

LESSON 6: VARIANTS

MATERIALS:

- Thumbtacks or Post-it tabs
- World Map for classroom wall (can be projected)
- Read aloud: *Ashpet* and *Cinderella* (Grimm) (teacher copies)
- Video: *Smoky Mountain Rose*:
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s-MfTcahH-w> (or)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lrOH9yzpTyU>
- Jane Yolen Thumbprints of History Quote (teacher copy for display)
- Folklorist Journals
- Cinderella in Other Languages (teacher copy for display)
- Can You Guess the Country? (one copy per student and teacher key)
- Word Wall card (variant)

OBJECTIVES:



One folktale can be found all over the world in many different cultures.

Variants are different versions of one folktale that are recorded by different people and/or in different countries.

Students will be able to:

- read a wide range of literature to build an understanding of human experience.
- apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts.
- apply knowledge of language structures, language conventions, and genres to create, critique, and discuss print and non-print texts.
- develop an understanding of and respect for diversity in language use, patterns, and dialects across cultures, ethnic groups, geographic regions, and social roles.

Cultural Sensitivity:

Please remind students that certain things that could not be explained scientifically were sometimes explained incorrectly in myths, fairytales, and fables (i.e., A story might give an explanation for why the possum has a bare tail, but it may not be the actual reason).



Key Terms:

- variant

Suggested Story Vocabulary:

- mare
- toadstool
- thicket

SEQUENCE	TEACHER NOTES
<p>READ-ALOUD: <i>Ashpet</i> (Fairytale)</p> <div data-bbox="259 300 446 499" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;">  <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">CLASS</p> </div> <p>Invite students to find a comfortable place for listening. Tell the students that you are going to read them a variation of the Cinderella fairytale that will probably sound familiar to them, even if they are unfamiliar with the name: <i>Ashpet</i>. Allow students to share what version of a tale that they are already familiar with (i.e., the Disney version), and record the different versions on the board, making a checkmark beside the versions that are mentioned more than once.</p> <p>Read <i>Ashpet</i> aloud.</p> <p>Explain to the students that even though they may be familiar with one version of this fairytale, today they will be exploring how a single story can be told many different ways, depending on who is telling the story and where the story comes from. Folklorists call different versions of a story variants. <i>Ashpet</i> is an Appalachian folktale variant of <i>Cinderella</i>.</p> <p>Encourage students to pay close attention to the similarities and differences they hear in the next version of the same story, and to think about ways this version is similar to <i>Ashpet</i>.</p> <p>Read <i>Cinderella</i> (the Grimm version) aloud.</p> <p>Afterwards, pause and allow students to turn to the person next to them to discuss how this version of <i>Cinderella</i> is different than the story of <i>Ashpet</i>. After giving students time to discuss, draw a Venn diagram on the board and compare the <i>Ashpet</i> version to the Grimm version of <i>Cinderella</i>.</p> <p>As time allows, or perhaps in a follow-up session, share one of these videos of a teacher reading <i>Smoky Mountain Rose</i> by Allen Schroeder (your choice):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s-MfTcahH-w • https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lrOH9yzpTyU <p>This picture book is another version of Cinderella set in Appalachia, and the readers in both videos emphasize that they will be using Appalachian dialect.</p>	<div data-bbox="1055 241 1218 409" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">PLACE</p>  </div> <p>Appalachia is a part of the Eastern United States, stretching from New York to Alabama, Mississippi, and Georgia. It includes parts of Tennessee, North Carolina, Virginia, Kentucky, Ohio, West Virginia, and Pennsylvania. Students may not realize that their community is part of Appalachia. You can show them the website for the Appalachian Regional Commission, which lists counties in each state that it considers part of Appalachia, but be sure to explain that some places may consider themselves Appalachian even if they are not on this “official” list.</p> <p>https://www.arc.gov/appalachian-counties-served-by-arc/</p> <p>If your students live in or near Appalachia, talk about characteristics associated with Appalachian culture.</p> <div data-bbox="1063 1260 1209 1417" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 20px;">  <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">TIP</p> </div> <p>In this version of <i>Cinderella</i>, the stepmother makes Cinderella pick lentils out of the fireplace to prevent her from going to the ball. Your students might not be familiar with lentils, so please be sure to explain what they are (or, if possible, bring in a bag of dried lentils to show them).</p>

JOURNAL RESPONSE: Abstract/Complex Cognition

Display the following quote from Jane Yolen. Read the first part of the quote aloud, and cover the second half of the quote. It will be read later in the lesson.

“Folktales from the oral tradition carry the thumbprints of history.” (Yolen, p. 5)



Ask students to think about the discussion of culture in the previous lesson. History is a part of culture, and folklore is an oral tradition, which means stories are traditionally told orally, instead of being written down. Ask students: *What do you think this quote means? What does it mean*

to “carry the thumbprints of history?” Allow them to respond to this question in their Folklorist Journals.

After writing for five minutes, student should share their ideas, either whole group or with a partner. Teachers should take anecdotal notes about student responses, listening for complexity of student thought.

Reiterate that folklore varies based on the culture, location, and time in history in which it is told. Therefore, folktales leave their mark, giving the listener insight into the culture and point in history in which it was shared, just like a person leaves their thumbprints on things they touch.

All Jane Yolen quotes come from the introduction to *Favorite Folktales from Around the Worlds* (1986), an anthology she edited.



Responses to this prompt give teachers insight into students’ depth of thought. Sometimes challenging or open-ended journal prompts will alert teachers to deep thinkers who perhaps don’t speak up often in class.

ACTIVITY: Folktales are Universal

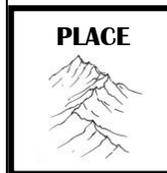
Have a world map displayed (either a poster or a projection). Then, show students the two excerpts from *Cinderella* written in other languages. Ask if any student can recognize the language and/or read the language. Looking at the title, ask if they can guess which country the tale is from (i.e., *Cendrillon* is French and *Aschenputtel* is German).



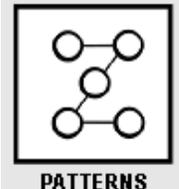
Explain that folktales originate all over the world. Ask if anyone can locate the country where that language is spoken on the world map. Provide a thumbtack, tape, or Post-it tab to that student, who will mark the location of the tale. Do this for all of the folktale excerpts (i.e., ask the students to



If a student can read the language, invite them to read the tales.



Are there variants of the *Cinderella* story in your community? What other versions of *Cinderella* exist around the

<p>put tab on Appalachia or the Eastern U.S. for <i>Ashpet</i>, France for <i>Cendrillon</i>, and Germany for <i>Aschenputtel</i>).</p> <p>Remind students that finding a country on the map and knowing the language spoken there are examples of objective culture, or culture that can be seen. Ask: <i>What does the Cinderella story teach us about subjective culture in the variants told from different countries?</i></p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: flex-start;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>PATTERNS</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>PLACE</p> </div> </div> <p>Encourage students to think about the culture of their own town, and the traditions, customs, and beliefs expressed there. If they were to write a variant of the <i>Cinderella</i> story, how would their story be different than the Grimm version? Ask: <i>What would your own version tell the reader about your subjective culture? How could this version of Cinderella carry the “thumbprint” of your culture or town’s history?</i> Encourage a whole-class discussion.</p>	<p>world (i.e., <i>Yeh-Shen</i> is the version from China, <i>The Orphan</i> is the version from Greece, etc.) What do these different versions tell you about the place in which they originate?</p> <p>If your school or local library has a copy, you might consider sharing the picture book of <i>Cinderella</i> written by Cynthia Rylant, an author from Appalachia. The illustrations are beautiful!</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>TIP</p> </div>
<p>ACTIVITY: Can You Guess the Country?</p> <p>Divide the class into heterogeneous groups either according to student interest based on the titles of the tales, or into homogenous groups according to student reading level (which can be determined by the teacher’s personal reading assessments). If grouping according to reading level, cut the tales on the dotted lines so that they are in strips, and give lower-level readers the first tales, and higher-level readers the later tales (tales increase in difficulty).</p> <p>Distribute <u>Can You Guess the Country?</u> Explain that these are several versions or variants of <i>Cinderella</i> (like <i>Ashpet</i>), and sometimes the same folktale, like <i>Cinderella</i>, can appear in different countries but with slight differences. They are variations of one story, or as folklorists call them, variants. Add this word to the <u>Word Wall</u>.</p>	<div style="text-align: center;">  <p>READINESS</p> </div> <p>The tales on the page get progressively longer and more difficult. Either create homogeneous groups and assign students in that group the appropriate passage to read based on their readiness level, or create heterogeneous groups of mixed abilities and ask students to start at the top of the sheet and see how far they can go.</p>
<p>WORD WORK: Word Roots/Suffixes</p> <p>Explain to students that just like many stories we enjoy today originate from other countries and cultures, words commonly used in English originate from other languages.</p>	<div style="text-align: center;">  <p>WORD STUDY</p> </div> <p>If students wonder what kindergarten means, ask</p>



Tell the students that Grimms' first collection of folktales was called *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (*Children's and Household Tales*). Write the title in German on the board. Ask the students: *Do you see a familiar word? What are these words similar to?* (Possible responses: *kinder* – kindergarten, *haus* – house)

Ask students to write the word “vary” on their personal word wall, and explain that the word means, “to alter or change something.”

Explain that many words originate from older languages like Latin. Some words that originate from Latin sound the same in many modern languages. For example:

Vary (English)
Variar (French)
Variar (Spanish)

Ask students to think about these three words and how they are similar and different (Possible responses: they all begin with “var-” but their endings are different).

Then, write the word **variant** on the board. Encourage students to examine the word and think about the base word (**vary**) and the suffix (“-ant”). Point out to the students that they already know the definition of vary, and remind them that the suffix “-ant” means “the state of.”

Based on this information, ask the students to write a simple definition for what the word **variant** might mean. Once every student has written a definition, do a quick check by having students share their responses.

Synthesize their responses by discussing the literal definition based on the word parts (“the state of altering or changing something”), and allow for students to share pieces of their own definitions to create a single definition as a class. The final definition should include the fact that **variants** differ only slightly from something else.

Write the word **vary** and **variant** and draw a line before “-ant.” Have the students pronounce the word with you.

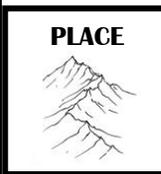
what “garten” looks like (garden). Ask what “kinder” looks like (kid or children).

Kindergarten: Coined in 1840 by a German referring to his method of developing intelligence in young children, brought to the U.S. by a German Catholic priest. Taken into English untranslated. (*Online Etymology Dictionary*, <http://dictionary.reference.com>)

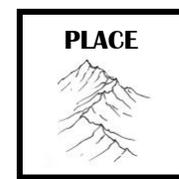
“-ant”: “a suffix forming adjectives and nouns from verbs, occurring originally in French and Latin loanwords (pleasant; constant; servant)”

“-ant’ can be added only to bases of Latin origin, with very few exceptions, as coolant.”

It is easier to understand the effect prefixes (“un-”/“re-”/“in-”/“dis-”) have on words than suffixes, where the meanings are more abstract (i.e., “the state of”).



Ask students to think of words that are commonly used around them everyday (i.e., pollutant in natural settings, repellant for nature walks, vigilant when hunting or fishing, unrepentant in religious context, etc.) that end in the “-ant” or “-ent” suffixes and add them to their word list. Encourage them to think about the parts of the word to see if the base word and

<p>Display words that end in “-ant” or “-ent.” Have students copy words and draw a line before the suffix (“-ent”/“-ant”). Encourage them to try to identify the base word and to infer the meaning based on the base word and suffix combination.</p> <p>pleasant accident peasant different merchant innocent servant intelligent elegant absent significant constant</p>	<p>suffix match their personal understanding of that word.</p>
<p>CLOSE: Journal Writing</p> <div data-bbox="243 724 422 924">  </div> <p>Display the second half of Jane Yolen’s quote:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“Each place, each culture, each teller leaves a mark.”</i></p> <p>In their <u>Folklorist Journals</u>, ask students to consider ways that a story can leave its “mark,” giving the listeners a look into the teller’s culture. Encourage students to carry on the oral tradition and make their own mark on <i>Cinderella</i> by scripting out their own variant of the tale, focusing on the culture, traditions, and history of their town.</p> <div data-bbox="243 1060 422 1239">  </div>	