

Carleton University
Winter 2025 Preliminary Course Outline
Department of English

ENGL 2011: Children's Literature
Not just once (upon a time): Re-telling and Re-reading Fairy Tale Narratives

Prerequisites: second year standing or permission of the department.

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***** This is a preliminary syllabus only—texts and assignments are subject to change.
A complete version will be available closer to the start of the term. *****

In this course we will delve into the array of magical stories of wonder and enchantment that have come to be known as “fairy tales.” In examining how these stories have been told and re-told across time and across cultures, we will discover some surprising things about them: they were not always created primarily for children, they did not always originate in folk traditions of oral storytelling, and they do not always end “happily ever after”! In looking at how these tales have been taken up and transformed by generations of tellers, writers, illustrators, and filmmakers and aimed at children and adults alike, we will learn about how they can be interpreted from psychological, sociohistorical, and feminist perspectives, as well as through the lenses of queer studies, disability studies, and critical race studies.

Evaluation will be based on in-class writing assignments, a mid-term test, a final cumulative project, and attendance/engagement/class participation.

Learning outcomes:

In this course, you are invited to:

- Become familiar with the history of fairy tales, especially with regard to how they became associated primarily with children
- Think deeply and critically about the how fairy-tale narratives continue to circulate in contemporary culture
- develop your skills in textual analysis through tracing the differences among fairy-tale re-tellings and interpreting the meanings of those differences
- develop your ability to share your ideas and questions about the stories you read through class discussion and through writing clear and concise prose