

Research Article

Martina Girsang^{1*}, Grace Cya Aprilia S. Meliala², Eginta Ayu Br Sitepu³, Grace Gabliela Br Gultom⁴,
Wina Ecica Br Ginting⁵

Literature For Children: The Role Of Parents In Choosing Good Fairy Tales And Reading Material For Children

*Corresponding Author: **Martina Girsang**; Faculty of Literature, Universitas Methodist Indonesia, Medan, Indonesia;
E-mail: martinagirsang253@gmail.com

Grace Cya Aprilia S. Meliala; Faculty of Literature, Universitas Methodist Indonesia, Medan, Indonesia

Eginta Ayu Br Sitepu; Faculty of Literature, Universitas Methodist Indonesia, Medan, Indonesia

Grace Gabliela Br Gultom; Faculty of Literature, Universitas Methodist Indonesia, Medan, Indonesia

Wina Ecica Br Ginting; Faculty of Literature, Universitas Methodist Indonesia, Medan, Indonesia

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.47353/ijedl.v1i3.13> | received January 07, 2023; accepted January 21, 2023; online February 18, 2023

Abstract: Literature is very important for our life. Literature can be enjoyed by all people, including children. There are many kinds of literature for children, namely fairy tales, folklore, children's songs, folklore, legends, and others. Literature for children is made like children's views. Imagination that emerges from children is summarized and researched into children's literature. Children's literature is made for education and as a means for children to grow to know literature. However, children need to get guidance from parents or adults in side by side with children's literature. Not all children's literature can be accepted by children. In some examples of children's literature there are things that are inappropriate for children to accept, such as fairy tales with a romantic genre. Therefore, the role of parents is important to help children get to know children's literature. Children cannot but coexist with literature. Literature for children helps children in their development. Literature for children exists so that children can express themselves as freely and as broadly as possible. Children must also accept literature and pass it on to the next generation. Without realizing it, humans live side by side with literature. Therefore, the role of parents and adults is very important in introducing literature to children.

Keywords: Literature, children, fairy tale, role of parents, literature for children.

Introduction

Literature is a written or oral form that produces beautiful works. Humans coexist with literature. Without literature, living humans will feel greatness and emptiness. Literature itself is an expression, thought, human thought itself. Mursal Esten (Esten, 1978) argues that Literature is the expression of artistic and imaginative facts as an embodiment of human life and society in general, through language as a medium and has a positive effect on human life. Literature is a work of beautiful writing (belle letters) which records something in the form of language which is condensed, deepened, convoluted, shortened and twisted, made odd or other ways of aesthetic composition through language tools (Eagleton, 2010). Literature is an oral or written work that has various superior characteristics such as

originality, artistry, beauty in content and expression (Panuti Sudjiman, 1990). Literature is an artistic activity that uses language and other symbols as a tool to create something imaginative (Badrun, 1983). All circles deserve to enjoy literary works, children are no exception. Literature for children can be in the form of fairy tales, folklore, short stories, poetry, children's songs, and so on. Children certainly cannot recognize literature and its meaning just like that. Parents play an important role in introducing literature to their children. The role of parents in a child's life is very important since the child is in the womb and until the child becomes a 'parent'. Every parent certainly has different ways of raising their child. Parents play a major role in providing affection, love and care from an early

age to children. The beginning of the development of a child through their parents. Success in child growth is influenced by environmental factors, friendships, and also parents. Starting from the family environment to the wider community environment. During the 'toddler' to 'children' period, there were at least more than one time when children listened to fairy tales, children's stories, folklore, children's poetry, or children's songs. Those who introduce literature to children are of course their parents. Parents certainly choose good things to give to their children. In introducing literature to children, parents must accompany and guide children in this regard.

Method

The author chose to research about thirty sources and journal articles as directed. With various sources, the authors want to examine the role of parents in children's growth with literature. Parents play an important role in the growth of their children, this is inseparable from the education that must be sorted out for children.

Results

Fairy tales are folklore that are not considered to have really happened by the owner's stories and fairy tales are not bound by time or place. Fairy tales are told mainly for entertainment, although there are also many fairy tales that depict the truth, contain moral teachings, and even satire (Agus, 2008). Fairy tales is also a fictional world and is imagined from the thoughts of someone who is then told from generation to generation. Sometimes a fairy tale can bring listeners drifting into a fantasy world, depending on how to trigger the fairy tale and the moral message it conveys (untukku.com, 2010). Fairy tales are usually told by parents or adults to children.

Based on KBBI, a fairy tale is a story that does not really happen, especially strange events in ancient times. It can be concluded that, fairy

tales are fictitious or imaginary folklore with imaginative and often nonsensical themes.

Fairy tales can be related to people's belief in something supernatural and implemented in everyday human life. Usually fairy tales involve extraordinary events that make the reader feel the atmosphere that is happening in the story.

Most fairy tales, both oral and written, cannot be identified as the author. This is because many fairy tales are stories handed down from ancestors. Therefore, fairy tales are classified as old literature that has existed from ancient times.

Fairy tales are indeed impressed as real events that really happened, even though fairy tales are just imaginative fiction. Even though it is a fictional story, fairy tales are still fun entertainment and have a lot of positive impacts on children because they contain a lot of moral messages.

Types of Fairy Tales

Fables

Fables are fairy tales in which the main characters are animals but have human-like character and behavior. Fables are often found in fairy tales between animals, for example in forests or other places.

Examples of fables: The Mouse Deer, The Clever Crow, the Mouse Deer and the Crocodile, the Ant and the Grasshopper, the Friendship of the Rabbit and the Monkey, the Turtle and the Mouse Deer, and so on.

Legend

Legend is folklore that exists in people's lives and relates to an event. Events in folklore can give birth to a place's origin, a regional name, or matters related to nature and the surrounding environment.

Examples of legends: Tangkuban Perahu, Legend of Lake Toba, Crying Stone, Prambanan Temple (Roro Jonggrang), Sangkuriang, and so on.

Mites or Myths

Mite or better known as myth is a type of fairy tale that is related to people's belief in things that don't make sense. Usually, the story will deal with spirits, gods, or other supernatural things.

Examples of mites: Nyi Roro Kidul, Laweyan, Joko Tarub, and so on.

Wise

Sage is a fairy tale whose story tells about the history of certain characters who have kindness, courage, supernatural powers, and heroism. Sage contains historical elements that have been mixed with folk fantasy stories.

Wise examples: Panji Laras, Calon Arang, Si Pitung, Lutung Kasarung, Airlangga, and so on.

Parabel

A parable is a story that contains educational values, be it religious, moral, or general education which is conveyed implicitly.

Examples of parables: A pair of white slippers, Damarwulan, The Tale of Bayan Budiman, Malin Kundang, and so on.

Hilarious

A witty tale or joke is a funny story played by the characters.

Examples of jokes: Si Kabayan, Pan Balang Tamak, Singa Rewa, and so on.

An ordinary fairy tale

In addition to the types above, there are also fairy tales that are usually told. This fairy tale contains a story of ups and downs and someone's dream.

Examples of ordinary fairy tales: Garlic and Shallots, Cinderella, Ande-ande Lumut, and so on.

From what we examined according to the title of this article, the meanings contained in fairy tales, children's literature, folklore, and ancient legends contain many very deep meanings. Like the fairy tale 'Malin Kundang', Cinderella,

Mousedeer and Crocodile, Snow White and Seven Dwarfts.

Malin Kundang

The story of Malin Kundang is a folktale originating from the province of West Sumatra, Indonesia. The legend of Malin Kundang tells of a boy who was disobedient to his mother and was cursed to turn to stone.

Starting from a mother and her child who live in the countryside. Then the son asked permission to go wander into the city. Actually the mother's heart does not allow it but what can her mother do. Then his mother allowed him to go to town. After many years in the city Malin Kundang became a rich man. Because Malin Kundang was rich, he became arrogant and he forgot and disowned his mother who had given birth to and cared for him since childhood. Even his mother came to us to meet Malin Kundang. However, Malin Kundang ordered and expelled his mother to return to their village. From there, Malin Kundang's mother felt hurt. Thus making Malin Kundang's mother curse her own child to stone.

Malin Kundang's story is highly recommended to be told to children. Because this story contains many lessons for children against their parents. Where parents must provide the basis for their children to love and respect their parents even though they are adults and become rich people. Parents must also teach their children that everything that their children achieve and gain is not solely because of the children themselves. But the prayers of parents who are always present even though children and parents are far apart. And this story is a reminder that we as children must be devoted to our parents.

In Malin Kundang's story, the morals of the story are very deep to be given to children. Malin initially promised his mother that he would return overseas one day, but when he returned Malin did not recognize his own mother because he was ashamed of his wife. Malin was so blinded by wealth that it made him forget who had given birth

and raised him all this time. Regardless of whether this story is true or not, children have the right to listen to it and be given understanding so they don't become disobedient to their parents and still remember the precious people who always support them.

The second work of children's literature is Cinderella.

Cinderella

Cinderella fairy tale. Cinderella is a beautiful girl who lives with her stepmother and stepsisters, her mother has died and her father remarried to an evil woman. Cinderella was kept locked up in the barn and told to be a maid for her stepmother and stepsisters. When her father went to a faraway place to work, her stepmother began to show her evil and arbitrary nature to Cinderella. One day an invitation came from the kingdom to invite all the girls because the prince was looking for a companion or someone who would become his wife. Cinderella was forbidden to go by her mother and siblings even though she really wanted to go. At one point, a fairy godmother came to grant her wish by dressing and riding a horse using rats and a large pumpkin. But he had to be back before twelve o'clock or her magic would return to normal. Cinderella was very happy because she could come to the dance and how lucky she was to be able to dance with the prince. But she forgot the time and was late to go home, so she rushed home and left her glass slipper on the stairs. The next day the prince came to find someone who fit the glass slipper. Of course the glass slipper was tried on by her stepsisters and the shoe didn't fit them. At first Cinderella was not allowed to go out but in the end the prince found Cinderella hidden in the house. The shoes were tried on and they fit Cinderella. In the end, Cinderella and the prince married and lived happily, causing jealousy to their sisters and mother.

Cinderella story is one of the children's fairy tales with the romance genre. As a parent, you

have to be smarter about how to make your child focus more on the moral message than the scene. For example, when telling the fairy tale, parents explain that romance is done when they grow up or when they are married, so that children don't think that anyone can do it. And also parents have to be smarter, which ones to tell and which ones don't need to be told. In the Cinderella story, the meaning contained in this story is very simple but also profound. This story teaches that our kindness will not be in vain someday. If what we sow is good, then we will reap good too. And one day we deserve our own happiness. Even though this story is more appropriate for teenagers, there is nothing wrong with children getting a lesson from this story apart from the love story.

Mouse Deer And The Crocodiles

The story of the mouse deer and the crocodile is a legendary story from ancient times, the mouse deer is a very clever animal. When the mouse deer wanted to cross the river to get rambutan but had to cross a river which was filled with very many crocodiles, the mouse deer called the crocodile and said to the crocodiles, if the crocodiles want their meat, the crocodiles must line up neatly so that the deer knew to share the meat and the crocodiles agreed and lined up neatly so the deer could cross while counting the crocodiles. After the mouse deer had reached the other side, the mouse deer laughed and thanked the crocodiles because the mouse deer had reached the other side. The crocodiles were very angry because of the mouse deer.

From various stories, the crocodile and the mouse deer teach children to always do good to others, to always help each other, and to use their intelligence and ingenuity to help others and not harm others. However, children should not follow the nature of the mouse deer who lies to other people for his own sake. Because that's the important role of parents in reading this fairy tale.

The moral message contained in the story of the mouse deer and the crocodile is to return to

each of us. The hare has the same ingenuity as us humans. But whether that ingenuity will be used for good or bad things. So the role of parents is needed in educating children and side by side with children's literary works.

Snow White And Seven Dwarfs

Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs fairy tale. In this story there is a princess who is beautiful and white as snow who has an evil stepmother. This stepmother intends to harm Snow White because she is jealous of her beauty. Snow White was kicked out of the house and she found a hut containing seven dwarfs. Snow White and the seven dwarfs were friends and lived in peace, but because of the envy and jealousy of the sleeping mother, she suggested killing Snow White using a poisoned apple. Luckily Snow White didn't die and finally she was helped by a prince. Snow White lived happily ever after with the prince and the seven dwarfs.

In the story Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, there is someone who stands out apart from Snow White, she is the Stepmother. Because of malice and jealousy, she did evil to Snow White. The moral of this story is that we should not be jealous, and that can be used by adults to educate children.

Conclusion

Children are very important in the continuity of generations, in that case children need to grow together with children's literature. Children's literature is very beneficial for growth in this era. Literature is a pure thing and has many benefits. In ancient times, children were brought up on fairy tales, folk tales, and legends by word of mouth. Like the story of Malin Kundang, which, although initially only a legend in certain areas, contains a moral message. Literature is free and unlimited, beautiful and pure. Adults must always remember and teach literature from generation to generation so that literature is not

lost in the future. Even though without realizing it, literature is always around us, of course we do not want literature to be forgotten. The role of parents for children is very important in the continuity of generations, in that case children need to grow together with children's literature. Parents should accompany children in reading fairy tales, folklore, children's songs and others. Literature is a pure thing and has many benefits. Children were brought up on fairy tales, folklore, and word of mouth legends. In these fairy tales, not all of them have to be taught to children. Because in some of these fairy tales, there is a romance genre aimed at adults. For that parents should not ignore it. And to read the story, parents must be good at giving good and true words for children to manage. Literature is free and unlimited, beautiful and pure. Adults should always remember and teach literature to children forgotten in later life. Without realizing it, literature is always around us, of course we do not want literature to be forgotten. Therefore the authors hope that this article can be useful for adults and also children who are developing.

References

- Godwin, Denise A. (1992). A postmodernist fairy tale. *Journal of Literary Studies*, 8(1-2), 10–21. doi:10.1080/02564719208529997
- Joosen, Vanessa (2004). Feminist criticism and the fairy tale. *New Review of Children's Literature and Librarianship*, 10(1), 5–14. doi:10.1080/1361454042000294069
- Vallasekova, Maria (1974). The Child and the Fairy-Tale. *Educational Media International*, 11(4), 27–34. doi:10.1080/09523987408548805
- Crain, William C.; D'alessio, Esterina; McIntyre, Brenda; Smoke, Leslee (1983). The Impact of Hearing a Fairy Tale on Children's Immediate Behavior. *The Journal of Genetic Psychology*, 143(1), 9–17. doi:10.1080/00221325.1983.10533528

- Gazzolo, Tommaso (2020). The Reflexivity of Law and of Literature. *Law & Literature*, (), 1–18. doi:10.1080/1535685x.2021.1847790
- Bista, Krishna (2012). Multicultural Literature for Children and Young Adults. *The Educational Forum*, 76(3), 317–325. doi:10.1080/00131725.2012.682203
- Dalgliesh, Alice (1928). Colorful Literature for Children. *Childhood Education*, 5(1), 26–32. doi:10.1080/00094056.1928.10723373
- Kleinau, Elke; Riettiens, Lilli (2020). Nature in German colonial literature for children and young people. *History of Education*, (), 1–19. doi:10.1080/0046760x.2020.1753825
- Edgington, William D. (2002). To Promote Character Education, Use Literature for Children and Adolescents. *The Social Studies*, 93(3), 113–116. doi:10.1080/00377990209599893
- Lewin, David (2020). Between horror and boredom: fairy tales and moral education. *Ethics and Education*, (), 1–19. doi:10.1080/17449642.2020.1731107
- John R. R. Freer; (2021). Students' attitudes toward disability: a systematic literature review (2012–2019). *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, (), –. doi:10.1080/13603116.2020.1866688
- Hung, Wai-Shun (2015). What is Literature? Revisited: Sartre on the Language of Literature. *Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology*, 46(1), 1–15. doi:10.1080/00071773.2014.969967
- Chapman, Michael (2007). 'World literature': The value of an unstable category. *English Academy Review*, 24(1), 3–22. doi:10.1080/17535360712331393431
- Cathrine Bjørnholt Michaelsen; (2021). The Ethos of Poetry: Listening to Poetic and Schizophrenic Expressions of Alienation and Otherness. *Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology*, (), –. doi:10.1080/00071773.2021.1915697
- van Middendorp, Judy E.; Lee, Sharon (1994). Literature for Children and Young Adults in a History Classroom. *The Social Studies*, 85(3), 117–120. doi:10.1080/00377996.1994.9956288
- Dellmann-Jenkins, Mary; Yang, Lisa (1997). The Portrayal of Older People in Award-winning Literature for Children. *Journal of Research in Childhood Education*, 12(1), 96–100. doi:10.1080/02568549709594720
- Stark, Jacqueline Ann (2010). Content analysis of the fairy tale *Cinderella* – A longitudinal single-case study of narrative production: "From rags to riches". *Aphasiology*, 24(6-8), 709–724. doi:10.1080/02687030903524729
- Stott, Belinda (2004). Cinderella the strong and reader empowerment. *New Review of Children's Literature and Librarianship*, 10(1), 15–26. doi:10.1080/1361454042000294078
- MacWhinney, Brian; Fromm, Davida; Holland, Audrey; Forbes, Margaret; Wright, Heather (2010). Automated analysis of the Cinderella story. *Aphasiology*, 24(6-8), 856–868. doi:10.1080/02687030903452632
- Hui, Jonathan Y. H. (2018). Cinderella in Old Norse Literature. *Folklore*, 129(4), 353–374. doi:10.1080/0015587X.2018.1515207
- Childers, Perry R. (1971). Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. *The Journal of Experimental Education*, 40(2), 5–8. doi:10.1080/00220973.1971.11011310
- Wright, Terri Martin (1997). Romancing the Tale: Walt Disney's Adaptation of the Grimms' "Snow White". *Journal of Popular Film and Television*, 25(3), 98–108. doi:10.1080/01956059709602756
- Kostas, Marios (2016). Snow White in Hellenic primary classrooms: children's responses to non-traditional gender discourses. *Gender*

- and Education, (), 1–19.
doi:10.1080/09540253.2016.1237619
- Gottschalk, Keith (2013). Update: Snow White and her 7 Dwarves. *English Academy Review*, 30(1), 135–136.
doi:10.1080/10131752.2013.783400
- Fordiani, Tricia A. (1995). Have You Read a Fairy Tale Lately?. *Kappa Delta Pi Record*, 31(3), 116–119.
doi:10.1080/00228958.1995.10531917
- Mahoney, Erin (2009). THE HOUSE OF MIRTH and the Realistic Fairy Tale. *The Explicator*, 68(1), 36–38.
doi:10.1080/00144940903423303
- El'koninova, L. I. (2001). Fairy-tale Semantics in the Play of Preschoolers. *Journal of Russian and East European Psychology*, 39(4), 66–87. doi:10.2753/rpo1061-0405390466
- Wexelblatt, Robert (2001). Fairy Tale Time: A Pedagogical Caprice. *College Teaching*, 49(3), 91–95.
doi:10.1080/87567550109595856
- Bernasconi, Paola (2013). A fairy tale dictator: children's letters to the Duce. *Modern Italy*, 18(2), 129–140.
doi:10.1080/13532944.2013.780424
- Badrun, Ahmad. (1983). *Pengantar Ilmu Sastra*. Surabaya: Usaha Nasional.
- Sudjiman, Panuti. (1990). *Kamus Istilah Sastra*. Jakarta: UI Press.
- Esten, Mursal. (1978). *Kesusastraan (Pengantar, Teori, dan Sejarah)*. Bandung: Angkasa.
- Alfari, Shabrina. 2022. "Cerita Dongeng: Pengertian, Jenis, Ciri-ciri, Fungsi, Unsur & Contohnya".
<https://www.ruangguru.com/blog/dongeng>, accessed on Februari, 01 2023.

