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Grimms' Fairy Tales

The genre of fairy tales has had a bigger role on our society than what meets the eye. The part it has played in our lives can be seen as both a pro and a con by individuals. Fairy tales are arguably one of the things that has impacted child development as well as culture forming over generations. Fairy tales have undoubtedly aided in the developing of behavioural and emotional traits. For example, without noticing fairy tales could have affected the way you think today about say certain animals, or maybe digging deeper, fairy tales could have taught your developing child brain to accept or deny things like violence, or cruelty, even romance-- all things that are commonly found on fairy tales.

The first thing some think of when they come across the words fairy tales is of Disney. What most don't know is that some of Disney's most recognized fairy tales films are inspired by the works of the Grimm brothers, as well as other authors. Their work dates back centuries, with their initial release of "The Children's and household tales" in 1812. The Grimm brothers have written their own versions of known tales such as, *Little Red Cap* (which has been adapted to little red riding hood over time), *Cinderella*, *Rapunzel*, *Snow white*, *The Frog prince* and etc.

Fairy tale genre can be connected to diverse discourse communities. For starters we have the younger generations who learn about fairy tales from usually a parental figure. Fairy tales can also be associated with some early educational experiences: meaning fairy tales could be in the discourse of teachers and educators. However fairy tales aren't just limited to being used for

children's use. Fairy tales can also join the discourse group of politicians or literacists as they can often have hidden allegories behind them.

When thinking about the descendance of fairy tales people might think about the 1800's when they rose to fame, however fairy tales have been around long before the written page. *Wikipedia* has an abundance of information on the topic, "Tales were told or enacted dramatically, rather than written down, and handed down from generation to generation. Because of this, the history of their development is necessarily obscure and blurred. Fairy tales appear, now and again, in written literature throughout literate cultures, as in *The Golden Ass*, which includes *Cupid and Psyche* (Roman, 100–200 AD), or the *Panchatantra* (India 3rd century BC) but it is unknown to what extent these reflect the actual folk tales even of their own time. The stylistic evidence indicates that these, and many later collections, reworked folk tales into literary forms. What they do show is that the fairy tale has ancient roots, older than the *Arabian Nights* collection of magical tales (compiled *circa* 1500 AD)."

Although fairy tales aren't just for children and can be enjoyed by anyone who has an interest in fantasy, you often find it that it is kids who are usually directed towards them.

Fairy tales have all very similar with each other when it comes to form. In order for something to "classify" as a fairy tale it must contain things that are beyond reality. That is to have mystical beings or powers etc. Fairy tales also tend to have happy endings, however that isn't always the case. *good fairy tales have four essential ingredients, identified by Tolkien: fantasy, recovery, escape, and consolation.* When it comes to characters in Fairy tales it is crucial to have at least one antagonist. Without them a fairy tale can be missing that "Happily ever after" ending and a purpose within its structure.

Like with everything, different people have different opinions on fairy tales. Some believe fairy tales were and are crucial to the creation of culture and character, while others may think that fairy tales are an unrealistic and give the wrong expectations of life to our youth. There have been many critical and supportive articles and literacy works made around the controversial nature of fairy tales.

The 5 examples of fairy tales I have chosen were all written and adapted by the Grimms' brothers. *The Frog-Prince*, *Cat and Mouse in Partnership*, *Rapunzel*, *Fundevogel*, and *Little Red-Cap* all have similarities, but slightly different messages in the end, hence why I picked them. *The Frog-Prince* speaks about the story of a princess who made a promise to a frog who helped her, but never intended to keep her promise. However she was forced by her father to keep true to her word. In the end of it, the frog who turned into a described handsome prince married the princess. This fairy tale in particular is intended to teach people a lesson to keep their promises.

Cat and Mouse in Partnership Takes a very different route than the previous fairy tale. This is a fairy tale that has one of those unorthodox "bad" endings. In this tale there is a cat and a mouse who loved each other so dearly that they decided to live together. They had a bowl of food stored away for the winter, and they came to an agreement that they would save it for times of need. However during this time the cat deceives the mouse and eats all the emergency food by himself. When the time of need comes, and the mouse and the cat have nothing to eat the cat eats the mouse; shortly after the mouse had accused the cat of eating all the food. The moral of the story isn't left to speculation with this tale, as the last sentence is "That is the way of the world".

Fundevogel explains the tale of two step siblings that were able to defeat a witch because of their love and loyalty to each other. One sibling alerted the other of the evil witch's plan to boil him in a cauldron, even after she told the witch she wouldn't tell him.

Little Red-Cap, which many know as little red riding hood is about a girl who didn't listen to her mother's instructions and as a result of that ended up getting herself and her grandmother devoured by a wolf. However in the end they lived and the girl learned from her mistakes.

Although each story has its own unique message, all of these fairy tales can be categorized into life-lessons. When it comes to fairy tales there is always going to be the constraint of keeping things child friendly and relatively easy to understand. All of these tales talked about were directed toward children and the household. These fairy tales have no significant differences from each other when it comes to things like plot, except for *Cat and Mouse in Partnership*. The difference between *Cat and Mouse in Partnership* and the other fairy tales talked about is the way the story line is set up. As said before when one thinks of fairy tales we associate with happy endings, but in *Cat and Mouse in Partnership* the events that unfold tell more of a realistic outcome than mystical.

Rapunzel, one of the most recognized and familiar fairy tales is credited by the Grimm brothers, however they were inspired by the work of Friedrich Schulz who based his work from another artist's work, Charlotte-Rose de Caumont de La Force who was also influenced by the original tale of *Petrosinella* by Giambattista Basile. The reason *Rapunzel* stands out from the other selected fairy tales is because of its differently received messages to people. In *Rapunzel*, there is a wife and a husband who lived over a witch's garden. One day the husband stole

rampion from said garden because his wife desired what she couldn't have, even knowing that the witch could retaliate if she found out. When the witch found out, she demanded for the couples firstborn and in exchange she would give them mercy, the couple accepted to these terms and the baby was named rapunzel. When Rapunzel grew to be a beautiful girl, the witch isolated her from everyone but herself by putting her in a tower, whose only entrance was by climbing Rapunzel's hair. One day a prince heard rapunzel's singing voice and immediately took interest in the girl he couldn't reach. The prince stood around and found out that the only way up was through rapunzel's hair, and so he approached her. After time the witch found out that rapunzel had been having contact with a prince and had plans of marriage, when she did she banished rapunzel to a dessert to be with her unborn twins. The witch also scared the prince into falling off the tower, which made him blind. In the end of it, the prince found his way to rapunzel and her tears cured his blindness.

Although it may not be apparent after a first read, many conclusions can be made about the theme of *Rapunzel*. Some say that the theme of *Rapunzel* is desire, and that it can be compared to Adam and Eve with the apple of the forbidden tree as the rampion. Others may say that the theme of rapunzel is Freedom and Independence. *Rapunzel* critics have even made the conclusion that it is about Lust, the coming to womanhood, sex and pregnancy.

Because of all this it could be said that *Rapunzel* isn't just a kids tale, and that it's target audience is broad.

Like all fairy tales, *Rapunzel* is important to society because of its role in education, entertainment, etc "Children's literature helps a young child make sense of what it is to be human and helps them understand the world around them. ... One of the central reasons that fairy tales

are important is that they aid in child development". *Rapunzel* is also important to me and discourse communities who enjoy seeking the hidden meanings of literary works.

Personally, I believe the most important detail about *Rapunzel* is the mother's sudden addiction with what she can't have, a desire so strong that she felt she was dying. I find it significant that they were able to blend in literal complexity into a kids story.

Justineos

Once upon a time, when princes rescued princesses trapped in castles, and the witches lived in the woods and had a lot of power, there was a distant kingdom, whose prince named Justineos wanted to find love, have many children and become a just king.

Over the years, Justineos became a handsome young man, and one morning he decided to leave in search of a princess in distress, to rescue her and give her his forever love. After riding his horse for a while, he realized that he had reached what he thought was the end of the world, where he couldn't find any signs of civilization and the colors were gray.

What he did find, was a fairy who was passing by and decided he wanted to help Justineos, his name was the Distracted Fairy, the Distracted Fairy promised that upon returning to his kingdom, the young prince would find the great love of his life, sitting by the throne waiting for his arrival. The prince retraced his steps at full speed, but upon arriving at the castle he discovered that a giant onion awaited him.

With Confusion, the prince married the onion, and at night, he got used to withstanding her horrible smell. Over the years, the onion learned to speak, to recite poems and sing beautiful melodies, and the prince began to feel comfortable with his wife, who made him laugh and prepared exquisite soups with her own skin.

One day, the Distracted Fairy appeared in the kingdom, apologizing to the prince for his terrible confusion, for he had mistaken his spells and had to return the onion to its

owner and instead offer him the beautiful princess he had always wanted. However, Justineos flatly refused, having found love with his beloved onion.

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