

# Fairy Tales

Imitation in Writing Series  
Book 2

Matt Whitling

Logos School Materials  
Moscow, Idaho

## IMITATION IN WRITING

This *Fairy Tales* text is book two in a growing series of Imitation in Writing materials designed to teach aspiring writers the art and discipline of crafting delightful prose and poetry.

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The Grammar of Poetry Primer Teacher's Edition

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# Imitation In Writing

## FAIRY TALES

### Background:

We are commanded in Scripture to imitate the Lord Jesus Christ. We are also commanded to imitate those brothers and sisters who through faith and patience have inherited the promises. To imitate something or someone means:

- To do or try to do after the manner of; to follow the example of; to copy in action.
- To make or produce a copy or representation of; to copy, reproduce.
- To be, become, or make oneself like; to assume the aspect or semblance of; to simulate.

This God-sanctioned method of learning is an essential tool for educating young people. For example, how is it that we teach a child to perform simple physical skills such as throwing and catching? “Hold your hands like this. Step forward as you throw like this.” Imitation. How is it that we teach a child how to form his letters correctly? “Hold your pencil like this. Look at this ‘a’. Trace this letter. Now, you try to make an ‘a’ like this one.” Imitation. How is it that we teach art? At Logos School students learn how to paint by imitating master painters of the past. “This is a good painting. Let’s see if you can reproduce it.” Imitation. How is it that music is taught, or reading, or math? Very often the best instruction in any of these areas necessarily includes imitation. Why, when it comes to teaching young people writing do we educators regularly neglect this effective tool?

Educators in seventeenth century England knew the value of imitation as a tool through which they could teach style, particularly in the area of writing. The primary method of imitation in these English grammar schools was called *Double Translation*. In a double translation the teacher would translate a Latin work into English. The student was to copy this English translation over, paying close attention to every word and its significance. Then the student was to write down the English and Latin together, one above the other, making each language answer to the other. Afterwards the student translated the original Latin to English on his own. This was the first part of the translation. The second part took place ten days afterward when the student was given his final English translation and required to turn it back into good Latin.

Benjamin Franklin wrote of a similar exercise that he employed to educate himself a century later. When he was a young man he came across a particular piece of writing that he delighted in, *The Spectator*. *The Spectator* is a series of 555 popular essays published in 1711 and 1712. These essays were intended to improve manners and morals, raise the cultural level of the middle-class reader, and popularize serious ideas in science and philosophy. They were written well, the style was excellent, and Franklin wanted to imitate it. Here is Franklin's method of "double translation" regarding *The Spectator*:

With that view (imitating this great work) I took some of the papers, and making short hints of the sentiments in each sentence, laid them by a few days, and then, without looking at the book, tried to complete the papers again, by expressing each hinted sentiment at length, and as fully as it had been expressed before, in any suitable words that should occur to me. Then I compared my Spectator with the original, discovered some of my faults, and corrected them.

But he realized that he needed a greater stock of words in order to add variety and clarity of thought to his writing.

Therefore I took some of the tales in the Spectator, and turned them into verse; and, after a time, when I had pretty well forgotten the prose, turned them back again. I also sometimes jumbled my collection of hints into confusion, and after some weeks endeavored to reduce them into the best order, before I began to form the sentences and complete the subject. This was to teach me method in the arrangement of thoughts. By comparing my work with the original, I discovered many faults and corrected them; but I sometimes had the pleasure to fancy that, in particulars of small consequence, I had been fortunate enough to improve the method or the language, and this encouraged me to think that I might in time become to be a tolerable English writer, of which I was extremely ambitious.

Now the question is, "How can we employ a similar methodology?"

# Imitation In Writing

## FAIRY TALES

### Instructions:

#### Day 1

1. CHOOSE A STUDENT-READER: Send the fairy tale home with a student the night before you begin the assignment. He should be prepared to read the entire tale for the class the next day.

#### Day 2

2. READ SILENTLY: Have the students read the tale quietly to themselves, paying close attention to the story line. When they are done, they should underline the vocabulary words in the tale. Discuss, by means of questioning, who the characters are in the tale and what took place.

3. STUDENT READS TALE: The student who was selected on Day 1 to read the tale now comes to the front of the class and reads the entire tale.

4. ORAL RETELLING: The teacher calls on individual students to retell the tale in their own words. These oral summaries should be short and to the point.

5. VOCABULARY: Call on one student for each of the vocabulary words. That student will read the sentence in which the word is found, providing context, and then define the word for the class. Occasionally the student definition will need to be modified by the teacher so that it is an exact match with the vocabulary word in the tale. One word definitions work well. The idea here is to provide the students with a synonym for each vocabulary word which could be substituted into the sentence without distorting the meaning. Have the students write the definition of each word on the blank provided.

6. OUTLINE THE PLOT: Initially this activity should be guided by the teacher and completed as a class. Providing every-other simple sentence or phrase for each scene is helpful for younger students. There is some room for variation in the exact wording of the sentence or phrase. The rules are that each sentence or phrase must be three words long and represent a significant chronological event in that scene. From time to time the students will come up with a better sentence or phrase than the one provided in the Plot-Key at the rear of this book. Use it, by all means.

7. CHARACTERS: At this point the students will list the main characters in the story and write a few descriptive words about each.

8. PASS IN ORIGINAL FAIRY TALE: Before the students begin rewriting the tale they must pass the original one in. Some students will want to read through the tale one more time to better understand what the whole thing is all about.

9. WRITE FIRST DRAFT: The students are now ready to rewrite the tale using their outline to guide them. I allow my students to change the characters and some of the incidentals of the story in their rewrites as long as the plot is identifiable. The exceptionally

good writers in the class will thrive off of this opportunity to be innovative. The students who are less comfortable with writing will tend to stick to the same characters and incidentals; that is fine. All of the vocabulary words must be used correctly and underlined in the rewrite. The students should skip lines on the first draft to allow room for editing.

10. PARENTS EDIT: Students take their rewrites home on Day 2 for the parents to edit. This is most profitable when the parents sit down with the student and edit the tale together. Guidelines for editing can be sent home at the beginning of the year or communicated at “Back to School Night” so that parents know what is expected. The edited first draft will be due on the morning of Day 3.

Day 3

11. FINAL DRAFT: Time in class is provided for the students to work on the final draft. The students should not skip lines. I allow the students to draw a rubric at the beginning of their story if they like. This final draft will be due on the morning of Day 4.

Day 4

12. GRADING: The grading sheet should be duplicated, cut out, completed, and stapled to each student’s rewrite. This will help the teacher to focus on the essential aspects of the composition as he is grading it and will provide specific feedback to the student and parents regarding which areas will need more attention in the future. As a rule, I deduct one point for each mistake per page for sentence structure, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.

## Student Examples

### *The Germs and the Rats*

*(The Elves and the Cobbler rewritten by Brian Kohl - 3rd Grade)*

Once, not so very long ago, there lived some rats. They were professionals at candle making. The only things they didn't like about candle making were they couldn't do their work openly because they lived in a cobbler's house and the cobbler hated rats. They also didn't like having to dip their paws into the hot wax when a string fell into it. Slowly their business went down hill and finally they only had enough wax to make one more spice candle. The husband got out the wax and started the oven to melt it. Next he and his wife went to bed. At daybreak he came down to start working. He saw before him a masterpiece candle; it had no bumps and the string was right in the middle. Mrs. Bump (a frog) came in and snatched the candle up and gave him 25 shillings (by the way, the candle was only 10 shillings) and walked out with the candle. The rat bought 12 wax wads for 12 new candles. This went on for some time. What ratty put out was done by morning.

One day Mr. Rat said, "Why not find out who gives us this fortune?" She said, "All right." So they stayed up and around midnight in ran fifty little germs. The little wights without any pantaloons began to caper around the hot wax. Jumping in the wax they then ran to slide down the string to coat it with wax. Then after they made the candle they ran out the door. The next morning the wife had an idea, "Why not help the germs since they helped us? I could make some pantaloons and you some candles." So they left the clothes and candles before hiding to watch.

The germs came in and were delighted. They put on the clothes and danced off over the green with candles in hand. The good old couple never saw them again. But you can find the old couple in Madison, Wisconsin, with a sign that says: RAT CANDLE MAKING BUSINESS, GREAT PRICES! in rick-rack letters. We suppose we could find the little wights who helped the old couple if we really tried, but, nobody ever does.

FINIS

## The Bear and the Seven Little Kids

(The Wolf and the Seven Little Kids rewritten by Lesley Stephenson - 3rd Grade)

There once was a goat and her seven little kids. One day she said to her kids, "I need to go into the forest and fetch some wood for our fire. The bear will probably come. If he comes, you will recognize him by his low gruff voice or his pitch black paws. Do not open the door to him or he will devour you." And with that she left, without anxiety.

When the goat had gone there was a LOUD knock at the door. It seemed like the whole house shook, "Kids, I'm home." said a deep gruff voice. "Well," said the youngest kid, "I know you're not my mama because you have a deep gruff voice. So I will not let you in." The bear plodded off annoyed to the storekeeper and said, "I want some chalk or else." "Yes sir," said the storekeeper in a trembling voice and he handed him the chalk. The bear ate the chalk and said:

"Those goats they will be yummy,  
Although they're too big for my tummy;  
They'll wiggle and squirm,  
But I'm not concerned because I'll,  
top them and eat them with honey."

Then the bear went back to the goat's house. He went to the door and said, "Honey dears I'm home." And while he was saying that he had his front paws near the little window on the door and so they knew it was not their mother. They said, "Bear, we know it is you because of your pitch black paws." So, bear went to the baker and said, "I have hurt my feet so please if you would, rub some dough on them." "Yes sir." said the baker and put some dough on his feet and the bear left and again went back to the goat's house. When he got there, he said, "Children I'm home." "First show us your paws." said the kids. So he showed them his paws. Once they saw his white paws they knew that it was their mother so they opened the door! The bear sprang in and the children scattered hastily to different hiding places. The bear hunted the children down and ate every single one of the kids except the youngest who had hidden in the clock case. Then the gorged bear went out into the meadow and fell asleep, his appetite satisfied.

When the goat got home she saw the door was open and she ran through the door and sputtered each of their names and when she got to the smallest kid he called, "Mother! Mother! I'm in the clock case." The mother dashed to the clock case and opened it. She wept when she heard of what had happened and the goat went to the meadow and saw the bear lying on the grass asleep. She saw the bear's stomach moving around and thought maybe her children could still be alive! She told her youngest kid to fetch her some scissors and string. She cut the bear open and out came six little goats. OH! And boy did they stink! Then the mother goat told her seven kids to quickly get big stones to put in the bear's stomach. They all loaded up his stomach and she sewed it back together. When he woke up he was thirsty so he got up and went to the lake. He bent over but when he did he was so heavy he fell into the lake and drowned. When the goats found out they were very grateful and they lived happily ever after.

The End



FAIRY TALES

Story Outline	10	_____
Handwriting	10	_____
Title / Indent	5	_____
Vocab. Usage	15	_____
Sentence Structure	15	_____
Spell./Punct./ Cap.	25	_____
Story Line	20	_____

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Total	100	_____
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FAIRY TALES

Story Outline	10	_____
Handwriting	10	_____
Title / Indent	5	_____
Vocab. Usage	15	_____
Sentence Structure	15	_____
Spell./Punct./ Cap.	25	_____
Story Line	20	_____

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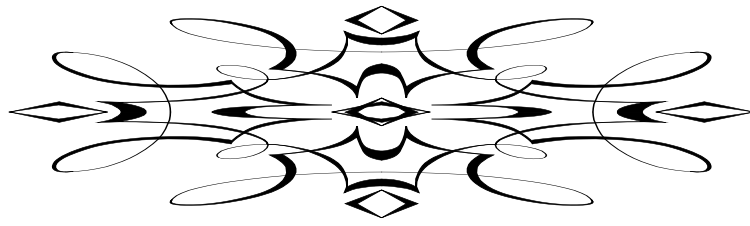
FAIRY TALES

Story Outline	10	_____
Handwriting	10	_____
Title / Indent	5	_____
Vocab. Usage	15	_____
Sentence Structure	15	_____
Spell./Punct./ Cap.	25	_____
Story Line	20	_____

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Total	100	_____
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# Why the Bear has a Stumpy Tail

by George Webbe Dasent

## I

One winter's day the bear met the fox, who came slinking along with a string of fish he had stolen.

"Hi, stop a minute! Where did you get those fish?" demanded the bear.

"Oh, my Lord Bruin, I've been out fishing and caught them," said the fox. So the bear had a mind to learn to fish, too, and bade the fox to tell him how he was to set about it.

## II

"Oh, it is quite easy," answered the fox, "and soon learned. You've only got to go upon the ice, and cut a hole and stick your tail down through it, and hold it there as long as you can. You're not to mind if it smarts a little; that's when the fish bite. The longer you hold it there, the more fish you'll get, and then all at once out with it, with a cross pull sideways and a strong pull, too."

## III

Well, the bear did as the fox said, and though he felt very cold and his tail smarted very much, he kept it a long, long time down in the hole, till at last it was frozen in, though of course he did not know that. Then he pulled it out with a strong pull, and it snapped short off, and that's why bruin goes about with a stumpy tail to this day!

**FINIS**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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

# Why the Bear has a Stumpy Tail

I. Vocabulary: Underline the following words in the fable and define them below.

- slinking: \_\_\_\_\_
- demanded: \_\_\_\_\_
- bruin: \_\_\_\_\_
- bade: \_\_\_\_\_
- smarts: \_\_\_\_\_
- stumpy: \_\_\_\_\_

II. Plot: Write a simple sentence to describe the main actions that take place in each scene.

<b>Slinking Along</b>
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

<b>Bad Advice</b>
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

<b>A Strong Pull</b>
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

III. Characters: List the main characters and write a few descriptive words for each.

_____	_____
_____	_____

IV. Rewrite this fairytale. Be sure to:

- Include and underline all of the vocabulary words in your rewrite.
- Write three separate paragraphs, one for each scene (indent three times).