

ENGLISH

(Teachers are advised to check these links for suitability before allowing children to access them)

Folk Tales:

During the course of researching the story of Beauty and the Beast, the author discovered many different versions from many countries. There are common threads running through them and each one contains the elements of a magical transformation with a counter-charm. This always seems to involve a handsome prince, who is transformed into an ugly creature, such as a toad or a bear. The ending is always a happy one and generally includes the kiss of a beautiful girl or her tears falling on the ugly creature, who is transformed back into a prince.

Follow this link to visit a website with a massive collection of folk tales, including no fewer than twelve versions of Beauty and the Beast:

<http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/folktexts.html>

Follow this link to children's folk tales:

<http://www.op97.org/instruct/ftcyber/alpha.html>

These links lead you to some versions of well-loved stories written by children:

http://www.internet-at-work.com/hos_mcgrane/folk/folkhome.html

Russian folk tales:

<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Delphi/6422/tale.html>

Classroom Activity: write a short story based on a well-known folk or fairy tale. You could invent your own names for the characters if you like. Why not update the story and set it in the twenty-first century?

Classroom Activity: write a short play based on a well-known folk tale. Use a template for your script and observe conventions regarding layout of the text. See the simple template provided as a WORD file on this CD or visit the BBCi writers room for free downloads of templates:

http://www.bbc.co.uk/writersroom/help/scriptsmart_downloads.shtml

Classroom Activity: there are a number of **proverbs** which may describe events or people in the play. Examples are: 'beauty is in the eye of the beholder', and 'it is in giving that we receive'. Can you explain these and perhaps find some more? Many stories have a moral. Aesop's fables are well-known examples. What do you think is the moral of this story.

Can you spot which character uses **alliteration** in his speech. This convention is also used to give dramatic weight to the prologue. Old English poetry used alliteration instead of rhyme. The finest example of this is Beowulf. The language of the poem is, of course, Old English (once called Anglo Saxon).

This link will lead you to a modern English alliterative translation:

<http://alliteration.net/beoIndex.htm>

Here is a link to Beowulf in Old English:

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/beowulf-oe.html>

And Beowulf read aloud in OE:

<http://www.engl.virginia.edu/OE/Beowulf.Readings/Beowulf.Readings.html>

An on-line Old English course can be found here:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/UofC/eduweb/engl401/site.htm>

There is more information about the conventions used in poetry at this site: (Poetry Handbook)

<http://www.shadowpoetry.com/resources/handbook/a.html>

This site contains advanced tips on poetry writing:
Tricks and Tips for Writing (advanced)

<http://alliteration.net/fieldgd.htm>

For more advanced students of poetry:

<http://www.danagioia.net/essays/eaccentual.htm>

HISTORY

In order to reinforce the fact that this is an English version of the story, Old English (Saxon) forms have been used in character and place names in the play.

For example:

Broc = badger

Frith = peace

Burg = stronghold (town)

Ham = home

Many character's names are also OE, such as Orva, Nelda, Wilda, Athelstan, Wulfstan, Wilfrid, Sigbert, Elvina, Hengist and Horsa.

Follow the link to Saxon names:

<http://www.earlybritishkingdoms.com/kids/placenames.html>

Much of the surviving OE literature takes the form of alliterative poetry (they did not use rhyme). This poetry follows a strict set of rules about how the alliteration occurs and where stresses fall. The greatest surviving poem is Beowulf. Follow the links on the English page to find translations and information about the poem.

The Saxons had a great tradition for storytelling.

Much of this was oral. Information on the Saxons:

<http://www.earlybritishkingdoms.com/kids/sax.html>

About Runes: <http://www.earlybritishkingdoms.com/kids/runes.html>

See also the Old English bible extract I have included at the end of these pages.

DRAMA

Classroom Activity: see if you can spot in which scenes these dramatic conventions are used:

- breaking the fourth wall
- use of narrator to update audience regarding the passing of time
- monologue
- mistaken identity
- use of disguise
- mime

Which scenes use comedy to lighten the mood?

The main plot is obvious but can you spot any subplots?

Which character develops a conscience and undergoes a transformation from evil to good?

Classroom Activity: improvise a dialogue in the style of Garmangarbis when he was struggling with the good and evil sides of his character in the forest.

ABRAHAM and ISAAC IN OLD ENGLISH

God wolde þa fandian Abrahames gehiersumnesse, and clipode his naman, and cwæð him þus to:

God wished to test Abraham's obedience, and called his name, and said this to him:

'Nim þinne ancennedan sunu Isaac, þe þu lufast, and far to þam lande Visionis hraðe, and geoffra hine þær uppan anre dune.'

Take your first-born son, Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land Visionis quickly, and offer him up there on the mountain.

Abraham þa aras on þære ilcan nihte, and ferde mid twam cnapum to þam fierlenan lande, and Isaac samod, on assum ridende.

Abraham then arose that same night, and travelled with two companions to that distant land, and Isaac also, riding on a donkey.

Þa on þam þridan dæge, þa hie þa dune gesawon þær þær hie to scoldon to ofsleanne Isaac, þa cwæð Abraham to þam twam cnapum þus:

Then, on the third day, when they saw the mountain on which he was to sacrifice Isaac, then Abraham spoke to the two companions thus:

'Anbidiað eow her mid þam assum sume hwile. Ic and þæt cild gað unc to gebiddenne, and we siððan cumað sona eft to eow.'

Wait here with the donkey for a while. I will go with the child to pray, and we will soon return to you.

Abraham þa het Isaac beran þone wudu to þære stowe, and he self bær his sweord and fyr.

Abraham then commanded Isaac to carry the wood to that place, and he himself carried his dagger and fire.

Isaac þa ascode Abraham his fæder: 'Fæder min, ic ascie hwær seo offrung sie; her is wudu and fyr.'

Isaac then asked Abraham his father, my father, I ask where the offering is; here is wood and fire.

Him andwyrde se fæder, 'God foresceawað, mine sunu, him self þa offrunge.'

His father answered him, God will provide the offering himself, my son.

(Please note that this is the author's own translation and is not scholarly.)