



Myths, Folktales, and Fairy Tales

Guide for Curriculum Unit 79.04.02
by Nan Baker

Fairy tales, folktales, and myths speak to adults, teenagers, and children. They deal with basic human predicaments or problems. Although they often deal with fantastic events and magical creatures, they provide models for human behavior wherein heroes go out into the world and find secure places for themselves by making use of their bravery, their insight, and their intelligence. Even when these works contain some archaic word patterns and vocabulary, most are stories that students from sixth through twelfth grade who can read on grade level or above can comprehend at least on the surface level. I will propose ways to adapt the teaching of folktales, fairy tales, and myths to unsophisticated sixth graders, to sophisticated twelfth graders or to students who range in between. The unit contains lesson plans that deal with the stories on two levels: reading for understanding of the story's content and reading for understanding of the story's background and meaning. The main focus of the readings is the theme of the quest; suggestions will follow for the continuation of the unit with two other themes, choice and universal questions. A bibliography and list of suggested tales conclude the unit.

(Designed for use with average and advanced level English classes in high school.)

Key Words

Literature Fables Folklore Mythology Reading Instruction

<https://teachersinstitute.yale.edu>

©2019 by the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute, Yale University

For terms of use visit <https://teachersinstitute.yale.edu/terms>