

## Fairy Tales & Stories for Different Ages

When selecting fairy tales for young children, it is a help to know which tales tend to be appropriate for different ages. These are to be taken as light indications, not hard and fast rules. Reading a few tales from each category gives a picture of the progression of difficulty of the tales. One can then choose according to the needs and maturity of the children involved.

### Very simple tales and sequential tales, suitable for three and young four-year-olds.

*Sweet Porridge* (Grimm #103)  
*Silverhair (Goldilocks) and the Three Bears* (Spindrift)  
*Little Louise and the Little Flea* (Spindrift)  
*The Giant Turnip* (Russian, Spindrift)  
*The Mitten* (Russian)  
*The Gingerbread Man*  
*The Johnny Cake* (English)  
*The Hungry Cat (Plays for Puppets)*  
*The Little House* (Spindrift)  
*The Old Woman and Her Pig* (English Fairy Tales)  
*The Cat and the Mouse* (English Fairy Tales)  
*The Little Boy Who Wanted to be Carried Along (Plays for Puppets)*  
*When the Root Children Wake Up*  
*Little Red Hen*  
*The City Mouse and the Country Mouse*

### Simple tales but slightly more complex than those listed above. The mood is usually cheerful and without too much sorrow and struggle. Quite good for four and young five-year-olds.

*The Three Billy Goats Gruff* (Spindrift)  
*The Three Little Pigs*  
*The Wolf and the Seven Little Kids* (Grimm #5)  
*The Pancake Mill (Let Us Form a Ring)*  
*Mashenka and the Bear* (Spindrift)  
*The Elves* (Grimm #39)  
*Star Money* (Grimm #153)  
*Huggin and the Turnip* (*The Seven Year Old Wonder book*)

**In the next category many of the tales are associated with the term “fairy tale.” There is more challenge and detail than in the above list, obstacles are encountered, but they do not weigh too heavily on the soul of the child. Good for five and young six-year-olds.**

*The Frog Prince* (Grimm #1)  
*Mother Holle* (Grimm #24)  
*Little Red Cap* (Grimm #26)  
*The Bremen Town Musicians* (Grimm #27)  
*The Golden Goose* (Grimm#64)  
*The Spindle, the Shuttle and the Needle* (Grimm #188)  
*The Hut in the Forest* (Grimm #169)  
*The Queen Bee* (Grimm #62)  
*The Snow Maiden (Play for Puppets)*  
*The Seven Ravens* (Grimm #25)  
*Snow White and Rose Red* (Grimm #161)  
*Little Briar Rose* (Grimm #50)  
*The Princess in the Flaming Castle (Let Us Form a Ring)*  
*Twiggy (Let Us Form a Ring)*  
*The Donkey* (Grimm #144)  
*Lazy Jack* (English Fairy Tales)  
*Tom-Tit-Tot* (English Fairy Tales)  
*Rumpelstiltskin* (Grimm #55)

**The last category are those tales which are much loved by children but in most cases are better told in first grade rather than in the kindergarten or early childhood classes. The challenges are more difficult in them and the forces of evil more strongly described. Some kindergarten teachers may tell one or two of these tales at the end of the year if they have a number of children turning seven.**

*Little Snow White* (Grimm #53)  
*Jorinda and Joringel* (Grimm #69)  
*Hansel and Gretel* (Grimm #15)  
*Cinderella* (Grimm #21)  
*Rapunzel* (Grimm #12)

## Fairy Tale Resources

Hunt, Margaret and James Stern, editors: *The Complete Grimm's Fairy Tales*  
introduction by Padraic Colum and commentary by Joseph Campbell.  
pub. Pantheon

Jacobs, Joseph, editor: *English Fairy Tales*  
illustrated by John D. Batten

Wyatt, Isabel: *Seven Year Old Wonder Book*

*Spindrift* and *Autumn* books

*A Lifetime of Joy* (formerly *Play for Puppets*) compiled and created by  
Bronja Zahlingen

*Let Us Form a Ring* (formerly the *Acorn Hill Anthology*)

## **Interpretations of Fairy Tales**

Glas, Norbert: *Once Upon a Fairy Tale*

Two volumes. Fascinating look at the “real meaning” of fairy tales.

Meyer, Rudolf: *The Wisdom of Fairy Tales*

The meaning of fairy tales and how they can have a positive influence in the developing child.

Steiner, Rudolf: *The Poetry and Meaning of Fairy Tales*

Contains 2 lectures given in 1908 and 1913 in Berlin.

Wilkinson, Roy: *The Interpretation of Fairy Tales*

Summaries and commentaries of fairy tales and their effects on the healthy soul life.