

An Educator's Guide to:



# Rapunzel

Rapunzel is an enticing classic complete with the long-haired beauty, Prince Charming and the evil witch. Rapunzel's parents, starving and destitute, make a pact with a nearby witch to give her their first born child in exchange for food. Exiled to a lonely tower, only the witch may visit Rapunzel by climbing up her beautiful, long hair. As the years pass, the witch gives the strong willed princess everything she wants except freedom. This seriously funny tale shows how a possessive mother, a tentative prince, and a naive young girl all grow up in a surprising way.



Throughout the study guide, this symbol means that specific Florida Standards are being addressed that correlate activities directly to Florida Assessments. As new standards are created and approved by the Florida Department of Education, this may change. Please visit [www.cpalms.org](http://www.cpalms.org) for more information and to customize this guide to your specific grade level.

## THE THEATRE IS A SPECIAL TREAT

Let us concentrate for a moment on a vital part of youth theatre: the young people. Millions of youngsters attend plays every season, and for some the experience is not particularly memorable or entertaining. The fault may lie with the production – but often the fault lies in the fact that these youngsters have not been properly briefed on appropriate theatre manners. Going to the theatre is not a casual event such as flipping on the TV set, attending a movie or a sports event. Going to the theatre is a SPECIAL OCCASION, and should be attended as such. In presenting theatre manners to young people we take the liberty of putting the do's and don'ts in verse, and hope that concerned adults will find this a more palatable way of introducing these concepts to youngsters.

## MATINEE MANNERS

By PEGGY SIMON TRAKTMAN

The theatre is no place for lunch,  
Who can hear when you go "crunch?"  
We may wear our nicest clothes  
When we go to theatre shows.  
Do not talk to one another  
(That means friends or even mother)  
When you go to see a show,  
Otherwise you'll never know  
What the play is all about  
And you'll make the actors shout  
Just to make themselves be heard.  
So, be still - don't say a word  
Unless an actor asks you to...  
A thing they rarely ever do.  
A program has a special use  
So do not treat it with abuse!  
Its purpose is to let us know  
Exactly who is in the show  
It also tells us other facts  
Of coming shows and future acts.  
Programs make great souvenirs  
Of fun we've had in bygone years  
Keep your hands upon your lap

But if you like something you clap  
Actors like to hear applause.  
If there is cause for this applause.  
If a scene is bright and sunny,  
And you think something is funny  
Laugh- performers love this laughter  
But be quiet from thereafter.  
Don't kick chairs or pound your feet  
And do not stand up in your seat,  
Never wander to and fro -  
Just sit back and watch the show.  
And when the final curtain falls  
The actors take their "curtain calls"  
That means they curtsy or they bow  
And you applaud, which tells them how  
You liked their work and liked the show.  
Then, when the lights come on, you go  
Back up the aisle and walk - don't run  
Out to the lobby, everyone.  
The theatre is a special treat  
And not a place to talk or eat.  
If you behave the proper way  
You really will enjoy the play.

## THE STORYTELLERS

### The Brothers Grimm

We can imagine the sense of revelation and delight fairy tales must have offered to the generations of folk who originally heard them told aloud at firesides. But these stories fell into disrepute with the educated classes, ashamed of reminders of what they imagined to be a barbaric past. It was Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm who brought these stories into print, revealing their beauty and strength.

Jacob and Wilhelm were born in 1785 and 1786 in the small German principality of Hesse-Cassel, and spent their later childhood in Steinau, a small town dotted with medieval monuments. Theirs was a tightly knit family, and the two brothers, who were unusually close, developed a deep love of tradition. As adults, they collected the fairy tales mostly from friends and neighbors.

Although the Grimm brothers did not, technically speaking, write any of the tales, they altered them to make them more suitable for you readers. Their alterations were prompted, in part, by Wilhelm's puritanical leanings. But commercial concerns also played a role. The children's market for fairy tales, fueled by a growing recognition that children had their own unique interests, was growing tremendously, and publishers were more willing to invest money in books that parents found acceptable. The first volume of these stories was published by Christmas, 1812, and the second appeared in 1814. Jacob's belief was that the fairy tale "is a poetry which belongs to the childhood of the race - and therefore children take to it so readily."



## THE EXPERT

### Dr. Sheldon Cashdan

What accounts for the enduring charm of fairy tales? Why are generations of children drawn to stories such as *Hansel and Gretel*, *Snow White*, and *Cinderella*? In *The Witch Must Die: How Fairy Tales Shape Our Lives*, Dr. Cashdan explores how fairy tales help children deal with psychological conflicts by projecting their own internal struggles between good and evil onto the battles enacted by the characters in the stories. Rumpelstiltskin, Pinocchio and Rapunzel vividly dramatize lust, envy, avarice and sloth on a safe stage, allowing children to confront their own "deadly sins."

“Fairy tales are ultimately a celebration of life. Both enchanting and empowering, they are as timely today as they were hundreds of years ago. The underlying dynamic—the age-old struggle between good and evil—resonates between the lines of *Snow White*, *Hansel and Gretel* and *The Emperor’s New Clothes*, as it will in the as yet unwritten stories of the twenty-first century. For this reason, the witch will continue to be a major presence in fairy tales, sensitizing us to forces within ourselves that pose a challenge to our sense of who we are. Her destruction is not an act of vengeance, nor even cruelty. It merely reminds us that sinful tendencies are a part of everyday existence, and that we must do battle with them if we wish to have a fairy-tale ending.”

## THE MESSAGE

From Sheldon Cashdan’s highly-praised best-seller:  
*The Witch Must Die: How Fairy Tales Shape Our Lives*

Though one is hard-pressed to find explicit references to lust in fairy tales today, many older tales were filled with bawdy references and lurid encounters. Indeed lust – or any incident with salacious content – was often a pivotal part of the plot. When fairy tales first became a part of children’s literature, however, publishers were concerned about tales that might conceivably damage the sensibilities of the very young. One wonders whether fairy tales would have been altered as much had they come into being in today’s sexual climate. In a world where the exploits of movie stars and political leaders are paraded before the public day after day on television, and children are explicitly instructed on proper and improper touching, material regarded as risqué hundreds of years ago probably would be considered tame.

Nevertheless, as fairy tales increasingly became a part of children’s literature “obscene” tales were consequently toned down or completely deleted from children’s storybooks. But these stories are not so much about sensuality per se, as about precocious sensuality – “sex before its time.” Sensual messages in fairy tales are usually conveyed indirectly so that the child does not have to deal with subject matter that he or she is unable to handle. A prime example is found in *Rapunzel*.

The element of sensual curiosity enters the story when Rapunzel meets the prince -- the first time in her life that she has seen a man. Although she is terrified at first, other emotions soon come to the fore. She and the Prince fall in love and conspire to meet when the witch is away.

Little is revealed about what transpires during the Prince’s visits but the witch ultimately learns of the couples clandestine meetings and flies into a rage. In earlier versions of Rapunzel, the witch learns of the Prince’s visits when she notices that Rapunzel’s stomach is getting larger. Her illicit pregnancy is never spelled out even though it is the reason she is banished by the witch.

The story nevertheless can be helpful in exploring the physical and psychological aspects of physical attraction with older children (between the ages of nine and eleven, for example) since many children in this age range are subjected to a great deal of information and misinformation about sex. With younger children, it is best to accent the tender and sentimental nature of the feelings between the characters, allowing the sensual elements of the story to rise naturally to the surface when the child is more mature and better able to deal with them. At a time when children are increasingly exposed to the more tawdry aspects of sensuality on television and magazines, it can help to read stories in which attraction between a man and a woman is presented in the more general context of commitment and caring.

## THE EXPERT

### Child Psychologist Bruno Bettelheim

In this day of heightened sensitivity to the effects of culture (both classical and popular) on the psychological development of young people, the fairy tale has come under scrutiny by many concerned educators, parents, and psychologists. Many feel that fairy tales enforce negative stereotypes and establish unrealistic expectations in children. Others voice concern over the violence exhibited in many stories. Still others find fairy tales relatively harmless while questioning their relevance to today's youth. One current work by a noted psychologist attempts to rewrite and update fairy tales to embrace contemporary social situations, perceptions and concepts.

Perhaps the most important and insightful work on the subject is "*The Uses of Enchantment*" by psychoanalyst Bruno Bettelheim. Bettelheim maintains that, like all lasting legends and folklore, fairy tales contain universal symbols of human experience and, for children, a safe arena for dealing with the complexities of their own needs. He recognizes that the content of fairy tales has significance to all persons, regardless of age, but points out that children are more open in their responses than are adults.

## THE MESSAGE

From Bruno Bettelheim's award-winning book:

### *The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales*

Rapunzel illustrates fantasy, escape, recovery and consolation. The story unfolds as one deed is balanced by another, following each other with geometrical ethical rigor: rampion (Rapunzel) stolen leads to rampion returned from where it was originally taken. The selfishness of the mother, which forces her husband to take the rampion illegally, is balanced by the selfishness of the sorceress, who wishes to keep Rapunzel to herself. The fantastic element is that which provides the final consolation: the power of the body is imaginatively exaggerated by the overlong tresses, on which one can climb up a tower, and by the tears, which can restore sight. But what more reliable source of recovery do we have than our own body?

Both Rapunzel and the prince act immaturely: he spies on the sorceress and sneaks up the tower behind her back, instead of approaching her with his love for Rapunzel. And Rapunzel also cheats by not telling what she did, short of her revealing slip. This is why Rapunzel's removal from the tower and her domination by the sorceress do not immediately bring about the happy ending. Both Rapunzel and the prince have to undergo a period of trial and tribulation, of inner growth through misfortune—as is true for the heroes of many fairy tales.

The child is unaware of his inner processes, which is why these are externalized in the fairy tale and symbolically represented by actions standing for inner and outer struggles. But deep concentration is also required for personal growth. This is typically symbolized in fairy tales by years devoid of overt events, suggesting inner silent developments. Thus, the physical escape of the child from his parents' domination is followed by a lengthy period of recovery, of gaining maturity.

In the story, after Rapunzel's banishment into the desert, the time comes when she is no longer taken care of by her substitute mother, nor the prince by his parents. Both of them now have to learn to take care of themselves, even in the most adverse circumstances. Their relative immaturity is suggested by their having given up hope—not trusting the future really means not trusting oneself. At its end they are ready not only to rescue each other, but to make a good life, one for the other.

## THE ACTIVITIES

### BEFORE THE PLAY:

1. Read *Rapunzel* to your students. Explain to them that there are countless adaptations of this story from various cultures all over the world and the version they will see will not be exactly like the one they have read. Discuss the difference between a play and a book.

✍ **TH.1.H.1 (PreK–2)** Through study in the arts, we learn about and honor others and the worlds in which they live (d).

✍ **TH.1.0.3.1** The student understands the artistic characteristics of various media and the advantages and disadvantages of telling stories through those artistic media.

✍ **LAFS.2.RL.3.9** . The student recognizes the use of comparison and contrast in a text

2. Ask your students to discuss the difference between television and live theatre. It is important that they know about “theatre etiquette,” or manners. Refer to the poem “Matinee Manners” listed above.

✍ **TH.1.S.1.1** The student understands theatre as a social function and theatre etiquette as the responsibility of the audience.

3. Have the students learn the following vocabulary words and listen for them during the play. See how many words they can recall and how the characters used them in the context of the play.

|           |               |              |           |
|-----------|---------------|--------------|-----------|
| a la mode | appreciative  | armor        | bountiful |
| carriage  | condition     | cottage      | distress  |
| evident   | fate          | gizzard      | jousting  |
| liable    | maypole dance | newt         | ogre      |
| peasant   | peculiar      | proclamation | rampion   |
| treasurer | troll         | valet        |           |

✍ **LAFS.1.L.3.5.** With guidance and support from adults, demonstrate understanding, word relationships and nuances in word meanings.

✍ **LAFS.1.L.1.1** Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

4. Every classic fairy tale lets the child see that all triumphs (escaping the tower) come not merely by magic but from the hero's (thus the child's) accomplishment of a seemingly impossible task. Talk to your class about their secret dreams and enchanted worlds, for that is where they will begin to discover themselves and ultimately set the goals that they will strive for.

✍️ **G.K.12.6.2.2.a** –Self-Motivation - Know: Follow directions to complete a task.

✍️ **LAFS.1.SL.1.3**: Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to gather additional information or clarify something that is not understood.

## AFTER THE PLAY:

### Part I

1. Ask your students to write letters, or draw pictures, to send to the cast of *Rapunzel*. What did they like about the play? Who was their favorite character? What did they learn from the story?

✍️ **TH.2.C.1.2** –Respond to a play by drawing and/or writing about a favorite aspect of it.

✍️ **LAFS.K12.L.1.2** – Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

### Part II

- Relevant Themes:**
1. **Crime and punishment**
  2. **Love betrayed**
  3. **Growing up**

Refer to the themes listed above. Ask the following questions to relate the themes to everyday life:

1. In the beginning of the play the cobbler and his wife are so hungry they steal food from the witch next door.
  - a. Was this justifiable?
  - b. What could they have done differently?
  - c. What was their punishment?

\*Have your students re-write the beginning of the story. Read the new beginnings to the class and discuss how the story would change.

✍️ **LAFS.K12.L.1.2** - Ask and answer questions about information from a speaker, offering appropriate elaboration and detail.

✍️ **LAFS.2.RL.2.5** - Describe the overall structure of a story, including describing how the beginning introduces the story and the ending concludes the action.

✍️ **LAFS.3.SL.1.1** - Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 3 *topics and texts*, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

✍️ **SC.K2.CS-CS.2.6**- Illustrate thoughts, ideas, and stories in a step-by-step manner using writing tools, digital cameras, and drawing tools.

2. Even a child knows that nothing causes greater fury than love betrayed, and Rapunzel, even while thinking about her prince, knew that the witch loved her.
  - a. Although selfish love such as the witches always loses out, can you think of a time when you loved something so much that you didn't want to share it?
  - b. What happened?
  - c. How did it make you feel?

\*Discuss with your students the concept of sharing and other qualities that make up a good citizen. Why are these qualities important?

✍ **LAFS.3.SL.1.3** – Ask and answer questions about information from a speaker, offering appropriate elaboration and detail.

✍ **SS.K.C.2.1** – Demonstrate the characteristics of being a good citizen.

✍ **WL.K12.IM.3.2** – Ask and answer questions on familiar topics to clarify information and sustain a conversation.

✍ **G.K12.6.3.4c** - Social Context - Perform: Assume responsibility for developing and managing goals that contribute to personal and group attainment.

3. The school age child often can't believe that he will ever be able to face the world without his parents. Someday, everyone will need to master the dangers of the world (witch) alone. Have a conference in your classroom about the responsibilities of growing up. .
  - a. Think of five things that your parents do for you now, but one day you will do on your own.
  - b. What can you learn from Rapunzel to better prepare yourself for future challenges? Dreams really can come true.
  - c. How will you overcome the problems that the future will bring?

✍ **LAFS.2.SL.2.4** – Tell a story or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking audibly in coherent sentences.

✍ **LAFS.3.RL.2.6** - Distinguish their own point of view from that of the narrator or those of the characters.

✍ **CTE-HS-68-GENERL.09.03** -Identify character traits that reflect good moral judgment (e.g. honesty, kindness)

✍ **WL.K12.IIL.1.2** Demonstrate understanding of the main idea and essential details of short conversations and oral presentations.

## The Art of Florida Assessments

Contributed by Patricia Linder

✍ Visual and Performing Arts Field Trips provide an excellent source of support for the development of skills necessary for success on the Florida Assessments. We invite you to use these instructional strategies to enhance preparation through your theatre field trip.



## Theatre Activities

### Cognitive Level 1

- Read the story (or play) your field trip performance is based on.
- Name the main character.
- List all the characters.
- Identify the setting.
- List the story events in the order they happened.
- Describe a character (or setting).
- Explain the problem (or conflict) in the story.
- Explain how the actors used stage props to tell the story (or develop characterization).
- Discuss how the blocking, or positioning of the actors on stage affected the performance.
- Discuss how unusual technical elements (light, shadow, sound, etc.) were used in the performance.
- Draw a picture of a character.
- Illustrate or make a diorama of a scene from the performance.
- Draw a poster to advertise the performance.
- Work with other students to act out a scene.
- Demonstrate how an actor used facial expression to show emotion.
- Write a narrative story to summarize the plot of the performance story.
- Use a map and/or timeline to locate the setting of the story.
- Make a mobile showing events in the story

### FCAT Cognitive Level II

- Would the main character make a good friend? Write an expository essay explaining why or why not.
- Create a graph that records performance data such as: female characters, male characters, animal characters or number of characters in each scene, etc.
- Compare/Contrast a character to someone you know or compare/contrast the setting to a different location or time.
- Solve a special effects mystery. Use words or pictures to explain how “special effects” (Lighting, smoke, sound effects) were created.
- Image the story in a different time or place. Design sets or costumes for the new setting.
- You’re the director. Plan the performance of a scene in your classroom. Include the cast of characters, staging area, and ideas for costumes, scenery, and props in your plan.
- Create a new ending to the story.
- Did you enjoy the performance? Write a persuasive essay convincing a friend to go see this production.
- Write a letter to the production company nominating a performer for a “Best Actor Award.” Explain why your nominee should win the award.

Create a rubric to rate the performance. Decide on criteria for judging: Sets, Costumes, Acting, Lighting, Special Effects, Overall Performance, etc.

## THE PRODUCER

**STAGES PRODUCTIONS** is a professional theatre ensemble that specializes in bringing classic fairy tales to over 150,000 young people each year throughout the Southeast.

STAGES' show credits include critically acclaimed performances of: School House Rock live, Charlotte's Web, The Three Little Pigs, and The Musical Adventures of Flat Stanley.. Be sure to join us for our 32nd Anniversary Season featuring Elephant and Piggie, Santa's Holiday Revue and Rapunzel..

Stages Productions is dedicated to making drama an integral part of education, and lesson plans are available to incorporate these plays into the student's curriculum. Thank you for supporting this mission by choosing a STAGES PRODUCTIONS play!

## THE REFERENCES

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