

Activity 7:

Fairy Tales

'If you want your children to be intelligent, read them fairy tales. If you want them to be more intelligent, read them more fairy tales.' Albert Einstein (quoted in Frayling, 2005)



KEY CONCEPT:

Stories (Fairy tales)

KEY WORDS:

Fairy tale, story, character, good, bad, evil, magic, wolf, pig, bear

Same, different, in common, similar, sometimes, always, never

LEARNING INTENTION:

To understand what makes a story a fairy tale

SUCCESS CRITERIA:

We can:

- Listen to the stories of at least 3 fairy tales
- Re-tell some of the important points of these stories
- Identify who the characters are and what their role is in the tale
- Talk about important features of fairy tales
- Compare 2 or 3 fairy tales and sort out what parts of the stories are the same and different

STRATEGY USED:

Venn Diagram

Ranking

1. IDENTIFY IMPORTANT CONCEPTS:

Some of the key areas to investigate within and around the concept of 'Fairy tales' are the following:

- Good/ Bad characters
- Magic
- Special beginning and ending words
- Special numbers
- Talking animals

2. CHALLENGE CHILDREN'S UNDERSTANDING:

Here are some examples of conflict we expect your children to experience:

Figure 79: Cognitive Conflict About Fairy Tales

Opinion	Conflicting opinion
Fairy tales teach us the difference between right and wrong	Many fairy tales involve someone being killed by another character
Fairy tales have a 'good' character and a 'bad' character: <i>Red Riding Hood and the Wolf</i>	The 'good' character is not always 'good': <i>Red Riding Hood disobeys her mother, breaks her promise, talks to strangers</i>
Fairy tales have talking animals in them	Many cartoons and stories have talking animals but are not fairy tales

Create challenge using some of these questions:

- What is a fairy tale?
- Why do you think fairy tales are written?
- What would our lives be like without stories?
- Why do lots of stories have magic in them?
- What is your favourite fairy tale?
- What makes a story a 'good story'?
- Can animals really talk?
- What makes someone 'good' or 'bad'?
- Should all stories have a 'happy' ending?
- Why are some characters forgiven and others not?
- Are animals or people more important in fairy tales?
- Do fairy tales always have magic in them?
- Can a true story ever be a fairy tale?

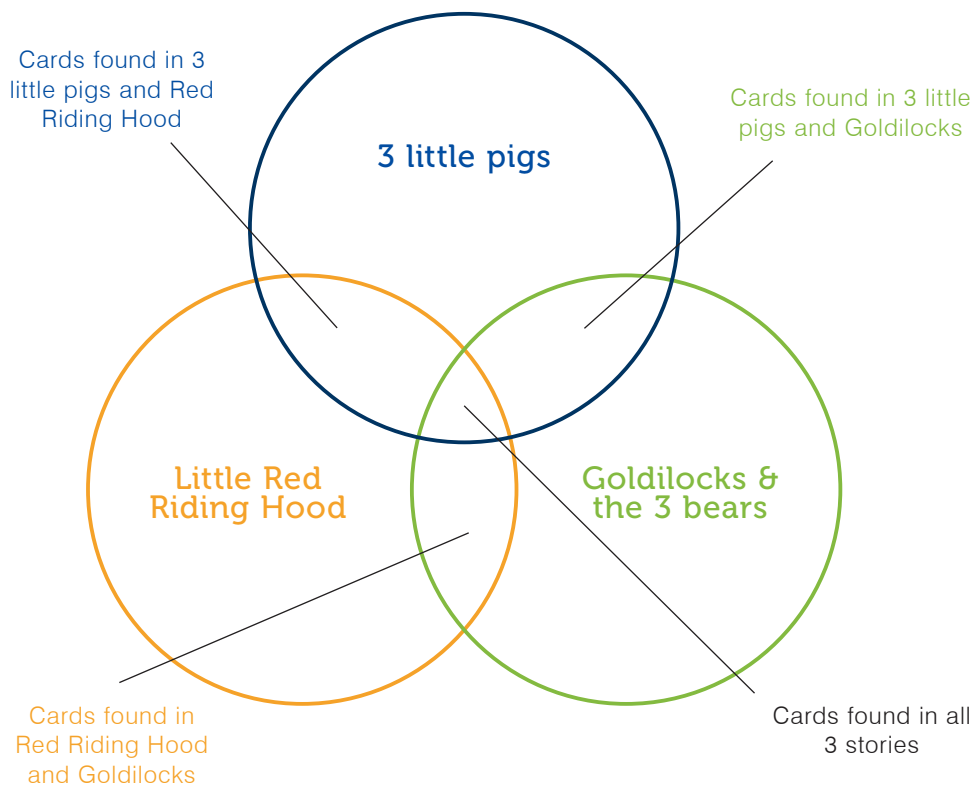
3. CONSTRUCT UNDERSTANDING TOGETHER:

Share the stories of Little Red Riding Hood, Goldilocks and the Three Bears and The Three Little Pigs with your children. This can be done over a series of sessions. Ensure that the children have a good understand of the story, the plot and the characters involved.

Activity 1: Sorting and classifying using a Venn Diagram

- Explain that all the different parts of the stories have been muddled up and you need your children's help to sort them out.
- Introduce a red hoop and explain to your children that anything to do with the story of Little Red Riding Hood should be placed in the red hoop.
- Starting off with the more concrete cards (e.g. pig, wolf, house, girl) ask the children to consider the story and decide whether that card should go in the red hoop or not. Repeat this process with other cards moving on to more abstract cards such as love, excited, nasty. Each time, ask your children to provide reasons to support their answers and encourage them to refer to the story while doing so.
- Introduce a yellow hoop for Goldilocks and then a blue hoop for the Three Little Pigs and repeat the process each time.
- Ask your children to consider where they may place cards that would fit in more than one hoop and demonstrate that the hoops can overlap to accommodate 'shared' cards.
- Demonstrate this first with two hoops then with three if they have understood the idea well enough.
- Your children should now sort the cards between the three hoops, comparing and contrasting the stories to decide which 'cards' go into which space.

Figure 80: Venn Diagram of Fairy Tales



ADAPTATION:

To adapt the activity, consider only two stories at a time and concentrate on the more concrete characteristic cards.

To extend the activity, compare 2 or 3 different versions of each story using the same Venn Diagram set up and cards.

4. CONSIDER THE LEARNING JOURNEY:

Ask your children to reflect on what they now know about fairy tales.

- What do all the fairy tales we looked at have in common?
- Why do you think we enjoy reading or hearing fairy tales?

Activity 2: Ranking

- A useful way for your children to sort through all their ideas is through ranking.
- Ask your children to think about what they feel are the most important things in a fairy tale and which are the least important.
- Introduce the ranking frame shown in Figure 64 and explain to your children that they must put the most important thing a fairy tale needs at the top of the frame in the smiley face box and the least important thing in the bottom box with the sad face. They should put things that are only quite important in the middle boxes.