FUN WITH FAIRY TALES
Fairy tales are a great way to involve children in activities that will sneak some learning into their lives.

Reading fairy tales aloud to our kids puts them in touch with a rich cultural heritage. By reading fairy tales from other cultures with them, we broaden their literary horizons. We make them aware of the way story is woven into the fabric of life.

By watching video clips and book trailers about fairy tales with our kids, we open opportunities for discussion and find new and wonderful stories to read.

The activities in this booklet are best done with adult supervision, especially those involving websites. Many activities suggest prompts that might lead to writing, drawing, painting, creating a play, making a movie - all wonderful ways to develop children's creativity and self-expression.

By taking an interest in what our kids create, we affirm the importance of such things in their lives, and our own. By sharing interactive websites and online tools with our kids, we have the chance to model creative and critical thinking, and keep a close eye on internet safety.

I hope you and your kids/students have fun with these fairy tale activities. The booklet was created by Susan Stephenson, Australian author, teacher and blogger. It is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs, meaning you are free to use it with your kids and students, but you must give attribution to me, and not change, or sell it.

If you find the booklet useful, you might like to visit The Book Chook or www.susanstephenson.com.au to read my tips for parents, teachers and librarians.

Susan
Here are some ideas you can use to have fun with fairy tales:

How many fairy tale character names can you write in two minutes? Ready, set, go: Goldilocks, woodcutter, Hansel...

How many fairy tale words can you write in five minutes? Ready, set, go: woods, witch, stepmother, dragon... Type your words into a word cloud generator, like the one at ABCya, then use them in a story.

Which character is your favourite fairy tale villain? Make a wanted poster about the villain.

Check out your library's fairy tale collection. Are there any from other countries? How are the fairy tales from other countries different to the ones you know?

Create a fairy tale scene in your garden for some toys. You could make a castle with blocks or little things you find in the garden.

Use salt dough, clay or play dough to model your own favourite fairy tale character.

Learn to draw a cartoon fairy tale castle, a dragon, and a princess. Experiment with drawing your own fairy tale characters and try to re-tell a favourite fairy tale. Or better still, create a whole new fairy tale of your own.

Design a new magical creature to star in your fairy tale. You could look at other such creatures to get ideas. What weakness will your creature have? What strengths? What will your creature’s special powers be? Draw your creature and label it so others can understand it. Create a really, really big painting of your creature, or a teeny tiny drawing of it.
Fun with Fairytales

Start writing a fairy tale: Once upon a time.... Consider having some magical creatures in your story. Make sure you have descriptive language in your story, too. Will the characters live happily ever after? Most fairy tales end that way. You could use Storybird to create your own version of a fairy tale online.

A girl used her toys to make this movie about Rapunzel. If you have software like Windows Movie Maker or iMovie, and a video camera, you could try something like this.

Would you rather have a goose that lays golden eggs or a magic potion that can heal sick people?

Set up your toys or puppets and take some photos of them so you can use the images to tell a fairy tale or story. If you have software like Comic Life (see my example at left), or an app like Strip Designer, you can put the pictures into a template and write your story in speech bubbles and captions.

Or use the ideas in this cereal box scenery to set up a castle for your toys or puppets to play in.

If you were a fairytale character which one would you be? Why?

Make a trading card about a fairy tale character at Read Write Think. Choose one you know well, so that you can answer the guiding questions and build up your character profile.

Tell your own version of a fairy tale using a comic editor online. There are fairy tale worlds at Creaza - eg: The Three Billy Goats Gruff and Little Red Riding Hood. Myths and Legends isn't exactly about fairy tales, but the elements provided could be used to tell one. Carnegie Library's My Story Maker, also has some elements you could use to tell a magical story.

Watch some fairytale movies together with your family or classmates. Make popcorn and fairy bread! You could design an invitation with a fairy tale theme to invite guests. Add to the fun by dressing in costume.
Draw some fairytale scenes with "hidden" characters for younger kids to find. You could combine them into a class book. Add some simple text in the form of rhyming couplets, where you take the name of a character and find a word to rhyme with it. For example:

She loves to dance with a princely fella
Can you find Cinderella?

The Scrap Coloring website has some fairy tale pictures to colour. You can use the site’s patterns to fill different parts of the picture, like in the dragon below.

Can you use the picture you make to start a fairy tale story? You could tell your story to a friend, write it, or type it into a computer. Later, get some friends together and act out your story.

Design a board game with a fairy tale theme. Maybe you could have Good Luck and Bad Luck cards for when players land on a certain place. What counters will you have? How will you make them? If you need some ideas, look at board games you know, and piggyback on those ideas and features.

Create a surprise ending for one of your favourite fairy tales. Share it with your friends.

What is the weirdest name you can think of for a fairy tale character? What sort of problems would this character face? Would he or she need a nickname?

Imagine a conversation between two characters from different fairy tales. What might Cinderella say to Goldilocks? What would The Big Bad Wolf say to the witch out of Hansel and Gretel?

List all the problems you can think of for being a Big Bad Wolf. Are there any advantages?

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