

FOLKTALES

WHAT ARE FOLKTALES?

Folktales contain stories and legends that are vocally passed down by generations since the beginning of time. Folktales integrate moral lessons as well as historical characteristics, teaching the young of what it means to have a childhood that's rich with stories, creativity and imagination.

TYPES OF FOLKTALES

- Fairytale
- Fables
- Trickster Tales
- "Why" Stories
- Religious tales
- Myths



THE HISTORY OF HOW FOLKTALES CAME TO BE

- The first written version of folktales called "Tales of Mother Goose" was compiled and published by Charles Perrault in 1697
- Many ancient civilizations had their own versions of folktales
 - Indians developed their stories into physical art pieces
 - Persians then learnt this art and passed it down to other cultures and people such as the Arabs
 - After passing through the Middle East, these folktales and the different ways of telling them made their way to Europe
 - It was in Europe where the oral tradition of telling stories got introduced and popularized



5 FOLKTALES RECS

A BAKER'S DOZEN

- **Origin:** unknown
- **Story:**
 - *While a dozen represents 12, a baker denies an old woman 13 Christmas cookies due to the fact that his family depends on the 13th to eat. Out of frustration, the old woman curses him. Afterwards, bad luck is brought upon them for his baked goods were continuously getting stolen. After weeks of misery, the baker asks Saint Nick for good fortune and St. Nick tells him instead that an extra cookie doesn't hurt him in large way and generosity will help him in the long run. The old lady comes back and is given a proper baker's dozen of 13 and she finally tells him that she learned his lesson.*
- The **moral of the story** that is emphasized as the story gets told is how generosity whether big or small goes a long way in defining a person's character.

THE PIED PIPER

- **Origin:** tale told in Germany, time period isn't known
- **Story:**
 - *In 1284, the townspeople hire a rat catcher to lure away the vermin that have overrun their village. The townspeople fail to compensate the rat catcher, making him feel taken advantage of as he seeks revenge. Later, the man becomes the "pied piper" and returns to fulfill his grudge, using a flute in order to entrance fleets of mice- sending them to torment the village.*
- The **moral of the story:** Never take a person for granted and treat those with the same respect that they give you or else what the piper did could happen.

GOLDILOCKS AND THE THREE BEARS

- **Origin:** 19th century England
- **Story:**
 - *Goldilocks stumbles upon a house while she is on a walk, stumbling to a cottage that houses 3 bears. She eats the owner's food and sleeps in their beds to her convenience. Afterwards, the owner's are revealed to be bears as they come home to find that their house has been used. They become enraged and wake Goldilocks from her nap and scare her out of their home. She then promises never to come back again, fearful of the bears*
- Depending on where and when the variation is told, the meaning/structure changes. The original is written by Robert Southey where Goldilocks is an older woman.
- It's interesting to note that because of the numerous variations of the story, the **moral does change as well.**

HANSEL AND GRETEL

- **Origin:** Grimm's Fairytales set in Germany
- **Story:**
 - *Hansel and Gretel are the young children of a poor woodcutter. One day the stepmother of the children takes them into the woods after a great famine comes, leaving them to fend for themselves to save money. Before she does this, she tells this plan to her reluctant husband and as she talks, the kids overhear- prompting Hansel to sneak out of the house, reassuring Gretel that they will be alright. Hansel lays a trail of white pebbles after they find that their parents have abandoned them. They return home safely, much to their stepmother's rage. Once again, they are abandoned in the woods. Though Hansel leaves a trail of bread crumbs, the plan falls through. After days of wandering, they discover a large cottage built of gingerbread, cakes, candy and with window panes of clear sugar. Hungry and tired, the children begin to eat the rooftop of the house. An old woman emerges, luring the children inside, with the promise of soft beds and delicious food..*

HANSEL AND GRETEL CONT'D

- *The old woman turns out to be a bloodthirsty witch however who typically lures children into her home to eat them. After the witch dies, the pair find treasure in her home and take the riches to their home. Though their step-mother has passed away, they are able to reunite with their father and live a plentiful life*
- **The moral of the story:** Don't trust strangers
 - This can be shown when the witch tries to lure the children in and the two willingly follow her despite never having met her
 - In other versions of the story, the moral becomes "don't disobey your parents" as in those versions, the children run away from their father before the step-mother gets a chance to abandon them without knowing that the father was going to save them

JACK AND THE BEANSTALK

- **Origin:** English Fairytale published in 1734

- **Story:**

- *Jack, a poor country boy, is told to sell his family cow for money but instead gets a handful of magic beans. When he brings it back to his family, they berate him for not taking their situation seriously. That night, he plants the beans in hope that they can give the family something and his mistake wasn't for nothing. The next morning, Jack wakes up to find that the beans grow into an enormous beanstalk. He then climbs the beanstalk to see what else he could find, horrified that the top is home to an unfriendly giant. After an unpleasant encounter with the giant, Jack finds a handful of treasure before jumping down to cut off the beanstalk- fearful that the giant will follow him home. He then presents his wealth to his family and tells them that something good did come out of his trade.*

- **Moral of the Story:** Try to make the best of the situation

CONCLUSION

Overall, folktales help listeners get a view of the world from perspectives that aren't their own

Because they are typically told by word of mouth, the story is prone to change yes, but the morals of the stories are classic and timeless and are passed down generation by generation!