Project-Based Learning Unit- Once upon a time...

Pat Hooker

Grade Level: 4th
Essential Question: What is a fairy tale?

Sub questions: What are the common elements of a fairy tales?
What are the characters like?

Objectives:

Objective 2.03
Read a variety of texts, including:
- fiction (legends, novels, folklore, science fiction).
- nonfiction (autobiographies, informational books, diaries, journals).
- poetry (concrete, haiku).
- drama (skits, plays).

Objective 2.04
Identify and interpret elements of fiction and nonfiction and support by referencing the text to determine the:
- plot.
- theme.
- main idea and supporting details.
- author's choice of words.

Objective 3.02
Analyze characters, events, and plots from different selections and cite supporting evidence.

Objective 4.07
Compose fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and drama using self-selected and assigned topics and forms (e.g., personal and imaginative narratives, research reports, diaries, journals, logs, rules, instructions).

Objective 4.09
Produce work that follows the conventions of particular genres (e.g., personal and imaginative narrative, research reports, learning logs, letters of request, letters of complaint).

Goal 5
The learner will apply grammar and language conventions to communicate effectively.
Activities:
• The students will read a variety of fairy tales, at least three, and try to find the story elements. They will turn in a log for evaluation purposes.
• The students will fill out the paper “Common Elements of Fairy Tales” (see below)
• They will then create an outline for their fairy tale by starting with "The name of my Fairy tale" in the middle circle. Then, they will branch off and include circles for each element. The students could use the “common situations” examples given (see below) or using their own. (The outline could be done by hand, or on the computer using Kidspiration or Kid Pix.)
• The students will then work on their rough draft, edit and finally write their final copy of their fairy tale.

Final Product/Presentation Description:
• The students will share their fairy tale with their classmates or book buddies. :-)
• Each story will be made into a book that will be placed in the school library for other students to enjoy.

Evaluation of Product (Rubric):
20 pts List of Fairy Tales read
20 pts Fairy Tales story elements
40 pts Fairy Tale story ( 20 pts for elements - 20 pts for convention)
20 pts Sharing time

Materials Needed:
Internet
Library Books/Fairy Tales
Writing material
Computer if using Internet, Kidspiration, Kid Pix, and /or Word processing for final copy of their story
Approximate Time Needed: 3 weeks

Internet Resources
Grimm Fairy Tales
http://www-2.cs.cmu.edu/~spok/grimmtmp/
This page has links to several of the fairy tales of the Brothers Grimm available online.

Possible extensions of this activity

• Act out their fairy tale
• Make a movie of the fairy tale play your students will act following their story.
• Write a Fractured Fairy Tale (Students could use familiar characters, plots and settings from traditional fairy tales to create "fractured" versions. By altering the story line, adding an unexpected twist, or creating a contemporary "spin," students will experiment with satire, irony and parody.)
See the following website for more information:
• Writing a Tall Tale
See the following website for more information and some examples of tall tales:
http://www.hasd.org/gos/talltale/talltale.htm#pualbunyan
Common Elements of Fairy Tales

1. A fairy tale begins with "__________________"
2. Fairy tales happen in ________ (when in time)__________.
3. Fairy Tales have clearly defined g____________ characters vs. ________________characters.
4. Royalty is usually present in a fairy tale, a beautiful _______________/handsome _____________.
5. There may be m______________ with giants, elves, talking animals, witches or fairies.
6. Fairy tales have a p______________ that needs to be solved.
7. It often takes ____________ or ________ tries to solve the problem.
8. Fairy tales have happy ____________ – “they all lived happily ever after.”

Common Elements of Fairy Tales Key

1. A fairy tale begins with "Once upon a time...”
2. Fairy tales happen in the long ago.
3. Fairy Tales have clearly defined Good characters vs. Evil characters.
4. Royalty is usually present in a fairy tale, a beautiful princess/handsome prince.
5. There may be magic with giants, elves, talking animals, witches or fairies.
6. Fairy tales have a problem that needs to be solved.
7. It often takes three or seven tries to solve the problem.
8. Fairy tales have happy endings – “they all lived happily ever after.”
Situations for Fairy Tales

Here are some common situations that could be used for fairy tales.

1. Being the new kid in school
2. Divorce in the family
3. A new baby in the family
4. Jealousy
5. Common Fears
6. Dealing with bullies
7. Problems to overcome
8. Loss of something special to you
10. Losing your best friend
11. Boys picking on girls
12. Getting detention all of the time
13. Death in the family
14. Death of a friend
15. Having to move
16. Best friend moving