

Mythology, Folklore, Fairy Tale & Fantasy

MYTH

- A traditional story, which may describe the origins of the world and/or of a people.
- An attempt to explain mysteries, supernatural events, and cultural traditions.
- Sometimes sacred in nature, a myth can involve gods or other creatures.
- Usually represents reality in dramatic ways.
- Many cultures have their own versions of common myths, which contain *archetypal* images and themes.

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- **Archetype:** Perfect example of something
Universal symbol of something
 - In literature, an archetype is a typical **character**, or a **situation** that seems to represent such universal patterns of human nature.

EXAMPLES

- **Character:**

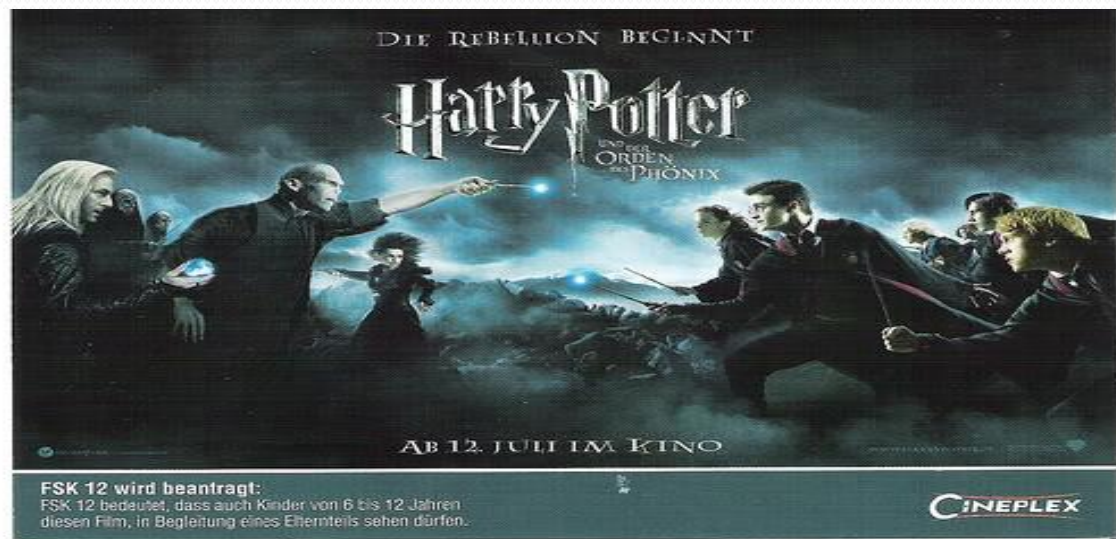
- The Hero
- The Mother Figure
- The Mentor
- The Villain



- **Situation:**
 - The Journey



- Good vs Evil

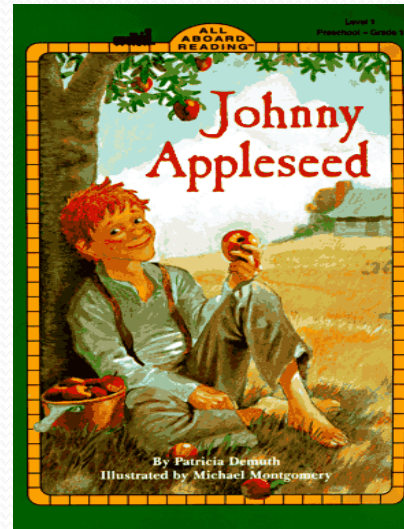


Folklore

- Whereas myth focuses on the origins of a people, and is often sacred, folklore focuses on **the traditional beliefs, tales and practices of a people**
- It can be fictional tales about **people/animals/monsters**
- Folklore is often transmitted orally

Folklore-General

- Creatures, spirits, demons, characters, etc. from all parts of the world
- Examples:
- Johnny Appleseed (America)
- Banshee (Ireland)
- Doppelganger (Germany)
- Jack Frost (Russia/ Germany)

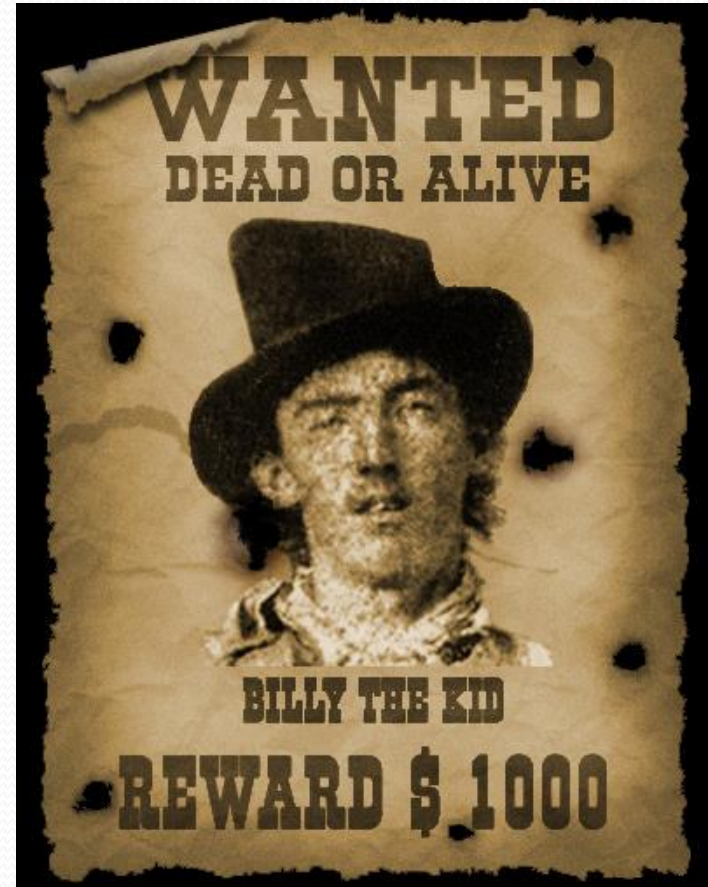


Folklore-Legend

- A legend is a story purported to be historical in nature, but without any proof
- Where evidence of the existence of actual historical figures exists, these characters are legends due in large part to the many stories that have been created about them

Folklore-Legend

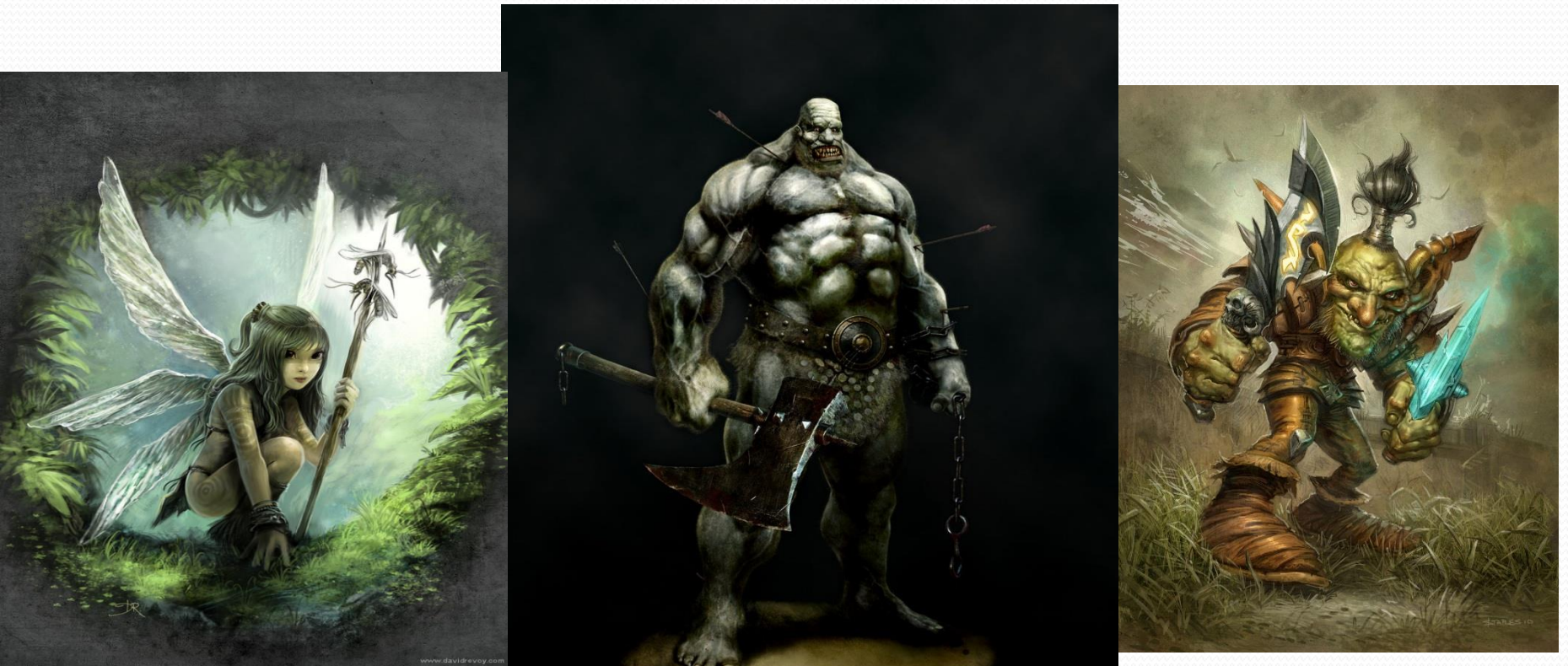
- Examples:
- King Arthur
- Robin Hood
- Billy the Kid



Fairy Tale

- **A fanciful tale of legendary deeds and creatures, usually intended for children** (although they may not have started out that way)
- Many books/films are based on the stories of "Cinderella," "Beauty and the Beast," and other fairy tales.

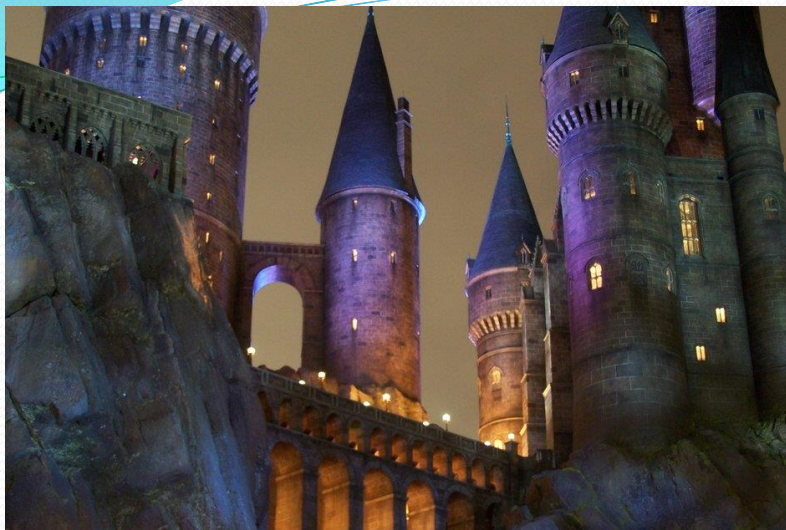
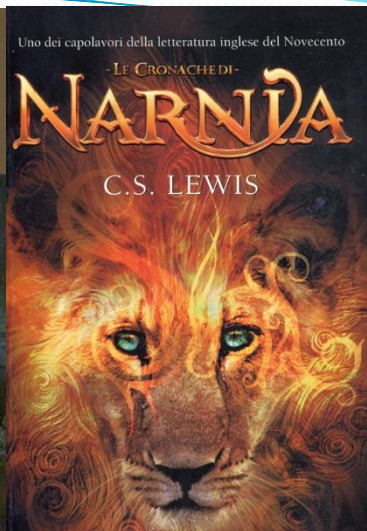
A fairy tale may involve fairies, giants, dragons, elves, goblins, dwarves, and other fanciful and fantastic forces.



Fantasy

- **Fantasy** is a genre of fiction that commonly uses magic and other supernatural phenomena
- Many works within the genre take place in imaginary worlds where magic and magical creatures are common
- Fantasy is rooted in folklore but the stories are not handed down orally as in traditional folklore

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- Identifying traits of fantasy:
 - The inclusion of fantastic elements in a self-coherent setting, where inspiration from mythology and folklore remains a consistent theme
 - Within such a structure, any location of the fantastical element is possible:
 - it may be hidden in or leak into the apparently real world setting (urban fantasy)
 - it may draw the characters into a world with such elements
 - or it may occur entirely in a fantasy world setting, where such elements are part of the world
 - Essentially, fantasy creates its own rules!



From C. JoyBell C. (author, poet)

“Fiction is written with reality and reality is written with fiction. We can write fiction because there is reality and we can write reality because there is fiction; everything we consider today to be myth and legend, our ancestors believed to be history and everything in our history includes myths and legends.

Before the splendid modern-day mind was formed our cultures and civilizations were conceived in the wombs of, and born of, what we identify today as "fiction, unreality, myth, legend, fantasy, folklore, imaginations, fabrications and tall tales." And in our suddenly realized glory of all our modern-day "advancements" we somehow fail to ask ourselves the question "Who designated myths and legends as unreality? "

But I ask myself this question because who decided that he was spectacular enough to stand up and say to our ancestors "You were all stupid and disillusioned and imagining things" and then why did we all decide to believe this person?



Excerpt continued...

There are many realities not just one. There is a truth that goes far beyond what we are told today to believe in. And we find that truth when we are brave enough to break away from what keeps everybody else feeling comfortable.

Your reality is what you believe in. And nobody should be able to tell you to believe otherwise.”