

Did That Really Happen?- Looking at Spooky Stories in folklore

Grade levels: 1-2

Objective: Distinguish the difference between folk and fairy tales and other forms of literature.

The Teeny Tiny Woman by Paul Galdone

Boney Legs by Joanna Cole

A Big Spooky House by Donna Washington

The Little Old Lady Who Wasn't Afraid Of Anything by Linda Williams

Wiley and the Hairy Man by Molly Bang (a spookier version is *Wiley and the Hairy Man* by Judy Sierra)

The Hobyahs by Robert D. San Souci

Folktales are stories that have been told and told again from friend to friend, from parent to child and from grandparent to grandchild. This lesson about folktales can be spread over several days and allow a deeper look into this age old genre.

Procedure:

- Read several of the spooky folktales listed above aloud. (For more examples of spooky folktales, check the bibliography in *Scary Stories You Won't Be Afraid To Use* by Pamela Schembri)
- Ask your students to draw or write about the person doing the telling. (Folk and fairy tales are told from one person to another. They originally were oral stories.)
- Write a letter home with your students about one or more of the books you have read. Ask if any parents or grandparents know the story. Make a graph when you get enough responses. Can the children retell the versions their parents or grandparents know?
- When you have read enough samples, make a graph about what the stories have in common.
 - How many contain magic elements?
 - What is the setting in each? (Folktales contain stock settings- a cottage, a swamp etc.)
 - Who are the main characters in each story? (As in the setting, the characters are not drawn out - a boy, a man. The plot is important)

- How often is the number three used? (Often the hero tries three times or takes three guesses. Sometimes numbers divisible by three are used)
- How do the stories begin? (Often folk and fairytales start in such a way that lets you know that a make believe story is about to begin. One example of a beginning is “Once upon a time.”)