

TRADITIONAL LITERATURE

Traditional Literature is also referred to as Folklore or folk Literature. It encompasses the rituals, customs, superstitions, and manners of a particular group that are passed orally or in writing from one generation to the next. It is described as being “a window through which children in today’s world may view cultures of long ago.” The retellings of a tale may differ from the tale due to the oral traditions. The picture book versions of traditional literature list the story as being told by, retold by, etc. There is no actual author.

There are sub-genres that make up traditional literature. These sub genres are:

1. Animal Stories: Deals with Anthropomorphism – *The Three bears, Chicken Little, the Lion and the Mouse.*
2. Trickster Tales: The story revolves around a trickster, someone who gets others in trouble – *Brer Rabbit, Anansi the Siper, Roadrunner.*
3. Pourquoi Tales: The story explains why something happens – *Rikki Tikki Tembo, why Mosquitoes buzz in People’s Ears.*
4. Tall Tales: Highly exaggerated stories, typical American tales – *Paul Bunyan and Babe, the Blue Ox, Pecos Bill, Swamp Angel.*
5. Cumulative Tales: Composed of repeated lines and additional lines – *There was an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly, The Gingerbread Boy, The Little Red Hen.*
6. Fairytales: Magical stories – *Cinderella, Sleeping Beauty, East of the Sun, West of the Moon.*
7. Numbskull or Droll Tales: Stories of fools and idiots – *The Three Sillies, The Three Stooges.*
8. Folktales: Folktales are tied to and reflect a particular culture. *Rob Roy (Scottish), dwarves (German), The Little Mermaid (Scandinavian).*
9. Fables: A form of animal tale in which animals portray human virtues and vices to convey a moral message – *Aesop.*
10. Ghost Stories: An example of a living folktale, told from person to person with each telling adapted to the occasion.
11. Myths: Stories of gods, goddesses, and heroes of a given culture. They explain the origins of customs and social beliefs – Greek myths, Norse, Native American, African, and Asian.
12. Epics and Heroic Legends: Grew out of mythology, but humans became the heroes – *Iliad, Odyssey, The Song of Roland.*
13. Saint’s Lives and Local Legends: Recounting of apocryphal tales of the lives and miracles of saints – *Book of Martyrs, George Washington’s Cherry Tree.*

CRITERIA FOR SELECTING BOOKS AND AUTHORS:

- * The story should be appropriate to the developmental age of the children
- * The oral storytelling style of the original tale should be preserved in the book
- * The integrity of the original culture of the tale should be retained
- * The illustrated versions of traditional tales should be of high quality and provide assistance in interpreting the story, plot, characters and theme

REASONS FOR USING TRADITIONAL LITERATURE WITH CHILDREN:

- * Provides entertainment
- * Contains the rich heritage of a story
- * Tells stories of the human experience
- * Kindles the imagination
- * Serves as the building blocks for contemporary literature/framework for literature
- * Provides a window on diverse cultures
- * Carries on the strong oral tradition of storytelling
- * Provides moral models for children as the struggle between good and evil is applied to incidents in their own lives

BENEFITS OF EXPOSURE TO TRADITIONAL LITERATURE:

- * Tales, verses, and song embody a child's conception of the world.
- * Opportunities to experience fantasy worlds and simultaneously reflect on human conditions.
- * Through the experience, young readers can observe the consequences of acceptable and unacceptable behaviors, the failures and successes of characters, and their determination to reach their goals.
- * Ability to encounter historical and folk heroes from a particular culture.
- * Young readers are able to compare and contrast motifs and universal truths valued by various cultures.
- * Increased awareness of the literary options available.

TRADITIONAL LITERATURE BOOKS FOR CHILDREN:

A Christmas Carol. Dickens, Charles; Lippincott, 1952.

Aesop's Fables. Jerry Pinkney. SeaStar Books, 2000.

American Tall Tales. Osborne, Mary Pope; Alfred A. Knopf, INC., 1991.

The Cajun Gingerbread Boy. "Rebaked by" Bertha Amoss. Hyperion Books, 1994.

The Cat & the Fiddle & More. Aylesworth, Jim; Macmillan, 1992.

Clay Boy. Ginsburg, Mirra; Greenwillow Books, 1997.

Crocodile! Crocodile!: Stories Told Around the World. Barbara Baumgartner. Illustrated by Judith Moffatt. Dorling Kindersley Publishing, 1994.

Curious George. H.A. Rey. Scholastic, 1941.

The Emperor's New Clothes. Hans Christian Andersen. Illustrated by Dorothee Duntze. North-South Books, 1986.

The Gingerbread Boy. Richard Egielski. HarperCollins, 1997.

Hansel and Gretel. James Marshall. Dial Books, 1990.

Harry the Dirty Dog Treasury. Gene Zion. Pictures by Margaret Bloy Graham. Barnes and Noble Books, 1956.

Henny Penny. Retold and illustrated by Paul Galdone. Clarion Books, 1968.

Jack and The Beanstalk. Cauley, Lorinda Bryan; General Publishing Co., 1983.

The Jade Stone, A Chinese Folktale. Yacowitz, Caryn. Holiday House, 1992.

James and the Giant Peach. Roald Dahl. Illustrated by Quentin Blake. Puffin Books, 1996.

Little In A Circle Long Ago: A Treasury of Native American Lore from North America. Vanlaan, Nancy; Apple Soup Books, 1995.

The Little Match Girl. Adapted and illustrated by Jerry Pinkney. Phyllis FogelmanBooks, 1999.

The Little Red Hen. Paul Galdone. Clarion Books, 1973.

Madeline. Ludwig Bemelmans. Viking.

Momotaro. Kuwata, Masakazu; Kodansha International Ltd, 1963.

The Monkey and The Crocodile. Galdone, Paul; Seabury Press, 1969.

Mother Goose Remembers. Beaton, Clare; Barefoot Books, 2000.

The Princess and the Pea. Adapted and illustrated by Janet Stevens. A Holiday House Book, 1982.

Puss in Boots. Charles Perrault. Illustrated by Fred Marcellino. Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1990.

Rumpelstiltskin. Jonathan Langley. HarperCollins, 1991.

Russian Folk Tales. Illustrated by Ivan I. Bilibin. Translated by Robert Chandler. Shambhala Publications, printed in U.S.A. (9/80).

The Three Billy Goats Gruff. Tim Arnold. Margaret McElderry Books, 1993.

The Three Little Kittens. Paul Galdone. Illustrated by Paul Galdone. Clarion Books, 1986.

Thumbelina. Anderson, Hans Christian; Dial Press, 1979.

Tikki Tikki Tembo. Retold by Arlene Mosel. Illustrated by Blair Lent. Scholastic, 1968.

The Tortoise and the Hare. Adapted and illustrated by Janet Stevens. Holiday House, 1984.

The True Story of the Three Little Pigs. As told to Jon Scieszka. Illustrated by Lane Smith. Scholastic, 1989.

The Ugly Duckling. Anderson, Hans Christian; Random House, 1986.

The Velveteen Rabbit. Margery Williams. Illustrated by Florence Graham. Platt & Munk, 1987.

The Wild Swans. Anderson, Hans Christian; Dial Press, 1981.

The Wind In The Willows. Grahame, Kenneth; Scribber, 1960.

The Wonderful Wizard of Oz, A Commemorative Pop-Up. Baum, L. Frank ; Little Simon, 2000. (This is a terrific pop-up book!)

Versions of the Cinderella story:

Cinder Edna. Ellen Jackson. Illustrated by Kevin O'Malley. Lothrop, Lee & Shepard, 1994.

Dinorella: A Prehistoric Fairy Tale. Pamela Duncan Edwards. Hyperion Books for Children, 1997.

Domitila: A Cinderella Tale from the Mexican Tradition. Jewell Reinhart Coburn. Illustrated by Connie McLennan. Shen's Books, 2000.

The Egyptian Cinderella. Shirley Climo. Illustrated by Ruth Heller. HarperCollins, 1989.

The Gift of the Crocodile: A Cinderella Story. Judy Sierra. Illustrated by Reynold Ruffins. Simon & Schuster, 2000.

The Korean Cinderella. Shirley Climo. Illustrated by Ruth Heller. HarperCollins, 1993.

Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters: An African Tale. Retold and illustrated by John Steptoe. Lothrop.

The Persian Cinderella. Shirley Climo. Art by Robert Florczyk. HarperCollins, 1999.

Yeh-Shen A Cinderella Story from China. Louie, Ai-Ling; Philomel Books, 1982.

***This is a small sample of the many versions of the Cinderella story available. There are over 600 versions of this tale.*

Authors:

Anderson, Hans Christian

Aylesworth, Jim

Bierhorst, John

Climo, Shirley (Cinderella stories)

Cole, Joanna

Dahl, Roald

De Paola, Tomie

Demi

Dickens, Charles

Dillon, Diane and Leo

Galdone, Paul

Ginsburg, Mirra

Grimm, Jakob & Wilhelm

Kimmel, Eric A.

Langley, Johnathan

Macdonald, George

Perrault, Charles

Pinkney, Jerry

Scieszka, Jon

Steptoe, John

Web Sites related to traditional Literature:

<http://afsnet.org/sections/children/aesop.htm> - This site is dedicated to the Aesop Awards that are given to traditional children's books. You can find a listing of each years recipients.

<http://www.ling.hawaii.edu/faculty/stampe/oral.html> - This site offers a listing of traditional books for every culture.

<http://falcon.jmu.edu/~ramseyil/form2.htm> - This site has links to other sites and books for each sub-genre within traditional literature.

<http://www.geocities.com/paris/jardin/1630/> - This is a great site. You can access many traditional books from this site.