LEARNING UNIT 1 - The tale: Protagonists and Antagonists

DIDACTIC TOOLS

K.C.8_Cultural awareness and expression competence

CPIA Palermo 2
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LEARNING UNIT 1

The tale: Protagonists and Antagonists
THE TALE: PROTAGONISTS AND ANTAGONISTS

Brainstorming activities

Try to describe what the fairy tale is!

Challenge yourself!

Put a cross on the right answer.

A fairy tale is a(n) ...................... story

- mistery
- adventure
- fictional
Watch the video:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O_Ugic0n49M

Challenge yourself!

Did you like the fairy tale “The Three Magic Charms”? Let’s learn to synthesize!

Put the following sequences in the right order, numbering them from 1 to 4
THE FAIRY TALE

The fairy tale is a fictional story narrating events invented throughout the world, in very ancient times, by ordinary people such as poor servants, farmers, fishermen and shepherds, who could neither read nor write. The popular and spontaneous character of the fairy tale has determined its success in any part of the globe.

For a long period, fairy tales were only handed down orally by anonymous narrators who - from time to time - adapted them to the environment and life experiences of the listeners.

Some of them are probably a simplification of old myths and legends reworked by popular imagination and considered like a sort of repertory of wisdom and fantasy, intended for both children and adult people.

Time in fairy tale events is indefinite and everything seems to be somewhat vague: one hundred years can pass in a moment, while a character can live a thousand years.

The fairy tale places are generic, not referable to a particular region or a specific country. Typical places of fairy tales are: mansions, castles, enchanted woods, enchanted lakes, etc.

The characters of fairy tales are human beings involved in extraordinary adventures together with characters endowed with magical powers, such as fairies, orcs, dwarfs, giants and the like.

Both time and places are generically mentioned and not described in details.

The actions carried out by the characters develop from a starting situation of equilibrium broken by a fact, which will cause the development of the events, always characterized by a happy ending.

The fairy tale has a double aim: on the one hand, it is meant to entertain people and, on the other hand, it tends to teach how to behave properly, trusting in one’s own abilities. The protagonist is mostly a good, gentle, brave young man, who has to go through trials in order to get what he desires.

In the fairy tales from all over the world, we can find magical aspects but also core themes such as the struggle between good and evil, love, friendship, envy and betrayal. Typically, the fairy tale characters may be smart and silly people, brave and fearful individuals, etc.
Now, let’s reflect on the characters of the fairy tale you have been told.

- How many characters are there in the tale?

- Are there more important characters and less important ones?

- Is the most important character a bearer of values in the same way as the less important one?

- Can the most important character be considered a hero?

- Who is the character with positive values? Put a cross on the right box.

- Who is, in your opinion, the character with negative values? Tick the box under the correct image.
Who’s he/she?
LEARNING UNIT 1 - The tale: Protagonists and Antagonists

Quiz Time!

• What moral qualities characterize the main character?

• Why is he a positive character?

• What kind of actions characterize his behaviour, while facing an obstacle or a problem?

• Does he possess the suitable talents and qualities to overcome any trials successfully?

Challenge yourself!

Put a cross on the right option:
The protagonist of a fairy tale is:

☐ bad  ☐ good  ☐ unlucky

The fairy tale...
☐ has a happy ending  ☐ has a tragic ending  ☐ does not always end well

The fairy tale characters are...
☐ real  ☐ fictional  ☐ both real and fictional
LEARNING UNIT 1 - The tale: Protagonists and Antagonists

Who's he/she?

THE PROTAGONIST

The protagonist is the hero of the story, the one who fights against evil and restores the balance of the starting situation. He is the bearer of positive values: he is honest, good, brave and loyal. His destiny develops through a series of adventures and vicissitudes, which go on until a happy ending situation comes, where the good gets the better of the bad.

Let's summarize!
Quiz time!

- What distinctive moral qualities must the character opposing the protagonist possess?

- Why is he a negative character?

- What are the actions characterizing his behaviour?

- Can his physical aspect be associated with his moral qualities?

Let's play!

Choose the shape of the character you prefer, complete and colour it, adding helpful details to connote the chosen character. Download the material you need from the Internet or use the shapes proposed below.
THE ANTAGONIST

The antagonist is the enemy of the protagonist, a negative character opposing the hero, causing him difficulties. When fighting against the hero, he is always defeated.

Multiple choice excercise; put a cross on the right option:

A fairy tale is...
☐ a story    ☐ a book    ☐ a newspaper article

The characters of a fairy tale are...
☐ true    ☐ fictional    ☐ both true and fictional

Among the characters there are...
☐ aliens    ☐ robots    ☐ protagonists

The ending of a fairy tale is...
☐ sad    ☐ happy    ☐ sometimes happy, sometimes sad

True/Fals excercise. Put a cross on the right option:

A fairy tale is a story
☐ T    ☐ F

The story may include the presence of antagonists
☐ T    ☐ F

Time is well specified.
☐ T    ☐ F

The fairy tale places are described in a detailed way
☐ T    ☐ F

A fairy tale has a sad ending
☐ T    ☐ F
Completion exercises. Complete the texts with the given words.

Fairy tales tell ......................................., which end with a happy ending. The characters involved are referred to in a generic way (a prince, a carpenter, a farmer). A lot of fictional characters endowed with ....................................... (such as orcs, magicians, witches and animals) also appear.

The ....................................... is indefinite: the fairy tale ....................................... are quickly described and no particular details are provided (a castle, a village). Time is ....................................... too (once upon a time, a long time ago).

Fairy tales tell fictional stories, which end with a ....................................... The characters involved are referred to in a ....................................... (a prince, a carpenter, a farmer). A lot of ....................................... endowed with prodigious features (such as orcs, magicians, witches and animals) also appear.

The setting is ....................................... : fairy tale places are quickly described and no particular details are provided (a castle, a village); the ....................................... is indefinite, too (once upon a time, a long time ago).
LEARNING UNIT 2

Helpers and Magical Objects
Quiz Time!

Playful teaching: “A story in bulk”.
Put the images related to the fairy tale No. 1 “Cinderella” in sequential order.
The teacher will tell you the story of “Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves” of Persian origin. Meanwhile, some reference images will be shown on the Interactive Whiteboard.

After enjoying the storytelling, try to search the Internet for at least six similar images or, alternatively, draw the characters or the scenes that impressed you most. Afterwards, put them in sequential order to summarize the fairy tale you have been told.

Let's get started!
Read the different sequences of the fairy tale n°3 “The Golden Child and The Silver Child”, of African origin, carefully. Put the sequences in the right order, numbering them from 1 to 4.

1. Niame embraced his children, had the queen recalled from exile, threw Acoco onto the earth.
2. Finally, he praised the good huntsman
3. A huntsman picked up the basket and opened it. He was stunned at the beauty of the two children. He was very poor, but he took them home and raised them with love, without revealing where he had found them. The two children grew up good, obedient and skilled at doing everything. The magical dust falling down from their bodies allowed the huntsman to become rich.
4. One day, the huntsman came to know that the twins were the king's children. Therefore, he decided - although reluctantly - to bring them back to their father.

Read the different sequences of the fairy tale n°4 “Snow White”, of european origin, carefully. Put the sequences in the right order, numbering them from 1 to 4.

1. After looking at herself in the magic mirror, the queen called a hunter and told him: “Bring Snow White into the woods. She is more beautiful than me: kill her”. The hunter obeyed and led the girl into the woods; but when he pulled out the knife to pierce her innocent heart, he found himself unable to kill her and let her go. She was alone and afraid in the forest; she ran away until her legs didn’t work. All of a sudden, she saw a little house and went inside to have a rest. Everything was tiny in that house: it was the home of the seven dwarfs, who mined for minerals in the mountains.
2. Once upon a time, there was a girl as white as snow, as red as blood and with so black hair as the wood of the window; they called her Snow White. She had a beautiful but superb stepmother: she could not bear that someone outclassed her in beauty.
3. One fine day a prince came into the woods, saw the coffin and fell in love with Snow White. While moving the coffin, the piece of poisoned apple that Snow White had swallowed came out of her throat. She came back to life and the prince decided to marry her. And they lived happily ever after.
4. She stayed with them and kept their house in order. They warned her against her stepmother who, despite everything, succeeded in her aim. The dwarfs, in fact, back home from work, found Snow White on the ground, apparently dead. They made a crystal coffin, laid the girl’s body in it and carved her name on it.
Recognize the characters of helpers / donors in the following fairy tales:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Helper/Donor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cinderella</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Golden Child and the Silver Child</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snow White</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Who's he/she?
Observe this image. Who seems to be helping the other?

Match the role of the fairy tale character identified by Propp to the relative definition.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANTAGONIST</th>
<th>A character who favors the hero's action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HELPER</td>
<td>The one who tries to hinder or harm the protagonist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FALSE HERO</td>
<td>A character - always unveiled - who replaces the protagonist</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do you remember the Japanese fairy tale “The Three Magic Charms”, narrated in the previous Learning Unit?

Who is the Helper, in your opinion? Insert “X” in the appropriate box.
Decide if the following statements are True (T) or False (F)

The magical helper is always present in a fairy tale
F:  

Fairy tale helpers can be both magical and non-magical
T:  

The helper is never an obstacle to the hero.
F:  

A loyal servant can be a magical helper
T:  

Supernatural powers are not typical of wizards, witches and fairies
F:  

THE HELPER

The helper is one of the basic roles assumed by fairy tale characters.

His/her task is to assist and encourage the hero's action with his/her own magical gifts, replacing or supporting the magical object. The helper appears in several forms.

Helpers may be human beings but also supernatural entities or speaking animals. The helper shares several characteristics with the magical agent; therefore, Vladimir Propp theorized that the two elements also share a common origin.

The helper can be both a marginal factor and a central element in the story; the most famous case of helper-protagonist (not a hero) is represented by Puss in Boots.

Like every element of the fairy tale, even the helper can be rationalized and realistic as in the case of faithful servants or wealthy benefactors.

Those who kill the wolf in different variations of Little Red Riding Hood (the hunter, the woodcutter...) can also be considered helpers.
They are helpers:

- **fairy animals**, common animals with some magical gifts; talking animals ready to act for the hero; shapeshifters, like animal-shaped humans (victims of spells) or fairies who accompany the hero assuming an animal shape (the dragon);

- **prodigious men**, men with magical powers, endowed with fantastic hearing, infallible aim, super speed, ability to support unlimited weights, blow stronger than wind, knowledge of herbs with miraculous powers, ability to understand the language of birds;

- **travelling companions**, apparent strangers who accompany the hero on his journey and help him in dangerous situations;

- **faithful servants**, they act as helpers and, in order to save the master, they sometimes face trials that make him appear an enemy but his true identity is revealed in the end;

- **mentors**, maternal or paternal figures who act as helpers;

- **the beloved**, a figure the hero falls in love with and who helps him to save himself;

- **the casual helper**, a character who plays the role of helper without a specific reason; it is not known where he comes from, what his nature is and why he wants to help.

Now, reflect on the characters of the fairy tale you have met:

- Do the characters try to help the protagonist of the story?

- Do they have magical powers?

- Are they both humans and fantastic creatures?

- Try to describe their moral qualities.

- Are they fundamental for the resolution of the story?
Let’s Play!

THE TALE

R T T Q H M V
O K O E T I R
T T R L L E M
N O A L P A X
E M A L G T B
M I E I E D B
N H C T I W I

WORD BANK

HELPER
MAGIC
PLOT
VILLAIN

HERO
MENTOR
TALE
WIT
Focus on the fairy tale elements you have already analyzed:

- Do you remember all the fairy tales you have dealt with?
- In your opinion, have any objects changed the unfolding of the story?
- Are the identified objects essential for the development of the story?
- Do they have magical powers?
- Do you think they are helpful to the hero?

Try to insert the magical objects of the analyzed fairy tales in the column on the right. Then, compare your results with those of your classmates.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FAIRY TALE</th>
<th>MAGICAL OBJECT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Puss in Boots</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ali Baba and the 40 Thieves</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cinderella</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snow White</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Golden Boy and the Silver Boy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Genius of the River</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Three Magic Charms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Look at these images. Can they be associated with some of the fairy tales listed above? Which ones?
Can you identify any magical object in the following images?
What's the magical object in this image?

![Image of a fairy tale character on a flying carpet.]

**Challenge yourself!**

Match the role of the fairy tale characters identified by Propp to the related definitions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MANDATOR</td>
<td>An extremely brave warrior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HERO</td>
<td>A feather of a colorful bird</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAGICAL OBJECT</td>
<td>The head of a village in difficulty</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here are some scenes from the Japanese fairy tale "The Three Magic Charms", narrated in the previous Learning Unit.

**In your opinion, where is the magical object? Insert “X” in the appropriate box.**

[ ] [ ] [ ]
Decide if the following statements are True (T) or False (F).

The helper represents one of the fixed roles of the fairy tale  
The role of the helper is that of favoring the hero's action  
There can be only one helper in a fairy tale  
Fairy tale helpers are both realistic and imaginary characters  
In a fairy tale, wizards, witches, orcs and goblins can be magical helpers

Let's summarize!

**THE MAGICAL OBJECT**

**Magical agents** are recurring elements in fairy tales.

In fairy tales around the world, magical powers are attributed to substances, commonly used objects and animals.

Often, the hero cannot overcome any trials without the help of a magical agent.

Sometimes, the plot revolves around the loss and recovery of a magical object, other times the object is only a support for trials.

A magical agent is usually a human being with great powers but even a dead person, a supernatural entity or a talking animal could act as magical agents.

In a fairy tale, an animal can be both a magical agent afforded to the hero and a helper met along the way.

Having the magical object and the helper a common purpose, it has been possible to theorize that the two elements also have a common origin.

**There are several types of magical agents:**

- Animals
- Objects causing the appearance of magical helpers
- Obstacles: thrown objects that turn out to be obstacles for the antagonist
- Objects with magical powers
Objects with the power of transforming people

• **Carpillon** looks like an old woman thanks to a bouquet of carnations. Nevertheless, it is an illusion and not a true metamorphosis.

• **Giuanin** uses a lion’s claw, a dog’s whiskers, an eagle’s feather and an ant’s leg to transform himself into those animals.

• **The Canary Prince** turns into a canary when his beloved leafs right-to-left through the magic book and he goes back to being human again, when she leafs left-to-right through the book.

Objects with the power of making people invisible

• **Adolfo** uses Zephyrus’ green cloak to become both invisible and light.

• **Primavera** takes her mother’s headdress, which has the power to make her invisible.

Revealing objects

They serve to warn the characters of something. **Bluebeard** discovers his wife’s disobedience because a blood stain incessantly reappears on the key of the “forbidden room”.

A **hero** buys a mirror that shows him everything he wishes.

Objects with the power of changing something

steals a **wand** with the power of changing things.
### THE TALE

```
S E R U T A E R C
S S E C N I R P O
H G U I D E N G U
C Z D R T O I Y R
T B Z S G A R B A
I M N A N I Z T G
W O R T A P B N E
M D S F R N X R D
```

### WORD BANK

- CREATURES
- MONSTER
- DRAGON
- FAIRY
- PRINCESS
- WITCH
- GIANTS
- COURAGE
- GUIDE
Multiple choice excercise. Put a cross on the right option:

SET 1

In a fairy tale, the role of the helper is that of…
- making the antagonist win
- favoring the hero’s action
- finding the wanted person

A fairy tale usually involves the presence of the helper.
- No, it is false
- Yes, it is true
- Yes, but only in case the helper is also a donor

In a fairy tale, the helper is...
- always a bad character
- favourable to the hero
- unfavourable to the hero

SET 2

In a fairy tale, the magical object is...
- a magical helper
- a magical means
- a magical sword

A fictional story may include the presence of...
- magical objects or helpers
- just magical places
- just magical characters

In a fairy tale, the magical object can be...
- a cat in boots
- the boots
- the cat
Completion exercises. Complete the texts, by using the proposed words

**TEXT 1**

The helper is one of the fixed roles of the ....................................... . He is a character who, thanks to his exceptional powers, helps the hero when he is in ....................................... and allows him to successfully face any ....................................... .

The world of fairy tale helpers is inhabited by both realistic and ....................................... who, in their multiplicity, share the same functional identity: they favor the ....................... .......................... .

**TEXT 2**

Agents or magical objects are those .............................................. helping the hero. Through the delivery of the means or of the magical helper, a new character is introduced. In case of a living being (e.g. a man, a spirit, an animal) we can define him a ....................................... ; otherwise, it will be called a magical object.

In the fairy tale, ............................................... act exactly as living beings do; for this reason, we can conventionally call them «.......................................». For instance, the .............................. wounds the dragon, cuts it into small pieces and points the way to the hero. Under certain circumstances, any objects can have a ....................................... .

**Decide if the following statements are True (T) or False (F)**

- The helper represents one of the fixed roles of fairy tales: **T** ✔️ **F** ✗
- In fairy tales, there are both realistic and imaginary characters: **T** ✔️ **F** ✗
- The magical helper has no exceptional powers: **T** ✔️ **F** ✗
- In a fairy tale, all the objects may be magical: **T** ✔️ **F** ✗
- Magical objects play the same role of magical helpers: **T** ✔️ **F** ✗
- Magical objects cannot be referred to as “characters”: **T** ✔️ **F** ✗
Reflect and try to answer the following questions together with your classmates:

- Have you ever received an order to be respected?

- Have you always followed the received orders?

- What do you mean by “departure”?

- Have you ever been helped by someone, in difficult moments?

- Have you ever faced more or less difficult trials?

- Have you ever felt damaged by someone/something?

- Do you identify yourself with the good or the bad characters of fairy tales? Or perhaps you prefer the role of the helper?

*After watching the video of the Japanese fairy tale “THE THREE MAGIC CHARMS” once again, try to put the following sequences in the correct order, by numbering them.*

[Link](https://youtu.be/O_Ugic0n49M)

- Antagonist’s action
- Protagonist’s rescue
- Antagonist’s defeat
- Initial situation
- Final victory
- Protagonist’s damage
- Hero’s action
- The protagonist goes into action (he fights and overcomes trials)
Remember...

Fairy tales are all similar to each other because any actions carried out by the different characters are standardly repeated. There are innumerable fairy tales with different plots, but you can find recurring actions and situations in all of them.

In fact, even if characters and places change, some situations almost always occur in the development of the events.

Who carries out the action? What do the images refer to?
Choose the solution you think is correct.

[Images of characters in a battle scene and a scene with a trickery]

- ☐ The antagonist's action
- ☐ The protagonist's action
- ☐ The antagonist's action
- ☐ The protagonist's action

What kind of action do the images below portray? Choose the correct solutions.

[Images of a scene with trickery and a scene with a struggle]

- ☐ The antagonist's trickery
- ☐ The antagonist's defeat
- ☐ The antagonist's damage
- ☐ The antagonist's departure
- ☐ The struggle
- ☐ The antagonist's defeat
- ☐ The task to be overcome
- ☐ The protagonist's damage
Read the different sequences of the African fairy tale n.3 “THE GOLD CHILD AND THE SILVER ONE” carefully.

Niame, the most powerful of the magicians in the sky, decided to marry.

During his absence, the queen gave birth to twins: one all gold, the other all silver.

As soon as the wicked Acoco saw the two children, she took them and closed them in a basket, fleeing with them into the woods.

Instead of the children, she placed two horrible frogs in the cradle.

A huntsman picked up the basket and opened it. He was stunned at the beauty of the two children.

He was very poor, but he took them home and raised them with love, without revealing where he had found them.

The two children grew up good, obedient and skilled at doing everything.

The magical dust falling down from their bodies allowed the huntsman to become rich.

One day, the huntsman came to know that the twins were the king’s children. Therefore, he decided - although reluctantly - to bring them back to their father.

Niame embraced his children, had the queen recalled from exile, threw Acoco onto the earth.

Finally he praised the good huntsman.
What are the protagonist's actions? What are the antagonist's ones?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROTAGONIST'S ACTION</th>
<th>ANTAGONIST'S ACTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Which of these words could be associated with the protagonist's or the antagonist's actions you have just described? Highlight them!

- TRICKERY
- DEPARTURE
- VICTORY
- PROHIBITION
- DAMAGE OR LACK
- RESCUE
- VIOLATION
- FIGHT
- PUNISHMENT
- TRIAL

Try to complete the definitions, using the proposed words:

- .............................................. : one of the family .............................................. leaves his/her house.
- .............................................. (or order): on the protagonist or the mandator a limit is imposed in doing something or they are given an order to be respected.

**Violation**: violate the order or circumvent the ...............................................

- .............................................. : the antagonist tries to .............................................. the hero: the hero falls into the trap.

**Damage** (or lack): the .............................................. causes damage to a member of the family (or something is missing).

**Mediation**: .............................................. or lack is made known.

- ABSENTATION
- ANTAGONIST
- TRICKERY
- INTERDICTION
- DECEIVE
- MEMBERS
- DAMAGE
- PROHIBITION
What are the protagonists doing?
The following images portray specific actions/situations. Match the words in the boxes to them, correctly:

- Rescue
- Happy Ending
- Protagonist’s Damage

The beginning of the story is troubled by an unexpected event
The fairy tale opens with a situation of disequilibrium
The hero is able to overcome any trials (there are usually 3 of them)
The protagonist performs actions meant to restore the initial situation
The protagonist or the mandator suffer from damage

Put a cross (X) on the correct answer (True/False).

Did you know that the fairy tale actions are repeated and that they were object of accurate studies in the past?

Propp’s functions

The typical situations were analyzed and catalogued in the work “Morphology of the Folktale” by a Russian scholar, Vladimir Propp, who gave them the name of
“functions”, recognizing 31 different ones. Of course, not all of them are always present in every fairy tale, but only those more consistent with the characteristics of the events and the protagonists.

The fairy tale usually begins with some sort of initial situation in which the main characters and the future hero - the protagonist - are introduced simply reporting their names and social condition as well as elementary physical and psychological characteristics. The initial situation is followed by the breakdown of equilibrium and the introduction of functions. Some of the latter are:

- **Absention:** a character leaves home for a trip, a mission, an assignment or other.
- **Interdiction (or order):** a prohibition is imposed on the hero and it must not be violated, or the hero is given an order to be obeyed: not to touch an object, not to open a door, not to take part in the Royal Ball, not to follow a certain route, etc.
- **Violation:** the hero does not respect the prohibition or the imposition and, therefore, he can suffer punishment or damage.

- At this point, the antagonist usually appears; his role is to disturb the peace, being the cause of a negative event (the antagonist can be a dragon, an evil king, a stepmother, an envious brother etc.).
- **Trickery:** the antagonist tries to deceive the victim with the intention of damaging him/her, in order to take possession of his/her identity or belongings, or to prevent him/her from realizing his/her dreams.
- **Damage or lack of the object of desire:** this important function represents the breakdown of the initial situation and the beginning of the real narrative. At this stage, the antagonist tries to hinder the hero's trials by causing him damage or loss. In other cases, something is missing or something may be desired that is difficult to get hold of.

- **Departure:** the hero leaves the house to remedy the lack. Very often, the donor comes on the scene to help him in his undertaking.
- **Acquisition of the Magical Agent:** the hero enters into possession of a magical agent.
- **Difficult task:** the hero has to face a difficult assignment (solving riddles, passing a test of strength, dexterity, courage or patience).
- **Struggle:** the hero comes up against the antagonist.
- **Victory of the hero and overcoming of the task:** the antagonist is defeated.
- **Removal of Damage (or of Lack):** this function forms a pair with damage.
- **Punishment:** the antagonist is punished.
- **The Wedding, Prize or Happy Ending:** the hero receives a prize (often a marriage to the princess and the power of a kingdom), a reward or reunitification with whom or what he had lost. As a result, the initial balance is restored and a happy ending comes.
And now, try to answer these questions:

- Do the characters always carry out the actions necessary for the story development?

- Are the protagonist’s and the antagonist’s actions the same?

- Try to describe the functions that impressed you the most, while you were reading the different fairy tales.

- Have you ever been helped by someone, in difficult moments?

Challenge yourself!

Match the functions identified by Propp to the correct definitions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INTERDICTION</th>
<th>VIOLATE AN ORDER OR CIRCUMVENT A PROHIBITION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TRICKERY</td>
<td>A LIMIT IS IMPOSED ON THE HERO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIOLATION</td>
<td>THE HERO IS DECEIVED</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“The Trickery”
## Quiz Time!

Match the elements of the left column to the ones listed in the right column:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INITIAL SITUATION</th>
<th>THE VILLAGE CHIEF SUFFERS DAMAGE FROM THE SORCERER WHO HAS FREED HIMSELF FROM THE CHAINS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BREAKING OF THE EQUILIBRIUM</td>
<td>THE FARMER SAVES HIS VILLAGE AND THE CHIEF’S DAUGHTER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE EQUILIBRIUM IS RESTORED</td>
<td>HE GETS A PRIZE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HAPPY ENDING</td>
<td>THE FARMER SAVES HIS VILLAGE AND THE CHIEF’S DAUGHTER</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Put a cross (X) on the correct answer (True/False).

- **Disequilibrium** is caused by a negative situation  
  - True (T) / False (F)  

- The **protagonist** (or the Mandator) suffer from damage or absention  
  - True (T) / False (F)  

- The **antagonist**’s vicissitudes are caused by the hero  
  - True (T) / False (F)  

- The **protagonist** performs actions to rebalance the initial situation  
  - True (T) / False (F)  

- **Actions** do not correspond to Propp’s functions  
  - True (T) / False (F)  

- **Prohibition, violation** and trickery are functions  
  - True (T) / False (F)  

- The achievement of the **magical agent** and the struggle between the antagonist and the hero are not functions  
  - True (T) / False (F)  

- The **hero** will be able to overcome any trials (there are usually 3 of them)  
  - True (T) / False (F)  

- The **mentor**’s guide or the helper/magical object are often present in fairy tales  
  - True (T) / False (F)
How to write a fairy tale. By following the fairy tale scheme proposed below, give free rein to your creativity!

INITIAL SITUATION

The Antagonist creates a situation of disequilibrium. Who is this fantastic creature? An orc? A wizard? Someone else?

THE ANTAGONIST

The hero’s vicissitudes begin. Describe what the hero has to overcome.

THE TRIAL

The hero defeats the antagonist.

HAPPY ENDING
Challenge yourself!

How to write a fairy tale. By following the proposed scheme, write your own fairy tale.

1. Begin your story like this: “*Once upon a time* ………………………………”
   Choose the place and describe the setting
   a. an enchanted castle
   b. a distant land
   c. an enchanted forest
   d. *image a diverse one*

2. Introduce the main character and describe him/her as you like
   a. a good princess
   b. an ugly and evil servant
   c. a brave prince
   d. *try to invent a diverse one*

3. A sudden negative situation disturbs both order and balance
   a. the protagonist’s absentation
   b. the coming on of the antagonist
   c. the spell of an evil witch
   d. *invent a new one*

4. Build the story development with the help of these guiding questions:
   What happens? What does the protagonist do? Are there any trials to be faced?
   Has the protagonist to struggle against the antagonist?

5. Does he have a helper? Introduce and describe the helper:
   a. a friend
   b. a faithful servant
   c. a magical animal
   d. *invent a diverse one*

6. The helper does not provide any magical object. What object would you like to give your protagonist?

7. Remember! The hero must fight against the antagonist.

8. Everything is resolved: the victory over the antagonist is guaranteed and the happy conclusion comes.

9. Don’t forget the closing formula: “*And they lived happily ever after*”
Let's write!

You have just completed your fairy tale but a sudden event seems to have brought about a change! A further antagonist has come to help your hero's antagonist...

So, imagine a **different conclusion** for the fairy tale and tell it.

You can enter the description of the new character and the new tasks your hero has to face.

**ALTERNATIVE VERSION > NEW DISEQUILIBRIUM > AN EVIL, MAGICAL CREATURE HELPS YOUR HERO’S ANTAGONIST.**

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