

African Fairy Tale

A creative game which helps to develop players' imagination and creativity; and it also familiarize them with an unknown culture surroundings and an exotic folklore

Authors: Kateřina Štěpničková, Kristýna Tillová

Physical stress: 1 - none

Psychological stress: 2 - small

Preparation time: 20 min.

Number of instructors: 1

Time needed: 90 min. (depends on the time that's available, but the more time the better; players have time to make the scenery and costumes and they can work on a scenario more in details)

Number of players: any

Age group: elementary and secondary school pupils

Environment: any

Daytime: any

Season: any

Material: copies of the fairy tale text, stage scenery and properties according to the possibilities, paper and art supplies for creating masks and scenery, costumes

Subject / Seminar: Czech Language (literary communication), Art, Drama

Theme summary: Multicultural Education

Expected outcomes:

- the player develops his/her imagination, creativity and speech and communication skills
- the player gets better at teamwork skills, he/she works in a group on a collective project, accepts compromises, suggests and accepts solutions
- the player discusses the origins of the fairy tales and becomes aware of the similarities and the differences between various cultures

Characteristics of the game: The players listen to the beginning of a fairy tale coming from Africa. They must guess the ending of the story and transform it into a dramatic form, including self-made costumes and scenery.

Realization: The players hear the beginning of the African fairy tale out, but the ending isn't read loud out. After that, they are separated into a few groups in which they are given a task to think the storyline out. Each group is given a space for making

scenery, costumes and scenario. After the time limit is reached, they present their own version of the tale in one of the various styles of theatre performances such as: pantomime, drama, puppet theatre, shadow theatre, musical, etc. At the end, the instructor reads loud the original ending of the fairy tale.

Review:

Firstly, the instructor asks about the cooperation in the group: Who did have the most ideas? What was the most difficult about the game? Did you work well together? Did a lot of discussions occur? Were they constructive?

In the second part of the review, the instructor focuses on the fairy tale itself: Were you surprised by the ending? Was your ending different from the original one? Do you know other fairy tales from different parts of the world? What was the same about the Czech fairy tales and the ones from abroad? And what was different? You can find the information about this topic in the informational box called **Fairy Tales All around the World**.

Methodical notes:

- The players form the groups in a way how they want them to be, so that they can work at ease. It isn't necessary to form the groups artificially.
- In the beginning of the game, instructor can suggest to the players, what kind of art style they can use (shadow theatre, drama, ballet, puppet theatre, etc.)

The beginning of the fairy tale:

Why does the Zebra have Black Stripes and the Baboon a Bare Bottom

Long time ago, when the Earth was still young, the surface was dry and hot. The whole world was nearly burning in the heat. The water could be found only on a few places in tiny ponds which were spread out in the endless deserts and savannas. Near one of those savannas lived a big baboon, who declared himself to be an owner of the water in a pond and began to guard it. "This water is only mine and nobody else is allowed to drink it," he said. And he did, what he said. Every time he drove everyone, who wanted to drink it, out of there. He even built a guard tower and a big fire ring, so that he could guard the water even at night, when the desert gets really cold.

One day a zebra was walking by. She was thirsty because of her long trip through the desert. Her fur was shiny white and the shiny fur made her the most beautiful animal in the dessert. She walked slowly towards the water and wanted to drink some of it. Right then, the baboon jumped out from the guard water and started to yell angrily. "Who are you? Get out! That water is only mine." Zebra wasn't in mood to listen to the mean baboon and she hastily responded: "This water isn't yours, you ugly monkey! It's for all of us." Then she calmly drank.

The ending of the fairy tale:

The enraged baboon said to the zebra, that if she had wanted to drink again from “his” pond, she would have had to fight for it. And so the zebra threw herself on the baboon and a fierce battle begun. They rolled around the pond gripped together. Then the zebra ended the fight with a hard kick. The punch was so strong, that it sent the baboon flying on a high rock far behind the pond. And it was so swift, that even the zebra lost her balance and fell on her back. Unfortunately she fell into the baboon's fire ring so fast, that the logs in the fire flew off in all directions. A large amount, when they flew back to earth, burned the zebra's shiny white fur.

She run hurt and scared deep into the grassy savannah and from that time to know on, she lives there. The black stripes on her white fur were burned out thanks to the logs from the baboon's fire ring. And from that time on, she wears those white and black stripes that no other animal on the world has.

The baboon on the other hand got from the fight a bare and red butt, thanks to the zebra's kick. He's hiding on rocks and looks very angry, because he lost his ownership over water.

Source: <http://www.afrikaonline.cz/pohadky/?cat=1>

Fairy Tales All around the World

Fairy tales, which are told in various corners of the World, don't just amuse children. For adults they serve as a tool for understanding another culture and its folklore, because they are a valuable source and treasure chest. About what are the stories from Africa, Asia and Latin America and what do they have in common with ours?

African Folklore

Transformations and animal fights, magic and even normal neighbour relations between people and also with the nature... that everything and many more is the content of African fairy tales.

One of the writers, which were interested in the folklore of Africa, was Blaise Cendrars (1888–1961), a French novelist and avant-garde poet of Swiss origin. He devoted his books called *Myths, fairy tales and legends* and *Small black fairy tales for fearless children* to the African fairy tales. They even came out in Czech.

The main heroes of the short stories are people, animals, supernatural beings and natural elements. They all live in a close contact and they talk each other. Their relationships are ambivalent, because they sometimes help one another, and sometimes they do harm to others, but they know that any real turn from equilibrium

would be fatal for everyone. Cendrars's fairy tales explain to the little readers, on what principles is the life of primitive societies in an unbound nature based.

Chinese Fairy Tales

On the other hand, Chinese stories are full of tigers and dragons... There are a lot more dragons, devils and fairies than kings, emperors and princesses, but even here a faithful love can overcome every obstacle, good beats evil and intelligence wins over stupidity. Considering the large area of China and the heterogeneity of nationalities of its population, the Chinese folklore contains stories of shamans from the frozen Siberia and even a story of the creation of the World in visions of people from the rain forests in south.

At first glance, the fairy tale that is similar to Czech stories is the one about the biggest Chinese nation – Chan, which is called “About Lu Pan, the First Carpenter Master”. It was published in the book *Chinese Fairy Tales* (2007). It begins as most European stories: there are three brothers that set out in the World to find luck. Unlike European peasants, they don't search for a treasure or a bride – so something that they could own, but they're going to seek knowledge, to improve themselves. Only the youngest achieves success. After many obstacles on the way he finds a master carpenter on a high hill, who gives him peculiar lessons, where the boy actually learns everything by himself and learns the carpenter profession on a level of a master. The boy gets back home, but the story doesn't tell if and when the boy has got married. We just need to know, that he's a perfect master and to a perfect person the luck comes by itself. The key words for a plebeian person from the ancient China therefore aren't “I have” but “I am”.

Indian Fairy Tales

In the fairy tales and legends of Indian tribes in North and South America is mostly shown what the Indians imagined about the creation of the World, life and sun and even about where the night, death or fire comes from. In a lot of myths, you can see animals, that are behaving like people and they show diverse human characteristics such as greed, pride, stinginess, slyness, etc. Indian fairy tales came out in Czech for example in the year 2003, the book was written by Vladimír Holpuch.

Brazilian novelist, historian and ethnologist Hernani Donato (1922) has written funny and informative stories about the Brazilian Indians. He based them on notes from travellers, ethnographers and anthropologists, who recorded them throughout the 19th and 20th century. They tell about the various things in life of Brazilian Indians, about their traditions and world view. A main part in his stories naturally play animals like: a jaguar, a turtle, a monkey, an anteater, a condor, a tapir and many others.