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Науковий керівник:

Баняс Наталія Юліанівна
канд.філ.наук, доцент

Завідувач кафедри:

Берегсасі Аніко Ференцівна
д-р габілітований, доцент
професор кафедри філології

Робота захищена на оцінку _____, «__» _____ 2025_ року

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Олашин Вікторія Михайлівна

Освітня програма

014 Середня освіта (мова і література (англійська))

Науковий керівник: **Баняс Наталія Юліанівна**

канд.філ.наук, доцент

Рецензент: **Надь-Коложварі Еніке Адальбертівна**

др. філософії, доцент кафедри філології

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Ferenc Rákóczi II Transcarpathian Hungarian College of Higher Education

Department of Philology

INFLUENCE OF FAIRYTALES ON THE MORAL DEVELOPMENT OF A CHILD

Bachelor's Thesis

Presented by: Olásin Viktoria

a 4th year student

Professional Education program:

014 Secondary education (language and literature (English))

Thesis supervisor: Nataliya Baniyas

Candidate of Philological Sciences

Associate Professor

Second reader: Eniko Nagy-Kolozsvari,

PhD, Associate Professor

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INTRODUCTION

Passed down through generations in both oral and written form, fairy tales are one of the world's oldest and most influential forms of storytelling. They play an important role in shaping children's understanding of the world, particularly in terms of morals and values. Fairy tales reflect cultural norms and help children build emotional and ethical frameworks.

As one of the best-known and most enduring genres of children's literature, fairy tales offer unique insights into how stories influence young people's learning about justice, kindness, bravery and the difference between right and wrong. Their imaginative imagery and symbolic characters present serious themes in a way that is easy to understand and remember.

A number of scholars have studied the educational and psychological functions of the fairy tale. How children interpret fairy tales and how they contribute to their emotional and moral development have been studied by Bruno Bettelheim, Jack Zipes and Maria Tatar. There has also been a growing interest in literary fairy tales, particularly the works of Oscar Wilde, which often contain strong ethical messages beneath the simplicity of the storytelling.

The development and adaptation of fairy tales over time can be linked to the theory of literature and to pedagogy. In particular, the theory of genre allows us to understand the way in which fairy tales work in different historical and cultural contexts. From this perspective, fairytales can be seen as flexible tools for moral education, able to evolve and maintain their relevance in contemporary classrooms.

The relevance of this study lies in its focus on the educational and developmental value of fairy tales in school settings. It also aims to contribute to the growing field of interdisciplinary research between literature and education. This thesis may be useful to teachers, curriculum developers and researchers interested in children's moral development through literature.

The object of the thesis is literary fairy tales, with special focus on Oscar Wilde's works.

The subject of the thesis is the potential impact of fairy tales on the moral and aesthetic development of school-age children.

The aim of this thesis is to analyze how fairy tales — particularly those written by Oscar Wilde — can contribute to the ethical education of children in school environments. The study also aims to explore how modern schoolchildren respond to these stories, and what values they draw from them.

The main tasks of the thesis are as follows:

- to examine the main features of fairy tales as a literary genre;

- to review the use of fairy tales in the school curriculum;
- to analyze selected fairy tales by Oscar Wilde in terms of moral themes;
- to conduct a sociological survey to explore how students perceive and understand fairy tales;
- to evaluate the role of fairy tales in shaping students' ethical judgments and worldview.

The methods used in this research include historical, analytical, comparative, descriptive and empirical approaches. The first two parts of the dissertation deal with literary and theoretical analyses, while the third part presents data gathered from a study of secondary school students (5 to 11 years old). The results have been analysed using quantitative methods.

The novelty of this research is the combination of literary analysis and empirical research. This makes it possible to gain a deeper understanding of how fairy tales are interpreted by today's students and whether these stories still have the same moral impact as they do today. The research tests the idea that fairy tales remain a relevant tool for teaching values in today's media-saturated world.

The theoretical basis of the research includes the work of scholars specializing in children's literature and moral development, including Bruno Bettelheim, Jack Zipes, and Maria Tatar.

The practical value of this work lies in its potential use in educational settings, particularly in the teaching of literature, which aims not only to develop reading skills, but also to develop students' understanding of ethics and emotions. The thesis may also serve as a reference point for future comparative studies in children's literature and values education.

Structurally, this thesis consists of an introduction, three main parts, a conclusion, a summary, a bibliography and appendices. The introduction presents the relevance, aim, objectives, methodology, novelty, subject, object, theoretical basis and practical value of the study. Part 1 describes the genre of the fairy tale and its characteristics. Part 2 examines the thematic and moral content of Oscar Wilde's fairy tales. Part 3 presents the results of the empirical survey and discusses students' attitudes towards fairy tales. The conclusion summarises the main findings of the research.

PART I. LEARNING LITERARY FAIRYTALES IN THE SECONDARY SCHOOL

1.1 Specifics of the genre of a fairytale

Fairy tales are a special kind of story. They are known almost in every culture, and many of them have similar ideas, even if they were created in different parts of the world. Even though people often think of fairy tales as something for children, they actually started much earlier and were not just for young audiences. These stories changed a lot over time, but they still keep some features that help us recognize them (Zipes, 2006).

In the beginning, fairy tales were told aloud. People didn't write them down at first. They were told in families, around the fire, or during long winter evenings. Every time someone told the story, they could change it a bit, so different versions appeared. Later, some people started to collect these stories. For example, Charles Perrault wrote down well-known tales in France, like Cinderella and Little Red Riding Hood. In Germany, the Brothers Grimm did something similar. They also published stories they heard from people. And Hans Christian Andersen made his own fairy tales, which were not from folk tradition, but they still followed the fairy tale style. These authors helped make fairy tales part of literature (Tatar, 2009).

One of the main things that makes fairy tales special is how they are built. The plot is usually easy to follow. There is a hero or heroine, they have a problem, they go on a journey or face danger, they meet helpers (often magical), and in the end, they either succeed or learn something. This kind of structure is found in many fairy tales. Some researchers say that this helps people connect with the story and understand it better, especially children (Zipes, 2006). The stories are short, but they have meaning. They are not just for fun — they often show what is good and what is bad.

Characters in fairy tales are usually not complex. Most of the time they are either good or bad. There is usually someone kind, honest, maybe poor or lonely, who later wins. And there is someone who is jealous, mean, or greedy, and they usually lose. These characters are easy to understand, especially for children. They show simple moral ideas like kindness, honesty, courage, and fairness (Tatar, 2009).

Another important thing about fairy tales is magic. There is always something that cannot happen in real life. It can be talking animals, magical objects, witches, spells, or special powers. These magical parts make the stories interesting, but they also have a deeper role. They help explain feelings or problems in a different way. Some researchers believe that the magical elements help children deal with their fears or wishes by placing them into symbolic forms inside the story (Bettelheim, 1976).

Fairy tales are not the same as myths, fables, or legends, although they may look similar at first. Myths often talk about gods or the creation of the world. Legends usually have something to

do with real history, even if they are not fully true. Fables are very short and usually have animals that talk, and they always end with a clear lesson. Fairy tales are different. They are longer, they focus more on the personal journey of a character, and they don't always say the lesson directly — sometimes the reader has to think about it (Warner, 2014).

The style of fairy tales is also easy to recognize. They often begin with “Once upon a time...” and end with something like “They lived happily ever after.” The words are usually simple. There is also a lot of repetition. Characters do things three times, or meet three challenges. There might be three brothers or three wishes. These patterns help listeners remember the story and also feel safe — because they know what to expect (Tatar, 2009).

The places in fairy tales are not usually real. The story happens in “a faraway kingdom,” “a deep forest,” or “a small village,” but there is no real map. That is why fairy tales work in many cultures — they are not about a specific time or place, but about ideas and feelings that many people share. Children from different countries can understand the same fairy tale in their own way (Zipes, 2006).

There are also some common ideas that appear in many fairy tales. For example, the idea that good wins over evil, or that people should not be judged by how they look. Sometimes fairy tales talk about love, bravery, or helping others. These ideas are shown not by teaching directly, but through the story. Researchers say that fairy tales often repeat the same symbols and patterns, and that's one reason they are so easy to remember and pass on (Bacchilega, 1997).

Today, fairy tales are still everywhere. People read them, watch them as movies, or play games based on them. Some authors rewrite old fairy tales in a modern way. Some make fun of them or change the ending. But the main ideas are still there. Even stories like *Shrek* or *Frozen* have fairy tale parts. Fairy tales also appear in advertising or pop music — because people know these stories so well, they are easy to recognize (Warner, 2014).

Teachers often use fairy tales in schools. They help children read and understand texts, but also think about values and emotions. Fairy tales are short, but they have a lot to discuss. That's why they are still used in classrooms, even when there are so many new kinds of stories. Researchers like Zipes say that fairy tales are flexible — they can change over time, but they still keep their main structure (Zipes, 2006).

1.2 Characteristics of fairytales

Fairy tales have features that make them easy to tell apart from other kinds of stories. Even though they were created in different parts of the world, they often share similar ideas and elements. These things can be seen in the way the story is told, who the characters are, how the

plot goes, and what kind of feeling the story gives to the person who reads or hears it. This part of the paper talks about what kind of features are usually found in fairy tales.

One thing that can be seen in many fairy tales is how they begin and how they end. Often the story starts with words like “Once upon a time...” and ends with something like “They lived happily ever after.” This kind of beginning lets the person know right away that the story is not about something that really happened. It shows that the story will be more like a fantasy. It also gives a special feeling — kind of magical — right from the start (Tatar, 2009).

The setting of fairy tales is usually vague or distant. The story happens in “a faraway kingdom,” “a deep dark forest,” or “a small village,” but it is never a real place you can find on a map. This gives the tale a universal quality. People from different parts of the world can imagine their own version of the story because there is nothing that limits it to a specific culture or country. This open setting allows the focus to be on the message, not on where or when the events happen.

Another strong feature is the presence of magic or supernatural elements. There can be flying carpets, talking animals, invisible cloaks, witches, spells, or magical helpers. Magic is not just for decoration — it is part of the logic of the fairy tale world. In this world, strange things can happen, and that’s completely normal. It gives the story freedom to explore big emotions or situations in a way that feels safe. As Bettelheim (1976) explains, magic in fairy tales allows children to imagine solutions to problems that seem impossible in real life.

Fairy tales also use simple and clear language. The words are not complicated, and many things are repeated. For example, a character might try something three times, or meet three different characters on their journey. This kind of repetition helps children follow the story and remember it. It also gives a rhythm to the narrative, which makes it more pleasant to hear or read. In many cultures, this pattern of “three” is very common — three wishes, three brothers, three challenges. These repetitions make the story easier to understand and more predictable, which helps build emotional security (Zipes, 2006).

Characters in fairy tales are usually types, not individuals. This means they represent an idea more than a real person. The hero is often good, brave, kind, or clever. The villain is usually greedy, jealous, or cruel. There is not much information about their past or personality. This makes it easier for readers to focus on what the character does, rather than who they are. It also helps with identifying what is “good” and what is “bad” — something important in moral development for children (Tatar, 2009).

Another important characteristic is that fairy tales often follow a clear moral structure. Good actions are rewarded, and bad actions are punished. Even if the story doesn’t say the lesson directly, it becomes clear from what happens to the characters. Someone who helps others might receive a magical gift, while someone who is selfish might lose everything. This structure is useful

in teaching values without making the story feel like a lesson. Zipes (2006) mentions that this hidden moral system is part of what makes fairy tales effective in shaping cultural norms.

The plot of a fairy tale is also quite specific. Usually, there is a main character who has a problem or a goal. They go on a journey, face obstacles, get help (often from magical creatures), and finally succeed. The plot is not too complex, but it is full of meaning. The character often changes or grows by the end — not just by finding treasure or getting married, but by learning something important. This kind of journey can be both literal and symbolic. Scholars like Warner (2014) argue that the “hero’s path” in fairy tales reflects emotional and social development.

Symbols are used a lot in fairy tales. A forest might stand for danger or the unknown. A castle could represent safety, or a reward. Animals often have symbolic meaning too — a fox might be clever, a wolf dangerous, a bird helpful. These symbols are repeated in many tales, and they help make the story easier to understand, especially when children listen to them. Bacchilega (1997) says that such recurring symbols are one of the key features that make fairy tales a recognizable and powerful genre.

Fairy tales also create emotional distance from real problems. For example, a story might include hunger, fear, loneliness, or even death — but because it is told through fantasy, it doesn’t feel too scary. This makes it easier for children to process hard ideas without being overwhelmed. This characteristic helps explain why fairy tales are used not only for entertainment, but also in teaching and therapy. Children can relate to the situations in the story and think about their own feelings in a safe way.

After all, fairy tales are often very open to change. Depending on who tells the story or where it is told, the details may change, even if the core ideas remain the same. Some modern versions include new characters, new endings or modern problems. This flexibility is one reason why fairy tales are still popular today - they can be adapted to suit different values or social issues, while retaining their traditional charm (Zipes, 2006; Warner, 2014).

1.3 Common Elements of Fairy Tales

Even though fairy tales are different in every culture, many of them have things in common. These are not always easy to notice at first, but if we look closely, we see that many fairy tales use the same kinds of ideas, events, and symbols. These common elements help us know that we are reading or hearing a fairy tale, not just any story. They also help carry important meanings that stay with the reader or listener, especially children. In this part, we will look at the most typical things that appear in fairy tales again and again.

One of the most obvious things is the structure of the story. Fairy tales often start with a problem or situation where the main character has to do something difficult or go somewhere. For

example, the girl in *The Red Shoes* wants to have something special, but it brings her pain. Or in *Hansel and Gretel*, the children are abandoned and have to survive in the forest. The middle of the story usually shows how the character faces danger or makes important choices. In the end, there is usually a result — a reward, a punishment, or a lesson learned. This basic pattern appears in many tales and makes them easy to follow (Zipes, 2001).

Another common thing is that fairy tales usually have a clear contrast between good and evil. Characters are often clearly either good or bad. There is a kind girl, a brave boy, or an honest woodcutter. On the other side, we see a cruel stepmother, a greedy king, or a dangerous witch. There are not many characters who are “in between.” The good characters often suffer at first, but in the end, they win. The bad ones are punished. This makes the moral of the story very clear. Children can quickly understand what is right and what is wrong. In *Cinderella*, the main character is kind and patient, while her stepsisters are rude and selfish — and the difference is obvious from the start (Heiner, 2010).

Many fairy tales also use the number three in some way. There may be three wishes, three trials, three brothers, or three tasks. This is true in stories like *The Three Little Pigs*, where each pig builds a different house, or in *The Golden Bird*, where the youngest of three sons succeeds. The number three gives rhythm to the story and creates a feeling of balance. Often, the first two attempts fail, and the third one works. This teaches that success sometimes comes after failure, and that trying more than once is important (Bettelheim, 1976).

Magic is another thing that appears in many fairy tales. There can be talking animals, magical helpers, spells, witches, and objects that do things no real object can do. A pumpkin becomes a carriage, a mirror talks, a ring brings wishes. These magical parts are not just there to entertain — they often help the character move forward or change. In *The Twelve Dancing Princesses*, the invisible cloak helps the hero solve the mystery. In *The Little Mermaid*, the sea witch’s spell creates the central conflict. Magic lets the story go beyond real life and show ideas in a symbolic way (Bacchilega, 1997).

Fairy tales often include a journey — either a physical journey, like going to the forest, a castle, or another kingdom, or a personal journey, like learning a lesson or changing inside. For example, *The Ugly Duckling* is about someone who doesn’t feel like they belong and then discovers who they are. It’s not just about animals — it’s about growing up and finding your place. Many tales show that change is possible, and that going through hard things can lead to something better.

Another common element is the helper character. This can be an old woman, a fairy godmother, a talking animal, or even a magical object. These helpers usually appear when the main character is in trouble and offer advice, gifts, or help. In *Cinderella*, it’s the fairy godmother. In

Puss in Boots, it's the clever cat. These helpers often appear suddenly, and their help is often magical. They can be seen as a symbol of hope or unexpected support in difficult times (Zipes, 2001).

Also, fairy tales often use symbols that appear in many different stories. For example, the forest is not just a place — it often stands for danger, fear, or being lost. Castles often mean safety, goals, or rewards. Shoes can be about freedom or identity (like in *The Red Shoes* or *Cinderella*). Animals in fairy tales usually have meaning too — the fox is clever, the wolf is dangerous, the bird is a messenger. These symbols help the reader feel the deeper meaning of the story without having to explain it directly (Bacchilega, 1997).

Another typical feature is repetition. Not just of numbers, but also of phrases, events, and actions. Characters often repeat their actions two or three times before succeeding. Phrases like “mirror, mirror on the wall” or “what big eyes you have” stay in memory and give rhythm to the story. Repetition also helps children remember the story and feel comfortable with it — they know what's coming, and that gives a feeling of safety (Bettelheim, 1976).

Fairy tales also often have a transformation. A frog becomes a prince, a servant becomes a queen, or a child becomes strong and independent. Transformation is not just physical — it can be about growing up, learning something, or gaining confidence. This is part of what makes fairy tales inspiring. They show that people can change, that situations can improve, and that even the smallest or weakest can win in the end. That's why many children identify with the main characters — they see hope in them.

Many fairy tales end with justice. The good are rewarded, and the bad are punished. But the way this happens is not always realistic. Sometimes the punishment is very harsh (like in *The Goose Girl*, where the villain is rolled in nails), and the reward is very big. But this kind of ending gives emotional satisfaction. It makes things feel fair, even if it's not like in real life. And that is part of what makes fairy tales powerful — they give us a world where everything makes sense in the end (Zipes, 2001; Heiner, 2010).

1.4 The style of fairytales

The style of fairy tales is one of the things that makes them special and easy to recognize. Even if the story comes from a different country, the way it is told has a lot in common with other fairy tales. The words are often simple, the structure is clear, and the same phrases or ideas appear again and again. In this part, we will look at the main features of fairy tale style and how they help the story work, especially for young readers or listeners.

One of the first things to notice is the use of simple and direct language. Fairy tales are usually told in a way that is easy to understand. The sentences are short, and the vocabulary is basic. This

is partly because fairy tales were often told aloud, not written. The storyteller needed to speak clearly and keep the attention of the listener. Even when fairy tales became part of literature, many writers kept this simple style. For example, Hans Christian Andersen's stories often use short sentences and very clear descriptions, which makes them easy for children to follow (Andersen, 1862).

Fairy tales also often begin in a similar way, with standard opening phrases. "Once upon a time..." is probably the most famous one in English, but other cultures have their own versions. These phrases help the listener or reader know that the story is not real and that it happens in a magical or imaginary world. It creates distance from everyday life and sets the tone for fantasy. The same happens with the endings — "And they lived happily ever after" is very common. These kinds of fixed expressions are called formulaic language, and they appear in many oral traditions (Heiner, 2010).

Another part of fairy tale style is the use of repetition. This can mean repeating actions, phrases, or situations. For example, the hero might try something three times before succeeding. A character might say the same line again and again. A journey might include the same type of event repeated several times. This repetition is not boring — it creates rhythm and helps the audience remember what is happening. It also builds tension, because we know something will change on the third time. In *The Three Billy Goats Gruff*, the same situation repeats three times with slight changes, and that makes the ending more satisfying (Bettelheim, 1976).

Fairy tales also use a lot of patterns and balance. Many things appear in threes or in pairs. There might be three brothers, three tests, three wishes, or two sisters — one kind and one cruel. This kind of structure makes the story feel complete and organized. It is also easier to remember and retell. In oral storytelling, this was very important. The storyteller did not have a written version, so clear structure helped them stay on track.

The descriptions in fairy tales are usually short and symbolic. Instead of long explanations, the story uses images and actions to show what is happening. A character might be described as "the most beautiful girl in the kingdom" or "a poor but honest boy," but we don't get long paragraphs about their feelings or background. This helps keep the pace of the story fast and keeps the focus on the action. It also makes the characters feel more like symbols than real people. This is why fairy tales are often compared to dreams or folk beliefs — they are not about realism, but about meaning (Bacchilega, 1997).

Another style element is the lack of detailed time and place. Fairy tales don't usually say when exactly the story happened. "Once upon a time" could mean anything. The places are also vague: "a deep forest," "a small village," "a distant kingdom." This helps the story feel universal. The listener or reader can imagine the setting in their own way. This is part of what allows fairy tales

to be retold in different cultures — they are not fixed to one place or one moment in history (Zipres, 2001).

Also, fairy tales often include direct speech and dialogue, especially in the more literary versions. Characters speak clearly and often say what they think or feel in simple ways. For example, in *Little Red Riding Hood*, the wolf and the girl have a short, repeated conversation: “What big eyes you have!” “The better to see you with.” These kinds of exchanges are easy to remember and repeat. They also help bring the characters to life in a short space.

There is also a certain emotional tone in fairy tales. The style is usually not very dramatic or sentimental, even when sad things happen. The story just tells what happened in a calm and matter-of-fact way. For example, in *The Little Match Girl*, the ending is very sad, but the style stays quiet and simple. This style makes it easier for children to hear about hard topics like death, fear, or hunger without being overwhelmed. It also leaves space for the reader to feel their own emotions without being told what to feel (Andersen, 1862).

Another feature is the use of contrast — good and evil, poor and rich, beauty and ugliness. These opposites appear in how the characters speak, act, and look. The contrast is not only in the content but also in the language. Good characters are described with positive, soft words. Evil characters are described with negative and harsh ones. This black-and-white way of speaking helps build the moral message of the story.

1.5 Fairytale motifs

One of the most interesting things about fairy tales is that many of them use the same ideas again and again. These ideas are called motifs — small parts of a story that show up in many different tales, even in different cultures. A motif is not the whole plot, but just a piece of it. For example, a magic ring, an evil stepmother, or a task that must be done three times — these are all common fairy tale motifs. They help give the story a shape and meaning, and they also make the story feel familiar to the listener or reader, even if they have never heard that version before.

Fairy tale motifs have been passed down through many generations. Some of them come from old myths or folk beliefs, while others were added by writers like the Brothers Grimm, Charles Perrault, or Hans Christian Andersen. These motifs are useful because they carry a lot of meaning in a small form. They help us understand the story faster, and they give a kind of “code” for how to read it. When we see a magic mirror or a poisoned apple, we already know something important is going to happen.

One very well-known motif is the evil stepmother. She appears in stories like *Cinderella*, *Snow White*, and *Hansel and Gretel*. The real mother is usually gone, and the new woman is mean, jealous, or cruel. She might try to get rid of the children, take away their happiness, or stop them

from growing. This motif often shows the fear of losing a parent or being replaced. It can also show conflict inside the family. In *Snow White*, the stepmother is not just jealous — she wants to destroy the girl's beauty. In *Hansel and Gretel*, the stepmother agrees to leave the children in the forest. These actions are extreme, but they help show strong emotions, like fear and anger, in a symbolic way (Zipes, 2001).

Another common motif is the helpful animal or magical helper. In many stories, the hero gets help from someone or something unexpected. In *Puss in Boots*, the cat helps the poor boy become rich and respected. In *The White Snake*, animals help the hero complete tasks because he showed them kindness. These helpers often give advice or magical gifts. They are not just part of the action — they represent hope, kindness, and the idea that good actions will be rewarded. Often, the hero receives help only after showing generosity or honesty (Heiner, 2010).

Transformation is also a very strong motif in fairy tales. People change — not only on the inside, but also on the outside. A beast becomes a prince (*Beauty and the Beast*), a frog becomes a king (*The Frog Prince*), a servant becomes a queen (*Cinderella*). These changes usually show that someone's true nature is different from how they first appeared. This motif gives a message of hope — that things can get better, and that we can become more than we are now. It also teaches not to judge people too quickly based on how they look (Bettelheim, 1976).

The quest or journey is another classic motif. Many heroes and heroines must go somewhere — to find something, solve a mystery, or complete a task. Sometimes the journey is long and difficult, like in *East of the Sun and West of the Moon*, where the girl travels to the ends of the world to save the prince. Other times, the journey is short but full of danger. This motif shows personal growth. The character leaves home and returns changed — stronger, wiser, or happier. The journey may be physical, but it also shows emotional development (Bacchilega, 1997).

Another popular motif is three trials or tests. This motif appears in stories like *The Three Feathers*, where the prince must prove himself three times, or *The Golden Goose*, where the hero's kindness helps him succeed. The first two attempts usually fail or are done by older brothers or sisters, and the third try — often by the youngest — is successful. This structure gives the story rhythm and builds expectation. It also teaches patience, persistence, and the value of being different or underestimated.

The magic object is another motif that appears very often. These can be rings, swords, shoes, mirrors, cloaks, or combs. Each object has a special power and is important for the story. In *The Twelve Dancing Princesses*, an invisible cloak helps the hero discover the secret. In *Cinderella*, the glass slipper is the key to recognition. In *Snow White*, the poisoned comb and apple are both used by the villain. These objects carry meaning — they can bring help or danger, depending on how they are used.

The forbidden action is a powerful and dramatic motif. A character is told not to do something — open a door, eat a fruit, speak to someone — but they do it anyway. This leads to a problem or curse. In *Bluebeard*, the wife is told not to open one room. In *The Six Swans*, the sister must stay silent for six years and not speak, or her brothers will remain cursed. This motif often shows the cost of curiosity, or the power of self-control and sacrifice (Zipes, 2001).

Fairy tales also love the lost-and-found child motif. Children get lost, abandoned, taken, or hidden — and later are found, rescued, or returned. In *Hansel and Gretel*, the children are left in the forest. In *Rapunzel*, the girl is taken away and locked in a tower. These stories often explore fear of separation, but they usually end with reunion and healing. They give hope that no matter how bad things look, there is always a way back.

The mirror motif is specific but strong. Mirrors appear in tales like *Snow White*, where the stepmother's mirror speaks and gives bad advice. Mirrors in fairy tales are not just objects — they show truth, but also vanity, jealousy, or power. This motif is useful for showing how people see themselves or how others see them. It can also reflect lies and illusions.

Many fairy tales include motifs about wishes. A poor person might get three wishes from a fish, a fairy, or a genie. What they wish for — and how they use it — shows their character. In *The Fisherman and His Wife*, the wife keeps asking for more, and in the end, they lose everything. The motif of wishes is about limits, greed, and gratitude. It teaches that having everything is not always the best thing (Heiner, 2010).

The reward-and-punishment motif appears in almost every tale. If the main character is good, brave, or kind, they are rewarded — often with love, wealth, or a new life. If a character is cruel, selfish, or dishonest, they are punished. Sometimes the punishment is small, but often it is big — turned into stone, exiled, or worse. This motif helps create a feeling of justice. The world of the fairy tale may be magical, but the values are clear (Zipes, 2001).

1.6 Significance of fairytales for child development

Fairy tales are more than just stories to read before bedtime. They have a special role in how children grow and understand the world. For many years, fairy tales have been part of childhood, helping kids think about right and wrong, face their fears, and dream about possibilities. The characters, settings, and lessons in fairy tales can leave a strong impression. In this part, we will look at why fairy tales are important for children and how they help with emotional, moral, and mental development.

One of the clearest things fairy tales do is help children understand values. In most tales, good is rewarded and evil is punished. This kind of storytelling helps children learn the difference between what is right and what is wrong. In *Beauty and the Beast*, kindness and love are shown to

be more powerful than looks. In Cinderella, patience and gentleness lead to a happy ending, while jealousy leads nowhere. These stories don't need to tell the lesson directly — children see it through the characters and outcomes (Opie & Opie, 1974).

Another reason fairy tales matter is because they show children that problems can be solved. Many tales begin with a difficulty — someone is poor, lost, scared, or treated unfairly. But as the story goes on, things change. The hero faces danger or makes a hard choice, and in the end, there is a solution. In Hansel and Gretel, the children are left in the woods, but they use their courage and cleverness to get back home. These stories give hope. They show that problems don't last forever, and that bravery or clever thinking can make a difference (Lang, 1889).

Fairy tales are also important because they allow children to explore strong emotions in a safe way. Feelings like fear, anger, jealousy, or sadness are part of many tales. A child might not know how to explain these emotions, but they can understand them when they see them in a story. In *The Little Mermaid*, the main character gives up everything for love — and faces pain as a result. This shows that emotions are powerful and sometimes complicated. Children learn that it's normal to feel a lot of things at once, and fairy tales give them a way to talk about it (Andersen, 1862).

Another way fairy tales support development is by building the child's imagination. Magical lands, talking animals, flying carpets, and invisible cloaks are not part of everyday life — but they live in fairy tales. By imagining these things, children learn to think creatively. This doesn't mean they believe everything is real. Even small children often know that stories are “pretend,” but pretending is useful. It helps them practice thinking in new ways and seeing more than one possibility. According to the Opies, children use fairy tales to explore “the possible within the impossible” (Opie & Opie, 1974).

Language is another area where fairy tales help. Because fairy tales often use repetition and rhythm, children can remember them more easily. Phrases like “Once upon a time...” or “Mirror, mirror on the wall...” become part of how children play with words. When they hear or read these stories, they learn new vocabulary and sentence patterns. They also practice telling stories themselves, which helps them build memory and speaking skills. In schools, teachers often use fairy tales to support reading and early writing.

Fairy tales also show children how to be active problem-solvers. Many characters don't have special powers — they just make good choices. In *Jack and the Beanstalk*, Jack climbs into the unknown and takes a risk. In *The Brave Little Tailor*, the main character uses cleverness to win, not strength. These kinds of stories give children the idea that success doesn't come from magic alone — it comes from trying, thinking, and being smart about your actions (Lang, 1889).

Another way fairy tales support children is by giving them role models they can relate to. Many main characters are young, small, or ordinary — but they become heroes. Cinderella is not

strong, but she is kind. The youngest brother is often laughed at, but in the end, he wins. This shows children that they don't have to be perfect or powerful to make a difference. They just have to be themselves and stay true to what is good.

Fairy tales are also important because they deal with fears — but not directly. A child might be scared of being alone or abandoned. Instead of talking about this directly, a fairy tale might show a character who is lost in a forest or trapped by a witch. This makes it easier for the child to understand and talk about what they fear. The fear is real, but the story gives it a shape, and then a solution. This can be comforting and healing.

Another big part of child development is learning how to live with limits and consequences. Many fairy tales have moments when a character is told “Don't do that” — but they do it anyway. In *Bluebeard*, the wife opens the forbidden door. In *The Goose Girl*, the maid lies and is punished. These stories help children understand that actions have results. They learn that curiosity, greed, or dishonesty can lead to problems — but also that mistakes can teach us something.

Fairy tales also help build a sense of belonging and culture. Different cultures have their own stories, and through them, children learn where they come from. Irish fairy tales often include nature spirits and deep forests (*Fairy Legends of Ireland*, 1888). Eastern European tales might include wolves, snow, and long winters. These details are not just decoration — they help children feel connected to a place and a people.

Fairy tales are memorable and emotional. They are told with love — by parents, teachers, or friends. When children grow up, they often still remember their favorite stories. These tales become part of who they are. They give comfort, lessons, and a bit of wonder. As Andrew Lang (1889) wrote, “The oldest stories are the youngest in the hearts of children.”

1.7 Review of school curriculum (in what forms fairytales are studied)

Fairy tales are not only part of childhood and home reading — they are also studied in schools. In the school curriculum, fairy tales are included at different stages and serve several purposes. They help children improve their reading and language skills, teach important values, and let students talk about emotions and choices. In this section, we will look at how fairy tales appear in school programs, what kinds of stories are used, and what goals teachers try to achieve when using them.

Fairy tales are most often studied in primary school. Usually, this happens in grades 1 through 4, when children are learning to read and understand texts. At this stage, fairy tales are simple enough to be accessible, but rich enough to invite discussion. They are used to practice reading aloud, finding main ideas, identifying characters, and retelling. Students may be asked to draw scenes from the story, role-play parts of it, or even rewrite the ending. Teachers use tales like

Cinderella, Little Red Riding Hood, or The Three Little Pigs because these stories are familiar and engaging. The focus is not only on literacy but also on emotional development and moral lessons (Opie & Opie, 1974).

In many school systems, fairy tales are included in literature textbooks or reading anthologies. These textbooks usually contain both folk tales and literary fairy tales. For example, in Ukrainian schools, the stories of the Brothers Grimm and Hans Christian Andersen are often included in 2nd or 3rd grade reading programs. The Ugly Duckling, The Snow Queen, and The Brave Tin Soldier are among the most commonly read. These stories offer more than just entertainment — they invite students to think about personal change, kindness, and courage (Andersen, 1862).

As students grow older, fairy tales may appear in the curriculum in new forms. In grades 5–7, some programs offer comparisons between folk tales and literary tales, or between different cultural versions of the same story. For example, students may read Cinderella in several versions — the classic Perrault version, a Grimm version, and a modern retelling. This helps develop analytical skills, as students look at structure, characters, and morals. It also introduces the idea that stories evolve and reflect the time and place they are told in.

Fairy tales are also used in language lessons, especially for ESL (English as a Second Language) learners. Because many fairy tales are translated into dozens of languages, they are a useful tool for teaching vocabulary, grammar, and sentence structure. In English classes, short tales like Jack and the Beanstalk or The Princess and the Pea are used for listening, reading, and speaking practice. Students already know the story in their own language, which makes it easier for them to follow and participate. Repetition in the story helps reinforce new words and phrases (Lang, 1889).

Another way fairy tales are studied in school is through creative activities. Teachers often encourage students to write their own fairy tale, change the ending, or imagine what happened before the beginning. These exercises help develop creative writing and critical thinking. Students also learn about story structure — setting, conflict, resolution — by working with stories they already understand. In art classes, students may draw scenes, design costumes, or create comics based on fairy tales. Drama classes may use fairy tales for role-play and acting practice. These activities make the learning process active and engaging.

In literature-focused programs in middle and high school, fairy tales can be explored more deeply. At this level, the focus may shift from reading the story to discussing its themes, symbols, and social meaning. Students might look at how fairy tales reflect gender roles, power, or cultural norms. In Little Red Riding Hood, for example, the theme of danger and disobedience can be discussed. In The Frog Prince, students might talk about promises, change, or trust. Some teachers

use modern adaptations or retellings to start conversations about how stories change over time. This helps students connect classic texts with modern life (Bacchilega, 1997).

In many countries, fairy tales are also included in cross-curricular projects. A fairy tale might be used in a history lesson to show how people lived in the past, or in a science lesson to talk about natural elements in the story. For example, *The Snow Queen* can be used to talk about winter, ice, or weather phenomena. *The Little Mermaid* can raise topics about the sea and marine life. These kinds of lessons show students that stories are not just part of literature — they are connected to the world in many ways.

Sometimes fairy tales are used to talk about social and emotional learning. Teachers may use a story to start a discussion about kindness, bullying, fear, or fairness. In *The Ugly Duckling*, students might talk about what it feels like to be left out. In *The Red Shoes*, they can think about choices and self-control. These stories give students a way to talk about emotions without speaking directly about their own experiences. It creates emotional distance, but still allows reflection.

In some modern programs, teachers also explore different versions of the same tale to discuss stereotypes or gender roles. For instance, in traditional versions of *Sleeping Beauty*, the girl is passive and waits for rescue. In modern versions, she might save herself or break the spell with courage. Students compare these versions and talk about how values have changed. This kind of analysis is part of critical thinking and cultural awareness — key goals in secondary education (Opie & Opie, 1974).

Fairy tales are also used during school celebrations or theatrical performances. Many schools stage plays based on *Snow White*, *Cinderella*, or *The Nutcracker*. These events allow students to experience literature in a new way — through movement, voice, teamwork, and costume. Even students who don't enjoy reading can feel involved in the story.

Fairy tales are part of reading for pleasure programs. Libraries in schools often have special sections for fairy tales — both classic and modern. Teachers recommend them for independent reading because they are short, memorable, and emotionally rich. For many students, fairy tales are among the first stories they enjoy reading on their own.

PART II. MORAL AND ESTHETICAL EDUCATION OF SCHOOLCHILDREN BY MEANS OF FAIRYTALES

2.1 Problem-thematic analysis of the fairytale “The Selfish Giant” by Oscar Wilde

“The Selfish Giant” is a fairytale by Oscar Wilde that helps children understand what happens when people act selfishly and how kindness can bring change. The story shows that being alone and keeping everything to yourself does not bring happiness. It also talks about friendship, caring for others, and how people can change for the better. These ideas are simple but important for young readers who are still learning about emotions and relationships.

The fairytale tells about a giant who owns a beautiful garden. While he is away, children come there every day to play. The garden is full of birds, flowers, and sunshine. But when the Giant returns and sees the children, he becomes angry. He builds a high wall and tells them never to come again. After that, the garden changes. Spring does not come. It stays winter all the time — cold, grey, and quiet. Only when the children return many years later, and the Giant helps a small boy, does spring return to the garden and to his heart.

This story helps children see how selfishness can make someone feel lonely. The Giant has something beautiful, but he doesn’t want to share it. Instead of feeling happy, he feels cold and alone. Children often go through moments when they want to keep things to themselves — toys, space, or attention. This fairytale shows what can happen when someone closes their heart. It becomes easier for children to understand that kindness and sharing can make life warmer, not only for others, but for themselves.

Another strong message in the story is about change. The Giant starts out mean and distant. But when he sees a small boy trying to climb a tree and cannot, something changes inside him. He helps the child, and in that moment, he understands that doing something good feels better than being alone. He takes down the wall and lets all the children come back. For young readers, this shows that people can change — even if they did something wrong before. The important thing is to open your heart and try again.

The story also talks about emotions like regret, hope, and peace. At the end of the story, the Giant becomes old. He sees the same small boy again, who now has marks on his hands and feet. The Giant does not understand what they are, but the boy says they are the marks of love. After that, the boy takes the Giant to a special garden. The next day, the children find the Giant lying still under a tree, but he looks happy.

For children, this ending may seem mysterious, but it feels calm and soft. It shows that when someone chooses love and kindness, they find peace. The fairytale gives a way to talk about life,

growing older, and what it means to do good — without using difficult words or ideas. Children who read this story can start to think about what it means to care for others and how small actions can change a lot.

The symbols in the story also help make the message clear. The garden changes with the Giant’s mood. When he is selfish, it stays frozen. When he is kind, it becomes full of flowers and light. This connection is simple but strong. Even young readers can feel that what someone does on the inside shows up on the outside. The change in seasons makes it easier to understand how emotions affect the world around us.

The fairytale also shows how important it is to notice others. The Giant begins to change when he sees a single child in trouble. He does not become kind because someone told him to — he becomes kind because he saw someone who needed help. This helps children understand the value of paying attention and being ready to help someone, even in a small way.

Oscar Wilde writes the story in a clear and gentle way. The words are easy to follow, but the feelings behind them are strong. The Giant goes from cold to warm, from alone to surrounded by children, and from angry to peaceful. These changes help children see that people are not always one thing. They can grow, learn, and become better — and that is a hopeful message for any child.

2.2 Problem-thematic analysis of the fairytale “Star Child” by Oscar Wilde

“Star Child” is a fairytale by Oscar Wilde that helps children think about pride, kindness, and the way people treat each other. The main idea of the story is about a boy who believed he was better than others, but later understood that real beauty is not about how someone looks, but about what kind of person they are. For young readers, this is a chance to explore big feelings like shame, regret, and the wish to be forgiven.

The story begins when a poor man finds a baby in the forest. The baby is lying under a star and looks beautiful, so the man takes him home and raises him. As the child grows up, he becomes proud of his appearance. He is unkind to others, makes fun of people who are poor, and even refuses to accept his own mother because she looks poor and old. After this, the boy’s appearance suddenly changes — he becomes ugly. People no longer treat him with respect. He begins a long journey where he faces hunger, rejection, and hard choices. Along the way, he starts to help others and becomes more thoughtful and kind. In the end, he finds his mother and asks for forgiveness. When he does this, his appearance changes again, and he becomes beautiful — not just outside, but inside too.

This story can help children understand what happens when someone acts with pride and looks down on others. Many children go through moments when they compare themselves to others or feel more special because of how they look, what they have, or what they can do. The story shows

that thinking this way can hurt people and lead to loneliness. When the boy becomes proud and unkind, others turn away from him. For children, this is a strong message: if you are not kind to others, they may not want to be close to you.

The fairytale also shows how people can change. This is very important for children to see. Sometimes they make mistakes — they say something mean, they don't help someone, or they choose to act badly. In “Star Child,” the main character makes many mistakes, but he learns from them. He begins to feel sorry, and he starts to help others, even when it is difficult. This helps young readers understand that it is not too late to do the right thing. If someone is ready to change and be better, good things can still happen.

The emotional part of the story is especially strong. Children can feel what it is like to be rejected or to feel guilty. But they also see what it is like to be forgiven and accepted again. These emotions are often hard to talk about, but the story makes them easier to understand. When the boy is kind and asks for forgiveness, he becomes a better person. This shows that it is okay to feel bad about past actions, as long as you try to fix them.

The fairytale uses magic and symbols that children can understand. The change in the boy's appearance shows how outside beauty is not the most important thing. What matters is what is inside. Many children worry about how they look or how others see them. This story helps them think about what it means to be good, not just to look good.

“Star Child” also teaches about helping others. The main character learns to give, to care, and to think about people who are in trouble. This helps children understand why it is important to be kind even when no one is watching. They see that small acts of kindness — like sharing food or showing respect — can mean a lot. It helps children build empathy, which is an important part of growing up.

Another important idea in the story is forgiveness. The boy does something very painful — he turns away from his own mother. Later, he feels very sorry for it. Children may not always know how to say “I'm sorry,” but this story shows how powerful it can be. When the boy finds his mother again and asks for her forgiveness, he feels peace. This helps children understand that saying sorry is not something to fear — it can help heal a broken connection.

Oscar Wilde writes the story in a simple way, with clear emotions and easy language. The story works because it shows what it means to be wrong, and what it means to try again. It does not punish the boy forever. Instead, it gives him a chance to grow. That is something children need to see — not only the mistake, but also the path forward.

Stories like “Star Child” give young readers a safe way to think about themselves. They don't feel judged. They simply follow the character and begin to ask their own questions: Am I kind?

Do I help others? What do I care about most? These are quiet questions, but the story plants them like seeds.

2.3 Problem-thematic analysis of the fairytale “Happy Prince” by Oscar Wilde

“The Happy Prince” is a fairytale that helps children think about what it means to care for others. It shows that giving something up for someone else can be more important than having something beautiful or expensive. The story also talks about friendship, sadness, and how even small acts of kindness can make a big difference.

The story is about a statue of a prince who used to live in a palace and never saw anything outside the palace walls. After he dies, people build a statue of him and place it high above the city. The statue is covered with gold and jewels. From up there, the prince finally sees how hard life is for many people. He feels sad because he cannot help anyone — until one day, a little swallow lands at his feet. The swallow becomes the prince’s messenger, flying around the city to take the jewels and gold from the statue and give them to people who are suffering.

This story teaches children about empathy — the ability to feel what others feel. The prince cannot enjoy being beautiful when he sees pain around him. He gives away everything he has, little by little, to help others. The swallow also chooses to stay with him, even when the weather turns cold. These choices help children understand that love and kindness often involve doing something hard or uncomfortable, but it can still feel right.

The ending of the story is emotional. The statue becomes dull and gray because all the jewels and gold are gone. People in the city think it is no longer useful, so they take it down and throw it away. The swallow dies from the cold. But in the end, an angel chooses the swallow and the heart of the prince as the two most valuable things in the city. They are taken to “the city of God,” where they are praised forever.

This part of the story helps children understand that good actions are not always noticed by everyone — but that doesn’t make them less important. Sometimes, people who do good things are not thanked or remembered. But the story shows that kindness still matters, even when no one is watching. It helps children feel that their small, kind actions — like helping a friend or sharing something — are meaningful.

The friendship between the prince and the swallow is also something children can feel strongly. The bird starts out only wanting to go somewhere warm, but ends up staying because he sees how much the prince cares. They become close in a quiet, gentle way. This can show young readers what true friendship looks like — it’s not always fun or easy, but it means staying close and helping each other.

There is also a clear idea about giving. The prince gives up everything he has. He does not hold on to his gold or his jewels. The swallow gives up his warm journey to stay with someone who needs him. This can help children think about why we give — and that giving does not always mean money or presents. It can mean time, care, or simply being there for someone else.

Wilde writes the story in a way that feels soft and sad, but not hopeless. It helps children explore feelings that are often difficult — like loss, sacrifice, or being forgotten. But it also shows how strong love can be, even when the world doesn't see it.

2.4. Problem-thematic analysis of the fairytale “The Little Match Girl” by Hans Christian Andersen

“The Little Match Girl” is a classic fairytale by Hans Christian Andersen that speaks very gently but very deeply about things like loneliness, love, and what it means to care for someone. It tells the story of a poor little girl who is walking through the snow on New Year's Eve. She is barefoot and cold, holding a small bundle of matches in her hand. She is trying to sell them to strangers, but everyone walks past. No one talks to her. No one stops. She is completely alone in the world.

As the night gets colder, she lights a match to warm her fingers. And in that little flame, she sees something beautiful — a warm stove, a table full of food, a Christmas tree full of lights. But when the flame goes out, everything disappears, and she's back in the snow. She lights another match and sees her kind grandmother, the only person who ever loved her. She lights more matches just to keep her grandmother with her. In the morning, the girl is found frozen on the street, but she has a smile on her face. People don't know what she saw before she died.

This story is sad, but it's not just about sadness. It helps children understand that not everyone in the world is safe or cared for. The girl is small and quiet. She doesn't shout or ask for much. But she still matters. Children reading this story start to feel what it's like to be left out, to be invisible. It makes them think: what if I saw someone like her? Would I walk past, or would I help? That's one of the strongest messages in the story — the importance of noticing others.

The little girl dreams of things that many children have every day — warmth, food, and someone who hugs them. But to her, these things are like magic. She doesn't want toys or money. She just wants to feel loved. This shows children what really matters. Not things, but people. Not gifts, but care. It helps them understand that happiness isn't always about having more — it's about being seen and loved.

The ending of the story might seem scary at first, because the girl dies. But Andersen doesn't make it frightening. He makes it peaceful. The way he describes her final moments — the light, the smile, the vision of her grandmother — makes the ending soft, not cold. Children may not fully

understand death, but they can feel that the girl is no longer hurting. That feeling of calm helps them think about hard things in a safe way.

There are also strong symbols in the story. The snow and darkness show how hard the world can be. The matches are small, but they bring warmth and light. Each time she lights one, a dream appears. It doesn't last long, but it's full of hope. This helps children see how even small moments — a smile, a hug, a kind word — can make someone feel better, even if just for a short time. The match is a symbol of kindness, of light in the dark.

The story also shows a big contrast. Inside the houses, people are celebrating, eating, and laughing. Outside, the girl is hungry and cold. Andersen doesn't explain this contrast — he just shows it. But children feel it. And because they feel it, they start asking questions. Why is she alone? Why didn't anyone help her? And slowly, they begin to understand: caring for others is something we all need to do.

Andersen's writing is quiet and gentle. He doesn't use hard words. He lets the emotions speak. That's why this story works so well for children. It doesn't tell them what to think — it shows them something real, something true. And children, even very young ones, understand that kind of truth.

"The Little Match Girl" stays in the heart long after it's read. It doesn't need big lessons or loud moments. It teaches through feeling. And that feeling — of wanting to help, of wanting the girl to be warm and safe — is the beginning of empathy. That's why this fairytale is so important for moral education. It helps children feel, and when they feel, they begin to care.

2.5. Problem-thematic analysis of the fairytale "The Tale of Peter Rabbit" by Beatrix Potter

"The Tale of Peter Rabbit" is a story by Beatrix Potter that shows what happens when a child — or in this case, a rabbit — doesn't listen to warnings and follows their curiosity instead. The main character, Peter, lives with his mother and three siblings. At the beginning of the story, his mother tells all the children not to go into Mr. McGregor's garden, because it's dangerous. But Peter doesn't listen. He runs straight there and starts eating the vegetables. At first, everything seems fine. But then Mr. McGregor sees him, and Peter has to run for his life.

From this moment on, the story becomes more tense. Peter gets caught in a net, loses his clothes, hides in a watering can, and can't find the way out. He's scared, tired, and doesn't know what to do. In the end, he escapes and gets home, but he feels sick and has to go to bed without dinner, while his sisters eat bread and milk and blackberries.

This story is very simple, but it has a lot to say. First of all, it shows that curiosity is natural, but that rules are there for a reason. Peter doesn't want to be bad — he just wants to explore. Children understand this feeling very well, because they also don't like when adults say “no.” But through Peter's adventure, they can see what happens when you don't listen: sometimes things really do go wrong, and it's not fun or exciting anymore. It's scary.

Another message is that choices have consequences. Peter made his own decision, and no one saved him — he had to deal with it himself. That's something children start learning early in life. When you do something risky, you can get hurt, or scared, or end up missing out on something nice — like Peter missing his supper. It's not a punishment from someone else — it's just the result of what you chose to do.

The story also talks about fear in a way that feels real. Peter goes from feeling brave to feeling completely lost. He doesn't know where to run, and everything feels too big. This is something children really connect with — they know what it's like to get in trouble and suddenly wish they could go back and change what they did.

What's interesting is that Peter doesn't get into huge trouble at the end. His mother doesn't scold him. She just gives him chamomile tea and puts him to bed. That part is important too. It shows that parents might get upset or worried, but they still take care of you when things go wrong. Peter learned something that day, and he probably won't go back to the garden again. Not because someone yelled at him, but because now he understands what the danger really means.

The setting in the story also matters. Mr. McGregor's garden looks beautiful — full of fresh vegetables, flowers, and open space. But it's also the most dangerous place. Children can learn from that too — that not everything that looks nice is safe, and not every rule is unfair. Sometimes, rules are there because someone wants to protect you.

Beatrix Potter wrote this story in a very calm and quiet way. She didn't try to scare children, or make Peter seem bad. She just showed a moment from his life — a mistake, an adventure, a lesson. And that's what makes it powerful. Children read it and enjoy the funny parts, like Peter losing his jacket, but they also feel what Peter feels — the fear, the regret, the relief. And all of that helps them understand something about their own lives too.

PART 3 – EMPIRICAL RESEARCH. SOCIOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION HOW FAIRYTALES INFLUENCE THE DEVELOPMENT OF SCHOOLCHILDREN’S OUTLOOK. (SOCIOLOGICAL SURVEY OF SCHOOLCHILDREN.)

3.1 Participants of the Research

The theme of this research is the influence of fairy tales on the moral development of schoolchildren. Since the first two parts of this work focused on the role of fairy tales in teaching moral values and shaping children’s emotional world, the aim of this empirical part is to see how modern students perceive fairy tales and what moral lessons they actually take from them.

The research was conducted among students from three different schools: Irshava Lyceum, Vynohradiv Secondary School, and a secondary school in the village of Osi. In total, 53 students aged between 12 and 17 participated in the study. The group included boys and girls with different characters, interests, and reading experiences. Some students regularly read, while others read less often — this helped create a more realistic and balanced picture of how fairy tales work in real life.

The students were not selected by any specific academic level or reading skill. They were simply regular schoolchildren who agreed to take part in the questionnaire. This makes the responses more genuine and reflects the views of everyday teenagers — not just those who are especially interested in reading or literature.

The main purpose of the survey was to find out how fairy tales influence the way children think about good and evil, about empathy, honesty, responsibility, and other key values. The research also aimed to see if students feel that fairy tales still matter today, or if they see them as something “old” and no longer useful.

3.2 Research Instruments

The main research tool was a questionnaire prepared for students (see Appendix 1). The form included 16 questions, both closed (multiple choice) and open-ended. The questions were written in both Ukrainian and English, depending on what was more comfortable for the students.

The topics of the questions were directly related to the moral impact of fairy tales. Some asked general opinions — for example, whether fairy tales help people become better, or if they help understand what is good and evil. Other questions asked students to reflect on their own experience — if they remembered fairy tales when facing real problems, if they tried to act like certain characters, or if they saw any use in reading fairy tales at school.

The final part of the questionnaire included questions about what values students had learned from fairy tales — such as honesty, kindness, helping others — and what kind of characters they would like to be if they were inside a fairy tale themselves.

This method was chosen because questionnaires are simple to distribute and allow students to answer freely, without pressure. Of course, like in any questionnaire, there may be some small disadvantages — for example, not all students answer honestly, or some skip questions — but overall, the answers collected were clear and meaningful.

3.3 Procedures of the Research

The research was carried out during the spring semester of 2025. First, I contacted the English teacher at Irshava Lyceum, where I had completed my teaching practice. He agreed to help me share the questionnaire with her students. I also reached out to a teacher I personally know at Vynohradiv Secondary School, and she also agreed to assist. Finally, I shared the form with several students from Osyi School, where I studied myself. Many of them were happy to take part in the research.

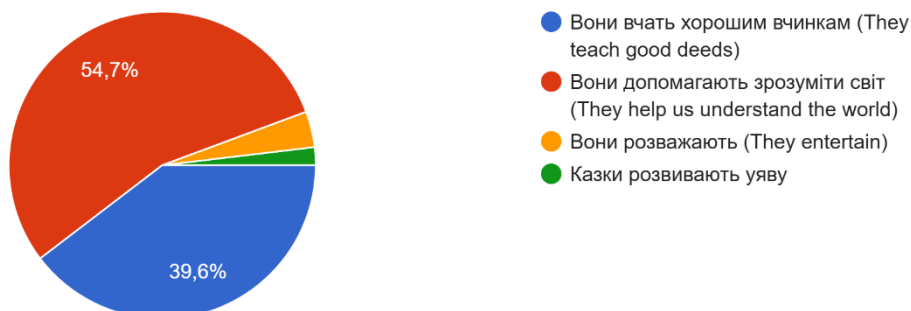
The questionnaire was shared online, using a simple form that students could fill in at home or during their free time at school. All participants answered voluntarily and anonymously. After about two weeks, I had collected a total of 53 completed questionnaires. The next step was to carefully go through the results, summarise the answers, and draw conclusions based on what the students shared.

This whole process — from reaching out to teachers to collecting responses — was both interesting and rewarding. It showed that many students are open to thinking about fairy tales and their meaning, even if they don't talk about them every day.

3.4 Procedures of the Research

Як ви думаєте, чому казки корисні? (Why do you think fairy tales are useful?)

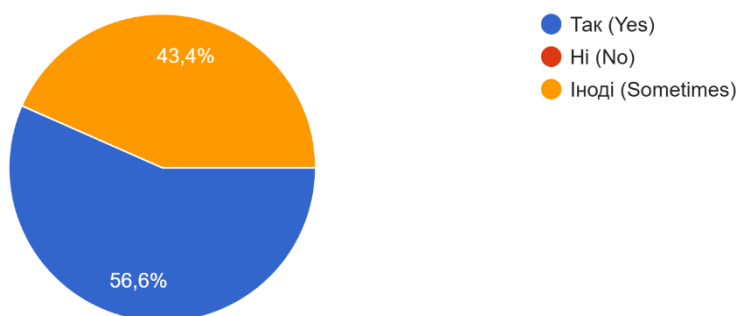
53 ответа



Most students said fairy tales help us understand the world around us. Many also said they teach us how to do good things. Only a few saw them as just entertainment. This shows that students see meaning in fairy tales, not just fun.

Як ви думаєте, чи казки допомагають людям ставати кращими? (Do you think fairy tales help people become better?)

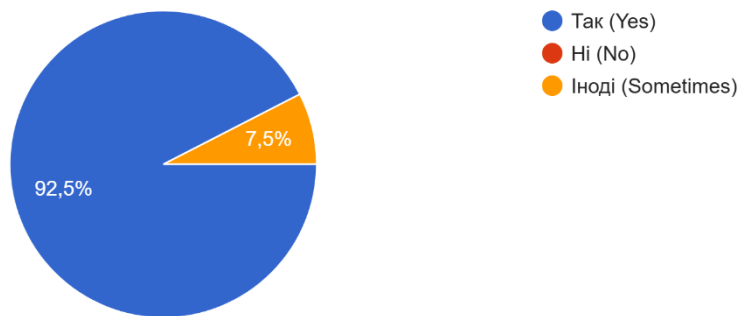
53 ответа



Over half of the students answered “yes”, and the rest said “sometimes”. No one chose “no”, which is a good sign. It means most students believe that fairy tales can make people kinder or more thoughtful, even if not always.

Як ви вважаєте, чи можуть казки допомогти зрозуміти, що таке добро і зло? (Do you think fairy tales can help us understand what good and evil are?)

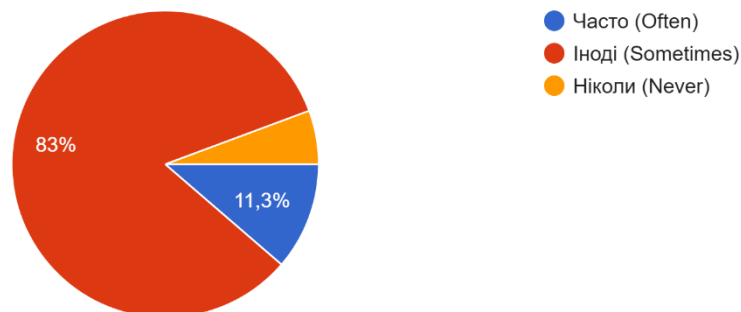
53 ответа



This question had the clearest result. More than 92% answered “yes”. Students clearly feel that fairy tales show what is right and what is wrong — through simple characters and situations that are easy to understand and remember.

Чи можна використовувати те, чого навчають з казки, у реальному житті? (s it possible to apply what you learn from a fairy tale to real life?)

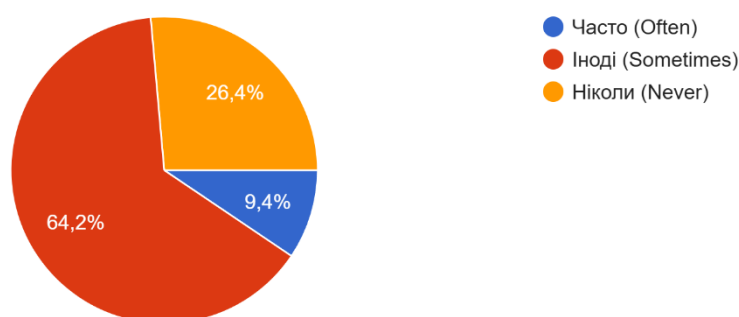
53 ответа



Most students answered “sometimes”. A few said “often”, and very few said “never”. That means fairy tales don’t always tell us what to do, but they leave us with ideas and examples that can help when we face problems.

Чи згадуєте ви моменти з казок, коли стикаєтесь з проблемами в реальному житті? (Do you remember moments from fairy tales when you face problems in real life?)

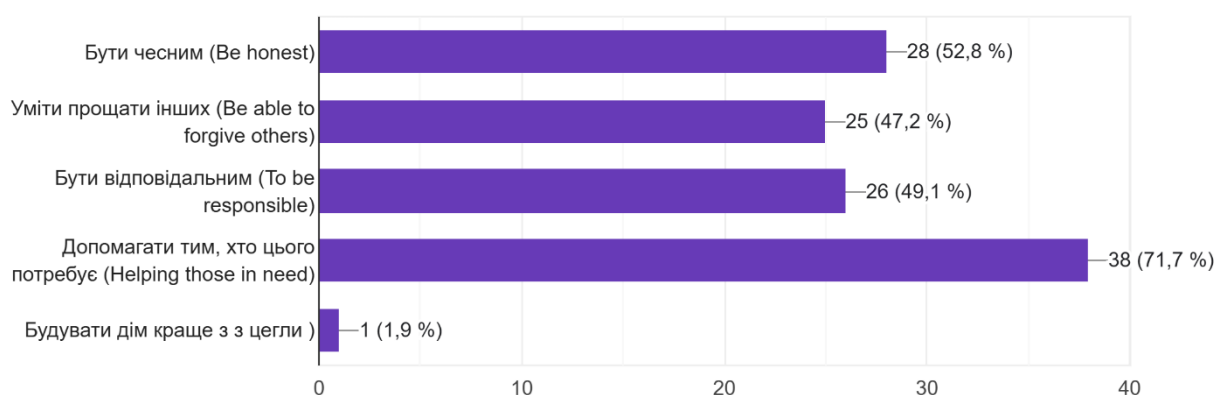
53 ответа



Again, most students said “sometimes”. Some said “often”, and about a quarter said “never”. So even if fairy tales are not in their thoughts every day, they still stay in memory and sometimes come back when needed.

Які корисні уроки ви дізналися з казок? (What useful lessons have you learnt from fairy tales?)

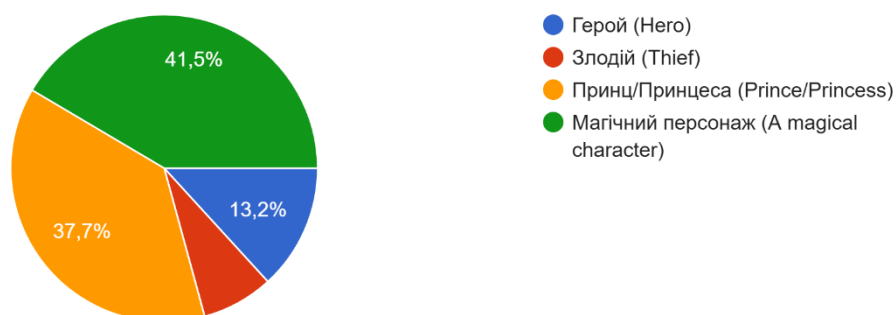
53 ответа



The most popular answer was “helping others”. After that, students wrote “being honest”, “being responsible”, and “forgiving”. These are exactly the kinds of lessons fairy tales usually teach. One student even joked, “build a house out of bricks” — short but meaningful.

Яким казковим персонажем ви б хотіли бути і чому? (What fairy tale character would you like to be and why?)

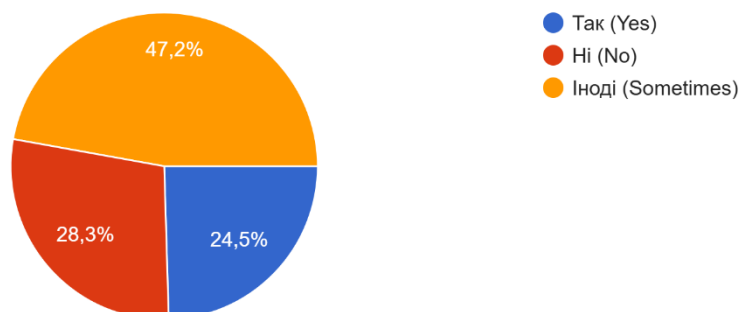
53 ответа



The most popular choice was “a magical character”, then “a prince or princess”. Fewer students wanted to be a hero, and almost no one chose a negative character. This shows that students are drawn to kindness, magic, and positive roles — they want to do good and be special.

Чи наслідуєте ви поведінку головних героїв у казках? (Do you imitate the behaviour of the main characters in fairy tales?)

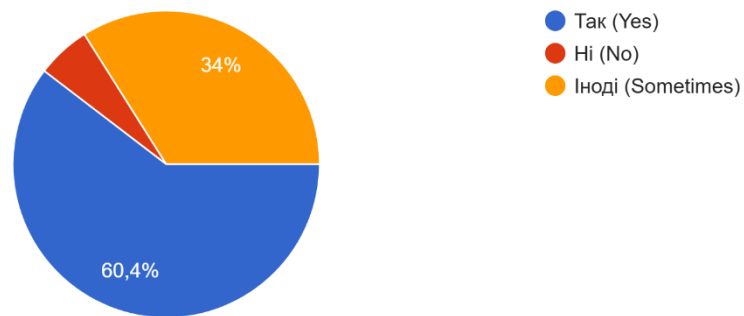
53 ответа



Only about a quarter said “yes”, but almost half said “sometimes”. This means fairy tale characters still have influence, even if students don’t follow them exactly. Some wrote that they tried to act like their favourite character when they were younger.

Чи допомагають казки краще розуміти, що відчують інші люди? (Do fairy tales help us better understand how other people feel?)

53 ответа



Most students said “yes”, and many others said “sometimes”. Fairy tales often show emotions like sadness, fear, or kindness — and students learn how to notice these feelings in real life too. That’s why fairy tales can help with empathy.

Як ви думаєте, чи добре, що казки читають у школі? (Do you think it is good that fairy tales are read at school?)

53 ответа



More than half said it’s “very good”, and many others said “not bad”. Only one person said fairy tales were not needed. So it’s clear: most students are okay with reading fairy tales in school — they don’t see them as childish or boring, but as something meaningful.

3.5 Discussion and Interpretation of the Research Results

The results of this research clearly show that fairy tales still matter. Most students see them not just as stories, but as something that teaches, explains, and makes them feel. They help children understand what is right and wrong, and show how to treat others.

Even though not everyone uses fairy tale lessons every day, many said they remember them when it really matters. The characters stay in their minds. The values — like honesty, kindness, and helping others — are repeated again and again in fairy tales, and students notice that.

It's also important that students think fairy tales are worth reading in school. They don't reject them as "for little kids" — they accept them as something with meaning.

So the conclusion is simple: fairy tales do have a positive influence on children's moral development. The answers from 53 teenagers prove it — they don't just enjoy fairy tales, they learn from them.

CONCLUSION

This thesis was about how fairy tales help children understand important things in life — like what is good or bad, how to treat people, and how to make the right choices. In the first two parts, we explained what fairy tales are, why they matter, and how they support emotional and moral development. We analysed five well-known stories: *The Selfish Giant*, *The Star Child*, and *The Happy Prince* by Oscar Wilde, *The Little Match Girl* by Hans Christian Andersen, and *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* by Beatrix Potter. Each of these stories teaches a simple but strong lesson — about kindness, honesty, responsibility, or change — and does it in a way that is easy for children to understand.

In the third part, we wanted to learn what students really think about fairy tales today. We created a questionnaire and shared it with students from different schools. In total, 53 students filled it out. Their answers showed that most of them still find fairy tales useful and meaningful. Many said these stories helped them understand what is right and wrong, and taught them to be more thoughtful and kind.

The aim of this work was to find out if fairy tales still help with moral development and if students see value in them. Based on the results of the research and the students' answers, we believe the goal was achieved. Students remembered the lessons from fairy tales and gave clear examples of how those lessons affected their thinking or behaviour.

Our hypothesis was that fairy tales have a positive effect on children's moral understanding. The results confirmed this. Many students mentioned that fairy tales helped them understand people better and encouraged them to do the right thing in different situations.

The research also showed that students don't see fairy tales as something old or boring. They still enjoy reading them and see them as helpful. To put it simply: fairy tales still work. They are clear, emotional, and easy to connect with.

This thesis has reached its goal, and the hypothesis was proven to be true.

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РЕЗЮМЕ

Темою бакалаврської роботи було дослідження того, як казки допомагають дітям зрозуміти важливі речі в житті — що є добрим, а що поганим, як варто поводитися з іншими, як приймати правильні рішення. У перших двох розділах розглянуто поняття казки, її значення, а також роль у формуванні емоційного та морального розвитку дитини. Було проаналізовано п'ять відомих творів: «Себелюбний велетень», «Зоряна дитина» та «Щасливий принц» Оскара Вайлда, «Дівчинка із сірниками» Ганса Крістіана Андерсена та «Історія про кролика Пітера» Беатрікс Поттер. Кожна з цих казок містить простий, але вагомий урок — про доброту, чесність, відповідальність або зміни — і подає його в доступній для дітей формі.

У третьому розділі було проведено дослідження з метою з'ясувати, як сучасні школярі сприймають казки. Було розроблено анкету, яку заповнили 53 учні з різних шкіл. Результати показали, що більшість респондентів вважають казки актуальними й змістовними. Багато хто зазначив, що саме через ці історії їм було легше зрозуміти різницю між добром і злом, а також навчитися співпереживанню та чуйності.

Метою роботи було з'ясувати, чи сприяють казки моральному розвитку дітей сьогодні і чи бачать учні в них цінність. Отримані результати та відповіді учнів підтверджують, що мети досягнуто. Школярі не лише пам'ятають уроки з прочитаних казок, а й наводять приклади того, як ці уроки вплинули на їхню поведінку чи ставлення до інших.

Гіпотезу про те, що казки мають позитивний вплив на моральне формування особистості, було підтверджено. Учні зазначили, що саме завдяки казкам краще розуміють інших людей і намагаються чинити правильно в різних життєвих ситуаціях.

Дослідження також виявило, що учні не сприймають казки як застарілий або неактуальний жанр. Їм і досі цікаво їх читати, а також вони визнають їхню практичну цінність. Простими словами: казки працюють. Вони зрозумілі, емоційно насичені та викликають відгук у молодій аудиторії.

Бакалаврська робота досягла поставленої мети, а гіпотеза була підтверджена.

APPENDIX 1

Привіт!

Мене звати Вікторія, я студентка і зараз працюю над дипломною роботою. Моя тема — як казки впливають на те, як діти розуміють добро, зло, справедливість та інші важливі речі.

Це анкета для дітей шкільного віку. Але якщо ви вже дорослий і пам'ятаєте, якими були ваші враження від казок у шкільному віці — також можете поділитися своїми спогадами.

Я дуже хочу дізнатися вашу думку! Це опитування допоможе мені краще зрозуміти, що дитина відчуває і думає, коли слухає або читає казки.

Тут немає правильних чи неправильних відповідей — просто поділіться своїми думками.

Дякую за допомогу!

1. Який ваш вік? (What is your age?)

2. В якому класі ви навчаєтесь? (What grade are you in?)

3. Як часто ви читаєте книжки? (How often do you read books?)

- a) Щодня (Every day)
- b) Кілька разів на тиждень (A few times a week)
- c) Рідко (Rarely)
- d) Майже ніколи (Almost never)

4. Які жанри книжок вам цікаві? (What book genres do you find interesting?)

- a) Казки (Fairy tales)
- b) Пригодницькі (Adventure)
- c) Фантастика (Fantasy)
- d) Романтика (Romance)
- e) Інші (Others)

5. Які казки ви знаєте або любите? (Which fairy tales do you know or love?)

6. Як ви думаєте, чому казки корисні? (Why do you think fairy tales are usefull?)

- a) Вони вчать хорошим вчинкам (They teach good actions)
 - b) Вони допомагають зрозуміти світ (They help understand the world)
 - c) Вони розважають (They entertain)
 - d) Інші причини (Other reasons)
7. Як ви думаєте, чи казки допомагають людям ставати кращими?
- a) Так (Yes)
 - b) Ні (No)
 - c) Іноді (Sometimes)
8. Чи можна використовувати те, чого навчають з казки, у реальному житті? (Do you think you can apply the lessons from fairy tales to real life?)
- a) Часто (Yes)
 - b) Ніколи (No)
 - c) Іноді (Sometimes)
9. Як ви вважаєте, чи можуть казки допомогти зрозуміти, що таке добро і зло? (Do you think fairy tales can help understand what is good and evil?)
- a) Так (Yes)
 - b) Ні (No)
 - c) Іноді (Sometimes)
10. Чи згадуєте ви моменти з казок, коли стикаєтесь з проблемами в реальному житті? (Do you remember the lessons from fairy tales when facing problems in real life?)
- a) Часто (Yes, often)
 - b) Іноді (Sometimes)
 - c) Ніколи (Never)
11. Які корисні уроки ви дізналися з казок? (What useful lessons have you learnt from fairy tales?)
- a) Бути чесним (Be honest)
 - b) Уміти прощати інших (Be able to forgive others)
 - c) Бути відповідальним (To be responsible)
 - d) Допомогати тим, хто цього потребує
 - e) Інше (Other)
12. Яким казковим персонажем ви б хотіли бути і чому? (Which fairy tale characters would you like to be and why?)
- a) Герой (Hero)
 - b) Злодій (Thief)
 - c) Принц/Принцеса (Princess)
 - d) Магічний персонаж (A magical character)
 - e) Інші (Other)
13. Чи наслідуйте ви поведінку головних героїв у казках? (Do you think it is important for fairy tales to teach children how to behave well with others?)

- a) Так (Yes)
- b) Ні (No)
- c) Іноді (Sometimes)

14. Чи допомагають казки краще розуміти, що відчують інші люди?

- a) Так (Yes)
- b) Ні (No)
- c) Іноді (Sometimes)

15. Як ви думаєте, чи добре, що казки читають у школі?(Do you think it is good that fairy tales are read at school?)

- a) Дуже добре (Very well)
- b) Непогано (Not bad)
- c) Мені не дуже це подобається (I don't really like)
- d) Це зовсім не потрібно (It's not a good idea at all)

16. Згадай якусь казку, яка навчила вас бути чесним, добрим або допомагати іншим. Що саме ви з неї запам'ятали? (Think of a fairy tale that taught you to be honest, kind or to help others. What do you remember from it?)

Звіт подібності

метадані

Назва організації
Hungarian College of Higher Education Ferenc Rakoczi II Transcarpathian
Заголовок
BACHELOR'S THESIS Olásin Viktoria
Науковий керівник / Експерт
Автор **Еніке Надь-Коложварі**
Підрозділ
Закарпатський угорський інститут імені Ференца Ракоці II

Обсяг знайдених подібностей

Коефіцієнт подібності визначає, який відсоток тексту по відношенню до загального обсягу тексту було знайдено в різних джерелах. Зверніть увагу, що високі значення коефіцієнта не автоматично означають плагіат. Звіт має аналізувати компетентна / уповноважена особа.



25
Довжина фрази для коефіцієнта подібності 2



13479
Кількість слів

83364
Кількість символів

Тривога

У цьому розділі ви знайдете інформацію щодо текстових спотворень. Ці спотворення в тексті можуть говорити про МОЖЛИВІ маніпуляції в тексті. Спотворення в тексті можуть мати навмисний характер, але частіше характер технічних помилок при конвертації документа та його збереженні, тому ми рекомендуємо вам підходити до аналізу цього модуля відповідально. У разі виникнення запитань, просимо звертатися до нашої служби підтримки.

Заміна букв		0
Інтервали		0
Мікропробіли		0
Білі знаки		0
Парафрази (SmartMarks)		13

Подібності за списком джерел

Нижче наведений список джерел. В цьому списку є джерела із різних баз даних. Копію тексту означає в якому джерелі він був знайдений. Ці джерела і значення Коефіцієнту Подібності не відображають прямого плагіату. Необхідно відкрити кожне джерело і проаналізувати зміст і правильність оформлення джерела.

10 найдовших фраз

Копію тексту

ПОРЯДКОВИЙ НОМЕР	НАЗВА ТА АДРЕСА ДЖЕРЕЛА URL (НАЗВА БАЗИ)	КІЛЬКІСТЬ ІДЕНТИЧНИХ СЛІВ (ФРАГМЕНТІВ)
1	https://americanliterature.com/fairy-tales-guide/	16 0.12 %
2	http://pigs.greyfalcon.us/red.htm	11 0.08 %
3	https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Snow-White_and_Rose-Red	11 0.08 %
4	http://www.encyclopedia.com/children/academic-and-educational-journals/charles-perrault	10 0.07 %
5	https://www.wisecronecottage.com/2021/01/the-little-match-girl-andersens-new.html	8 0.06 %