

The Use of Grimm's Fairy Tales to Understand the Moral Content in Fairy Tales

Kerstin Brand

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## ABSTRACT

**The Use of Grimm's Fairy Tales to Understand the Moral Content of Fairy Tales****Kerstin Brand**

This study examined the child's understanding of the moral content found in fairy tales based on an afterschool fairy tale story hour presented on a weekly basis for nine weeks. The study included four components: the fairy tale storytelling activity; the dramatisation of the told fairy tale; the interview; and the artistic activity. The interview component helped assess the understanding of the moral content as presented in the six told fairy tales. The study also explored the value of fairy tales in the lives of the children that participated in this study by observing and examining their role and participation in the storytelling, dramatisation and artistic components of the study. Sixteen children from grades one, two, and three participated in the study. A historical overview of Grimm's fairy tales is presented as well as Bettelheim's psychoanalytic theory (1976). Descriptions of fairy tale readings used in schools included various projects spanning curricular domains. Moral development is presented using the cognitive development approach as well as the theories based on Gilligan's (1988) research and Eisenberg's theory of prosocial behaviour (1992). The findings demonstrated that the children in this study were able to identify the moral content found in fairy tales such as: vices and virtues, the intentions behind the deeds, and in certain cases reason about them using orientations of

care, justice and empathy. The quality of participation in the dramatisations, artistic and storytelling components ascertained that the value of fairy tales endures in the lives of these children in the form of enjoyment and creative expression.

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## Table of Contents

	<b>Page</b>
<b>List of appendices</b>	<b>viii</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The historical nature of the fairy tale</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The importance and value of fairy tales: Bruno Bettelheim's contribution</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Fairy tales and their moral content</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>The issue of censorship</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Fairy tales in the school curriculum</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Moral development in children</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Existing research in the area of moral development</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Purpose of study</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>Methodology</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Participants</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Setting</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>The fairy tale telling</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>The first session</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>The dramatisations</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>The interview</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>The artistic activities</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>Findings</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>The initial session</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>The fairy tale story hour</b>	<b>57</b>

<b>The dramatisation of the fairy tale</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>The interview</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>Examining the moral content</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>The Water of Life</b>	<b>68</b>
<b>Fundevogel</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>The Miller's Boy and the Cat</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Jorinda and Joringel</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>The White Snake</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>The Three Little Men in the Woods</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>The artwork</b>	<b>82</b>
<b>Value of fairy tales</b>	<b>84</b>
<b>Discussion</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>Assessing the validity of using fairy tales in understanding moral content</b>	<b>92</b>
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>95</b>
<b>Implications for future research</b>	<b>96</b>
<b>References</b>	<b>98</b>
<b>Appendices</b>	<b>101</b>

**List of appendices**

	<b>Page</b>
<b>Appendix A - The fables</b>	101
<b>Appendix B - Letters of consent</b>	102
<b>Appendix C - The Three Little Men in the Woods</b>	104
<b>Appendix D - The White Snake</b>	107
<b>Appendix E - Fundevogel</b>	110
<b>Appendix F - The Water of Life</b>	112
<b>Appendix G - Jorinda and Joringel</b>	115
<b>Appendix H - The Poor Miller's Boy and the Cat</b>	117



## INTRODUCTION

The stories people tell ... The act of hearing stories, telling stories and reading stories is universal. Our passion for a story is a universal passion. From the day the new-born infant makes his/her entrance into the world, a story begins. It is a story of life and its cycles, a story of experience, a story of learning and loving, and a story of trying to understand one's place and purpose in life. Similar to the life story, a literary story unveils a beginning, a middle, and an end. This type of story might be narrated for many generations, passed down in the oral tradition or it may be limited to one mere rendition. The most common story told to the young and attentive mind is most often the fairy tale.

I explore the world of fairy tales as an adult in the same manner I would as a child. Being the teacher of kindergarten-aged children I use the fairy tale genre as a means to bridge the gap between my being in reality, combine it with a touch of escapism into the fantastical, and strongly subscribe to the importance that fairy tales play in children's lives. I read, listen to fairy tales and try to make sense of my own adult life with its own complications and joys.

I grew up with this world of Märchen (fairy tales), an experience that belongs to German tradition and folklore. Being raised in Canada, the Grimm Brothers helped my family maintain ties to their homeland in these readings, in the shared experiences of a young family. Following these childhood experiences, as a teacher in early childhood education, I stumbled into a German school where the German literary classics beginning with fairy tales continue to dominate the early literary experiences of children. The young children in my care relish the story and I feel fortunate to be able to transmit this genre as a part of the cultural heritage which the children will learn about as the years go on.

People have always told stories. The stories told long ago may have dealt with explaining natural phenomena. They were used to soothe and placate children and their curious minds. For many listeners, these stories were told to entertain, a night-time ritual around the warmth of the hearth, or for some tellers, to frighten the children into obedience (Neugebauer, 1992). They were told, just as they are today, to encourage developing imaginations (Danilewitz, 1991). These stories were known as and continue to be known as, folk and fairy tales. Belonging to a vast array of cultural backgrounds, these tales became the modern fairy tale young audiences have learned to love and cherish (Zipes, 1991).

The fairy tale, being timeless, persists long after the innocence of childhood is over. The universal nature of fairy tale themes surface because the fairy tale speaks to humans about other humans, no matter what nationality, race, or continent. Danilewitz (1991) maintains that fairy tales migrate easily because they rise above cultural and racial differences. The storyline demonstrates the universal pressures of individuals, young and old, using fantasy and fascinating events as a baseline for plot development and story unfolding.

Although quite primitive in origin, the world of the fairy tale quenches our thirst for the fantastical and satisfies our hunger for the marvellous. It was thought that one crucial role of the fairy tale was to educate children. Human behaviour in its most obvious state is in constant turmoil and conflict. The fairy tale acted as a biography told to help educate the child. The telling of the tale was to help the child work through, imitate, on various levels of consciousness, the process of the unfolding of the fairy tale as it relates to the life of the child (Danilewitz, 1991). Interest in attempting to understand the importance and meaning of fairy

tales on this level has been the quest for many researchers, especially those in the psychoanalytic field (Bettelheim, 1988; Heuscher, 1963).

Psychoanalysts have relied on the symbolism inherent in fairy tales to explain the neuroses of human development in attempting to bring the unconscious to a more conscious level. In charting this human development, especially in the development of children, one must understand this process to be interpretative only. Ben-Amos (1994) states that the interpretation of fairy tales is clearly subjective and therefore lends itself to a multitude of culturally defined interpretations resting on language, belief and cultural behaviours.

The German culture as represented by the works of the brothers Grimm, embraced the literary genre of the fairy tale. Into this culture was born one of many collections of fairy tales the western world has known to love, cherish, and glorify not only in printed versions but in box-office sensations as well. Today, its distribution on a world-wide basis can only be explained in terms of its continued appeal to people of all ages. This is the continuation of the age of enchantment. It began with the vision of two scholars from the University of Marburg (Ranke, 1966). This thesis will refer to Jakob and Wilhelm Grimm's contribution to the fairy tale collections on a historical level. As well, excerpts of Bettelheim's theory on the value of fairy tales will examine how fairy tales help children better understand their lives and derive meaning including understanding morality from fairy tale tellings.

The use of fairy tales in the school curriculum is by no means a novel idea (Kranowitz, 1992; Neugebauer, 1992). Because of the simplistic portrayal of the moral content and their fictional nature, educators and teachers alike subscribe to fairy tales by confirming their worthiness in helping children gain a better sense of morality by relying on the story to transmit

the transgressions, vices and virtues of humanity. Morality will be examined using the cognitive developmental approach as well as how educational settings today embrace fairy tales as a literary genre to enhance their curriculum and more specifically, to enhance moral understanding. This thesis examines the nature in which children understand the moral content presented in six fairy tales based on the original Grimm Brothers version. This study also explores the value of presenting fairy tales to children in storytelling and role-play situations that were thought to allow the children to intensify their understanding of the moral issues presented in the six fairy tale tellings.

### The Historical Nature of the Fairy Tale

Imagine this scene ... It is Christmas of the year 1812 and the air is filled with Napoleon's shadow of impending wrath and fury. Booksellers in German provinces placed a single volume in their storefront windows fated for immortality. This volume was titled *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (referred to as *The Nursery and Household Tales* in the English translation) collected by the brothers Grimm. This book, passing through hundreds of editions, relishing in the success it cast on a commercial and intellectual level, "delighted the tot in the nursery while engrossing the savant in the study" (Ranke, 1966, p. v). From this day forward, the fairy tale's enchantment was cast over audiences world-wide.

With the publication of *Contes de ma Mère l'Oye* by Charles Perrault in 1697, scholars and collectors had prior knowledge of the fairy tale genre. The German folklorist Theodor Benfey believed the great master-tales derived from India and made their way to the European countries via trade routes throughout central Asia and the Middle East. The brothers Grimm's contribution to the literary diversity of fairy tales came from earlier German books, directly

from the lips of contemporary storytellers, and from tales in print from other countries (Ranke, 1966).

The brothers Grimm were heralded as the founders of the science of folklore for their contribution in exploring ancient mythology, romantic literature, and for presenting the national soul of German people (Ranke, 1966). Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, as students from the University of Marburg began gathering tales from within their circle of acquaintances around the regions of Hesse and Hanau. The Grimm Brothers intended for the rich cultural tradition of the common people to be accepted by the middle class, a manner of literary 'bourgeoisification' (Zipes, 1983).

The first collection, a form of intellectual discovery, made it possible for the European educated class of 1812, 'the bourgeoisie' to peer through a literary window into the despised peasant class once thought to be so void of any kind of richness (Ranke, 1966). The themes found in fairy tales drew upon parallels of the social classes of their time: the tale centred on the king or lord's castle nestled atop of the hill looking down upon the peasantry gathered around the base below. The king or lord is glorified and the peasant or servant is dependent upon the kingdom and the king himself. The obedience at which the peasants execute the king's commands is praised and often rewarded.

All the while, in opposition to this stratified society in which the royal, courtly, and courtier class converge in some form with the low, peasant class, there appear the middle-class, one of great interest and mysticism (Ranke, 1966). They are the merchants, the minstrels, the quack doctors. They live outside the boundaries of the kingdom, they live and lurk in the nearby woods. Here they lead self-sufficient lives and rely on their own merit as members of

society. These characters were seen as intruders into the class system of the time. These characters represent the outsiders, the misfits and were used to mark the avariciousness with which they are to be greeted and respected. All these fairy tale characterisations represented the manner in which the Grimm brothers wished to portray the Germanic attitude, social order, and traits of the German people of the early 1800's: authoritarian, militaristic, sceptic and violent toward an outsider, and the maintenance of a strict enforcement of discipline (Ranke, 1966).

Gradually out of the folk tale emerged the fairy tale with its adapted form required to educate and instruct children of the upper classes. As Zipes (1991) states, "The morality and ethics of a male-dominated Christian civil order had to become part and parcel of the literary fairy tale" (p.9). Concerned with civilising, with empowering the children of the upper classes meant teaching them manners, mores, and proper socialisation skills to, in fact, groom them for their future functioning in society. All this was woven into the fairy tale. The lesson was an internalisation of values. According to Zipes (1991) the fairy tale became a form of discourse with manipulation as a major component to it. It emerged in a time where momentous attempts were made to civilise Europe and the world beyond during the sixteenth through to the eighteenth centuries. Zipes (1991) states, "To have a fairy tale published is like a symbolic public announcement, an intercession on behalf of oneself, of children, of civilisation" (p.11).

Times change and with each new historical epoch, the symbols and the configurations of the tales were given new and diverse meaning, a transformation or an elimination of certain content, all in reaction to the needs and conflicts of the people within this social order. This form of subversion used the tale to regulate societal norms and values. These changes went so far as to successively alter the form of matriarchal world views of some folk tale into

patriarchal attitudes where young princesses were changed into conquering male heroes during the feudal and capitalist periods (Zipes, 1991). In fact, the brothers Grimm changed the mother in *Snow White* to one of a step-mother character to portray her abhorrent behaviour as stemming from something outside the family circle that has infiltrated to the inside, namely the family.

Critics who have studied the emergence of the fairy tale in Europe agree that writers or collectors, used the oral folk tale and converted it into a type of literary discourse about mores, values, and manners so that children would become civilised according to the social code of that time. The fairy tale had become a manner of discourse, a form of conversing with and about the lower classes, the child's need for civilising in terms of acquiring the proper mores and values of the social order of the time (Zipes, 1991). It is important to recognise that the writers of fairy tales acted ideologically by presenting their notions regarding social conditions and conflicts while interacting with each other and with past writers, with storytellers of folklore of the time in a public sphere (Zipes, 1991).

Largely concerned with monarchist, patriarchal and feudal societies, the fairy tale presented class struggles, power corruption and competition between the aristocrats and the common folk. Marie-Louise Tenèze in her work examining the morphology of the fairy tale genre for children, realised that essentially all folk tales have the same morphology, with varied functions, expressing some form of "universal statement about the plight of humanity" (Zipes, 1991, p.4). Tenèze points out that power and oppression make up the main concerns of the folk tale and that for this reason the peasant class was so enamoured with it. They in turn, being the nannies and governess to the upper classes became the primary carriers of this genre of

story. The fairy tale gave the lower class the needed aspirations, projected hope and prospects, gave a basis for dreams that anyone, even the poorest person could become a princess, a queen, or lord of the manor. Starvation, poverty, and ruthless exploitation by the upper classes became embedded in the content so as to take the bite out of the reality of the conditions at the time. The fairy tale became a symbolic abstraction, a form of escapism for those that were enchanted by it (Zipes, 1991).

The enchantment of the fairy tale was not only found in its aesthetic appeal to the masses but in its symbolic representation of life as well. A path had been paved for subsequent interpretations and research into the value of reading and listening to fairy tales. The most widely quoted interpretation of the value and importance of fairy tales in today's responses and articles has been Bruno Bettelheim's (1976) work entitled *The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales* (Ben-Amos, 1994; Danilewitz, 1991; Howarth, 1989; Worthy & Bloodgood, 1993). Although Bettelheim is not the only and by far not the first to examine the importance and meaning of fairy tales in children's lives, he does subscribe to the idea that the fairy tale should be presented to the child in its unaltered original form as collected by the Grimm Brothers for example. Bettelheim was also noted for his conviction in the value and importance of fairy tales as belonging to traditional children's literature with its positive influence on personality and general psychological development (Ben-Amos, 1994).

#### The Importance and Value of Fairy Tales: Bruno Bettelheim's Contribution

"There is the wonderful story of the woman who had a young son who was brilliant in mathematics. She had an opportunity to ask Einstein how she should prepare him to achieve



greatness in the field. Einstein thought for a moment and said: "Read him the great myths of the past - stretch his imagination." (Huck, 1982, p.316, as cited in Tunnell, 1994).

To begin a detailed study of the importance and meaning of fairy tales in young children's lives, one ultimately begins with Bruno Bettelheim's work entitled *Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales* (1976). This piece of work reflects the nature and scope of Bettelheim's main treatise of helping children to find meaning in their lives through the use of fairy tales. Bettelheim was both an educator as well as a therapist for severely disturbed children. In working with these children, Bettelheim (1976) felt that they had no sense of meaning in their lives and it was for this reason that they required therapeutic help. The challenge came when Bettelheim began to examine which experiences in a child's life were most able to incite the ability to find meaning in his/her life. For Bettelheim, children's literature provided the answer to this question.

A deep dissatisfaction with the primers and educational reading material of his time prompted Bettelheim to disregard these resources because they were designed with the purpose of teaching children how to read, learn a life skill totally void of meaning, or with the sole purpose of entertaining or informing the child (1976). Children's books, he felt, neglected to give the child that which is meaningful to her/him at his/her particular stage of development. His argument for using the fairy tale story to help the child find meaning is best stated in the following excerpt:

For a story to hold the child's attention, it must entertain him and arouse his curiosity. But to enrich his life, it must stimulate his imagination; help him to develop his intellect and to clarify his emo-

tions; be attuned to his anxieties and aspirations; give full recognition to his difficulties while at the same time suggesting solutions to the problems which perturb him. In short, it must at one and the same time relate to all aspects of his personality - and this without ever belittling but, on the contrary, giving full credence to the seriousness of the child's predicaments, while simultaneously promoting confidence in himself and in his future. (Bettelheim, 1976, p.5)

Arriving at the understanding of one's life is a long, developmental process which Bettelheim (1976) believes begins in the early childhood years and ends with psychological maturity in adulthood. It does not include expecting the child's mind to function similarly to that of the parents' or adults'. The ripening of a mature understanding of oneself in this world is as slow and step-like a process as the maturing of the body and mind. It takes stages and experience to mature both physically and mentally. The fairy tale, in Bettelheim's view, helps address the following questions the young child asks as s/he progresses through these steps: who am I?; how can I solve my problems?; how should I act?; and, do I share my problems with others? (Howarth, 1989).

In Western culture, the period of greatest interest in fairy tales lies between the ages of two to ten years of age. At around four to five years of age, the fairy tale makes its greatest impact on the child (Danilewitz, 1991). It is at this age that the fairy tale suggests how the child may manage the contradictory feelings which would otherwise overwhelm her/him at this stage of emotional development. It is here, in the preoperational stage of development that the psychic foundations and the ego formations are forming. This particular period is critical

because it allows the child to believe that the world can be controlled by magic. Magic and the powers of mysticism account for a significant content of the fairy tale.

Bettelheim's theories are rooted in psychoanalytic principles. Bettelheim argued that only the fairy tale can provide the necessary stimulation and nurturing that guides a child to deal with the inner pressures and problems of growing up (1976). Using the psychoanalytic model of personality development, fairy tales carry messages to the conscious, preconscious and unconscious mind at whatever level each is functioning at the time of the fairy tale experience. Because the fairy tale deals with universal problems of humanity such as sibling/familiar rivalry, death, hunger, conflict, love and hate, it speaks to the child's emerging ego development while simultaneously relieving preconscious and unconscious pressures.

The fairy tale plot exhumes a child's fears, aspirations, conflicts and turmoil to a conscious level, providing unconscious means and processes of resolution to these fears and conflicts. The child's natural attraction to this type of literary style, in Bettelheim's view, stems from the fact that the fairy tale begins where the child is at in his/her psychological and emotional development (1976). By directly addressing the issues of rivalry, fears and struggles so pronounced in fairy tales, the child is not left with a sense of inferiority because her/his perceptions of the problems s/he faces in growing up are unique, but rather, that they are universal. The child's question of sharing problems with others has been answered. The child realises that s/he is not alone to feel, to fear, to fantasise about a certain thing. Fairy tale characters undergo the same fears, feelings and fantasies as a child can.

The child, as we know him/her to be and act, uses play, fantasy and embellishments of all sorts to arrive at an understanding of her/his world. The imagination is a powerful tool that

helps the child ease personal unconscious drives (Bettelheim, 1976). The fairy tale content encourages the child to use daydreams and fantasies to relieve unconscious pressures. The fairy tale gives a new dimension to the child's imagination, powerful images with which the child can structure his/her daydreams to arrive at positively redirecting her/his life. The child is expected consciously or unconsciously to imitate the symbolic process of the fairy tale and thus be motivated to enjoy in anticipation, the struggle of growing up (Danilewitz, 1991). According to Howarth (1989), this form of imitation can be done through role-playing, theatre and pretend play activities most appealing to young children.

Finding meaning in one's life is a process whereby experiences should reflect the true nature of life. Fairy tales, in turn, demonstrate one facet of this reality principle; the struggles or obstacles one meets throughout this journey must, and can, be overcome. Facing obstacles is unavoidable and very much intrinsic to human existence (Bettelheim, 1976). The fairy tale protagonist does not shy away from hardship or struggle, even in the cruellest of situations, but faces each one and eventually emerges victorious. The existential problems encountered in fairy tales, such as hunger, abandonment, and rivalry, are presented symbolically with the purpose of having the child face basic human predicaments. The power of suggestion and implication is strong and speaks to the child offering the child not only the chance to identify with this problem, but a path to resolution.

Bettelheim views the parent as the agent which best introduces the child to the fairy tale world (1976). The guiding principle for the selection of fairy tale readings is simple: follow the lead of the child. The parent has no means of assessing at what age and when a fairy tale will most suit the developmental needs of the child. In the beginning, the parent will normally

tell or read familiar tales. Following the child's lead, the parent might have to reread a fairy tale ten times before the child has gained all s/he can from the tale.

The parent should listen to the child's responses, never infer or interfere with the inner workings of the processes at work. The child, on his/her own, must make the unconscious conscious without adult interference. Bettelheim feels that discussing a fairy tale in any form tarnished the effect it may have on emerging ego and psychological development (1976). The fact that a parent is involved in the process of the fairy tale telling or reading, providing proximity and security, choosing to value this time with the child, is enough to leave the child with a sense of peace and control over her/his personal thoughts (Bettelheim, 1976).

Allowing the story to be meaningful to the child requires the story to enchant, to awe the child. This can only be done when a parent tells the fairy tale entirely in its original form. The child is easily enchanted by the fairy tale partly because s/he does not know why the stories delight and wonder her/him so. Also in this enchantment, the child will find the self-confidence, security, and strength in having comprehended and worked out personal conflicts alone, not with the aid of a parent or adult. Bettelheim believes that the greatest gift the child gives to the parent is the expression of the meaning derived from the tale, a sharing of personal secrets and private thoughts (Bettelheim, 1976).

Bettelheim's theory is predicated on the fact that a fairy tale proceeds in a manner which corresponds to the child's way of thinking and experiencing the world. The child will be soothed much more pleasantly by a fairy story rather than by adult reasoning strategies. In simple words, the fairy tale speaks to the child. The characters are similar to people the child knows. Everything is kept simple so as to avoid confusing the child (Bettelheim, 1976).

The fairy tale briefly introduces the characters at the beginning, presents the problem or obstacle to be overcome, has the protagonist face the challenges s/he must, arrives at a resolution phase where good has shown to be victorious, and lastly, terminates with a satisfying ending. The fairy tale character might for example, use animals, a tree, any object to relieve a feeling of isolation. A child understands this form of **animism** because s/he may use it in play situations with exactly the same purposes; to keep from feeling alone; an invisible friend, a talking doll, a speaking and thinking tree. The child's need for comfort or protection when alone might lead to the creation of a guardian angel or a make-believe friend that watches over the lonely child, such as those that befriend fairy tale characters. A child is convinced an animal understands and sympathises with him/her even though it does not show it realistically (Bettelheim, 1976).

Animism helps build necessary confidence to face the challenges met in fairy tales in the form of aid and guidance from friends or from the surrounding environment. For example, the animals in *Snow White* help ease her loneliness, or the white bird in *Hansel and Gretel* lead the children to the gingerbread house. The lack of delineation of what is real and what is not real does not concern the child of this young age. As evidenced in pretend play every object has the ability to be just like the child; sad, angry, lonely, helpful or ecstatic. The fairy tale characters spring to life with these qualities and enchant the young child even more (Bettelheim, 1976).

Another theme found in fairy tales is **magic**. Magic is the means in which the fairy tale provides hope often experienced through transformation. Magic is the tool that gives the child a sense of hope and determination to change in him/herself or in others, character features that are actually horrible into pleasant, desirable traits. Belief that change or transformation can

happen gives the child the courage not to withdraw or give up because of the way a person appears to her/him initially. For example remembering how the heroine of the fairy tale *Beauty and the Beast* succeeded in life because she dared to befriend or even challenge an unpleasant character, the Beast, may instil in the child the belief that s/he can create the same situation in real life (Bettelheim, 1976).

### Fairy Tales and Their Moral Content

A fairy tale would not be complete without the presence of two powerful, yet opposing forces; good and evil. In the fairy tale world, evil and good provide the background for morality (Danilewitz, 1991; Bettelheim, 1976). The dichotomy of good and evil provides the child with an experience in moral education. An interesting argument is presented by Bettelheim who states that it is not only the fact that evil loses out to virtuous and good behaviour, but that the child will be attracted to the good behaviour and deeds of the hero or heroine. The child might be attracted to the evil powers and illustriousness of the evil antagonist but will ultimately identify with the struggles, trials and tribulations of the hero or heroine, and will emerge victorious as the hero or heroine does (Bettelheim, 1976). Children want to be good, they aim to please, and they require that justice be upheld and served, therefore the good must vanquish (Tunnell, 1994).

This analysis of fairy tales partially contradicts what one sees as being of moral value to children. One would imagine that the mere fact that good wins and evil loses is enough of a lesson to be learned. In fact, the whole process of story development, including the resolution of the predicament or hardship, is a major component of Bettelheim's morality education theory. As he states, "In fairy tales, as in life, punishment or fear of it is only a limited deterrent

to crime” (Bettelheim, 1976, p. 9). The decisions the fairy tale characters make along the way, right or wrong, mirror real life in that a decision must be made to overcome any obstacle or hardship; the obstacle will not disappear; choices must be made.

To assist the child in understanding that choices must be made, the plain, clear characterisations of either good or evil take on a simple function: to avoid confusion for the child. In these stories, the character is either good or bad, but never both (Bettelheim, 1976; Danilewitz, 1991). In the story of *Frau Holle (Mrs. Holle)*, the one sister is beautiful and industrious while the other is ugly and lazy. The opposing characterisations allow the child to grasp in simple form, the differences between the two. The element of simplicity is important here since in real life, the complex nature of man's good or evil side is not always as clear to the child. Children in real life are told that one must not judge using appearances alone but must look into the hearts and souls of mankind. For children this is difficult and they rely heavily on their instincts, yet Bettelheim believes that the pairing of both beautiful with industriousness, ugliness with laziness for example, serves its purpose on a symbolic level rather than a realistic level. Characterisations are simple; one is either this way or that way. The complexities of mankind can be fully understood later.

The positive identification with the good or virtuous character occurs because the good is plainly just so, whereas the evil is just so horrible one would never want to be like that (Bettelheim, 1976). Bettelheim believes like a role model, the child identifies with the protagonist, the one that must struggle in the face of evil only to triumph victoriously. This answers the child's question; who do I want to be like? For parents as well as educators answering this question is not always as simple as Bettelheim presumes. Presented with the



good and evil traits of fairy tale characters, children arrive at understanding that good is better and evil is bad; the emergence of moral understanding has been established. Whether parents or teachers believe fairy tales are of value in providing the best opportunities to view opposing forces of good and evil, vices and virtues of mankind, that remains a personal choice.

### The Issue of Censorship

Children assimilate and discover their environment by observing, doing, imitating and experiencing with all senses. Parents and teachers attempt to create and provide for an environment that contributes most to opportunities intended to allow children to experience, to do, to be and to learn from. It is with the best intentions that parents seek to shield their children from the evils of the world. With the advent of psychoanalysis, parents were made aware of the conflicts raging in their children.

Not always fully accepting the oedipal complex theories and murderous wishes of their children, they sought to dam up the extent to which these psychological undercurrents flowed. Parents believe that only conscious reality impressions, real and pleasant images should be offered to the child. Parents, and without fault, on perhaps both a conscious and unconscious level, did and continue to cultivate the notion that inherently, all human beings are good (Tunnell, 1994). The demand for books that offered pleasant and soothing images of fairy tales and other stories arose out of this desire to have children exposed to the good side of humanity. The Grimm fairy tales became watered down eliminating the gory and far from real images of evil that lurked in the original versions. This was done in the fairy tale text as well as in the images that accompanied the text (Tunnell, 1994).

In Bettelheim's opinion, the mere act of overlooking the evil by taking it away is detrimental to a child's ability to cope with the pressures of growing up (1976). Such an attitude and application would leave the child incapable of comprehending his/her own evil side. Children realise that they possess evil thoughts, bad ideas, and violent images, but according to their parents, they are not allowed and should not have these thoughts, these images. The child begins to see him/herself as the monster, the one that does not belong, because no one has made clear to the child that all men and women are responsible for acts of selfishness, aggression and anger.

In dealing with these negative traits, children expect justice to be served. It is within the nature of the fairy tale plot to punish those behaviours that have transgressed and this is what is meaningful to children who enjoy fairy tales (Tunnell, 1994; Danilewitz, 1991). The child at times feels unjustly treated by adults and by the world in general. There is the sense that nothing is done to alleviate this feeling. It is in the identification of the punishments that those who have acted wrong or bad receive that the child begins to feel safe and protected. The identification with the fact that the evil character is indeed punished returns these feelings of safety and protection to peaceful and acceptable levels (Tunnell, 1994; Danilewitz, 1991).

The reliance of safe stories, stories that avoid issues of death, murder, or deception do not give the child suggestions in symbolic form as to how s/he might deal with these issues and develop into maturity safely (Bettelheim, 1976). Although many have argued that because fairy tales do not transmit truthful descriptions of reality, they are not healthy. Bettelheim disputes this idea. He claims that the truth of the fairy tale is in the truth of the imagination. The workings of the child's mind is different than that of the adult mind in that the child learns about

reality only after s/he has pondered about the story's contribution to his/her understanding of his/her greatest concerns in present time. At times what the child desires to be true will be true no matter what rational explanation an adult may attempt to give.

In addressing parental concerns about a child's inability to pull away from fantasy, Bettelheim believes that children cease to believe in the magic and fantasy of the fairy tale when they are ready (1976). When confronted with parental concerns about their child's need to learn to cope with reality, Bettelheim feels that fairy tales are crucial elements of this process and must by no means be left out of children's personality development. He states, "and the total personality, in order to be able to deal with the tasks of living, needs to be backed up by a rich fantasy combined with a firm consciousness and a clear grasp of reality" (p. 118).

A staunch supporter of fairy tales, Tunnell (1994) feels that fantasy, the fairy tale included, is fundamentally the most important kind of story to share with children. Tunnell, like Bettelheim (1976), believes that children deprived of a rich fantasy life in childhood are more likely to search for a magical means of coping with the realities of daily living in adolescent or adult life. Children and young adolescents today, coping with the harsh or unpleasant realities in life, often turn to the fantastic, the unreal, such the use of drugs to escape reality. As Tunnell clearly states, "Fairy tales and fantasy are prescriptions for mental health, not disease-causing agents" (1994, p. 607).

The issue of violence in fairy tales does not lie dormant; it is thought to breed violence in children (Tunnell, 1994). This premise was refuted by Bilbow (1973, as cited in Tunnell, 1994) who conducted a study on the effects of rich fantasy on aggression in children. The findings showed that children with rich fantasy lives who were exposed to the aggressive

content of a film responded with a significant decrease in aggressive behaviour. The low-fantasy children showed no decrease in aggression but rather the opposite, increased frequencies of aggressive acts. This study further stated that children versed in fantasy stories were shown to demonstrate less aggressive behaviour in free play time and in confrontational settings. Tunnell continues in his treatise by stating that trips in the form of daydreams, to the land of faerie led to creative conflict resolution and problem solving skills. The fantasies that children engage in diffuse the conflicting situation at hand.

Bettelheim (1976) suggests, that the fairy tale be told, not read, thereby allowing the child to vividly imagine the scene, the character, the forest, the struggle without pre-determined and prescribed pictorial representations. The child's ability to censor images is therefore within his/her power (Howarth, 1989). A child who watches a Walt Disney filmed version of *Snow White* is left with no censoring ability but that of turning away or closing her/his eyes, perhaps not highly effective strategies for young children.

Children that see the visual portrayal of an evil character in a film see the shape, the form, the look of evil. This image can leave a lasting impression more fearful than if the child censors it according to her/his personal experience of evil. It is when the mind and the eye meet that monsters are made. For example, the act of another person telling the child the story, whether parent or friend, means that the child is not alone. Being alone watching a film of instance, rather than sitting on mother's lap imagining the face of a beast, can create the worst monsters in the closet, or under the bed (Tunnell, 1994).

#### Fairy Tales in the School Curriculum

The use of fairy tales is not limited to the nursery and to mother's lap, but includes vast appeal in the elementary school setting. At times presented as part of a story hour, fairy tales in the classroom have taken on an educational role as well. The umbrella under which the educational role of fairy tales falls under most often is that of presenting students with moral and ethical situations which are aimed at engaging them in thinking about morality in step with today's social demands and pressures.

In today's society where there is the feeling that morality has corroded and faded to state of crisis, an increased obligation is placed on the educational setting aimed at reinventing the school curriculum to include moral and ethical concerns in the teaching agenda. The teaching of values for example, known as character education or instruction, is seen as a means to assist in the changing of student perceptions and ultimately their behaviours (Perry, 1996). There appears to be an increased demand in the school setting taking over the responsibility to teach morality in not only its hidden agenda, but in a very overt manner.

Lamme (1996) believed that children's literature is a premier vehicle for introducing children to issues of a moral and ethical nature. Embedded in this literature are the values that promote democratic living and help nurture moral education in children. Teachers have an opportunity to use this literature to address issues of value education, moral discipline, co-operative learning, and conflict resolution. Lamme suggests the use of folk literature to expose children to the good versus evil motifs and that good non-fiction literature includes behaviours and attitudes that help children identify with the story characters not mere facts (1996).

In evaluating the quality of books used in the classroom environment Lamme considers that books written telling the truth, showing both negative and positive character traits, present

realistic moral dilemmas and show how characters are apt to deal with the dilemmas will engage readers in thoughtful analysis of morality. She states, "Books that do not offend anybody will not move anybody either. It is books that touch the heart that move readers to consider more deeply the issues they address" (1996, p.411). Discussions and creating an open atmosphere conducive to listening to and of sharing ideas is of utmost importance when engaging in moral dialogue. Fairy tales lend themselves perfectly to fostering this form of dialogue. As Egan (1994) states, "If we want to make concrete content accessible, meaningful, and imaginatively engaging to young children, we should build it on powerful abstract oppositional concepts" (p.28).

Storytelling is often the vehicle used in the sharing of the fairy tale. Communicating with a child is one way a parent or teacher establish a secure and loving relationship at home, and/or a positive environment conducive to learning at school. This art form is used by some parents and teachers to stimulate children's imaginations, to connect psychologically, emotionally and intellectually with the child (Rubright, 1996). Storytelling becomes the vehicle to travel the literary word on fantastic or tamed wings, whatever the student prefers.

Children's literature such as fables, folk tales and fairy tales contain ancient truths about how one is to live, how one is to act, and indirectly, where one comes from and where one goes from here. The child that enjoys the fairy tale can begin to understand something about a family, a world that includes and evolves around more than him/herself. A child that goes to school begins to understand that there is a place outside the home that is rich in providing novel, different yet valuable experiences. The value of these experiences all relate back to what the child can and will make sense of.

In learning about and within these new experiences, a child enters into a world of relationships where certain definite truths about acting and being emerge. It is the child that can begin to distinguish what behaviours are acceptable and which are not that continue to guide the child's development in all areas. A genre of children's literature that has the possibility to arm the child with a sense of what is right and what is wrong is the fairy tale.

In learning about different behaviours, storytelling, combined with dramatic play, can allow the child to try on new roles, to test try character traits that are foreign but appealing or intriguing to the child. In participating in such endeavours, a child's emotional development is stimulated in that the ability to empathise develops along with the ability to understand another's point of view and emotional state (Rubright, 1996).

A storyteller, Jay O'Callahan, describes storytelling as the "theater of the mind" (as cited in Collins & Cooper, 1997). In this the storyteller is viewed as providing the skeleton while the listener provides the flesh, the scenery, the character and her/his descriptors. Collins and Cooper (1997) list enhancing imagination and the visualisation of storytelling for both teller and listener to be of extreme value in storytelling. With this aspect comes the ability to appreciate the beauty, the power of language and the rhythm itself where language provides access to a wide range of emotions and powerful portrayals of imagery.

Communicating is predicated on interaction with others and storytellers provide the colourful scene and set for communicating (Collins & Cooper, 1997). The interactions that storytellers weave between teller and listener are lasting positive impressions because of the engagement factor on the part of the story; one becomes part of the plot, part of a bigger picture. The interactions allow students to expand their reading and writing skills as they

become moved to share their own interpretation or story, their own imagined and perhaps, lived version. The students recognise the potential reading and writing provide in opening channels of the imagination previously unknown.

Storytelling invokes feeling. Storytelling allows the student to use both the affective and the cognitive aspects of development: How does the story make one feel?; Why am I choosing to tell this story?; Does this story relate to an aspect of my life? The expression of these feelings, the interpretation of these emotions, belong to the appeal of storytelling. An attraction to the story can become an experience of mirroring human experiences where human frailties and values are reflected in the narration (Collins & Cooper, 1997). This is especially true in the literary world of fairy tales where such values as for example, trustworthiness, friendship, helpfulness, kindness, and loyalty on the positive end of the moral continuum, are presented.

In a unit designed to introduce students of the fifth grade to the reading and telling of culturally diverse '*Cinderella-like*' variant fairy tales, Worthy and Bloodgood (1993) found that fairy tales inspired children to develop strong reading and writing skills as well as improve in vocabulary and syntax because the students were attracted to the fairy tales. Fairy tales inspire language arts and more specifically, reading skills because they address questions about life and human struggle in a language children can personally identify with. The fifth-grade students improved greatly in writing skills, making use of rich and diverse vocabulary including increased frequencies of sensory language (Worthy & Bloodgood, 1993) when presented with the *Cinderella* variations.



In an extension of fairy tale usage in the upper elementary classroom, Hicks and Austin (1994) focused their attention on having students realise that personal problems could be solved through the diligent application of strategies and techniques of creative and critical thinking with a series of designed activities culminating in “The Fairy Tale Trials”. Using the co-operation of legal professionals and judicial enforcers such as the police, attorneys and judges, the students examined the issues of justice in fairy tales.

Hicks and Austin (1994) felt that the students were being geographically isolated from mainstream worldly events for long periods of time throughout the year, and that the curriculum lacked opportunities for the students to experience life in the larger sense. The teachers then designed a curriculum unit centred on three components; integration, problem solving, and community involvement. As the students clipped newspaper articles, and placed the problems on bulletin boards, they began to sort the types of problems and attempted to relate them to their own personal difficulties. Discussions revolving around how best to solve these problems flourished.

This incorporation of real-life issues into the classroom gradually led to an examination of the legal issues in fairy tales such as in exploring the moral responsibility of each fairy tale character (Hicks, & Austin, 1994). By questioning familiar fairy tales, the students were asked to identify the part of the fairy tale where for instance, aspects of the Colorado criminal statutes had been violated. At this point, the students were able to choose a crime that they would like to pursue in a mock courtroom setting. The students learned to be careful of their biases, judgements, prejudices, and to be more organised in the processes of conflict resolution/problem solving. The exploration of children’s literature, in this case to foster a

deeper understanding of legal terms, of a citizen's rights and codes of conduct, not only resulted in the refining of the students' English language skills, but provided a meaningful process in which the students learned to resolve issues using the power of reason and the law to back them up.

While fairy tales have been useful in allowing students to think about morality, laws and general social order principles, another bountiful resource for teachers is emerging as a result of their usage in schools using an interdisciplinary approach. Barchers (1993) suggests that using the fairy tale in schools to educate both students using an interdisciplinary approach such as fairy tales in combination with math, history, geography and language art lessons for example, allows the curriculum to become more meaningful to students. Barchers included several examples of how this could be achieved. Stereotyping, for example, was used to lead the students to create a composite of the typical student using student characterisations where the tallying of responses to such questions as how many siblings, hair colour, pets per household the students had and using statistical measures was said to produce the typical student. This exercise demonstrated that while stereotypes exist they often reveal much information about groups and little information about individuals (Barchers, 1993). The activities allow the students to think and read critically while linking ideas and concepts across the multi-faceted curriculum, this clearly being a significant component of what is valued in education today.

Looking beyond the psychoanalytic point of view but not past it, one sees the value of using fairy tales to help foster the young child's emerging sense of morality because of the existence of the duelling nature of evil versus good so richly, yet so simply, embedded in the text. Bettelheim's theory that fairy tales help children answer questions of who they want to be

like, and how should I act are components of understanding that behaviours, attitudes, modelling and ways of thinking belong to moral development (1976). The embodiment of two opposing forces, good and evil, and the unfolding of the fairy tale plot as a whole speaks to the child at his/her present stage of development. While the opportunity to listen to fairy tales is appealing, the benefits of using fairy tales to foster understanding of the moral content is equally significant. This next section views the research on moral development in children.

### Moral Development in Children

Educational philosopher John Dewey viewed cognitive and moral education as the core components of developmental education. Dewey believed that an understanding of the stages of moral as well as of cognitive development was the means of accessing developmental education (Kohlberg, 1987). This interpretation of moral development actually belongs to the oldest philosophies of both Western and Eastern thought. To understand how one is to live and act morally appears to be more complex than expected, although the necessity to live and act so has befallen man since his advent in this world.

Historical schools of moral psychology including the likes of the British Utilitarians began to emerge with theories attempting to explain moral development and moral behaviour. The British Utilitarians, “assumed that moral values were the products of individual adults, possessed of language and intelligence, who judged the actions of other individuals or adults” (Kohlberg, 1987, p.260). Basing their theory on moral actions linked to either harmful or beneficial tendencies, a limited image of morality theory emerged. Actions by the self or by others whose consequences to the self or others are harmful are of course viewed as bad and will arouse anger or punitive tendencies, whereas on this same scale yet on the opposing end,

actions whose consequences are beneficial are naturally viewed as good and evoke affection or approving tendencies. Acting right became the *modus operandi* for doing the greatest amount of good for the greatest number (Kohlberg, 1987).

Although there is great truth to the afore-mentioned theory, the philosopher-psychologists such as Piaget (1965, as cited in Kohlberg, 1987) and Kohlberg (Kohlberg, 1987) nearing the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth century began to delve into the issues of morality and began to see the emergence of stages and defined these as resulting from the social interaction between a constructing child and a socially structured world, hence the basis of constructivist theory (Kohlberg, 1987).

Moral judgement has been studied under the umbrella of the cognitive-developmental tradition as the child's use and interpretation of rules in conflict situations, and by examining the child's reasons for moral action. Hartshorne and May (1928, 1930, as cited in Kohlberg, 1987) studied moral judgement and belief in young children and discovered that most young children already have an awareness of basic moral rules and of the conventions of their society by the first grade. The child's earliest notions of rules, justice and care all appear during the first years of life (Damon & Hart, 1992).

Research on infancy demonstrates that a germ of morality is present in early child development; the infants' responsiveness to the feelings of others and the young child's appreciation of standards (Gilligan & Wiggins, 1988). The origins of morality are found in the child's awareness of self in relation to others. This awareness leads the child to engage in two distinct dimensions of early childhood relationships that help shape this awareness.

The first dimension is one of inequality, reflected in the child's awareness of being smaller or less able than older siblings and adults. This dimension has been stressed by theorists of moral development in both the cognitive and psychoanalytic traditions and is evidenced by the emphasis placed on the child's feelings of helplessness and powerlessness in relation to others, feelings bound to the fact of being dependent on others who are more capable, more powerful. Psychologists examining the constraints of the situation in early childhood moral development "defined morality as justice and aligned development with the child's progress toward a position of equality and independence" (Gilligan & Wiggins, 1988, p.114).

The second dimension, also concerned with self-awareness but experienced through attachment, allows the young child to occupy an effect on others, by being moved by others or by moving others (Gilligan & Wiggins, 1988). The young child expresses feelings of deep attachment, of love for those that care for him/her. In the course of these relationships, the child learns about patterns of human interaction and observes the way in which people care for and hurt one another. Interestingly, this second dimension has often been overlooked in moral development theory because children were not understood to take an active part in creating and upholding relationships with others because the emerging sense of self-awareness during this time has been linked to separation and detachment.

The foundation of Piaget's moral stages must principally be the influence of the child's interaction with others, rather than the sole development of biological or neurological structures (1965, as cited in Kohlberg, 1987). Emphasising social interaction does not mean that the stages of moral development represent the teaching of values by concerned parents only. Piaget viewed parental training and discipline as influential only as a part of a world or

social order perceived by the child. The child would internalise the moral values of the parents and culture and in turn, make them his/her own. Social participation and role-taking become the agents for allowing the child to define a personal social order. Children learn from others, from their peers through play. The socialisation process such as that found in play, brings children in contact with the accepted and rejected norms of society which at times may be only partly consistent with the child's reasoning structure (Kohlberg, 1987).

A component of some forms of play, role-taking involves an empathic or sympathetic component, but it also involves the cognitive ability to define situations in terms of rights and duties, in terms of reciprocity, and in terms of perspective-taking abilities (Kohlberg, 1987). In analysing role-taking dynamics, one must examine the family, the peer group, and the larger societal institution. The social symmetry of sharing, and the social reciprocity of turn-taking, are developmental precursors to the child's emerging sense of distributive justice (Damon & Hart, 1992). Because of the child's active early experiences in social play, the sense of distributive justice (attempt to distribute goods fairly) develops most likely before the sense of retributive justice (the attempt to punish or penalise fairly). Young children do not use the key principles of equality and reciprocity in any systematic manner beyond occasional turn-taking or sharing experiences, yet the foundation for justice has been laid in the child's playful encounters so early in life (Damon & Hart, 1992).

During childhood, norms and standards take on an elevated degree of importance beyond their momentary significance for the child's unique social impulses. The child acquires a sense of objective responsibility and new insights as to following the rules, playing fair and acting in a caring way toward others (Damon & Hart, 1992). Children undergo a

transformation in their play, gaining a deeper understanding of collective rules usually through such playful experiences as organised games, family-derived admonitions, and school-enforced rules of conduct.

Children distinguish between two types of rules encountered in their social experiences: moral rules and conventional rules (Damon & Hart, 1992). Conventional rules uphold society's conventions (where men hold doors open for women) whereas moral rules enforce moral concerns such as preventing harm or ensuring that justice is distributed fairly (killing and stealing are not allowed). Children, early on, are able to distinguish between these two sets of rules. As the child develops, it is the recognition and exposure to moral rules that has the greatest effect on the child's moral development. Children in the pre-school years for example, understand that moral rules are more important than social conventions (Vail, 2001). For example, children already at age three are able to distinguish between hurting another or that taking away something from that someone (moral rule) is a more serious transgression than eating ice cream with fingers (social convention).

Piaget believed that young children see rules as absolutes and confuse rules with real things because of their sense of **realism** and because of their **ego-centrism** (1965, as cited in Kohlberg, 1987). Young children also tend to view their parents as all-knowing and perfect. As the child matures, a form of moral autonomy emerges with justice as a concept. Justice, the reasoning about justice is necessary to resolve the basic conflicts between persons in society. In explaining justice, Piaget refers to reciprocity and equality between individuals. The measures of justice are not reduced to mere matters of abstract logic but rather to sentiments of sympathy, gratitude, and vengeance. The moral point of view is arrived at through dialogue,

the exchanging of ideas, and in voicing the concerns of all parties agreeing by discussion and principle to settle conflict calmly, rather than by coercion, manipulation, and authority (Kohlberg, 1987).

Piaget did not try to define true stages of moral development although one can see the emergence of a clear sense of direction, of movement, from a dimension of premorality (or lack of morality) to a dimension of heteronomous morality, culminating in autonomous morality (1965, as cited in Kohlberg, 1987). According to Piaget, with age there is a gradual predominance of the autonomous type over the heteronomous type of morality rather than a qualitative transformation from one morality to the other. This predominance of autonomous morality depends greatly on the kinds of societal relations in which the child engages.

Premoral children have no sense of obligation to rules and authority. Heteronomous morality found later, hinges upon the strict observance to rules and is motivated by a deep respect for adult authority, especially parental authority. In this heteronomous stage, children usually aged three to six or eight, often tend to confuse moral rules with physical laws and to view rules as permanent constructs due to cognitive limitations. The progression to autonomous morality is characterised by a rational concern for rules of co-operation and reciprocity with peers, a mutual respect among peers and equals where law or morality derived from the self emerges (Perry, 1996; Piaget, 1965, as cited in Kohlberg, 1987). This type of morality is believed to develop between the ages of eight and ten.

Piaget noted specific moral concepts that emerged in his examinations of this progression from heteronomous to autonomous morality. Piaget (1965, as cited in Jensen and Murray, 1978) explored the importance of rules in children's games and found that as the



children mature, their understanding of certain rules become more flexible where the realisation that a rule can be changed or altered on the basis of mutual consent is recognised. Children in the heteronomous stage of development also believe that a misfortune will automatically follow any wrongdoing. This belief in immanent justice decreases with age. Another of Piaget's moral concepts involved examining children's responses to acts of right and wrongdoing where the ability to judge an act as either being right or wrong independent of the sanctions or consequence that follows that act was explored. It is believed that morally mature children will respond that a good act followed by punishment is still indeed a good act, whereas the less mature child will feel that the act was bad (Jensen and Murray, 1987). Lastly, Piaget explored the child's understanding of punishment: retribution and reciprocity. Retribution was explained as punishment prompted by revenge while reciprocity is a form of punishment resting on principles of fairness and justice where another's point of view is taken into consideration. Piaget believed that children in the heteronomous stage firmly adhere to retribution while those in the autonomous stage consider punishment using reciprocity (1965, as cited in Jensen and Murray, 1978).

In defining morality, Kohlberg implied that the ultimate end of all moral acts, prescriptions, and limitations must be to ensure fairness to the individual. When individuals claim conflict, impartial and fair procedures must be administered to resolve the conflict in a manner respectful of all individuals' rights (Damon & Hart, 1992). When a social rule or law operates in contradiction to meeting the rights of individuals, the rule is morally illegitimate and must be changed. Thus, conceptualising morality as justice means emphasising universal human

conditions such as equality, reciprocity and the respect for life. These conditions are to take precedence over social norms, rules or societal conventions (Damon & Hart, 1992).

Piaget, on the other hand, viewed moral judgement as the manner in which a child arrived at his/her judgement and the reasons for this judgement rather than examining the specific knowledge associated with moral issues (1965, as cited in Perry, 1996). Piaget believed that an individual's capacity for moral judgement arose out of both cognitive and affective development. The affective component was the driving force spurring behaviour and is developed through social interaction. Social interactions allow for moral judgement to develop in that differing points of view are presented. Reason according to Piaget was the guide to morality.

Kohlberg's extensive research into moral development found that there existed a definite order, a stage-like progression from one level of morality to the next (Perry, 1996). These three levels are referred to as preconventional, conventional and postconventional. Each level is further broken down into two stages. As Piaget (1965, as cited in Kohlberg, 1987) described earlier, preconventional morality is best described when children view morality as imposed by others and act morally when they see consequences for not doing so. The first stage punishment and obedience orientation describes children who decide the wrongfulness of an act based on the punishment. Obedience is valued because children view parents as all-knowing as described earlier (Bee, 1985).

The second stage individualism, instrumental purpose and exchange refers to morality that is based on intent usually in the form of a reward or pleasant result. The child follows rules when it is in his/her best interest. What is right is also viewed as what is fair, or viewed as an

equal exchange, an agreement (Bee, 1985). Children in this stage are unable to take another's viewpoint and consequently can not reason that they should behave differently toward others (Perry, 1996).

The next level conventional morality is broken down into mutual interpersonal expectations, relationships and interpersonal conformity which is characterised by the importance given to family and peer groups. Moral actions deemed good are those that are expected of the person based on the social influences at hand (Bee, 1985). The fourth stage called social system and conscience, law and order orientation is predicated on focusing on society and contributing to the well-being of society through the upholding of laws when deemed good. Children of around six or seven to the age of twelve are known to be in this conventional level (Perry, 1996). The children see morality as behaving good in anticipation of approval and praise from their peer groups or family members, to abiding by the rules no matter what.

Postconventional morality, the final level is further broken down into stage five, social contract or utility and individual rights where the person is aware that there are differing views and values to be taken into consideration. Laws and rules are to be upheld in order to preserve the social order but these are also relative. The final stage, universal ethical principles is characterised by own's use of conscience in deciding moral truths and acts (Bee, 1985).

While moral reasoning is certainly a crucial component of moral development, moral conduct is nevertheless as significant a component. Criticism of Kohlberg's theory include the less than direct link established between moral reasoning and moral conduct (Eisenberg, 1992) in children. Because one can reason morally, does not signify that one will act morally as well

as is so often the case in childhood. Perry (1996) states that although moral education using this stage theory is effective, one must also examine moral behaviour and the motivation used to act morally. Moral behaviour and moral reasoning are positively and significantly associated, and moral reasoning predicts moral action including honesty and altruistic behaviour (Perry, 1996).

When psychologists explored moral development and the child's discovery of the idea of justice, the findings revealed that women and girls were seen to have less of a sense of justice than men and boys (Gilligan & Wiggins, 1988). This deficiency in moral reasoning was further explained in part by women's concern for relationships and feelings (Gilligan & Wiggins, 1988). Gilligan and Wiggins while extending their interest in this area, found that in fact gender differences in moral development showed that males oriented more to rules and codes of justice while females tended to orient more to care, especially by confirming identities with their mothers in establishing a sense of self. Gilligan (1982, as cited in Perry, 1996) suggests that females when presented with moral dilemmas more often use responses that focus on caring about others, about maintaining relationships and about relieving the suffering of others.

The young child is perceptive and will come to know and test each facet of this experience in morality his/her own manner. Gilligan and Wiggins (1988) explain how American children voice their appeals for justice by using phrases such as, "It is not fair" or "You have no right." In expressing the strength of care one will often hear children say, "You do not care" or "I do not love you anymore." "In this, children discover the efficacy of moral standards, the extent to which justice offers protection to the unequal in the face of oppression and the extent

to which care protects attachment against threats of abandonment or detachment” (Gilligan & Wiggins, 1988, p.115). It is these lessons learned in early childhood that in turn create expectations which become validated or adjusted in later childhood and adolescence. The essence found in the universal truths of treating another fairly and to turn to those in need, is in fact, experienced and learned very early on.

The justice perspective along with its counterpoint care perspective, has as Kagan (1984, as cited in Gilligan & Wiggins, 1988) suggests, led psychologists to examine moral emotions and moral feelings associated with moral development, indicating findings that usurp the previous theory, namely that gender differences appear to have disappeared; “Empathy and concern about feelings, once seen as the source of limitation in women’s moral reasoning, are now viewed as the essence of morality but no longer associated particularly with women” (Gilligan & Wiggins, 1988, p.111). Furthermore, Walker (1995, as cited in Vail, 2001) states that girls and boys reason about moral issues similarly using both justice and care orientations. Smetana, Killen and Turiel (1991, as cited in Vail, 2001) found that it was the nature of the moral problem that determined whether justice or care or both responses would be given.

Gilligan and Wiggins (1988) describe the lack of evidence supporting gender differences in this area to be due to the fact that since both males and females demonstrate the human capacity to think rationally and to feel compassion, measures of morality in these terms should not find any gender differences. Yet, on the other hand these findings appear to cause confusion for those social science researchers who point to both the incidence and form of criminal activity, moral behaviour, largely based on male populations (Gilligan & Wiggins, 1988).

Psychologists examining moral conduct or behaviour in children look at prosocial behaviour. As moral development occurs in social settings, on an interpersonal level as Piaget (1976) and Damon (1985, as cited in Perry, 1996) stated, including prosocial behaviours into moral development makes sense. Eisenberg (1992, as cited in Perry, 1996) defines prosocial behaviours as those that involve one's behaviour toward another. The behaviours can be motivated by various socially derived conditions such as: rewards, social approval, guilt, sympathy for others, or empathic distress or even be altruistically inclined, and lastly adhered to internalised moral principles (Eisenberg, 1992, as cited in Perry, 1996).

Eisenberg (1982, as cited in Vail, 2001) states that in real life children's moral dilemmas involve choosing between helping others and self-interest and that previous research failed to examine children's responses using this approach. Eisenberg describes the first stage of moral thinking as being based on a hedonistic orientation. The child will choose to act based on the pursuit of pleasure and self-interest (Vail, 2001). Next, the child will choose the simple rule of helping others to guide their choices when faced with a moral situation. The third stage in later childhood and adolescence sees the child using a stereotyped, approval-focused orientation where the child believes s/he should act according to how good persons are expected to behave. The final stage is one of relying on empathy to guide moral reasoning. This stage is marked by the adolescent considering the injured child's perspective and how their own behaviours would make them feel (Vail, 2001).

Children learn by imitating and modelling takes on an educational role in the sense that children observe all around them without the need for direct instruction (Perry, 1996). Prosocial behaviour is acquired through such observation. Children must be motivated to

model behaviours and will often model only those people they have learned to respect. Respected teachers and peers can have a great influence on moral behaviour in that teachers especially need to share moral reactions to dilemmas and events so as to allow children to observe and hopefully model how adults and peers manage moral feelings (Damon, 1985, as cited in Perry, 1996).

If the perspectives of justice, care, and empathy intertwine as well as sometimes follow separate routes, moral psychology is required to examine moral experiences based on relationships, cognitive and emotional maturity, within cultural and societal influences. The domain of morality thus becomes more complex. Men and women, girls and boys have a tendency to examine morality from differing orientations, some use but one, losing sight of the other. Therefore it is conceivable for example, that either gender could become either/both sentimental and cold when genuine attachments unravel (Gilligan & Wiggins, 1988). Either gender is capable of caring and loving, either is able to value justice, yet in the face of inequality in childhood one must strive for moral equality through basic experience and relationships. That is the essence of morality.

#### Existing Research in the Area of Moral Development

Researchers in the area of moral development have long examined the issue of whether there existed procedures which could effectively accelerate the development of more mature judgements in moral reasoning in young children (Jensen & Murray, 1978). Various researchers claim that brief training programs can be effective in significantly raising the level of maturity in regard to specific moral concepts.

Schleifer and Douglas (1973, as cited in Jensen & Murray, 1978), found that young children could be trained to make significant gains in moral maturity rather than simply make verbal discriminations, if and when, children were given alternating viewpoints which stimulated the cognitive processes allowing them to progress to the next stage. The studies thus far have utilised a direct approach in facilitating moral development where the children have been directly reinforced for making predetermined specific responses (Jensen & Murray, 1978).

Using an indirect approach in which a discussion method was utilised, was shown to be an as effective measure for facilitating children's understandings of punishment as the direct approach. Jensen and Murray (1978) felt that the indirect, discussion-based methods would offer more conclusive evidence about the nature of moral change. The four moral concepts researched were: consideration of rules in games, immanent justice, independence of sanctions, and understanding punishment.

It was hypothesised that kindergarten and first-grade children would make significant gains in their levels of moral reasoning from the pre-test to the post-test measures. It was also hypothesised that first-graders would score higher on the pre-test than the kindergarten children not only because of development but because of an interplay of sociocultural variables such as maturation, concentration ability and overall experience with school.

The findings of this study showed that three of the four areas: immanent justice, rules in games, and understanding punishment, showed significant gains in moral maturity with the training period. The last area, that of independence of sanctions failed to show significant



results. The second hypothesis stating that the first-grade children would score higher on the pre-test measures than the kindergarten children also proved true for all four concepts.

In further understanding the differences in moral judgements, children's literature such as the use of fables, provide interesting data. If morality indicates the understanding of relationships with other people and serves as a means to solving conflicts in relationships, then fables give rise to a developing cognitive exercise in conflict resolution of relationships (Johnston, 1988). It is the degree to which the conflicts in these relationships are negotiated in terms of a care and a rights orientation that determine the extent to which gender differences are manifested. The conflicts of relationship become muddled when society's conventions, values and roles interfere with the perceptions and judgements of what is right and what is wrong. The society is part and parcel of the larger cultural picture, another defining dimension of one's perspective and judgement. Since fables provide relationship conflict resolution material stemming from cultural dissemination, it would appear that fables are conducive to providing insights as to the development of morality in terms of gender differences.

In the following study, Johnston examined spontaneous moral orientation responses and orientation preference responses using adapted Aesop's fables. Previous examinations of moral orientations have used real-life moral dilemmas as means of data collecting (Johnston, 1988). The moral orientations of justice and care detected in these previous vignettes were obtained spontaneously in discussions, but no attempt was made to systematically inquire as to the individual's understanding of the moral orientation that was not mentioned or used spontaneously. The researcher felt that there was no reason to assume that because an individual uses an orientation spontaneously, s/he would not use the other orientation if asked

whether another way of examining the dilemma existed. The researcher set out to determine whether both females and males could understand both orientations (Johnston, 1988).

In using the dilemma found in Aesop's fables, (*The Porcupine and the Moles; The Dog in the Manger*), (see Appendix A) the researcher studied eleven and fifteen year old girls' and boys' use of both the justice and care orientations in a school environment. The use of the fable as a standard method for interviewing was explained as follows, "the fable offers a constant context which is specific and consistent for all interviewees so that comparisons can be made among and between peoples' discussion of the same dilemma" (Johnston, 1988, p.51). In this manner the use of the fable is similar to the hypothetical dilemmas used so often in previous research. The fables were also not personally reconstructed moral problems, thus allowing the interviewer the opportunity to challenge the participant's construction of the problem and offer counter-suggestions to the given responses should certain solutions seem unworkable; and lastly, the participant constructed both the moral problem and the solution.

The participants were read either fable in alternating order with an interview following each one. Standard questions such as: What is the problem?; How would you solve it?; Why is that a good solution?; and, Is there another way to solve the problem? followed. The final question was: Of all the solutions we discussed, which one is best? The participant was offered counter-suggestions during the study in order to assess the strength of the commitment to his/her initial response. Questions were also admitted to clarify the solution and to evaluate the strategies used to reach the solution (Johnston, 1988).

The solutions given were categorised into two groups: the first solution given was coded as the spontaneous solution while the second was the preferred solution. Relying on a

coding scheme, the moral orientations of rights and response were examined. The results showed that there existed no significant difference in the use of spontaneous orientation by eleven and fifteen year olds. The orientation used spontaneously in the Dog Fable was significantly related to gender with males using the rights orientation at 73.3 percent in their initial solution. The girls used the response/care orientation at 50 percent while using the rights orientation at 40 percent and both at 10 percent in their initial solution. The Porcupine Fable showed no significant relationship to gender in its use of the spontaneous orientation. Interestingly, 60 percent of all participants interviewed solved this Porcupine Fable using the rights orientation (Johnston, 1988).

The next set of results provided an insight into the orientations used for the preferred solution. No significant relationship to age was found. In the Dog Fable, 80 percent of females chose the response care orientation with 10 percent deciding that both orientations provided the best solution. The males at 43.3 percent used the rights orientation with another 43.3 percent using the response care orientation as best solution (Johnston, 1988).

The results for the use of moral orientation for the best solution in using the Porcupine Fable showed a high significant relationship between orientation and gender. Sixty percent of females chose response and 56.7 percent of males chose rights as the orientation providing the best solution. Both males (20 percent) and females (16.7 percent) used both orientations. In examining fable effects the researcher found no significant effects regardless of which fable was used first (Johnston, 1988).

This research suggests that people understand two logics of moral problem solving and that the discernible orientations of justice and care incite different ways of perceiving and

resolving conflicts. Eleven year olds, as well as adolescents and adults, orient toward the moral values of both justice and care and are capable of shifting orientations in considering conflicts in relationships (Gilligan & Wiggins, 1988).

The research on moral development has provided theorists with the feasibility of explaining moral development as a stage-like process which unfolds according to a vast array of life experiences. No longer excluding the value of the family, of relationships, or of the culture which promulgates a certain type of thinking and acting, a child's potential for experiencing morality surrounds him/her. Present theories include all these facets of developmental opportunities and this investigator would like to include one more: children's literature, more specifically, the fairy tale.

#### Purpose of Study

The fairy tale is never stagnant. It takes on a life of its own using imagery, fantasy, dialogue, insightful probing into life's deeper meaning, while providing a sense of sheer gratification with every telling, retelling or reading. Its fluidity stems from its simplicity. The interaction between the teller, the story and the listener is in constant flux. The overall power and magic found in fairy tales creates a medium where the listener can look inside him/herself or even look beyond oneself in a rare moment of relaxation, a peaceful delving into oneself.

The investigator believes there exists an abounding and powerful resource in using fairy tales to determine an understanding of moral concerns and situations in the responses given by young children. The investigator does not set out to proclaim that fairy tales are virtuous in their own right, nor do she profess that they be examples of moral living, yet they guide the young child into distinguishing a sense of what is right from what is wrong. Fairy

tales assist in interpreting the basic rules that societies' conventions have set; guide the child to extract the good act from the bad act; and unveils a mode of how to act in light of how not to act. These lessons are deemed valuable as part and parcel of general educational principles and curriculum objectives such as those found in moral or ethics and religion courses for example.

It is with storytelling and dramatic play that the investigator proposes to travel into the realm of the fairy tale. More specifically, the investigator aims to explore issues of morality and themes that emerge based on the responses that the children use in understanding the moral content presented in the Grimm fairy tales using qualitative research methods of interviewing and observation methods. The investigator does not examine or evaluate moral reasoning or moral judgement in the classical sense, but looks at how children evaluate the moral content of fairy tales. Secondly, the investigator proposes to examine the value and importance fairy tales play in the lives of these children using their responses, levels of participation and reactions to the storytelling, dramatisation and artistic experiences. Answers to the following research questions are sought: How do fairy tales affect a child's understanding of moral content? and what is the meaning of fairy tales for children today?

## METHODOLOGY

### Participants

The participants in this project were sixteen grade one through grade three students from a private school in the area of Montreal. There were six students from grade one: three girls and three boys. From grade two, seven students participated: three boys and four girls; and finally, three girls from grade three took part in this fairy tale hour as well.

The cultural backgrounds consisted of a mixture of cultural groups: there were two German mother-tongue students, one Turkish-German student, five German-Canadian students where one parent was German speaking and of German descent, a Greek brother and sister pair, one Chilean student, one East Indian Canadian, and three English Canadian students.

The students were recruited on a volunteer basis by the investigator who presented the fairy tale story hour program to the students in grades one through three. The students were explained that they would be told a fairy tale once a week after school and that they would be given the opportunity to act the fairy tale out after its telling. The students were then informed that they would participate in some artistic activities during the eighth and ninth week of the fairy tale experience. All the children in these grades were given a list comprised of all afterschool activities and were invited to choose and register for the fairy tale story hour if they wished to participate. This form was filled in by the parents and then handed into the office where it was then picked up by the investigator. As this is a German school, the experience took place in German. The experience began in mid-September and ran until the beginning of December for a total of nine weeks.

The investigator then took the first sixteen registrations (first come, first serve basis) as the demand for this activity was large. Subsequently the parental consent form was sent home to the parents of these sixteen students along with an explanation of the purpose of the study. The parents of the students were also contacted by phone to answer concerns or questions. The parents had no concerns and thought this was a fantastic idea and looked forward to having their children retell the fairy tale at home. The Parental consent form (see attached consent form Appendix B) was collected before the first session took place.

## Setting

After school on Fridays, the participating students were asked to come to my classroom, the kindergarten classroom. I greeted the children at the door and told them to make themselves comfortable. Pillows and cushions were laid out in a circle in the center of the front area of the classroom. On a table on the right of this circle, the play clothes for the dramatisations were laid out. The play clothes provided by the investigator included: various hats, a vest, dresses, men and women's shirts, pants, men's dress ties, t-shirts, scarves, necklaces, blankets, crowns, ladies shoes and riding boots. The props included: a rolling pin, cushions, tables, building blocks, artificial flowers, chairs, desks, water table, and baskets. The props were pushed to the side and used as needed. The bench on the left was used by the children for sitting during the dramatisations. The area in which the telling and dramatisation took place was empty for the time being.

A candle was placed in the center of the circle to provide the ambience instrumental in entering the magic that lies in the realm of fairy tales (Howarth, 1989). The video camera was behind the children filming the telling and the dramatisations. The lights were dimmed, the curtains drawn, and once the candle was lit the investigator began telling the story.

The stories, based on the original version of the Grimm fairy tales, were chosen because they were thought to be relatively unfamiliar to the children and this new exposure may elicit differing moral responses. It was also thought that the tellings of new fairy tales would be more enjoyable for the children to learn about and role-play. The fairy tales offer similar motifs and themes (jealous step-mother and step-sister, setting off on a quest, coping with a seemingly difficult task) to those found in the more commonly shared fairy tales while

simultaneously offering new motifs (overcoming greed, setting off on a quest to with a specific mission in mind, encountering fortune) as well.

The fairy tales were also chosen for their moral content in providing the children with differing moral dilemmas, moral situations that offer food for thought for the interview to follow. These six fairy tales included and are listed in order of presentation: *The Three Little Men in the Woods (Die Drei Männlein im Walde)*; *The White Snake (Die Weisse Schlange)*; *Fundevoegel*; *The Water of Life (Das Wasser des Lebens)*; *Jorinda and Joringel (Jorinde und Joringel)*; and lastly, *The Poor Miller's Boy and the Cat (Der arme Müllersbursch und das Kätzchen)* (See Appendix C to H for the full text).

### The Fairy Tale Telling

Before the actual storytelling began the students were asked to participate in a movement exercise: for example, to stand and stretch, reach toward the sky on tip-toes, breathe in deeply through the nose, scrunch down into a little ball, exhale through the mouth, do jumping jacks, and/or windmill turns. This movement exercise was to allow the children to stretch and fidget before having to concentrate for yet another short period of time as all this took place after school and the children had been already been sitting through a full school day.

In introducing the fairy tale experience during the first meeting, the children were told that they would hear fairy tales that they may or may not already know. The first fairy tale session was used to introduce the children to the purpose of this after school activity and to establish what the children knew about fairy tales. In the next six fairy tale meetings, the children were subsequently instructed to listen attentively, they were invited to close their eyes, but as story time is magic time, they were not talk to me or to one another. It was a time to be



quiet, a time to share a story in a serene environment, a time to let the images created in each individual mind drift with this setting. The candle was explained as being a symbol of the magic that exists in fairy tales and was not meant to be touched or blown out until the very end when the fairy tale has been told. The candle became the symbol which invited the children into the land of faerie.

Once the candle was lit, the fairy tale telling began. I told the tale using voice fluctuations and facial and hand gestures to represent the various characters, no visual aid was used. Following the telling, no question concerning the content of the fairy tale was asked. The experience at this point was not to gauge a child's comprehension of the story but rather to appreciate the fairy tale for its beauty and enchantment. Should a child not have understood a specific word, an explanation was given. Any further questions about the fairy tale were re-directed to the group itself for answers or comments.

#### The first session.

The first hour session was an initiation into the world of fairy tales and an opportunity for the investigator to explain what was to be expected of the children. During this first session, following the greeting of the children at the door, the children were explained the purpose of the fairy tale experience and what the children would be doing during the remaining eight weeks (storytelling, role-play, artistic component and the interview). The investigator emphasised that the children were to enjoy, listen well to the told fairy tales, and participate as much as they could or wanted to during the dramatisations. Following this, attendance was taken and the movement exercise was performed (with the appropriate explanation given), the children settled themselves comfortably on the cushions.

In examining the room, the children were asked to notice the video camera and chord and were further told that all sessions and activities would be taped; the story, the dramatisation that followed the telling and the artistic activity in the final weeks. The children were asked to forget about the camera, pretend it is just another toy sitting on a shelf listening to the enchanting fairy tale. The children were reminded to attend the weekly sessions.

Sitting comfortably in a circle during this first fairy tale experience the children brainstormed about the fairy tales they already knew. The children were asked such lead questions as: “What do you think fairy tale story hour is all about? Do you like fairy tales? Can you remember the first tale you ever heard? What is your all-time favourite fairy tale? What fairy tales do you get read to at home? What is a fairy tale? How is it different than a children’s story?”. The students shared their favourite fairy tales by going around the circle. A list of all-time favourite fairy tales was compiled on a large piece of Bristol board. The children were explained that the dramatisations follow the story and were told what would be expected and asked to think about these questions, “Think of a favourite character; how would this character move, talk with his/her voice, dress, feel, show feelings? These are things that can help you play your character during the role-play.” As there remained a few minutes before the children were to greet their parents, a condensed variant version of *The Frog Prince* was shared during the remainder of the time.

### The Dramatisations

Following the telling of the fairy tale during the second week right through to the seventh, the children were asked to decide on a role that they wished to explore today, “Think about which person or thing you would like to be today and how you would act out that

person or thing. What would you say, and how would you say it, what would you do, how would you move?" Once the roles had been distributed through personal assignment and mutual agreement amongst the children, the children had a few minutes to put away the pillows, put on their play clothes, gather the required props and set the stage and take their places.

The first dramatisations were guided in introducing the characters, progression of the story line, and assisting in the stage design all the while following the lead of the actors themselves. It often happened that the children entered or exited, forgot or missed a line or part of the story, but this was to be expected and accepted. The children guided each other and were allowed to voice their concerns or comments about the play to help their friends. The aim of the dramatisation was to give the child the opportunity to internalise a role, feel the fairy tale come alive and participate in an enjoyable activity. In the instances where there was enough time for a recasting, a second performance was granted. The children regrouped at the end of the session to tidy up and were then sent off to greet their parents.

After the first two weeks had gone by, the investigator felt she had to extend the story hour to one and a half hours in order to complete the dramatisations. She spoke to each parent individually as they picked up their children after the second week and asked if adding one half hour to the afternoon would inconvenience them in any way. The parents all consented to this addition and so we managed to finish the dramatisations in sufficient time.

### The Interview

The final two Fridays and the subsequent Monday afternoon (as the investigator ran out of time) were devoted to individually interviewing the children based on random selection

(names drawn out of a hat) for their understanding of the moral content in the stories. At the beginning of the session, with the whole group, a review of the fairy tales that had been presented in earlier weeks was given: the title and a synopsis was given. A colleague assisted these sessions monitoring the children during their artistic activity.

The interviews were conducted in an adjacent classroom to the kindergarten classroom. The investigator went into the kindergarten classroom to deliver and retrieve each child for his/her interview. Before the interview began, the children were reminded to ignore the tape recorder and just try to answer as best they could.

The interview design was intended to answer the first question of this study namely, how do children understand the moral content in fairy tales? What recurring themes do children use to identify the moral content, if any? and what sense do children make of the moral content? The following questions would give the child an opportunity to regard the moral content of the fairy tales based on his/her own level of moral understanding without too many lead questions. The questions asked by the investigator were at times modified by character or deed and aimed at eliciting further responses. These were the general questions aimed at examining the child's understanding of the moral content of her/his favourite fairy tale(s): (a) Tell me about the fairy tale that you liked the most or that meant something to you?; (b) Tell me about the fairy tale that you disliked the most and why?; (c) There was a problem where someone acted good and someone acted bad in this fairy tale, can you tell me about it?; (d) Do you know why the person or something in that story that acted really good?; (e) Do you know why the person or something in that story that acted really bad?; (f) Was s/he punished enough?; (g) What was fair/unfair in this story?; and (h) How did you like the ending?

Furthermore, particular questions aimed at expanding the child's understanding of the moral content of the specific fairy tales were asked. These questions are described in the following section. Both the favourites and the dislikes were used at times to gauge a response. If a child answered 'I don't know' the following questions were used to elicit or prompt a clearer response:

1. *The White Snake* - In the story of *The White Snake*, the servant had the ability to listen to the animals talk but he did not tell them. Was it right to listen to their talk without telling the animals he could understand them? What did he do with his power? What the servant did at the beginning was important to the rest of the story, was it important to you?

2. *Fundevoegel* - In the story of *Fundevoegel*, what did the duck do and why? Who was more mean, the duck with the water or the cook? Did the fairy tale end fair?

3. *The Water of Life* - The young son found the water in the story of *The Water of Life* but he was not well treated, why? Who treated him worse, his father or his brothers? Is it worse to trick someone or have them killed? What happened to the youngest son throughout the fairy tale and why did this happen?

4. *Jorinda and Joringel* - In *Jorinda and Joringel* the sorceress transforms people into birds, why? Did Jorinde and Joringel know about trespassing? Why couldn't Joringel stay away?

5. *The Poor Miller's Boy and the Cat* - In the story of the poor miller, if the youngest boy had not served the cat, would he have been so rich? The cat promised Hans a horse after he worked for seven years but Hans still had to wait three days, was this cat keeping his

promise to Hans? The miller would give the mill to the boy who brought back the best horse, how did the two older boys act when they heard this?

6. *The Three Little Men in the Woods*- In the story with the Three Little Men, many people tried to fool each other, why? How did the girl become the queen?

### The Artistic Activities

These fairy tale culmination activities began in the final two weeks of the session while interviews were being conducted and included the painting and use of collage technique to produce a favourite fairy tale scene. This activity in combination with the telling and dramatisation component was used to assess the value of fairy tales in the lives of the children that participated in this study. This was done by observing their responses during the activities, their participation level, their overall enjoyment of the activities.

The children were reminded to create scenes based solely on the fairy tales that were told to them in the previous six sessions. Before the interviews and the beginning of the artistic activities, the fairy tales were reviewed. The children were presented with a variety of materials: yarn, material, construction paper and other types of paper tidbits, markers, sparkles, stickers, colouring crayons of all sorts, stamps and stencils for use in painting, bristol board paper and water colour paint to freely explore their fairy tale scene.

The children also had the opportunity to create a fairy tale scene using plasticine. The children were given the choice of using either artistic medium (collage, paint or plasticine) or of completing one after the other in their order of preference. This creative component was videotaped.

## FINDINGS

### The Initial Session

The first meeting assessed the children's previous literary experiences with the fairy tale genre. The children were welcomed to the fairy tale story hour, attendance was taken, a few stretches and curlings into a little ball were done, finally the lights were turned off and the candle was lit. The room was silent and one could only hear Adam draw his breath as the investigator said the fairy tale story hour had begun. The normal routine was explained and the children were asked to arrive promptly, "otherwise we could miss it." The video and its purpose was explained as well as its safety. The children were asked to ignore the camera.

The children were told to pretend with their minds and their eyes, that they are not in Montreal, not in Quebec, not in Canada, but in Fairy Tale Land. The children were told that the candle helps us know that when it is lit, we have entered Fairy Tale Land and that only the investigator may light and blow the candle out as, "fire is dangerous" the children chorused.

The children were asked to share their fairy tale experiences with the group, "I love fairy tales over everything" and "me too" was heard. When the children were asked if they were looking forward to this all said, "yes" and, "except Jason, he didn't want to come." In response to why were they looking forward to this experience: Susan shared, "because of the story," and "it's fun and fairy tales are good," stated Sally; Ben replied, "I have never participated in a fairy tale story hour," whereupon all children agreed in a resounding "me too"; Heidi remembered and said, "we did fairy tales in Kindergarten."

When asked to share when the children heard fairy tales, they replied; "at night before I go to bed my mother tells me them," and, "she (mother) tells us stories in bed and also horror

stories,”; and, “ my mother before I go to bed and in the park we can read them too.” When asked what exactly fairy tales were because Adam asked this question, Debra responds, “like stories and there can be different animals.” Tim in his response states, “fairy tales are stories with adventure or nice things inside.” Juliet began with, “Fairy tale story hour is a theater, and the girl with the red hat, and the father.” Other children referred back to their time in Kindergarten and named fairy tales they had heard and acted out then. Ben says, “I was once in a fairy tale story hour in Germany with my friend Ludwig. When will we do the play?”

During this next section, the children were extremely eager to share their favourite stories and at times the debate of whether the story was actually a fairy tale or if it was simply a children’s story was discussed. John chose *Titanic* and this caused an immediate reaction from others including giggles and cries of “no!, that is a real story, it really happened! that is not a fairy tale!”. Sally named *Willow* as her favourite story and said, “my mother even has the Brownies.” Adam chose *Power Rangers* where this caused an immediate discussion as to their literary form. The children decided that while it was on television and was cartoon, it was not a fairy tale because, “they are not fairy tale characters,” and, “they can do magic but it is not real.”

As the children brainstormed, their responses and choices were often heralded with “Oh, yeah, that’s good, my mother reads me that too.” On this list are several children’s stories that were mentioned and the children, on their own, discussed the distinction between a fairy tale and a children’s story by stating that it was, “a children’s story but a nice one.” The list of stories included: Debra - *Hansel and Gretel*, Laura - *The Wolf and the Seven Kids*, Sara - all fairy tales, Adam - *The Three Little Pigs* and *Mickey Mouse*, Anna - *The Wolf and the Seven*



*Kids*, James - *The Wizard of Oz*, Juliet - *The Wizard of Oz*, Sally - *Willow*, Jason - *Mickey Mouse*, Heidi - *The Wolf and the Seven Kids*, - Tim - *Robin Hood*, Betty - *Snow White*, Ben - *Robin Hood*, John - *Robin Hood and George of the Jungle*, Susan - *The Lion King*, Lisa - *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*. *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* was dismissed as being a simple children's story by the children..

As the circle brainstorming came to a close, the investigator offered her favourite fairy tale - *Cinderella* and was immediately bombarded with comments such as, " Oh yeah, I love that one too !" "Oh I forgot about that one! Me too, Frau Brand!" As *Cinderella* was mentioned Sally laughed and suggested she be Cinderella and James be the Prince. The names of the children that also liked this fairy tale were added to our list: Sally, Lisa, Laura, Juliet, Heidi, Debra, Anna, Ben, and finally Susan. Betty wanted the investigator to add *Pippi Longstocking* to the list.

The children were quickly taken into the land of faerie with a quick made-up rendition of the *Frog Prince* as time was quickly running out. The children were disappointed that no dramatisation was to take place but were promised one the following week.

### The Fairy Tale Story Hour

The magic of the fairy tale was not lost on this special group of children. Although it was an after-school activity, the investigator was amazed at the demand, the request to join our group and yearning glances of those children she met in the halls as they were leaving to head home or greet their parents just as she was welcoming the children that would participate in fairy tale story hour.

The students participated with eagerness. The desire to settle down comfortably on the cushions, light the candle and begin the telling was so intense the investigator felt she could not begin soon enough. As each successive week went by the time together became more precious and personal; the children arrived breathlessly, the lunch bags and bookbags were thrown haphazardly in the entrance and the children excused themselves if they were but a minute late. The movement and breathing exercises were taken over by the children where a different movement was performed by one child and this copied by the others.

The children were nestled like peas in a pod on the cushions and pillows, the candle was lit and the storytelling began. The investigator was so caught up in the fervour that she actually forgot to mention the title of the fairy tale she was telling until severe reprimands were voiced by the children. It was the relaxed and meditative positions the children took and found that made this not only a project for them to participate in but also a means to unwind after the hectic bustle of school life. Some children were sitting with their legs crossed, some were sitting side-ways with their heads tilted, some were lying on their stomachs and some even had their eyes closed as they were invited to do so. There was a serenity that existed in this circle of friends. One grade one child actually fell asleep during two tellings.

The investigator was in awe of the intensity with which the children listened. There were no questions asked, few words to be explained (scythe), only a giggle or occasional laugh, but little else was heard. The children were mesmerised by the story and followed the events with unabashed interest. Although the language of the fairy tale written so long ago was at times difficult to follow word for word for many of the children regardless of language

ability, the overall meaning was not lost. The children followed along using the investigator's gestures and facial expressions to gain contextual meaning to the sequences of the story.

### The Dramatisation of the Fairy Tale

The dramatisations highlighted the storytelling activity. After the storytelling experience, the children were asked to discuss the roles that may be performed during this play. The children responded by identifying the main roles as well as many animals roles such as horses, birds, and fish as well as inanimate roles. The inanimate objects such as trees, bushes, and castle gates were taken over by children such as Jason and Debra who remained quiet and withdrawn but nevertheless willing to participate in smaller non-verbal roles. Interestingly, the roles were openly shared and children who had a main role were given a less significant role during the next play. No children felt left out or desired not to participate. This role distribution took more time than expected as there were at times eight children on the stage with their own ideas and versions of how and what should go where. The investigator gave the children the opportunity to voice their desires about roles and stage set-up.

The investigator did help the children narrate the first two dramatisation sessions and began to incorporate and involve their input and their narration in subsequent weeks. The children were able to retell the fairy tale by the fourth week without hesitation. The investigator was surprised to find that Sara, her brother Adam, Tim and Juliet assumed the role of narrator as only one of these children spoke German at home. The language did not deter these children from exploring something they felt strongly about wanting to do.

At times the story line needed a guiding hand. The children sitting on the bench would spring in or the investigator would help out if asked to. It was quite an accomplishment as the

dramatisations were slowly taken over by the students themselves. The students would direct and correct each other, add to the story line, forget their entrance or place or exit, and even return to a previous scene because another character entered or needed the build-up of a certain scene to justify his/her being there. This process would start all over again time permitting, with a new cast for a second dramatisation thus ensuring everyone an opportunity to participate.

The first three sessions saw the investigator assisting with the stage design. Pillow, tables, cushions and areas were designated for purposeful direction in the play. In one fairy tale *The Water of Life* John took the cushions and folded them accordion style to delineate the castle grounds. Other times the tables became a tree or a castle room for the birds in *Jorinda and Joringel*. The children set up the stage according to their wishes and the overall fairy tale dramatisation took over the vast space offered. The children were very quick to reprimand those that dared trespass into the castle courtyard when s/he was supposed to be riding on the golden road far away from the courtyard. James, waiting for his grand entrance stated, "I'll go back here til it's time fro me to come out!" The room, it's corners and walls were used to enlarge the play area and this all organised by the children.

The children sitting and waiting for their turn participated verbally and motioned with hands and feet for others to carry on, move away, do, and be whatever. It was a very lively session with commands being issued and giggling from the sidelines. The laughter flowed and the giggles eventually subsided but the action never dwindled. Interestingly, when Anna was playing the role of the baby in *Fundevoegel* a shyness overcame her and she did not wish to cry

like a baby. The other children sitting on the bench or under the table made the crying sounds for her - no breaking up or egging on, just jump right in and do!

The mood was relaxed and friendly. The children performing were often seen to exaggerate a behaviour when it elicited a giggle from the audience. James looking for the children in *Fundevoegel* exaggerated his carrying of water in such a manner that one would think he was suffering from incredible back pain. The three servant girls asked to get the children from the forest in this same fairy tale looked far and wide with exaggerated motions looking over, under, behind everywhere and returned cowardly and trembling to face the cook. The cats that washed Hans in *The Poor Miller's Boy and the Cat* rubbed vigorously and with gentle touches waddled with their tail (bottoms wiggling) to dry his face. Laura, the tabby cat in this same fairy tale, commands with pointed finger and stern voice and thinks with her finger on her forehead rubbing her temple.

The costumes varied from play to play. Some children changed their identity by dressing as women such as John who dressed as the female wizard in *Jorinda and Joringel* and wore a two piece dress ensemble. The scarves became table cloths, the ties were used by the older sons and boys that appeared in the fairy tales. James who played the cook in *Fundevoegel* used an apron, railroad cap, and a wooden spoon to define himself. Adam used a rolling pin which was laying around the sink area as a rifle in *The Water of Life* to represent the army he was playing. The older children often helped the younger ones get dressed and helped them chose their costume or gave them ideas as to how they could dress. This co-operation amongst the age levels was felt throughout the whole fairy tale experience.

The children performed the fairy tale dramatisations using particular phrases, language, intonations and gestures which included the story line but which were clearly their own. At times the children's German language skills were corrected on the spot by the other children. Although one could detect the plot, the children used embellishments and their own voice to describe and narrate their understanding of the fairy tale. Tim in narrating *The Poor Miller's Boy and the Cat* used this phrase to describe the cats, the servants to the tabby cat, "The cats were golden, silver, and even like polished jewels, tartan-like..." He also added, "the violin, the flute and the trumpet" to the band that would play for the tabby cat. Hans when asked to dance said, "No, never with a cat! Are you crazy?" When the princess comes to deliver the horse the miller replies, "I don't think you want to see him, he is pretty naked and messy!" Obviously appealing to all young ears!

In *The Water of Life*, Sara is the enchanted princess who waits for her saviour; she greets the impostors with, "You are the wrong one ! Go away! Shoo, shoo!" In the scene to follow the princess tells her husband that his father, "he wants you back and he's really sorry!" As the youngest son returns home, his father literally falls into his arms with, "you aren't dead!" Although the language is simplified, its meaning has not been lost. The children put into the play their own personally derived understanding of the fairy tale and worked with this understanding throughout.

During *The Water of Life*, Lisa notices that two lions are missing, the play is interrupted as two hungry lions spring into action. Quickly and quietly two volunteers step right into the role play without discussion and a second thought - the play can continue. In another scene in this same play, the two brothers are praying to be released from their canyon

by praying with folded hands and repeating please, please while the youngest brother asks the dwarf about their whereabouts. It was the flexible atmosphere that allowed the children to come alive without memorising or following a strict set play. The children brought the main issues, the moral concerns to the stage and acted them out.

During the dramatisation sessions the investigator must stress the energy and vigour with which the children participated. Interestingly all the children wanted to participate in the dramatisations right away. During one of the role plays, Heidi's mother came to pick her up early. At first she refused to leave shaking her head vigorously and saying no, but she eventually conceded and left. The children relished the opportunity to role play. As the weeks progressed my role became one of audience and facilitator in role distribution.

### The Interview

The two main questions asked in this study are: how do fairy tales affect a child's understanding of the moral content of fairy tales? and secondly, what is the meaning of fairy tales for the children in this storytelling experience? The first question examines the child's understanding of the moral content derived through the interview responses. The second question was answered by observing the level of enjoyment, the participatory rate and manner in which the children participated during the storytellings, dramatisations and artistic experiences.

The interview began with the opening question: which fairy tale did you enjoy the most or which one meant something to you and why? This was followed by: was there a problem in this fairy tale, can you tell me about it? The intent behind this retelling was to help jog the

child's memory and thereby draw forth their responses of the moral content in their chosen fairy tale without too many lead questions.

In response to the initial questions, the children clearly had their own preferences: six of the sixteen children preferred *The Water of Life*; three chose *Jorinda and Joringel*; another three chose *The Poor Miller's Boy and the Cat*, both *Fundevogel*, and *The White Snake* were each chosen twice. These results were compiled by counting the number of times the fairy tale was mentioned as a first choice preference during each individual interview. Interestingly, the fairy tale *The Three Men in the Woods* was not mentioned as a first choice favourite by any child but was mentioned during the course of the interview. All fairy tales were subsequently mentioned during the course of the interview either other favoured ones or ones that were not liked at all. The responses of these aforementioned fairy tales were used as well.

The students automatically responded to the initial questions by reciting the story in their own words and levels of understanding. The students differed in their retellings by various means: memory and comprehension, length, and embellishments. Of significance is the fact that five of the ten girls were able to recount the events of the fairy tale with more precision than all other children. Only two of the boys, Tim and Adam could retell the fairy tale with minimal use of 'I forgot' and 'I don't remember'. The remaining boys were easily confused as to the sequences of events and even the fairy tale itself perhaps due to lack of interest.

Although seven weeks had elapsed since the commencement of the fairy tale tellings, I was struck by the detail and imagery the child used to recite the particular fairy tale. The students' use of my words and phrases and gestures such as finger snapping, arm movements such as pushing or shoving aside, would occasionally occur in their retellings. Also significant



was the voice and emotion heard in these retellings which was carried by the child's use of dialogue rather than mere description.

Occasionally in these children's retellings, an element was added to the work, or some aspect the investigator mistook as being insignificant to the story was of particular significance to the child and described in detail. One example is Laura's version of *The Miller Boy and the Cat*, "... and they went, the son followed the cat to her castle and then he was invited to dinner and then these people that played music came and played music and the cat asked the son, 'dance with me!' and the son said 'no, I am not going to dance with a cat!' So the cat clapped his hands (clap) and these cats came and took the son to his room and they changed him and they washed his face and a cat took his tail and cleaned his face and then he went to bed. The next day the cat was changing him and back washing his face and drying again..." This scene was described vividly and in great detail with her arms accompanying the text.

In another example, Sally's use of embellishment is apparent in her retelling of *The White Snake*: "She said to him, 'go and find a gold apple for me.' This gold apple was surrounded by fire breathing dragons and it was really hard to get, so he heard the crows coming and all three of them were holding the gold apple in their mouth and by the next day, the princess said OK I want this man and then they married and that was the end." There was no mention of fire breathing dragons in the original fairy tale. The children would change a character's identity as Laura did in *Fundevoegel* where Annemarie, a simple forester's daughter, became a princess. Perhaps central to their understanding of fairy tales is the presence of royalty in one form or another since so many fairy tales embrace this component.

#### Examining the moral content.

In assessing children's understanding of the moral content, the fairy tales assisted in the child's identification of values and themes of universal right- and wrong-doing. The children in this study identified values, vice and virtue, and recognised character deeds on both ends of the behaviour continuum. They recognised: acts of helpfulness and kindness; acts of laziness, indifference, and industriousness; beauty and virtue; ugliness and greed; deception and not keeping one's word; and the depth to which some characters personify evil. The moral dilemmas presented dealt with a vast continuum of moral choices and moral behaviours which allowed the children to make their own judgements based on the actions undertaken by the fairy tale characters. This delineation becomes crucial in understanding the children's responses as the deeds, the behaviours have been dealt with in the fairy tale plot, the children are left to interpret them on a personal level. In certain responses, analogies to the child's personal situation had been drawn as a means of understanding the moral content.

The children were able to state who had done something wrong, who had done something right, and rationalise the intent and consequences for such deeds. As for their reasoning about these moral deeds the children were found to be in Kohlberg's concrete individualistic perspective stage of moral development and in Piaget's autonomous stage of moral development (Bornstein & Lamb, 1992). The children responded to the question of intent with clear understanding of both the intent and the consequences.

This pre-conventional perspective included statements such as, "he deserved it" and "it was fair." The children understood and stated the universal 'an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth' tenet. Tim for instance said, "when the brothers were nice, he was nice but because they were mean, he was right in using his magic to punish them," in *The Water of Life*. The children

saw that acting good brought a reward or a pleasant result; a horse, the princess, or the reward at the end of a particular quest. On the other hand, those characters that acted badly were shown a differing fate; their lack of moral virtue led them to be punished in some manner; banishment, loss of fortune, or death. This understanding of punishment in the form of reciprocity was evident in their views that these punishments were seen as fair or unfair because the protagonist was dealt with unfairly and deserved the reward of whatever nature. The children took the protagonist's point of view and moral behaviour into consideration when judging the punishment.

When asked about the specific deeds and whether the character (person or animal) acted good or bad, the responses demonstrated the child's ability to use caring, justice and empathic orientations to describe their moral reasoning. No significant gender differences were found in the responses to the moral reasoning questions. Both genders used the care and justice orientations interchangeably, although certain fairy tales lent themselves to choosing one orientation more so than the other.

Of significance are the responses of certain children during the interview. The children in grade one, Lisa, Ben, Betty, and John, showed that they were able to identify the moral situations and comment on them but failed to reason, to give a judgement about them when asked why questions. Their responses contained mostly "I forgot" and "I don't know" comments. Interestingly James in grade two, and Debra in grade three had similar results. Debra was not able to recount the events in any cohesive order and answered "I can't remember" to all questions.

Of the ten girls that participated in this fairy tale story hour nine openly shared their enjoyment of the story hour and activities that followed. The boys, all from grades one and two, on the other hand, voiced comments such as thinking it was “too long”, “the fairy tales were too long to sit and listen to”, “I did not get to play ...” The boys tended to find it more of a chore. One parent admitted that she enrolled her son for the German-speaking component knowing that her son would not enjoy it but rather that he had to endure it. This kind of motivation, or rather lack thereof, is presumed to have played a part in the interview and in the responses given. The boys on average answered more questions with “I don’t know” and “I forgot” or “I can’t remember” than did the girls of the same age in this group. Three boys’ responses consisted of vague and jumbled retellings, their answers provided unspecified glimpses into the moral content of any fairy tale.

In the following section each fairy tale is presented with the children’s responses to the moral content.

*The Water of Life.*

Of the six children that responded to this fairy tale all of them showed congruence as far as the youngest son being genuinely concerned about the King’s welfare and that the moral dilemma centred on the obtaining of the desired Water of Life. Five children were able to justify the actions of the dwarf responding kindly to the third boy because he was the only one that was kind and stopped to explain his dilemma. On the other hand, the older two sons deserved their fate in the canyon because they were rude, and the dwarf was motivated by revenge in dealing with the two older brothers. Heidi stated that the reason the two older boys were rude to the little man was, “because he wanted to have the castle and he wanted to be the

King.” Heidi clearly understood greed and how it manifests itself. When asked whether the two brothers would have made good Kings she replied, “no, because they were mean”. When asked whether the two brothers were fair in their actions, she replied, “No, cause they wanted to have the castle, cause the dad said if you go and find me the medicine then I’ll give you the castle.”

Tim approached this fairy tale from a different angle: he stated that the little dwarf “when the brothers were nice, he was nice but because they were mean, he was right in using his magic to punish them.” “What did he do?” “He said his magic spell and because they were mean he left them stay stuck between two trees.” He went on to explain that when the third boy met the dwarf, he was polite to the dwarf and was rewarded by being given the directions to the Water of Life. Heidi responded similarly, “Because he wanted to help his father.” The kindness of the youngest boy did not go undetected therefore, one good turn deserves another.

The third son was warned, “to be out of the castle before midnight and just as the clock struck twelve for the last time he slid through the gate but lost part of his heel in the gate, but this was OK as more important was the water he was carrying for his father.” Tim, in his retelling, reinforced the empathy the third son had for his father and the wish he had to heal him over and above anything else. Tim’s view demonstrated that the youngest son genuinely cared for his father. Tim’s understanding of the punishment as retribution was evident; he understood that being mean and haughty would get one punished.

Interestingly Tim was not happy with the ending of this fairy tale. He felt that the banishment of the two brothers was too harsh a punishment, “because the King could have also spoken harshly to the two boys,” “Do you think he did?” “No, he never wanted to see them

again.” “Why did the King not have the older two brothers killed like he had ordered for the youngest brother?” “Because killing is not better than never being seen again.” “What do you think is worse out of these two?” “I think killing.” “Why?” “I don’t know.” “I think not being able to see someone again also hurts.” “Yes, if you take the Niagara Falls and the boat tips.” Tim’s reference to the Falls was presumed linked to the fact that in the story the two brothers were banished by boat never to return to the Kingdom. Sally on the other hand was happy with the way the story ended and said that the two older brothers got what they deserved, “Do you think the two boys of this story were punished enough?” “Yes, they deserved it.” “They did not deserve anything else?” “No.”

Juliet was focusing on the issue of whether or not the young boy was simply nice or if he was also lucky. She came to the conclusion that the castle, the princess, finding the Water of Life, and the meeting of the dwarf were due to luck mostly and then, “a little because the youngest was nice.” Juliet felt that the two older boys were “mean and that they did not get anything because they were so mean, that’s why!” For her, their justice was served in the form of exclusion from all things that the older brothers tried to deceive others with and by.

Lisa when asked whether there was a problem in this fairy tale initially answered no. She clearly understood fairy tale but failed to draw any moral conclusions. Upon further probing as to whether the behaviours of the characters were all good or bad she answered, “hmmm... not all.” “who was good?” “ummm... Sally” “Can you tell me about the fairy tale people, not the play?” “The youngest boy, the hunter and the princess.” “Why were these all good ?” “Because they were good people, and because they want to be nice to other people.” “There were also not so nice people?” “The two brothers and the King.” “Ah, who was

meaner, the two brothers or the King?” “The King because he was pretty mad and sour.” “Why was he sour and mean?” “Because he drank the wrong one.” “Who gave him the wrong one?” “The little one.” “The little one. What happened, why did he not have his Water of Life?” “Because they took it away!” Lisa relates the facts with a clear understanding of virtuous and good behaviour and its manifestations while also describing the opposite end of the behaviour continuum with the actions that led up to the deception scene.

The deception scene (switching of the water) was significant for three children in that it was mentioned during the interview as having occurred for various reasons. Interestingly, not one child mentioned the switching of the water and the consequences that ensued on the part of the King and his order to have his youngest son taken away and killed as unfair or wrong. This particular aspect was totally disregarded although the fairy tale clearly describes the events leading up to this scene. Lisa when asked if the two older boys received a fair punishment after having switched the water replied, “I don’t know.”

Betty viewed this same scene in a different light as one of caring concern and a wish to heal. She said, “they wanted to bring the Water of Life to their father and heal him.” She did not understand that the youngest boy should have had that honour. Heidi when asked to compare the deeds of the King and that of the older brothers, recognised that switching the water was not as bad as being killed because, “then you can’t be alive anymore and you can’t see anybody.” The understanding of death and its finality emerged in this response.

To conclude, according to the children, the youngest son’s action of being polite and obedient served him well in that he was rewarded for his deeds. The understanding that even though the punishment of wrongful acts had been held up by deception momentarily, acting

right and continuing to do so will eventually prevail. According to the children, the older brothers for the most part deserved their fate. Both girls and boys empathised with the King as well as with the youngest son, and the dedication of the youngest to help his father without selfish reasons, despite all odds, was clearly evident in the understanding of this tale.

*Fundevoegel.*

In this fairy tale all nine children that responded to questions (either as a first choice or through prompting) identified the act of not keeping the promise (between the cook and Annemarie) as the moral dilemma. Interestingly, the act of breaking a promise was seen by all children as being the salvation to the otherwise imminent death of the foundling bird. Adam explained that the promise was not justly upheld because perhaps as Annemarie was promising not to tell the foundling bird about the cook's plan, she might have had her fingers crossed behind her back, "cause oh yeah, cause that was really something really bad so that you had to tell her cause maybe she said no promise behind your back like this. Maybe she lied." The fingers crossed or behind the back, as he showed me, is a symbolic gesture that children understand means that the promise looks on but is actually off. Adam using this social convention as an explanation for the broken promise demonstrates how important breaking a promise really was to the children.

Ben in response to the question about Annemarie's actions against the cook stated that, "She lied." "Is that bad?" "No, not so bad." "Why?" "Then Fundevoegel can not get dead so the cook would not cook him and eat him." Upon further probing into lying, Ben revealed that lying is not acceptable but he could not further explain it. "It is then not so bad to lie to save someone's life? It is acceptable to lie to do this?" "No." "Why?" "I don't know."



Sara was asked whether the issue of Annemarie saving Fundevogel's life by breaking her promise was right. she replied, "She has to." This was a firm response, no hesitation, no questioning, that was the only right thing to do. Anna in her retelling of the story automatically included her reasoning for this act, "So he (the cook) told her that he was going to cook Fundevogel but even if she kept her promise, she had to tell because she liked Fundevogel and she didn't want him to get hurt."

Laura responded to the question of Annemarie telling Fundevogel about the cook's plan and if it was right or wrong with, "I think it is right that she did it because I don't think she wants to let her bird die." "She made a promise to the cook." "I sometimes break promises too." "When and why?" "Sometimes." "Why would you keep one promise and break another?" "Cause my brother will break the ones I tell." "But do you break his promises that he tells you?" "Well sometimes he breaks mine and I break his." Her explanation for the promises being broken derive from this logic - it is not that bad, I do it too. Laura then drew an analogy to her real life situation with her own pet; "if it's a real emergency, like my dog Tobi with like my cook in the hotel, he said tomorrow in the morning I'm going to kill Tobi, I would want to tell my dad." The children understood the delicate situation Annemarie was in and they were able to reason about the dilemma using their own judgement focusing on the intent and the consequences that would ensue. For these children the act of saving a life was paramount to keeping a promise.

When asked about the degree of meanness between the cook and the duck for drowning the cook and who was meaner Laura replied, "The cook." "Why?" "I don't know, I wouldn't want to eat a bird." "And the duck wasn't mean for having killed the cook?" "Well

the princess wasn't actually mean, well I don't think she wanted to, she just (snap of fingers)".

"Why was she doing that?" "She didn't want her pet bird to die." "So she was protecting it?"

"Yeah, I think so." The number of children responding to this act of breaking a promise reflects the manner in which children in real situations perceive it to be a betrayal of confidence of significant importance.

Adam, using a justice approach, described the ending with the stepmother drowning as follows, "cause the Stiefmutter (stepmother) wanted to cook the dolly and that was really mean! So she (stepmother) appreciates that and she deserves that." Anna explained this same ending used more of a caring orientation whereby she showed concern for the welfare of the cook and his appetite, "maybe he wanted to eat them and because he was hungry and he didn't have anymore food. Then after he decided to eat Fundevogel but he didn't." In probing about whether everything in the story was fair Anna stated, "no, because the cook he wanted to eat him but he didn't get to, but Fundevogel and his sister they got what they wanted." The investigator asked what it was they wanted to which Anna replied, "He (Fundevogel) got to live." Anna alone considered the moral dilemma and its consequences by showing concern for the character all other children clearly identified as the antagonist, the one that deserved to drown.

Juliet's grappling with the notion of abandonment in this fairy tale was of particular interest as it was raised during her response as to whether the ending was fair. She asked where the father was during the time that the duck was drowning the cook. When the investigator asked what the father could have done during this time she replied, "he could have called the police." "Why would Annemarie not have gone to her father after she heard the cook's plan?"

“Because she did not know where he was in the forest and he just left. If they were to look for him they would not find the path.” “Would the father have been able to help?” “Of course, he’s their father.” Recognising that an authority figure was missing, one that would undoubtedly intervene on behalf of those in need was of great concern for Juliet.

The act of protecting a friend, a brother or a pet was paramount to the act of breaking the promise. The children used both caring and justice orientations to explain their understanding of the moral content. Interestingly, the shift in considering the cook’s feelings as Anna did was noteworthy. In this fairy tale the absence of the father figure during the final scenes prompted Juliet to comment on this with the intent to state that all might have been different had he been present.

*The Miller’s Boy and the Cat.*

The following fairy tale explored deception and the quest three boys undertake for a specific purpose; to return with the most beautiful horse in order to claim ownership of the mill. The children identified the following two moral situations; the well-being and treatment of the youngest boy, and secondly, the cat holding off on Hans’ intended reward. The acts of the older boys deceiving the youngest boy by leaving him in a cave alone and teasing him because he was the youngest became a moral dilemma based on concern about the welfare of the youngest boy.

Hans was treated unfairly and was not properly cared for because of his size and rank according to the children who responded to this fairy tale. When Adam was asked, “Why were the other two boys mean to the third one?” “Because they were just laughing, they were making fun cause he was smallest.” In another example when Adam was asked whether the

Miller deserved the horse at the end of the fairy tale he said, "No, cause he said, oh you only to the two boys, you will get it, he was pointing to the two brothers but not the little one, he couldn't see him cause he was too little, and then he just said it to the big brothers." Being the small one is not always easy as Adam was trying to point out.

The cave scene left an impression on two of the children. Adam felt that the two brothers were just "mean and didn't care about the young boy" because they left him alone in the cave, "maybe a bear can come or a bear or a fox could come and eat him." Tim shared similar sentiments, "well, maybe there might be an animal living in the cave like a bear and then he would be scratched and ripped in pieces so that he doesn't live anymore." Although this did not happen in the story, the notion of being left alone and of fearful consequences happening were significant threats to Adam's and Tim's understanding about what it is to care for someone and how to show this caring nature.

The act of the cat not giving Hans the horse after his seven year term had expired was viewed as a broken promise by Susan while other children thought it was simply not nice and rude. Susan, when asked whether waiting another three days was fair said, "No because the seven years had gone by and he had to wait another three days and the cat promised him seven years." When asked to explain why the cat might have done this she replied she didn't know.

Adam when asked about the cat's word, replied similarly, "How do you think Hans felt?" "Sad." "Why?" "Cause he didn't get his horse and he worked all that much." "Do you think that was right?" "No, that was rude." "Why was that rude?" "Cause that wasn't very nice, cause he worked so much and then he didn't give it to him, the cat didn't give it to him." Nicholas when asked if Hans had not bumped into the cat, would he have been just as happy,

“No, then he wouldn’t get a horse and then he would lose and then he wouldn’t get the mill for himself.” For Adam, the cat is the means to an end; his interpretation of the getting of the horse is a contest and this becomes the propelling factor in this fairy tale.

Laura explained the delay with a deeper understanding of the sequence of events that followed the cat’s dismissal of Hans as follows, “Well, because the cat was actually the princess and she turned into a princess and she needed three days, and she needed to get the carriage and the horses.” Laura was able to causally explain why the miller boy’s reward after seven years service had to wait another three days. When the investigator examined this issue and drew a personal analogy as to how she would feel, Laura replied, “Bad. I just wouldn’t want to get it after three days, I would want to get it right away!” Laura’s initial response gave an explanation as to the delay in the fairy tale, when put in personal terms her response showed her unwillingness to wait a glimpse into her own potential moral behaviour.

The issue of size and rank played an immense role in the unfolding of the moral content in this fairy tale. It showed that a small person can defeat and overcome all obstacles with industriousness and fairness. The children identified the unfair treatment Hans received at the hands of the two older boys, the miller and the cat. Each situation indicated that the children examined morality significantly more through the concept of empathy and caring.

### *Jorinda and Joringel.*

In this fairy tale the moral content alludes to the timeless fairy tale theme of the innocent and good vanquishing the evil to save a love with the help of magical powers. Interestingly this fairy tale elicited the least number of responses in terms of understanding the moral content. The only response centered around the reasons for the transformations of birds.

Three children developed a myriad of explanations as to why the wizard would turn the innocent maidens into birds; a deed that the children thought was oriented around greed and possession or based largely on loneliness. Also in the explanations no child stated that the wizard was unfair, that the act was unfair or wrong. The wizard was just described as being mean and in one instance poor.

Sara who chose this as her favourite fairy tale was asked if she thought it was right that the wizard turn Jorinda into a bird, "That's mean." "Why?" "Maybe it was her collection maybe she wanted to eat them," and "maybe she wanted their feathers." Anna explained that the King (the wizard), a person that was very poor, wanted the birds, "because he had no company and he had no pets and he wanted some pets better than people then after he saw some people coming along and after he turned them into birds." "Do you think that was fair?" "No because he wanted all the girls to make eggs so he gets more of them." The transformation of wizard to King in Anna's response possibly explains why she took a rather empathic view of the wizard. She personifies him as a lonely yet selfish character.

In another response Tim takes an altruistic approach, "whoever came one hundred paces towards the castle was transformed into a bird and there they lived real nice." The wizard was said to have taken good care of the birds and this act overshadowed the act of snatching innocent maidens. For the children the story provided the least moral content presumably because no theme existed which is comparable to the other fairy tales heard. The fact that only three characters played prominent roles may have influenced their understanding of the moral content in this fairy tale.

*The White Snake.*

The powers, the magic some that some fairy tales capture will leave an impression on even the youngest child. The moral content of this fairy tale allowed the children to focus on positive moral situations, models of positive behaviour, the virtues of helpfulness and kindness. Interestingly this fairy tale appeared to enchant the children rather than allow them to analyse it for its moral content.

Only two children wished to explore this fairy tale. Sally, when asked about the specific powers of the servant and his deeds replied, "he used them for good things, he did not just say OK, I want this, I want that but then when the important things came he said, 'Oh I wish I could help you!'" When Sally was asked why the animals would choose to help the servant she replied, "Cause he helped them by doing something good so they did something good for him." Sally understood that by behaving selflessly one sows unexpected benefits.

When asked about the servant's power in relation to the fairness of being able to overhear conversations without telling the creatures of this ability, Sally defended the servant's power as fair and said, "the servant had a good heart." Jason also expressed these same sentiments concerning the servant's power and maintained, "He did a good thing with it (his power)." The issue of magical power was mentioned in that it was used positively and not for subversive acts. This fairy tale emphasised the positive traits that magic can spell on all.

Interestingly, although the King had forbidden anyone from peering into the covered bowl, the servant's disobedience was not picked up by the two children who talked about this tale. Sally when asked to describe the princess who led the men on all these quests said, "She was very greedy." When probed about the ending she embellished and stated, "She said to him, 'go and find a gold apple for me.' This gold apple was surrounded by fire breathing dragons

and it was really hard to get, so he heard the crows coming and all three of them were holding the gold apple in their mouth and by the next day, the princess said OK I want this man and then they married and that was the end.” As there was no explanation given to clarify this change of heart one can assume Sally was satisfied with the ending. Both Sally and Jason appeared to view this fairy tale as echoing the ageless adage of one good deed deserves another.

*The Three Little Men in the Woods.*

The moral content in this fairy tale centred on the vices of greed and jealousy. The motif is similar to that of *Cinderella* (an evil step-mother and step- sister treating, the daughter badly, a King to the rescue and the attempt at trying to deceive the King) and the investigator had hoped that more children would respond to this fairy tale. As it was only three children chose to examine this fairy tale, two of which referred to it as their least favourite fairy tale and although prompting was used to elicit some comments, these two often said “I forgot,” and “I don’t know.”

When asked whether there was a problem in this fairy tale, Heidi stated, “that the mother that wasn’t nice to the good little princess, she’s bad and she’s nice to the mean princess.” “Why was she like that?” “Because she liked, she was mean and she thought happiness was wrong.” Another issue that Heidi brought up was the issue of beauty and the relationship she perceives it has to being good and virtuous. When asked whether being beautiful in this story would lead to having a happy life Heidi replied, “It helps when you are nice too you can’t just be beautiful, you have to have a good heart.” On the issue of whether being good would be an advantage, Heidi stated, “yeah she got the money and she got the



most strawberries cause the man gave her strawberries because she was so nice to them, and that's all." When asked whether the ending was fair and in what way the ending could have been different she answered, "that they could both be princesses together, they could be nice princesses and that both could have a baby." Seen as equals there would be no competition between the two girls and everyone would be happy. Heidi identified the typical fairy tale characterisation of being both beautiful and nice. This identification was useful in assessing her moral understanding of inequality and how this inequality between the sisters could be alleviated.

### The Artwork

During the final two sessions, weeks eight and nine, the children were given an opportunity to create a scene, an image that was particularly meaningful to them based on a fairy tale told to them during the last six weeks. The overall mood was relaxed, quiet and concentrated as each child explored her/his favourite medium to create and mould. The children created scenes using plasticine, crayons and little collage for the drawings, and lastly water-colour for their paintings. In total eight plasticine scenes were moulded, four paintings, and fifteen drawings were accomplished.

The drawings contained: six scenes from *Jorinda and Joringel* of which three were similar; seven from *The Poor Miller's Boy and the Cat* in which all contain a carriage, a princess and at times, horses; and one from *The White Snake*; and one from *Fundevoegel*. The paintings contained one scene from *The Water of Life*; two from *The Poor Miller's Boy and the Cat*; and one untitled painting. The plasticine creations included: six similar scenes from *The Water of Life*; one from *Jorinda and Joringel*; and one from *Fundevoegel*.

“Is that a dough-nut?” “No, it is supposed to be a hat.” “How big is the that?” and “Should I make eyeballs?” These questions reflected the nature to which composition and detail was considered. The children were presented with no illustration or image of any told fairy tale. The freedom to create according to their personal expectations of the fairy tale and vivid imaginings was within their power. The results were colourful montages of scenes filled with action and expression.

In examining the artistic session it became clear that the children used dialogue to share ideas, and opinions about their own personal work as well as that of a neighbour. Often the similarities between the drawings and plasticine scenes demonstrated that a form of copying was also done. The children were free to roam and examine each other’s work and share ideas. The children such as Jason, James, Ben, and Tim were all seated side by side with Juliet and Sally seated across was significant in that all managed to recreate the same scene from *The Water of Life* with the dwarf, the hill and one of the brothers at times with a horse. The scenes varied in their composition as far as spaces, hill size, little person size and brother’s appearances, but the theme was the same. Comments such as, “Oh, cool! What is that?” and “I am making the hill with the dwarf,” and, “What are those, aliens?” were heard in responding to each other’s scenes.

The children shared ideas and often asked each other about their own creations. “Is this nice,” and, “is this good?” was most often asked by the girls who drew and painted. Interestingly the boys were not that concerned about the aesthetics. Comments such as, “Wow, that’s beautiful” were heard as Juliet and Sally showed their finished paintings of the dwarf and the carriage scene respectively. Of significance was the communication between the children

drawing and moulding plasticine as these children sat in groups and conversed frequently while those children painting, stood, and interacted less frequently.

The children played with their plasticine characters, moving them around on own set scene as well as onto that of their neighbour's. "This guy's head comes off!" or "How come his head came off - ow, I am sinking!" are examples of play the children were heard using during this session. The very nature of this medium allowed the children to manipulate the plasticine by rolling, scrunching, forming a ball, flattening, twisting and shaping it accordingly. The medium invited motion and the children at this activity appeared to be in constant motion. Bond referred to this activity as sculpting. Of the eight children choosing plasticine, three worked solely with this medium during both sessions. In drawing all girls drew with three boys completing a drawing as well.

The topics of discussion ranged from homework, to telling jokes, to asking for a specific crayon, to examining the walls and the Kindergarten's art projects, to looking outside and observing the children at play in the playground. Tim, now in grade one commented, "Hey, I remember those pictures from last year, they are baby-easy!" This brought back a flood of Kindergarten memories that included many anecdotes and giggles. The presence of sparkling wax crayons was also of significance as they lent themselves to be great topics of conversation.

The children were also heard singing the ABC song for example, during this time in both English and German versions. It was clearly a time to relax and create. Interestingly very little commentary on the fairy tale texts or activities thus far were mentioned. Specific references centered around the dramatisation component, as in Adam saying, "Remember when I was the dwarf?" or Tim saying to John, "I am not finished with you !" from *Jorinda*

*and Joringel*. The children appeared content in their endeavours until the middle of the second session where their projects were completed and the attraction to join the children on the playground was just too great.

### The Value of Fairy Tales

When the three components of the fairy tale story hour, the telling, the dramatisation and the artistic sessions are viewed with respect to determining their value in the lives of these sixteen children, the findings indicate a considerable leaning to the aesthetic appeal of fairy tales followed by the urge to re-enact them. The children expressed their enthusiasm in participating openly, without hesitation, and with a joy that exuded in the life they brought to their roles. The breathless arrival, the urge to begin and the notable will to role-play allowed the children to deepen their understanding of the moral content while seizing the moment.

The exercise in creativity and in imagining the stage, the scene to be executed in either role-play or in colour was momentous in that no visual aid was presented to these children. The ideas flowed from known experiences, from preconceived ideas about what, when and how to perform or mould. The children quietly absorbed the fairy tale possibly with images floating through their minds as the story unfolded.

The value of the fairy tales was also assessed in the way the children responded outside of the school environment in which these fairy tales were told at home and during the last telling, Sally brought her fairy tale book to allow me to examine the contents. Various fairy tales that had been told in this experience were present in her book and of this she was proud. Lisa in her interview session mentioned that she told the fairy tales to her family and that she looked forward to hearing a new one each week.

The circular nature of beginning with the tellings, followed by the dramatisation, and culminating in the artistic activity brought not only a deeper understanding of the fairy tale itself but a sense of closure, of having experienced the fairy tale from many facets each linked by enjoyment and a sense of creating with the story.

#### DISCUSSION

“Three and four year olds .... don’t analyse stories or fairy tales - they know immediately the message being conveyed. Ethics and morals were taught for centuries through myths and fairy tales” (Tubbs, as cited in Neugebauer, 1992, p.28).

The fairy tale is still regarded as belonging to a child’s first literary experience. Although far from its original roots, where these stories belong to a specific culture and audience, it has become literature for children, a story to listen to, to enjoy and possibly learn from. Lisa could not wait to end each session to deliver her rendition of the told fairy tale at home, “I also told a story to my mother and father about the ... I also told it. I tell my mami and my dad all the stories.”

For these children the fairy tales meant relaxation, enjoyment and an opportunity to share a literary experience with family. When the children were asked whether they enjoyed the fairy tale telling experience they replied with a resounding yes. This satisfaction was also evident in their manner of participation. They arrived breathlessly, settled in quickly and enthusiastically participated in the dramatisations. Overall, the experience was valuable not only from a research point of view but from the obvious pleasure it bestowed upon the children. The fairy tale telling activity is still being offered today.

In exploring children's prior knowledge of fairy tales the investigator was impressed with the diversity and quality of the fairy tales and other stories on their list of preferences. These children had previous exposure to the genre of fairy tales. It would be fair to assume that the fairy tales these children had heard or read, either in school, at home, or elsewhere, were an integral part of a pleasurable and entertaining experience. Whether the version was original, in print or presented as a movie, it was most likely meant for entertainment. And so it should be.

In viewing the responses, this previous exposure might help explain the children's rapid understanding of the fairy tale story line as manifested during the role-playing and during the interview where the story line was unequivocally accepted as is. During the interviews it became clear that the children accepted the events and consequences without asking too many questions. The children in various grades had difficulty answering the investigator's questions as to why a certain character and deed was right or wrong. The lack of alternating viewpoints, the lack of inferential reasoning other than descriptions of the fairy tale events, may have attributed to the lack of moral reasoning and moral judgements made as part of examining the moral content. For example, only Heidi suggested an alternate ending to *The Three Little Men in the Woods*. All children consented that the fairy tale endings were fair except Tim who felt that the two older boys were dealt with too harshly in *The Water of Life*. The majority of responses demonstrated that the fairy tale story line should remain intact, and could not be viewed alternately. The children accepted the story told in its entirety without question.

The children in this study indicated that they were still very much influenced by the very nature and beauty of the fairy tale itself. The fairy tale experience was regarded as fun, with the dramatisation aspect being most often referred to in the subsequent activities such as in the

interview and during the artistic component. Interestingly it was the children of grade one who referred back to the dramatisations most frequently during the interviews in their attempts to recall to story and identify their favourite fairy tale. John for instance liked the fairy tale where, “he was the horse and Tim was ...”. Tim’s retelling began with, “the time, when I held John like this , that is why I like it so ...”. The role-playing left a notable impression on the children that extended far beyond the actual event. The children remembered who did what, with who this was done, and how it was done.

The dramatisations allowed the children to try novel facets of behaving within a semi-structured activity. The freedom to act out a role based on a personal interpretation of a character, where the movements and the stage set-up were not pre-defined enticed the children to take on these new roles. For some actors the fact that the story was narrated by the children helped progress the play but also helped structure the narrative component where knowing what to say and how to say a line properly was secondary. The children were guided by the narrator if a word or action was forgotten. The freedom to move, to be and to invent oneself within this setting played a crucial role in the children’s enjoyment of the dramatisations.

The levels of meaning derived from the fairy tale telling differed with each child. On the one hand sometimes a fairy tale spoke to the child in the form of a particular like and dislike. Adam for example replied that *Miller's Boy and the Cat* was special to him, “because there was a horse and I liked being a horse, I like people.” When further asked what he thought the story was really about he replied, “a horse.” “An ordinary horse?” “An ordinary horse but better, but the horse was all coloured and beautiful, the colours!” This fairy tale appealed to

Adam's fascination with horses, it touched upon something that was important to him at that very moment in the experience.

According to Lamme (1996) literature that touches the heart allows readers or, in this case, listeners to regard moral issues in depth. This specific genre of literature in combination with social interaction in the form of role-playing allows the child to enter a character's point of view which has been shown to increase moral maturity (Selman, 1980, as cited in Perry, 1996). The children voiced concerns about contents of the fairy tales that seemed to speak to their personal fears and queries. Such issues as the broken promise, being abandoned as the youngest miller's boy was in the cave, a father's absenteeism, seemed to be of significance in the descriptive responses the children made.

Bettelheim (1976) states that fairy tales speak to the child, where in this study they appeared to involve the child in thinking about the content on a personal level. The threatening of the pet/friend in *Fundevoegel* elicited responses that focused on its protection and of breaking a promise to save the life of the pet/friend. It may be conceivable that the children were responding to their own concerns with regards to their pet. Questions asked may include; What would I do in this situation? Would I react differently? The dilemmas presented in the fairy tales begin to take the shape of real life situations. The identification of common concerns may have led the children to voice judgements and personal analogies based on these commonalities.

When Juliet questioned the father's whereabouts in *Fundevoegel*, she appeared to be questioning issues of abandonment and of the lack of an authority figure that should be present to protect and guide Annemarie and the foundling bird. The cave scene brought forth two very clear images of what could have happened to poor Hans. The consequences of being left alone



and of feelings of helplessness and perhaps a fear of being left alone emerged in Tim and Adam's descriptions. At this age children test their autonomy and question their sense of security within the family as perhaps younger siblings or the assuming of more responsibilities at school or at home play a significant role in usurping that balance that a child of eight years tries to establish (Damon & Hart, 1992).

The testing of this autonomy and the questioning of their sense of security relates to moral development in that morality begins to take on definite meaning as the child relates and interacts with various people and encounters differing moral dilemmas. The children in this study identified the moral dilemmas using their understanding of the moral content found in fairy tales. According to Kohlberg's theory of moral development (1987) the children that responded to the moral judgement questions showed that they were in the second stage of moral development; the preoperational, concrete individualistic perspective stage. In Piagetian terms they are in the autonomous morality stage (Bee, 1985) This finding is consistent with the existing research on moral development (Damon & Hart, 1992). This stage is characterised by the emergence of moral reciprocity, the intent of the deed is examined, and another's point of view is taken into consideration (Jensen and Murray, 1978). Characteristic to this stage is the fact that morality entails a reward for good and just deeds. The children, especially those in grade two and three, were able to identify the intent of the good and bad moral deeds. The children identified the reward as being justly deserved and fairly attained while the punishment was viewed as rightly deserved and fair in most cases.

In further examining the results, the younger children in grade one showed the least responses in understanding the moral content. The question in analysing the findings becomes

one of examining why many children failed to respond to questions of moral judgement. The children might not have understood the fairy tale in its entirety because it was presented in German. Taking language comprehension into consideration with the fact that time had elapsed since the first fairy tales were told, might help explain their lack of moral responses. This is particularly true in the cases where the children (mostly boys from grades one and two) forgot the story line due either to poor memory or lack of interest. John and Ben although able to distinguish titles, were not able to give a short resume and therefore became confused during the questioning even though prompting questions were used. The children may also have been caught off guard with the questions because they may never have had to think about this genre of literature in terms of morality.

Looking above and beyond the question of language and memory one might have to conclude that the children in grade one were not eliciting moral judgements because they were not able to. In fact the students might not have attained the level of moral maturity necessary to reason about the dilemma presented. This may be due to a lack of previous exposure to discussing morals and ethical concerns hidden in story form. These children had just entered grade one where the novelty of schooling might have been rather overwhelming. The changes in subject matter, hours spent at the desk, and the arrival of homework required adjustment. These children may also have been tired after a long school week. In two of the fairy tale tellings one child fell asleep. The older children may have had more exposure to ethical and moral issues in their religion and ethical course work at school.

What became very apparent in the responses the children gave about the moral content was their use of the care, justice and the empathy orientations. The comments referring to the

fairness and rightness of a deed can be seen to run through the responses given especially in *The Water of Life*. Not only was something deemed fair or unfair, right or wrong, but both genders used care to describe why a character acted the way s/he did. In this same fairy tale the children for example stated that the youngest son was polite and industrious because he had his father's failing health in mind. The children showed feelings of empathy for the characters themselves in that they delved into their personal lives to draw inferences about the moral situations. Laura when responding to *Fundevoegel* described how painful it would be for her to lose a pet and she would do all she could to save her pet should the need arise, even break a promise.

Gilligan and Wiggins (1987, as cited in Beal, Garrod, Ruben, Stewart, & Dekle, 1997) stated that attachment differences in early childhood between mother and daughter compared to mother and son attachments may lead to gender differences in moral orientation. By nature of encouraging warmth and emotionally responsive relationships with girls, while on the other hand promoting independence, detachment and exploration in sons, mothers may be attributing to these gender differences in moral orientation. The responses that Tim and Adam gave concerning the cave scene in *The Miller's Boy and the Cat* seemed to center on this exploration of independence and the fear of not being able to cope with being left alone and correspond to the researcher's findings. Juliet in addressing the father's whereabouts in *Fundevoegel* may have been trying to establish a need to maintain a relationship, a dependence on the father for guidance and protection. Although these two examples exemplify Gilligan and Wiggins's theory (1988), no significant gender differences were found overall; the children used care and justice interchangeably.

### Assessing the Validity of Using Fairy Tales in Understanding Moral Content

The question arises about the validity of using fairy tales in this manner of questioning to assess children's morality. Although fairy tales are fictional writings, they have a specific beginning, middle and an end. They contain moral situations that are dealt with within the confines of the unfolding of events, or the plot. The fact that the ending is such as it is plays a great part in the motivation of reasoning and thinking about the moral dilemmas in fairy tales as the expected outcome is evident; the ending states it all.

The very nature of the fairy tale plot allows the reader or audience to glimpse human nature according to both moral leanings. The fairy tale characters model behaviour that is virtuous and desirable on the one hand while showing the evil side of human nature on the other. This modelling found in fairy tales is, as Bettelheim (1976) has maintained, a powerful tool in addressing the child's need to answer, "Who do I want to be like?" This identification process becomes personal as each child, touched by fairy tales on an individual level will gain meaning and understanding in a similar manner. The themes and the symbolic language inherent in the fairy tales is meaningful to each child on an individual basis. It is the investigator's belief that fairy tales become tools that with discussion, aid in the transmittal of values and morals because children as well as adults enjoy them first and foremost.

In previous studies the use of fables, hypothetical dilemma situations, and Real Life Moral Dilemma stories, allowed for greater responses on the individual's understanding and reasoning about morality (Beal, Garrod, Ruben, Stewart, & Dekle, 1997). The investigator believes that fairy tales, both modern and conventional, can be used to foster a child's moral development by omitting the ending, in specifically asking for alternate fair endings, in

examining gender altered and variant fairy tales, and in examining fairy tales from different cultures whose values may differ from those that are presented in the Grimm renditions for example.

In line with discussing the validity of fairy tales, it is of equal importance to examine the questions used in the interview and the interviewing techniques. As varied as the fairy tales were, so were the responses. The questions answered and the choices the children made in choosing to talk about their favourite fairy tale may have caused some confusion with regard to the fairy tale itself. In addition, questioning the children immediately following the role-play may have yielded differing results and glimpses into their understanding of the moral content.

“Folk and fairy tales offer to the world of childhood a wealth of wonderful characters and events and vivid lessons that provide a rich and exciting contrast to the adventures of the many insipid characters (Care Bears and Smurfs) and violent heroes (GI Joe and Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles) of current culture” (Neugebauer, 1992). The dilemma of deciding what a child should be exposed to in literature form is very much a personal decision. The resurgence of variant fairy tales based on presenting alternate view points, alternate characterisations, values and norms is a useful tool in providing empowerment opportunities in literary form. The investigator suspects that children who are exposed to the other side, another point of view, may feel a certain obligation in real life to view a dilemma, a situation using both perspectives. The fairy tale offers a simplistic approach to analysing dilemmas using perspective taking abilities. The fairy tale presents characterisations in such a way that the complexities of good and evil are simply depicted; one is either good, beautiful and industrious or one is bad, ugly and lazy.

For some parents or educators, this character depiction is simply unacceptable. The investigator believes that this depiction is not to be dismissed because it is what she believes the children want to hear. Examining how evil looks and feels, one must imagine the worst. Children also must imagine the worst in thinking about evil and being bad in their daily exploration of limits, rules, social conventions, and moral dilemmas. On the other hand, imagining how goodness vanquishes and overcomes all obstacles is the second half of the moral equation, not to be forgotten. Children, as do adults, expect good behaviour, good people, good deeds to be saved, guarded, protected by the fact that evil is punished, dealt with and made to suffer in some way.

The fact that the characterisations are often ugly and lazy; greedy and deceptive symbolises the source of evil on a rather broad but simple spectrum. The children in this study did not seem to be bothered by the depiction of the characters but appeared to relish in the opportunity to take them on in role-play situations. This creative attempt shaped their understanding and helped identify the very nature of how good and bad may appear on the outside as well as on the inside.

The issue of censorship will most likely never lie dormant but it is the value of fairy tales in the pleasurable and fantastical sense that in this investigator's opinion surpasses the criticism of being out-dated fictional works void of meaning and depth. The literary genre of fairy tale may undergo many revisions, many variants may be written yet their appeal remains unchanged. The themes of fairy tales transcend borders and time. Human nature in certain facets remains fixed; good and bad exist and children must learn to recognise both. The fairy

tale and all its characters is one childhood tool that supports this recognition. The candle is lit and the magic begins. Can one say the same for those characters of current culture?

### CONCLUSION

The magic spun by the web of fairy tales is still appreciated by the children that absorb each rendition with awe and fascination. Identifying with the good and being attracted to the evil are the makings of childhood behaviour modeling. For parents as well as educators, the undaunting task of presenting children with opportunities for recognising these opposing forces is the beginning of moral development. It remains a personal decision as to which medium best provides these opportunities. It is the investigator's belief that the fairy tale is a useful and pleasurable literary tool that lends itself well to introducing children to the workings of human nature.

The fascination created by the dualling forces of good and evil allowed the children in the study to respond to questions of moral content by identifying the specific moral dilemmas, vices and virtues, presented in the six told fairy tales. The children were able to further explain the intent of the deed and how it transgressed morally. The children in this study were able to examine the moral content through both care and justice orientations.

The multi-faceted investigation provided the children with opportunities to examine fairy tales using storytelling, drama and artistic activities. The essence of this study became the aesthetic appeal of fairy tales covering all these domains. Imagining and creating became the tools useful for exploring the fairy tale and its moral content. This storytelling experience void of any pictorial aid allowed the children to creatively imagine the face of goodness and evil any

particular character portrayed. The scenes created in the child's mind became the theatre in which the moral content played itself out.

Through dramatisation the fairy tale became alive with each child's personal understanding of the text. In role-play, the children participated with vigour and determination trying out various roles, expressions and feelings. The stage was set for personal interpretations of the fairy tale brought forth through movement and dialogue. Each child assumed a vital role in the unfolding of this role-play; verbal and non-verbal roles were equally significant and accordingly acted out.

In these times of globalisation, the sharing of fairy tales opens the door to a richness found in the world of fantasy that invites cultural acceptance while fostering a sense of belonging. The moral content in fairy tales speaks a unifying language; whether one deals with a traditional Western fairy tale or a Persian tale, human nature is closely examined. The transcending basic theme of the illustrious battle of good versus evil leaves its mark on a child's emerging moral development as well as on a most treasured aesthetic level. Whether one appreciates the images that are presented in vivid character descriptions and fantasy depictions one can not underestimate the power of the dualling forces. No matter what, obstacles must be overcome, evil exists and will be punished, while diligence and honesty will be rewarded. To mirror reality, real life, this story would fail in its attempt, but to help understand life, its complexities and its appreciation of hope and wonder, this, becomes one of its strengths.

#### Implications for Future Research

Fairy tales offer childhood a wealth of creative and fantastical opportunities. Taking these opportunities into consideration allows educators to use fairy tales in second language



learning experiences where verbal skills are heightened as children may role-play and narrate the fairy tale and offer varying endings and alternate viewpoints. As this study could not examine moral behaviour in children, it may be possible to create situations, dilemmas which would allow for moral behaviour to be role-played spontaneously.

As this study was exploratory in nature, a comparative study examining levels of moral reasoning using pre- and post-testing methods with regard to the fairy tale story hour experience may yield deeper insights into moral reasoning and whether fairy tales can facilitate moral reasoning and moral behaviour in children. Also, examining levels of and the effects of violent behaviour inherent in fairy tales as compared to present day television shows (geared towards the younger population) may provide useful insights as to the nature of violent and aggressive behaviour in children.

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## APPENDIX A

## Fables

## The Porcupine and the Moles

It was growing cold, and a porcupine was looking for a home. He found a most desirable cave but saw it was occupied by a family of moles. "Would you mind if I shared your home for the winter?" the porcupine asked the moles. The generous moles consented and the porcupine moved in. But the cave was small and every time the moles moved around they were scratched by the porcupine's sharp quills. The moles endured this discomfort as long as they could. Then at last they gathered courage to approach their visitor. "Pray leave," they said "and let us have our cave to ourselves once again." "Oh no!" said the porcupine. "This place suits me very well."

## The Dog in the Manger

A dog, looking for a comfortable place to nap, came upon the empty stall of an ox. There it was quiet and cool and the hay was soft. The dog, who was very tired, curled up on the hay and was soon fast asleep. A few hours later the ox lumbered in from the fields. He had worked hard and was looking forward to his dinner of hay. His heavy steps woke the dog who jumped up in a great temper. As the ox came near the stall the dog snapped angrily, as if to bite him. Again and again the ox tried to reach his food but each time he tried the dog stopped him.

(Gilligan et al., 1988)

APPENDIX B  
CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

CONSENT FORM

THE USE OF GRIMM'S FAIRY TALES TO EXPLORE CHILDREN'S  
UNDERSTANDING OF THE MORAL CONTENT OF FAIRY TALES  
Kerstin Brand, B.A.

Dear Parents,

I am a graduate student in the Department of Education at Concordia University. I am presently conducting a research project under the supervision of Dr. Miranda D'Amico, in order to fulfil the requirements for a Master's Degree in Child Study.

This project will examine the child's understanding of the content of fairy tales and the morals inherent in them using the art of storytelling and dramatisation. This research uses fairy tales because of their familiarity and appeal at this age. In order to investigate this area, the child will be interviewed on an individual basis.

Your permission is required to include your child in this study. I will be observing your child in the fairy tale storytelling sessions using a video camera. Nine sessions will take place after school for an hour. In these sessions the children will be told a fairy tale, invited to act it out, and subsequently interviewed (interview recorded on tape).

For further information concerning this study, please feel free to contact me (#457-2886 at the school) or Dr. Miranda D'Amico (#848-2040) at the Department of Education at Concordia University. Please be assured that all names remain confidential and the results are used for my research purposes only.

Sincerely,

Kerstin Brand

**Statement of Informed Consent:** I understand that I am free to withdraw my consent and discontinue my participation at anytime without negative consequences. I understand that my participation in this study is confidential. I understand that anonymous group findings from this study may be published. I understand the purpose of this study.

**I HAVE CAREFULLY STUDIED THE ABOVE AND UNDERSTAND THIS AGREEMENT. I FREELY CONSENT AND AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY.**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Child's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(parent)

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(investigator)

Thank you for having taken the time to fill in this form.

APPENDIX C  
THE THREE LITTLE MEN IN THE WOOD

There was once a man whose wife died, and a woman whose husband died, and the man had a daughter, and the woman also had a daughter. The girls were acquainted with each other, and went out walking together, and afterwards came to the woman in her house. Then said she to the man's daughter: "Listen, tell your father that I would like to marry him, and then you shall wash yourself in milk every morning, and drink wine, but my own daughter shall wash herself in water and drink water." The girl went home, and told her father what the woman had said. The man said: "What shall I do? Marriage is a joy and also a torment." At length as he could come to no decision, he pulled off his boot, and said, "Take this boot, it has a hole in the sole of it. Go with it up to the loft, hang it on the big nail, and then pour water into it. If it hold the water, then I will again take a wife, but if it run through, I will not." The girl did as she was bid, but the water drew the hole together and the boot became full to the top. She informed her father how it had turned out. Then he himself went up, and when he saw that she was right, he went to the window and wooed her, and the wedding was celebrated.

The next morning, when the two girls got up, there stood before the man's daughter milk for her to wash in and wine for her to drink, but before the woman's daughter stood water to wash herself with and water for drinking. On the second morning, stood water for washing and water for drinking before the man's daughter as well as for the woman's daughter. And on the third morning stood water for washing and water for drinking before the man's daughter, and milk for washing and wine for drinking, before the woman's daughter, and so it continued. The woman became her step-daughter's bitterest enemy, and day by day did her best to treat her still worse. She was also envious because her step-daughter was beautiful and loveable, and her own daughter ugly and repulsive.

Once, in winter, when everything was frozen as hard as a stone, and hill and vale lay covered with snow, the woman made a frock of paper, called her step-daughter, and said: "Here, put on this dress and go out into the wood, and fetch me a little basketful of strawberries, - I have a fancy for some." "Good heavens" said the girl, "no strawberries grow in winter! The ground is frozen, and besides the snow has covered everything. And why am I to go in this paper frock? It is so cold outside that one's breath freezes! The wind will blow through the frock, and the thorns tear it off my body?" "Will you contradict me?" said the step-mother. "See that you go, and do not show your face again until you have the basketful of strawberries!" then she gave her a little piece of hard bread, and said: "This will last you the day," and thought: "You will die of cold and hunger outside, and will never be seen again by me."

Then the maiden was obedient, and put on the paper frock, and went out with the basket. Far and wide there was nothing but snow, and not a green blade to be seen. When she got into the wood she saw a small house out of which peeped three little men. She wished them good day, and knocked modestly at the door. They cried: "Come in," and she entered the room and seated herself on the bench by the stove, where she began to warm herself and eat her breakfast. The little men said: "Give us some of it, too." "Willingly," she said, and divided her piece of bread in two, and gave them the half. They asked: "What do you here in the forest in the winter time, in your thin dress?" "Ah," she answered, "I am to look for a basketful of



strawberries, and am not to go home until I can take them with me." When she had eaten her bread, they gave her a broom and said: "Sweep away the snow at the back door." But when she was outside, the three little men said to each other: "What shall we give her as she is so good, and she has shared her bread with us?" Then said the first: "My gift is, that she shall every day grow more beautiful." The second said: "My gift is, that gold pieces shall fall out of her mouth every time she speaks." The third said: "My gift is, that a king shall come and take her to wife."

The girl, however, did as the little men had bidden her, swept away the snow behind the little house with the broom, and what did she find but real ripe strawberries, which came up quite dark-red out of the snow! In her joy she hastily gathered her basket full, thanked the little men, shook hands with each of them, and ran home to take her step-mother what she had longed for so much. When she went in and said good-evening, a piece of gold at once fell out of her mouth. Thereupon she related what had happened to her in the wood, but with every word she spoke, gold pieces fell from her mouth, until very soon the whole room was covered with them. "Now look at her arrogance," cried the step-sister, "to throw about gold in that way!" But she was secretly envious of it, and wanted to go into the forest also to seek strawberries. The mother said: "No, my dear little daughter, it is too cold, you might freeze to death." However, as her daughter let her have no peace, the mother at last yielded, made her a magnificent coat of fur, which she was obliged to put on, and gave her bread and butter and cake for her journey.

The girl went into the forest and straight up to the little house. The three little men peeped out again, but she did not greet them, and without looking round at them and without speaking to them, she went awkwardly into the room, seated herself by the stove, and began to eat her bread and butter and cake. "Give us some of it," cried the little men; but she replied: "There is not enough for myself, so how can I give it away to other people?" When she had finished eating, they said: "There is a broom for you, sweep it all clean in front of the back-door." "Sweep for yourselves," she answered, "I am not your servant." When she saw that they were not giving her anything, she went out by the door. Then the little men said to each other: "What shall we give her as she is so naughty, and has a wicked envious heart, that will never let her do a good turn to any one?" The first said: "I grant that she may grow uglier every day." The second said: "I grant that at every word she says, a toad shall spring out of her mouth." The third said: "I grant that she may die a miserable death." The maiden looked for strawberries outside, but as she found none, she went angrily home. And when she opened her mouth, and was about to tell her mother what had happened to her in the wood, with every word she said, a toad sprang out of her mouth, so that everyone was seized with horror of her.

Then the step-mother was still more enraged, and thought of nothing but how to do every possible injury to the man's daughter, whose beauty, however, grew daily greater. At length she took a cauldron, set it on the fire, and boiled yarn in it. When it was boiled, she flung it on the poor girl's shoulder, and gave her an axe in order that she might go on the frozen river, cut a hole in the ice, and rinse the yarn. She was obedient, went thither and cut a hole in the ice; and while she was in the midst of her cutting, a splendid carriage came driving up, in which sat the King. The carriage stopped, and the King asked: "My child, who are you, and what are you doing here?" "I am a poor girl, and I am rinsing yarn." Then the King felt compassion, and when he saw that she was so very beautiful, he said to her: "Will you go away

with me?" "Ah, yes, with all my heart," she answered, for she was glad to get away from the mother and sister.

So she got into the carriage and drove away with the King, and when they arrived at his palace, the wedding was celebrated with great pomp, as the little men had granted to the maiden. When a year was over, the young Queen bore a son, and as the step-mother had heard of her great good-fortune, she came with her daughter to the palace and pretended that she wanted to pay her a visit. But, when the King had gone out, and no one else was present, the wicked woman seized the Queen by the head, and her daughter seized her by the feet, and they lifted her out of the bed, and threw her out of the window into the stream which flowed by. Then the ugly daughter laid herself in the bed, and the old woman covered her up over her head. When the King came home again and wanted to speak to his wife, the old woman cried: "Hush, hush, that can't be now, she is lying in a violent sweat; you must let her rest to-day." The King suspected no evil, and did not come back again till next morning; and as he talked with his wife and she answered him, with every word a toad leaped out, whereas formerly a piece of gold had fallen. Then he asked what that could be, but the old woman said that she had got that from the violent sweat, and would soon lose it again. During the night, however, the scullion saw a duck come swimming up the gutter, and said: "King, what art thou doing now? Sleepest thou, or wakest thou?" And as he returned no answer, it said: "And my guests, what may they do?" The scullion said: "They are sleeping soundly, too." Then it asked again: "What does little baby mine?" He answered: "Sleepeth in her cradle fine."

Then she went upstairs in the form of the Queen, nursed the baby, shook up its little bed, covered it a little, and then swam away again down the gutter in the shape of a duck. She came thus for two nights; on the third, she said to the scullion: "Go and tell the King to take his sword and swing it three times over me on the threshold." Then the scullion ran and told this to the King, who came with his sword and swung it thrice over the spirit, and at the third time, his wife stood before him strong, living, and healthy as she had been before. Thereupon the King was full of great joy, but he kept the Queen hidden in a chamber until the Sunday, when the baby was to be christened. And when it was christened he said: "What does a person deserve who drags another out of bed and throws him in the water?" "The wretch deserves nothing better," answered the old woman, "than to be taken and put in a barrel stuck full of nails, and rolled down hill into the water." "Then," said the King, "you have pronounced your own sentence"; and he ordered such a barrel to be brought, and the old woman to be put into it with her daughter, and then the top was hammered on, and the barrel rolled down hill until it went into the river.

## APPENDIX D THE WHITE SNAKE

A long time ago there lived a king who was feared for his wisdom through all the land. Nothing was hidden from him, and it seemed as if news of the most secret things was brought to him through the air. But he had a strange custom; every day after dinner, when the table was cleared, and no one else was present, a trusty servant had to bring him one more dish. It was covered, however, and even the servant did not know what was in it, neither did anyone know, for the King never took off the cover to eat of it until he was quite alone.

This had gone on for a long time, when one day the servant, who took away the dish, was overcome with such curiosity that he could not help carrying the dish into his room. When he had carefully locked the door, he lifted up the cover, and saw a white snake lying on the dish. But when he saw it he could not deny himself the pleasure of tasting it, so he cut off little bit and put it into his mouth. No sooner had it touched his tongue than he heard a strange whispering of little voices outside his window. He went and listened, and then noticed that it was the sparrows who were chattering together, and telling one another of all kinds of things which they had seen in the fields and woods. Eating the snake had given him power of understanding the language of animals.

Now it so happened that on this very day the Queen lost her most beautiful ring, and suspicion of having it stolen fell upon this trusty servant, who was allowed to go everywhere. The king ordered the man to be brought before him, and threatened with angry words that unless he could before the morrow point out the thief, he himself should be looked upon as guilty and executed. In vain he declared his innocence; he was dismissed with no better answer.

In his trouble and fear he went down into the courtyard and took thought how to help himself out of this trouble. Now some ducks were sitting together quietly by a brook and taking their rest; and, whilst they were making their feathers smooth with their bills, they were having a confidential conversation together. The servant stood by and listened. They were telling one another of all the places where they had been waddling about all morning, and what good food they had found; one said in a pitiful tone: "Something lies heavy on my stomach; as I was eating in haste I swallowed a ring which lay under the Queen's window." The servant at once seized her by the neck, carried her to the kitchen, and said to the cook: "Here is a fine duck; pray, kill her." "Yes," said the cook, and weighed her in his hand; "she has spared no trouble to fatten herself, and has been waiting to be roasted long enough." So he cut off her head, and as she was being dressed for the spit, the Queen's ring was found inside her.

The servant could now easily prove his innocence; and the King, to make amends for the wrong, allowed him to ask a favour, and promised him the best place in the court that he could wish for. The servant refused everything, and only asked for a horse and some money for travelling, as he had a mind to see the world and go about a little. When his request was granted he set out on his way, and one day came to a pond, where he saw three fishes caught in the reeds and gasping for water. Now, though it is said that fishes are dumb, he heard them lamenting that they must perish so miserably, and, as he had a kind heart, he got off his horse and put the three prisoners back into the water. They leapt with delight, put out, their heads, and cried to him: "We will remember you and repay you for saving us!"

He rode on, and after a while it seemed to him that he heard a voice in the sand at his feet. He listened, and heard an ant-king complain: "Why cannot folks, with their clumsy beasts, keep off our bodies? That stupid horse, with his heavy hoofs, has been treading down my people without mercy!" So he turned on to a side path and the ant-king cried out to him: "We will remember you - one good turn deserves another!"

The path led him into a wood, and there he saw two old ravens standing by their nest, and throwing out their young ones. "Out with you, you idle, good-for-nothing creatures!" cried they; "we cannot find food for you any longer; you are big enough, and can provide for yourselves." But the poor young ravens lay upon the ground, flapping their wings, and crying: "Oh, what helpless chicks we are! We must shift for ourselves, and yet we cannot fly! What can we do, but lie here and starve?" So the good young fellow alighted and killed his horse with his sword, and gave it to them for food. Then they came hopping up to it, satisfied their hunger, and cried: "We will remember you - one good turn deserves another!"

And now he had to use his own legs, and when he had walked a long way, he came to a large city. There was a great noise and crowd in the streets, and a man rode up on horseback, crying aloud: "The King's daughter wants a husband; but whoever seeks her hand must perform a hard task, and if he does not succeed he will forfeit his life." Many had already made the attempt, but in vain; nevertheless when the youth saw the King's daughter he was so overcome by her great beauty that he forgot all danger, went before the King, and declared himself a suitor.

So he was led out to the sea, a gold ring was thrown into it, before his eyes; then the King ordered him to fetch this ring up from the bottom of the sea, and added: "If you come up again without it you will be thrown in again and again until you perish amid the waves." All the people grieved for the handsome youth; then they went away leaving him alone by the sea.

He stood on the shore and considered what he should do, when suddenly he saw three fishes come swimming towards him, and they were the very fishes whose lives he had saved. The one in the middle held a mussel in its mouth, which it laid on the shore at the youth's feet, and when he had taken it up and opened it, there lay the gold ring in the shell. Full of joy he took it to the King, and expected that he would grant him the promised reward.

But when the proud princess perceived that he was not her equal in birth, she scorned him, and required him first to perform another task. She went down into the garden and strewed with her own hands ten sacks-full of millet-seed on the grass, then she said: "Tomorrow morning before sunrise these must be picked up, and not a single grain be wanting."

The youth sat down in the garden and considered how it might be possible to perform this task, but he could think of nothing, and there he sat sorrowfully awaiting the break of day, when he should be led to death. But as soon as the first rays of the sun shone into the garden he saw all the ten sacks standing side by side, quite full, and not a single grain was missing. The ant-king had come in the night with thousands and thousands of ants, and the grateful creatures had by great industry picked up all the millet-seed and gathered them into the sacks.

Presently the King's daughter herself came down into the garden, and was amazed to see that the young man had done the task she had given him. But she could not conquer her proud heart, and said: "Although he has performed both the tasks, he shall not be my husband until he has brought me an apple from the Tree of Life." The youth did not know where the Tree of Life stood, but he set out, and would have gone on for ever, as long as his legs would

carry him, though he had no hope of finding it. After he had wandered through three kingdoms, he came one evening to a wood, and lay down under a tree to sleep. But he heard a rustling in the branches, and a golden apple fell into his hand. At the same time three ravens flew down to him, perched themselves upon his knee, and said: "We are the three young ravens whom you saved from starving; when we had grown big, and heard that you were seeking the Golden Apple, we flew over the sea to the end of the world, where the Tree of Life stands, and have brought you the apple." The youth, full of joy, set out homewards, and took the Golden Apple to the King's beautiful daughter, who had now no more excuses left to make. They cut the Apple of Life in two and ate it together; and her heart became full of love for him, and they lived in undisturbed happiness to a great age.

(Grimm, 1972, pp.98-101)

## APPENDIX E FUNDEVOGEL

There was once a forester who went into the forest to hunt, and as he entered it he heard a sound of screaming as if a little child were there. He followed the sound, and at last came to a high tree, and at the top of this a little child was sitting, for the mother had fallen asleep under the tree with the child, and a bird of prey had seen it in her arms, had flown down, snatched it away, and set it on the high tree.

The forester climbed up, brought the child down, and thought to himself: "You will take him home with you, and bring him up with your Lina." He took it home, therefore, and the two children grew up together. And the one, which he had found on a tree was called Fundevogel, because a bird had carried it away. Fundevogel and Lina loved each other so dearly that when they did not see each other, they were sad.

Now the forester had an old cook, who one evening took two pails and began to fetch water, and did not go once only, but many times, out to the spring. Lina saw this and said: "Listen, old Sanna, why are you fetching so much water?" "If you will never repeat it to anyone, I will tell you why." So Lina said, no, she would never repeat it to anyone, and then the cook said: "Early to-morrow morning, when the forester is out hunting, I will heat the water, and when it is boiling in the kettle, I will throw in Fundevogel, and will boil him in it."

Early next morning the forester got up and went out hunting, and when he was gone the children were still in bed. Then Lina said to Fundevogel: "If you will never leave me, I too will never leave you." Fundevogel said: "Neither now, nor ever will I leave you." Then said Lina: "Then will I tell you. Last night, old Sanna carried so many buckets of water into the house that I asked her why she was doing that, and she said that if I would promise not to tell anyone she would tell me, and I said I would be sure not to tell anyone, and she said that early to-morrow morning when father was out hunting, she would set the kettle full of water, throw you into it and boil you; but we will get up quickly, dress ourselves, and go away together."

The two children therefore got up, dressed themselves quickly, and went away. When the water in the kettle was boiling, the cook went into the bed-room to fetch Fundevogel and throw him into it. But when she came in, and went to the beds, both the children were gone. Then she was terribly alarmed, and she said to herself, "What shall I say now when the forester comes home and sees that the children are gone?" They must be followed instantly to get them back again."

Then the cook sent three servants after them, who were to run and overtake the children. The children, however, were sitting outside the forest, and when they saw afar the three servants running, Lina said to Fundevogel: "Never leave me, and I will never leave you." Fundevogel said: "Neither now, nor ever." The said Lina: "Do you become a rose-tree, and I the rose upon it." When the three servants came to the forest, nothing was there but a rose-tree and one rose on it, but the children were nowhere. The said they: "There is nothing to be done here," and they went home and told the cook that they had seen nothing in the forest but a little rose-bush with one rose on it. Then the old cook scolded and said: "You simpletons, you should have cut the rose-bush in two, and have broken off the rose and brought it home with you; go, and do it at once." They had therefore to go out and look for the second time. The children, however, saw them coming from a distance. Then Lina said: "Fundevogel, never leave me, and I will never leave you." Fundevogel said: "Neither now, now ever." Said Lina:

“Then do you become a church, and I’ll be the chandelier in it.” So when the three servants came, nothing was there but a church, with a chandelier in it. They said therefore to each other: “What can we do here, let us go home.” When they got home, the cook asked if they had not found them; so they said no, they had found nothing but a church, and that there was a chandelier in it. And the cook scolded them and said: “You fools! Why did you not pull the church to pieces, and bring the chandelier home with you ?” And now the old cook herself got on her legs, and went with the three servants in pursuit of the children. The children, however, saw from afar that the three servants were coming, and the cook waddling after them. Then said Lina: “Fundevogel, never leave me, and I will never leave you.” then said Fundevogel: “Neither now, nor ever.” Said Lina: “Be a fishpond, and I will be the duck upon it.” The cook, however, came up to them, and when she saw the pond she lay down by it, and was about to drink it up. But the duck swam quickly to her, seized her head in its beak and drew her into the water, and there the old witch had to drown. Then the children went home together, and were heartily delighted, and if they have not died, they are living still.(Grimm, 1972, pp.241-244).

APPENDIX F  
THE WATER OF LIFE

There was once a King who had an illness, and no one believed that he would come out of it with his life. He had three sons who were much distressed about it, and went down into the palace-garden and wept. There they met an old man who inquired as to the cause of their grief. They told him that their father was so ill he would most certainly die, for nothing seemed to cure him. Then the old man said: "I know of one more remedy, and that is the water of life; if he drinks of it he will become well again; but it is hard to find." The eldest said: "I will manage to find it," and went to the sick King, and begged to be allowed to go forth in search of the water of life, for that alone could save him. "No," said the King, "the danger of it is too great. I would rather die." But he begged so long that the King consented. The prince thought in his heart: "If I bring the water, then I shall be best beloved of my father, and I shall inherit the kingdom." So he set out, and when he had ridden forth a little distance, a dwarf stood there in the road who called to him and said: "Whither away so fast?" "Silly shrimp," said the prince, very haughtily, "it is nothing to do with you," and rode on. But the little dwarf had grown angry, and had wished an evil wish. Soon after this prince entered a ravine, and the further he rode the closer the mountains drew together, and at last the road became so narrow that he could not advance a step further; it was impossible either to turn his horse or to dismount from the saddle, and he was shut in there as if in prison. The sick King waited long for him, but he came not. Then the second son said: "Father, let me go forth to seek the water," and thought to himself, "If my brother is dead, then the kingdom will fall to me." At first the King would not allow him to go either, but at last he yielded, so the prince set out on the same road that his brother had taken, and he too met the dwarf, who stopped him to ask, whither he was going in such haste. "Little shrimp," said the prince, "that is nothing to do with you," and rode on without giving another look. But the dwarf bewitched him, and he, like the other, rode into a ravine, and could neither go forwards nor backwards. So fare naughty people.

As the second son also remained away, the youngest begged to be allowed to go forth to fetch the water, and at last the King was obliged to let him go. When he met the dwarf and the latter asked him whither he was going in such haste, he stopped, gave him an explanation, and said: "I am seeking the water of life, for my father is sick unto his death." "Do you know, then, where that is to be found?" "No," said the prince. "As you have borne yourself as is seemly, and not haughtily like your false brothers, I will give you the information and tell you how you may obtain the water of life. It springs from a fountain in the courtyard of an enchanted castle, but you will not be able to make your way to it, if I do not give you an iron wand and two small loaves of bread. Strike thrice the wand on the iron door of the castle, and it will spring open: inside lie two lions with gaping jaws, but if you throw a loaf to each of them, they will be quieted. Then haste to fetch some of the water of life before the clock strikes twelve, the door will shut again, and you will be imprisoned." The prince thanked him, took the wand and the bread, and set out on his way. When he arrived, everything was as the dwarf had said. The door sprang open at the third stroke of the wand, and when he had appeased the lions with the bread, he entered the castle, and came to a large splendid hall, wherein sat some enchanted princes whose rings he drew off their fingers. A sword and a loaf of bread were lying there, which he carried away. After this, he entered a chamber, in which was a beautiful maiden who rejoiced when she saw him, kissed him, and told him that he had set her free, and should



have the whole of her kingdom, and that if he would return in a year their wedding should be celebrated; likewise she told him where the spring of the water of life was, and that he was to hasten and draw some of it before the clock struck twelve. Then he went onwards, and at last entered a room where there was a beautiful newly-made bed, and as he was very weary, he felt inclined to rest a little. So he lay down and fell asleep. When he awoke, it was striking a quarter to twelve. He sprang up in fright, ran to the spring, drew some water in a cup which stood near, and hastened away. But just as he was passing through the iron door, the clock struck twelve, and the door fell to with such violence that it carried away a piece of his heel.

He, however, rejoicing at having obtained the water of life, went homewards, and again passed the dwarf. When the latter saw the sword and the loaf, he said: "With these you have won great wealth; with the sword you can slay whole armies, and the bread will never come to an end." But the prince would not go home to his father without his brothers, and said: "Dear dwarf, can you not tell me where my two brothers are? They went out before I did in search of the water of life, and have not returned." "They are imprisoned between two mountains," said the dwarf. "I have condemned them to stay there, because they were so haughty." Then the prince begged until the dwarf released them, but he warned him and said: "Beware of them, for they have bad hearts." When his brothers came, he rejoiced, and told them how things had gone with him, that he found the water of life, and had brought a cupful away with him, and had rescued a beautiful princess, who was willing to wait a year for him, and then their wedding was to be celebrated, and he would obtain a great kingdom. After that they rode on together, and chanced upon a land where war and famine reigned, and the King already thought he must perish, for the scarcity was so great. Then the prince went to him and gave him the loaf, wherewith he fed and satisfied the whole of his kingdom, and then the prince gave him the sword also, wherewith he slew the hosts of his enemies, and could now live in rest and peace. The prince then took back his loaf and his sword, and the brothers rode on. But after this they entered two more countries where war and famine reigned, and each time the prince gave his loaf and his sword to the Kings, and had now delivered three kingdoms, and after that they went on board a ship and sailed over the sea. During the passage, the two eldest conversed apart and said: "The youngest has found the water of life and not we, for that our father will give him the kingdom, - the kingdom which belongs to us, and he will rob us of all our fortune." They went to seek revenge, and plotted with each other to destroy him. They waited until they found him fast asleep, then poured the water of life out of the cup, and took it for themselves, but into the cup they poured salt sea-water.

Now therefore, when they arrived home, the youngest took his cup to the sick King in order that he might drink out of it, and be cured. But scarcely had he drunk a very little of the salt sea-water than he became still worse than before. And as he was lamenting over this, the two eldest brothers came, and accused the youngest of having intended to poison him, and said that they had brought him the true water of life, and handed it to him. He had scarcely tasted it, when he felt his sickness departing, and became strong and healthy as in the days of his youth. After that they both went to the youngest, mocked him, and said: "You certainly found the water of life, but you have had the pain, and we the gain; you should have been cleverer, and should have kept your eyes open. We took it from you whilst you were asleep at sea, and when a year is over, one of us will go and fetch the beautiful princess. But beware that you do not disclose of this to our father; indeed he does not trust you, and if you say a single word, you shall lose your life into the bargain, but if you keep silent, you shall have it as a gift."

The old King was angry with his youngest son, and thought he had plotted against his life. So he summoned the court together, and had sentence pronounced upon his son, that he should be secretly shot. And once when the prince was riding forth to the chase, suspecting no evil, the King's huntsman was told to go with him, and when they were quite alone in the forest, the huntsman looked so sorrowful that the prince said to him: "Dear huntsman, what ails you?" The huntsman said: "I cannot tell you, and yet I ought." Then the prince said: "Say openly what it is, I will pardon you." "Alas!" said the huntsman, "I am to shoot you dead, the King has ordered me to do it." Then the prince was shocked, and said: "Dear huntsman, let me live; there, I give you my royal garments; give me your common ones in their stead." The huntsman said: "I will willingly do that, indeed I would not have been able to shoot you." Then they exchanged clothes, and the huntsman returned home, while the prince went further into the forest. After a time three wagons of gold and precious stones came to the King for his youngest son, which were sent by the three Kings who had slain their enemies with the prince's sword, and maintained their people with his bread, and who wished to show their gratitude for it. The old King then thought: "Can my son have been innocent?" and said to his people: "Would that he were still alive, how it grieves me that I have suffered him to be killed!" "He still lives," said the huntsman, "I could not find it in my heart to carry out your command," and told the King how it had happened. Then a stone fell from the King's heart, and he had it proclaimed in every country that his son might return and be taken into favour again.

The princess, however, had a road made up to her palace which was quite bright and golden, and told her people that whosoever came riding straight along it to her, would be the right one and was to be admitted, and whoever rode by the side of it, was not the right one, and was not to be admitted. As the time was now close at hand, the eldest thought he would hasten to go to the King's daughter, and give himself out as her rescuer, and thus win her for his bride, and the kingdom to boot. Therefore he rode forth, and when he arrived in front of the palace, and saw the splendid golden road, he thought: "It would be a sin and a shame if I were to ride over that," and turned aside, and rode on the right side of it. But when he came to the door, the servants told him he was not the right one, and was to go away again. Soon after this the second prince set out, and when he came to the golden road, and his horse had put one foot on it, he thought: "It would be a sin and a shame, a piece might be trodden off," and he turned aside and rode on the left side of it, and when he reached the door, the attendants told him he was not the right one, and he was to go away again. When at last the year had entirely expired, the third son likewise wished to ride out of the forest to his beloved, and with her forget his sorrows. So he set out and thought of her so incessantly, and wished to be with her so much, that he never noticed the golden road at all. So his horse rode onwards up the middle of it, and when he came to the door, it was opened and the princess received him with joy, and said he was her saviour, and lord of the kingdom, and their wedding was celebrated with great rejoicing. When it was over she told him that his father invited him to come to him, and had forgiven him. So he rode thither, and told him everything; how his brothers had betrayed him, and how he had nevertheless kept silence. The old King wished to punish them, but they had put to sea, and never came back as long as they lived.

(Grimm, 1972, pp 449-455)

APPENDIX G  
JORINDA AND JORINGEL

There was once an old castle in the midst of a large and dense forest, and in it an old woman who was a witch dwelt all alone. In the day-time she changed herself into a cat or a screech owl, but in the evening she took her proper shape again as a human being. She could lure wild beasts and birds to her, and then she killed and boiled and roasted them. If anyone came within one hundred paces of the castle he was obliged to stand still, and could not stir from the place until she bade him be free. But whenever an innocent maiden came within this circle, she changed her into a bird, and shut her up in a wicker-work cage, and carried the cage into a room in the castle. She had about seven thousand cages of rare birds in the castle.

Now, there was once a maiden who was called Jorinda, who was fairer than all other girls. She and a handsome youth named Joringel had promised to marry each other. They were still in the days of betrothal, and their greatest happiness was being together. One day in order that they might be able to talk together in peace they went for a walk in the forest. "Take care," said Joringel, "that you do not go too near the castle."

It was a beautiful evening; the sun shone brightly between the trunks of the trees into the dark green of the forest, and the turtle-doves sang mournfully upon the beech trees.

Jorinda wept now and then: she sat down in the sunshine and was sorrowful. Joringel was sorrowful too; they were as sad as if they were about to die. Then they looked around them, and were quite at a loss, for they did not know by which way they should go home. The sun was still half above the mountain and half under.

Joringel looked through the bushes, and saw the old walls of the castle close at hand. He was horror-stricken and filled with deadly fear. Jorinda was singing: "My little bird, with the necklace red, sings sorrow, sorrow, sorrow, He sings that the dove must soon be dead, sings, sorrow, sor- jug, jug, jug." Joringel looked for Jorinda. She was changed into a nightingale, and sang "jug, jug, jug." A screech owl with glowing eyes flew three times round about her, and three times cried "to-who, to-who, to-who!"

Joringel could not move: he stood there like a stone, and could neither weep nor speak, nor move hand or foot.

The sun had now set. The owl flew into the ticket, and directly afterwards there came out of it a crooked old woman, yellow and lean, with large red eyes and a hooked nose, the point of which reached her chin. She muttered to herself, caught the nightingale, and took it away in her hand.

Joringel could neither speak nor move from the spot; the nightingale was gone. At last the woman came back, and said in a hollow voice: "Greet you Zachiel. If the moon shines on the cage, Zachiel, let him loose at once." Then Joringel was freed. He fell on his knees before the woman and begged that she would give him back his Jorinda, but she said that he should never have her again, and went away. He called, he wept, he lamented, but all in vain: "Hooh, what is to become of me?"

Joringel went away, and at last came to a strange village; where he kept sheep for a long time. He often walked round and round the castle, but not too near to it. At last he dreamt one night that he found a blood-red flower, in the middle of which was a beautiful large pearl; that he picked the flower and went with it to the castle, and that everything he touched with the

flower was freed from enchantment; he also dreamt that by means of it he recovered his Jorinda.

In the morning, when he awoke, he began to seek over hill and dale for such a flower. He sought until the ninth day, and then, early in the morning, he found the blood-red flower. In the middle of it there was a large dew-drop, as big as the finest pearl.

Day and night he journeyed with this flower to the castle. When he was within a hundred paces of it he was not held fast, but walked on to the door. Joringel was full of joy; he touched the door with the flower, and it sprang open. He walked in through the courtyard, and listened for the sound of the birds. At last he heard it. He went on and found the room from whence it came, and there the witch was feeding the birds in the seven thousand cages.

When she saw Joringel she was angry, very angry, and scolded and spat poison and gall at him, but she could not come within two paces of him. He did not take any notice of her, but went and looked at the cages with the birds; but there were many hundred nightingales, how was he to find his Jorinda again?

Just then he saw the old woman quietly take away a cage with a bird in it, and go towards the door.

Swiftly he sprang towards her, touched the cage with the flower, and also the old woman. She could now no longer bewitch anyone; and Jorinda was standing there, clasping him round the neck, and she was as beautiful as ever. Then all the other birds were turned into the maidens again, and he went home with his Jorinda, and they lived happily together for a long time.

(Grimm, 1972, p.339-342)

APPENDIX H  
THE POOR MILLER'S BOY AND THE CAT

In a certain mill lived an old miller who had neither wife nor child, and three apprentices served under him. As they had been with him several years, he one day said to them: "I am old, and want to sit behind the stove. Go out, and whichever of you brings me the best horse home, to him will I give the mill, and in return for it he shall take care of me till my death." The third of the boys, however, was the dunce, who was looked on as foolish by the others; they begrudged the mill to him; and afterwards he would not even have it. Then all three went out together, and when they came to the village, the two said to stupid Hans: "You may just as well stay here, as long as you live you will never get a horse." Hans, however, went with them, and when it was night they came to a cave in which they lay down to sleep. The two smart ones waited until Hans had fallen asleep, then they got up, and went away leaving him where he was. And they thought they had done a very clever thing, but it was certain to turn out ill for them. When the sun rose, and Hans woke up, he was lying in a deep cavern. He looked around on every side and exclaimed: "Oh heavens, where am I?" Then he got up and clambered out of the cave, went into the forest, and thought: "Here I am quite alone and deserted, how shall I obtain a horse now?" Whilst he was thus walking full of thought, he met a small tabby-cat which said quite kindly: "Hans, where are you going?" "Alas, you can not help me." "I well know your desire," said the cat. "You wish to have a beautiful horse. Come with me, and be my faithful servant for seven years long, and then I will give you one more beautiful than any you have ever seen in your whole life." "Well, this is a strange cat!" thought Hans, "but I am determined to see if she is telling the truth." So she took him with her into her enchanted castle, where there were nothing but kittens who were her servants. They leapt nimbly upstairs and downstairs, and were merry and happy. In the evening when they sat down to dinner, three of them had to make music. One played the bass viol, the other the fiddle, and the third put the trumpet to his lips, and blew out his cheeks as much as he possibly could. When they had dined, the table was carried away, and the cat said: "Now, Hans, come and dance with me!" "No," said he, "I won't dance with a pussy cat. I have never done that yet." "Then take him to bed," said she to the cats. So one of them lighted him to his bed-room, one pulled his shoes off, one his stockings, and at last one of them blew out the candle. Next morning they returned and helped him out of bed, one put his stockings on for him, one tied his garters, one brought his shoes, one washed him, and one dried his face with her tail. "That feels very soft!" said Hans. He, however, had to serve the cat, and chop some wood every day, and to do that, he had an axe of silver, and the wedge and saw were of silver and the mallet of copper. So he chopped the wood small; stayed there in the house and had good meat and drink, but never saw anyone but the tabby-cat and her servants. Once she said to him: "Go and mow my meadow, and dry the grass," and gave him a scythe of silver, and a whetstone of gold, but bade him deliver them up again carefully. So Hans went thither and did what he was bidden, and when he had finished the work, he carried the scythe, whetstone, and hay to the house, and asked if it was not yet time for her to give him his reward. "No," said the cat, "you must first do something more for me of the same kind. There is timber of silver, carpenter's axe, square, and everything that is needful, all of silver - with these build me a small house." Then Hans built the small house, and said that he had now done everything, and still he had no horse. Nevertheless, the seven years had gone by with him as if they were six months. The cat

asked him if he would like to see her horses. "Yes," said Hans. Then she opened the door of the small house, and when she had opened it, there stood twelve horses, - such horses, so bright and shining, that his heart rejoiced at the sight of them. And now she gave him to eat and to drink, and said: "Go home, I will not give you your horse now; but in three days' time I will follow you and bring it." So Hans set out, and she showed him the way to the mill. She, however, had never once given him a new coat, and he had been obliged to keep on his dirty old smock, which he had brought with him, and which during the seven years had everywhere become too small for him. When he reached home, the two other apprentices were there again as well, and each of them certainly had brought a horse with him, but one of them was a blind one, and the other lame. They asked Hans where his horse was. "It will follow me in three days' time." Then they laughed and said: "Indeed stupid Hans, where will you get a horse? It will be a fine one!" Hans went into the parlour, but the miller said he should not sit down to table, for he was so ragged and torn, that they would all be ashamed of him if any one came in. So they gave him a mouthful of food outside, and at night, when they went to rest, the two others would not let him have a bed, and at last he was forced to creep into the goose-house, and lie down on a little hard straw. In the morning when he awoke, the three days had passed, and a coach came with six horses and they shone so bright that it was delightful to see them! - and a servant brought a seventh as well, which was for the poor miller's boy. And a magnificent princess alighted from the coach and went into the mill, and this princess was the little tabby-cat whom poor Hans had served for seven years. She asked the miller where the miller's boy and dunce was. Then the miller said: "We cannot have him here in the mill, for he is so ragged; he is lying in the goose-house." Then the King's daughter said that they were to bring him immediately. So they brought him out, and he had to hold his little smock together to cover himself. The servants unpacked splendid garments, and washed him and dressed him, and when that was done, no King could have looked more handsome. Then the maiden desired to see the horses which the other apprentices had brought home with them, and one of them was blind and the other lame. So she ordered the servant to bring the seventh horse, and when the miller saw it, he said that such a horse as that had never yet entered his yard. "And that is for the third miller's boy," said she. "Then he must have the mill," said the miller, but the King's daughter said that the horse was there, and that he was to keep his mill as well, and too her faithful Hans and set him in the coach, and drove away with him. they first drove to the little house which he had built with the silver tools, and behold it was a great castle, and everything inside it was of silver and gold; and then she married him, and he was rich, so rich that he had enough for all the rest life. After this, let no one ever say that anyone who is silly can never become a person of importance.

(Grimm, 1972, p. 482-485)