THE LEGEND OF THE BLUEBONNET

BY TOMIE dePAOLA
9780399209376 • \$17.99
GRADES K-3

THE LEGEND OF THE INDIAN PAINTBRUSH

BY TOMIE dePAOLA
9780399214346 • \$17.99
GRADES K-3

THE LEGEND OF THE POINSETTIA

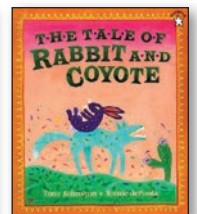
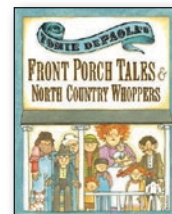
BY TOMIE dePAOLA
9780399216923 • \$17.99
GRADES K-3

Three legends about the origin of flowers come alive in Tomie dePaola's beautifully illustrated retellings. In the first, *The Legend of the Bluebonnet*, an orphaned Comanche girl sacrifices her most beloved possession to the Great Spirits in order to help her tribe. A hillside full of bluebonnets, the Texas state flower, shows that the spirits accept her gift. The story of the Indian Paintbrush, the Wyoming state flower, tells of a boy whose tribe lives on the Plains. While other boys learn to be warriors, Little Gopher pursues his love of painting, recounting his People's stories in art. His goal, to paint his Dream-Vision, brings with it the miracle of new flowers. In *The Legend of the Poinsettia*, a Mexican girl trusts that giving with love is more important than how showy the gift is. Her humble offering turns into gorgeous poinsettias. DePaola's carefully crafted, colorful illustrations expand the characters, emotions, and setting in all three legends.

RL.3.9 COMPARE AND CONTRAST THE THEMES, SETTINGS, AND PLOTS OF STORIES WRITTEN BY THE SAME AUTHOR ABOUT THE SAME OR SIMILAR CHARACTERS (E.G., IN BOOKS FROM A SERIES)

While these three charming legends share many features for students to compare, they are different enough to provide contrasts, too. Read all three aloud, sharing the pictures with the class. Have a general discussion about similarities and differences. Then have students break into small groups with all three books. They should re-read the books and study the pictures carefully. They should then take notes on similarities and differences, keeping in mind the categories of theme, setting, plot, and character. Have them create and fill in a simple chart with those four categories in one column and the titles across the top. Gather together as a class to discuss what each group found.

ILLUSTRATOR TIE-IN: Students may also enjoy reading *The Tale of Rabbit and Coyote*, retold by Tony Johnston and illustrated by Tomie dePaola. Have students compare the language Johnston uses to that of the tales above that dePaola retells. How are his illustrations similar in this book to the other books? How are they different?





AUTHOR STUDY: JANE YOLEN

The well-loved author, Jane Yolen, is a consummate storyteller with a love of folklore. Her books draw in readers with their strong plots and lively language. Her work lends itself to reading aloud and serves as an excellent model for students' own writing.



MERLIN AND THE DRAGONS

9780140558913 • \$7.99
GRADES 3-7

CURSE OF THE THIRTEENTH FEY: THE TRUE TALE OF SLEEPING BEAUTY

9780399256646 • \$16.99
GRADES 4-8

SNOW IN SUMMER: FAIREST OF THEM ALL

9780399256639 • \$16.99.
GRADES 5-8

RL.6.2 DETERMINE A THEME OR CENTRAL IDEA OF A TEXT AND HOW IT IS CONVEYED THROUGH PARTICULAR DETAILS; PROVIDE A SUMMARY OF THE TEXT DISTINCT FROM PERSONAL OPINIONS OR JUDGMENTS. In each of these three books, the main character's story has some components of a traditional hero's journey. Discuss the hero's journey pattern with your students. For example, the hero leaves home and encounters a different, sometimes magical world. The hero must solve problems and overcome obstacles, facing dangers along the way. Have students choose one of the books and analyze in a short essay how the plot reflects a hero's journey, citing specific details about characteristics and events.

RL.5.3 COMPARE AND CONTRAST TWO OR MORE CHARACTERS, SETTINGS, OR EVENTS IN A STORY OR DRAMA, DRAWING ON SPECIFIC DETAILS IN THE TEXT (E.G., HOW CHARACTERS INTERACT). *Snow in Summer* and *Curse of the Thirteenth Fey* take traditional fairy tales and give them new settings full of intriguing details. Have students read both books, taking notes about the time, place, and people involved. Then have them compare the settings in detail, noting geographical features, houses, furniture, transportation, and the like. Create a large Venn diagram for students to fill in with details from their reading to show similarities and differences in the settings.

RL.5.4 DETERMINE THE MEANING OF WORDS AND PHRASES AS THEY ARE USED IN A TEXT, INCLUDING FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE SUCH AS METAPHORS AND SIMILES. Read *Merlin and the Dragons* aloud or have students read it independently. Have them break into small groups and talk about the role of the dragons in the story. What role do they play in destroying the battle tower? Why are they different colors? What relationship do they have to the kings? What do the dragons symbolize?

WRITING.5.3-6.3 WRITE NARRATIVES TO DEVELOP REAL OR IMAGINED EXPERIENCES OR EVENTS USING EFFECTIVE TECHNIQUE, RELEVANT DESCRIPTIVE DETAILS, AND WELL-STRUCTURED EVENT SEQUENCES. Have students work in pairs to write an exchange of letters between the main characters in *Snow in Summer* and *Curse of the Thirteenth Fey*. The first letters should introduce the characters to each other, as if they had never met. The following letters should describe the problems they are facing, ask questions of each other, and give each other advice. **6.3:** Have students take a familiar fairy tale and give it a new setting, modeling their stories on the Yolen novels. Gather together fairy tale collections or single book versions of traditional fairy tales to give students ideas of possible stories. Discuss as a group the possible attributes of a changed setting, which could be a real geographical location and a specific historical era like *Snow in Summer*, or could be a different magical setting than the original tale.

★ ★ ★ FOR GRADES 4-8 ★ ★ ★



FOLLOW FOLLOW: A BOOK OF REVERSO POEMS

BY MARILYN SINGER

9780803737693 • \$16.99

GRADES 4-6

In this ingenious collection, Marilyn Singer creates “reverso poems” about well-known tales. The poems form a pair, each with the same number of lines. The second poem has the same text as the first, but the order is reversed so the last line becomes the first. Two voices speak in pairs such as two princesses sleeping on a stack of mattresses, one comfortable, the other disturbed by the pea. The hare and the tortoise each give their respective points of view, as do Aladdin and the Jinni of the Lamp. Colorful full-page illustrations divided in two reflect both voices.

RL.4.5 EXPLAIN MAJOR DIFFERENCES BETWEEN POEMS, DRAMA, AND PROSE, AND REFER TO THE STRUCTURAL ELEMENTS OF POEMS (E.G., VERSE, RHYTHM, METER) AND DRAMA (E.G., CASTS OF CHARACTERS, SETTINGS, DESCRIPTIONS, DIALOGUE, STAGE DIRECTIONS) WHEN WRITING OR SPEAKING ABOUT A TEXT. Read the first poem, “Fairy Tales,” aloud to the class. Have each student open their copy of the book to that page, or project the poem so everyone can see it. Discuss the formatting of the two poems and how the poet uses punctuation to change meaning. Then read aloud a version of “Puss in Boots” such as Jerry Pinkney’s beautifully illustrated retelling. Follow this with a reading of “Panache” from *Follow Follow*, which has the voices of the cat and the miller’s boy. Have students think-pair-share about the differences between the poetry and prose tellings. Come back together as a group to discuss the differences. To extend this exercise, gather together prose versions of the tales in *Follow Follow*. Divide the class into small groups with one of the tales and copies of *Follow Follow*. Have each group read the poems related to their tale aloud, with half the group taking one voice and half the other. Have each small group then compare the poems and the prose version of one tale, looking at differences in approach.

BOOK TIE-INS: Pair the Singer book with her other collection of fairy-tale based reverse poems, *Mirror Mirror*.



NIGHTINGALE'S NEST

BY NIKKI LOFTIN

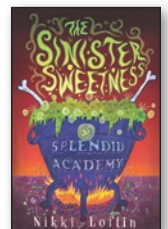
9781595145468 • \$16.99

GRADES 5-8

Life has been especially hard for Little John since a tragedy took away someone he loved—and he feels it was his fault. His father is angry and impatient, his mother sad and withdrawn. Little John feels helpless to change things. But when the 12-year-old starts helping his father cut trees for the local businessman known as the Emperor, he meets a mysterious young girl who needs his friendship. Gayle, a foster child in a harsh family, hides in trees and sings like a bird in a way that seems like magic. Little John wants to help her but he faces a nearly impossible choice between her and his family’s financial future. This beautifully written novel explores tragedy, hard choices, and the magic of friendship, enriched by echoes of Hans Christian Andersen’s “The Nightingale.”

RL.6.4 DETERMINE THE MEANING OF WORDS AND PHRASES AS THEY ARE USED IN A TEXT, INCLUDING FIGURATIVE AND CONNOTATIVE MEANINGS; ANALYZE THE IMPACT OF A SPECIFIC WORD CHOICE ON MEANING AND TONE. Before the class starts the novel, read them “The Nightingale” by Hans Christian Andersen. As students read with the novel, have them look for figurative language including imagery, metaphors, and similes to write in the reading journal. When they are finished reading, have them choose ten examples of figurative language and print each on a piece of paper. Create a “Words with Wings” bulletin board where they can post their choices. Print the figurative language on a handout and have students meet in small groups to go over the handout and discuss the imagery. Ask them to identify categories from which the language is drawn, such as language related to “The Nightingale;” to nature; to media like books or radio; and so on. Come together as a class to share thoughts about the categories and about the impact of figurative language on the reader.

AUTHOR TIE-IN: For another project, have students read Loftin’s *The Sinister Sweetness of Splendid Academy* and trace its connections with “Hansel and Gretel.”





A TALE DARK & GRIMM

BY ADAM GIDWITZ

9780525423348 • \$16.99

GRADES 4-7

Welcome to the Kingdom of Grimm! It's a darker, more exciting land than you may remember from the gentler fairy tales in children's books. In this trilogy, readers go on a series of harrowing journeys with fairy tale children, starting with Hansel and Gretel in *A Tale Dark and Grimm*. The brother and sister travel from their own fairy tale to other Grimm tales as they make their perilous way back to their parents. In *A Glass Grimly* follows the quest of Jack and Jill through encounters with goblins and giants and deceiving mermaids. Finally, in *The Grimm Conclusion*, twins Jorinda and Joringel meet "Cinderella," "Sleeping Beauty," and more on their scary way home. Guided by a funny, sarcastic narrator, readers will ride a roller-coaster of breath-taking danger through fairy tales like they've never encountered before.

5.6 DESCRIBE HOW A NARRATOR'S OR SPEAKER'S POINT OF VIEW INFLUENCES HOW EVENTS ARE DESCRIBED.

WRITING 5.3/5.3A Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences. Orient the reader by establishing a situation and introducing a narrator and/or characters. Then organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally.

Before students start the book, read the introduction and the first chapter aloud and discuss the narrator's voice. Introduce or review the idea of an omniscient narrator, and then the sub-category that is sometimes called "intrusive narrator," a voice that adds comments and opinions. Ask if anyone has read other books with a similar narrator. Have students brainstorm words to describe the narrative voice. Ask what the narrator adds, such as humor and foreshadowing. While students continue to read the first book or the whole series, have them make notes in their reading journals about the narrator's comments. When everyone has finished reading, have students meet in small groups to compare their journal entries and thoughts about the narrator's role. As a response to thinking about the narrator's voice, have students do a writing exercise, alone or in pairs, in which they take a well-known fairy tale not in the Gidwitz books and add an intrusive narrator to the telling. Have them share the results with each other aloud or by compiling a book of their tales.



AUTHOR TIE-IN: Find an extensive teacher's guide at the author's website:

adamgidwitz.com/sites/all/themes/gidwitz/pdf/A_Teachers_Guide_To_A_Tale_Dark_And_Grimm.pdf

ADAM GIDWITZ: IN DEFENSE OF REAL FAIRY TALES

Excerpted from his essay In Defense of Real Fairy Tales, which appeared on the Wall Street Journal Speakeasy blog,

In most fairy tales, the great wide world takes the form of a forest. Bruno Bettelheim, the great psychoanalytic interpreter of fairy tales, explains, "Since ancient times the near-impenetrable forest in which we get lost has symbolized the dark, hidden, near-impenetrable world of our unconscious." Forests are where our fears turn into wolves, our desires into candy houses, where our fathers turn us loose to fend for ourselves, where the emotional problems we face at home are physicalized, externalized, and ultimately conquered. Where tears are transformed into blood.

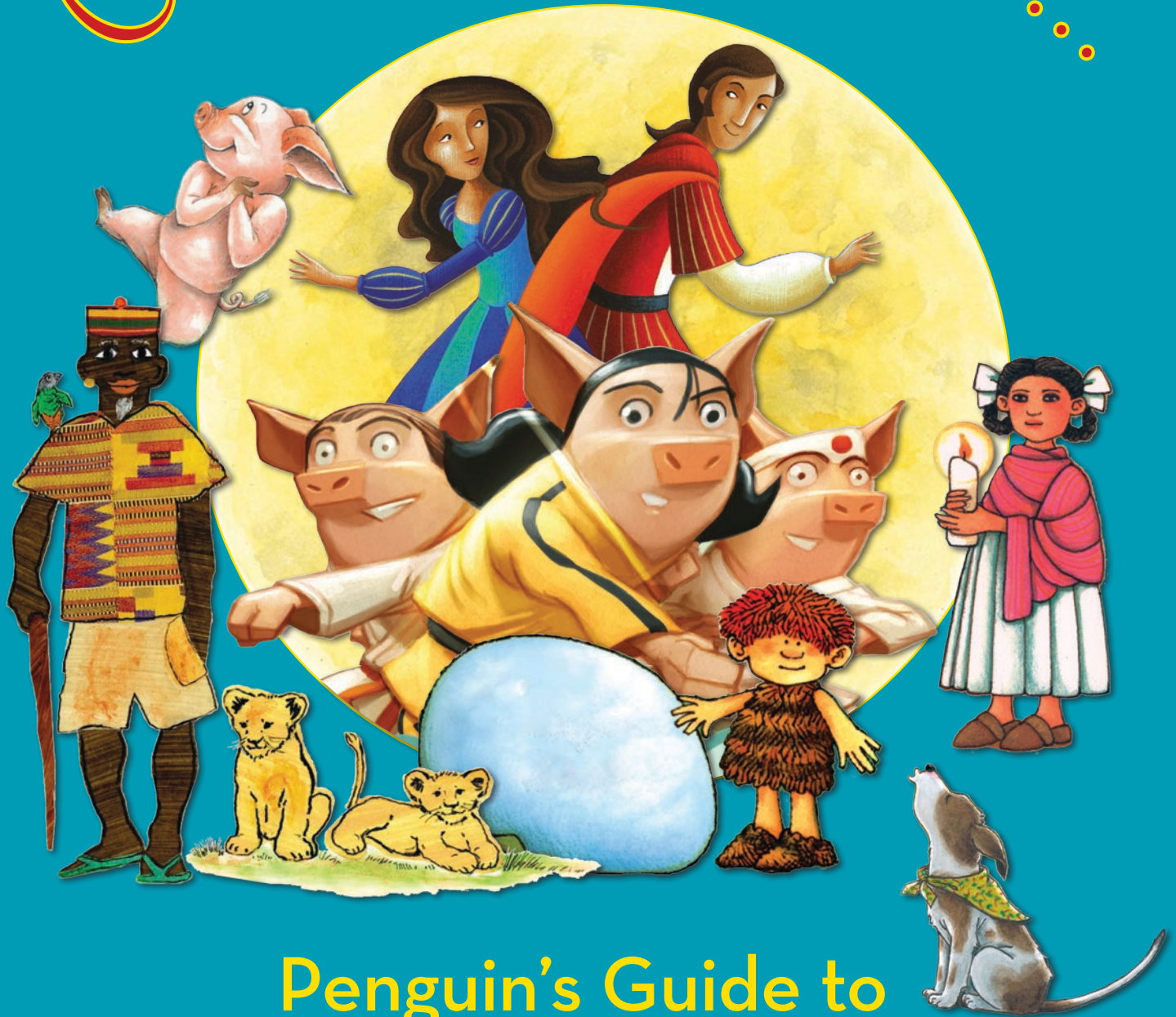


When I share the real, old, Grimm tales with children, I see them gasp and laugh and clasp their hands together and stare so hard I think they might fall over. But does this mean that children are benefitting emotionally? Or are they merely titillated?

Over the course of my career as a teacher and writer for children, I have become aware of one of nature's greatest gifts to both to children and their guardians. Children know what they need. Not that they are errorless—we still have to grab their hands before they rush into the street; we still must help them overcome their fear of the first day of school. But children, much more than adults, are unconsciously in tune with the developmental needs of their bodies and minds. Their play is more educational and emotionally salutary than anything a teacher or psychologist could prescribe. When a child is reading a book that he finds upsetting, he closes it and puts it aside (this is one structural advantage of books over movies, which move so swiftly and are so hard to turn off). And when the book contains new and needed wisdom, he will demand it again and again, until its lessons are mastered (much to the chagrin of the sleepy parent).

For the full essay, visit Adam's website: adamgidwitz.com/adams-blog/defense-real-fairy-tales

Once upon a time...



Penguin's Guide to Folklore and Fairytales

Access more Common Core material at
PENGUINCLASSROOM.COM/COMMONCORE

