

LESSON 13: RETELLERS

MATERIALS

- Read aloud: *Molly and Blunderbore* and *The Golden Goose* (copies for each student)
- Word Wall card (**influential**)
- Colored pencils or crayons
- Folklorist Journals

OBJECTIVES:



Folktales change when they are written down.

Retellers change folktales from the original source—sometimes slightly, sometimes dramatically.

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.



Key Terms:

- influential

Suggested Story Vocabulary:

- commenced
- flask
- urgent
- heartily
- holler (of a log)
- peeved

SEQUENCE

READ ALOUD: *Molly and Blunderbore* (Folktale)



Invite students to find a comfortable place for listening. Encourage students to listen closely to *Molly and Blunderbore* and to think about how the story begins, the characters, the order of events, the conflict, and the resolution.

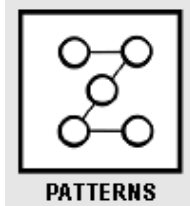
Read *Molly and Blunderbore*.

TEACHER NOTES

Explain how this story is shared from a recently-written book based on familiar Appalachian folktales, *The Adventures of Molly Whuppie and Other Appalachian Folktales* (a great book you might consider asking your school librarian to include in their collection!). Molly Whuppie was a character featured in Scottish tales that were carried over when Europeans immigrated to Appalachia generations ago.

WHOLE GROUP: *Molly and Blunderbore* (Folktale) and *The Golden Goose* (Fairytale)

Explain to the students they are starting to compare fairytales that are deliberately changed from the traditional tale. Explain that the Blunderbore story is not exactly a version of the Brothers Grimm fairytale, *The Golden Goose*, but that the general plot of the story occurs in lots of fairytales/folktales.



Read *The Golden Goose* (Grimm).

Display a Venn diagram to compare/contrast the *Molly Whuppie* story with *The Golden Goose*. Encourage students to share the differences and similarities that they noticed between the two stories and record them for the class.

After comparing the two tales, ask the students to look at the Venn diagram and consider: *What are some reasons collectors may have for altering the original tale? How can stories change as they transition from oral stories to stories that are written down? Who is the intended audience for each story? Have you ever changed a story based on whom you were telling it to?*

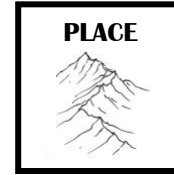
DIFFERENTIATION: Story Diagramming

Using Formative Assessment 3 (Lesson 11), place students into two groups: lower-level readers and higher-level readers.



Distribute copies of *Molly and Blunderbore* to about half of the students and *The Golden Goose* to the other half. You can assign stories at random, let students choose, or make decisions based on students' reading strength (*Molly and Blunderbore* is longer and contains regional dialect, so it may be more challenging).

Ask students to read their chosen or assigned story and mark the beginning of the story, the sequence of events, and the



Ask students to think about something exciting that happened to them where they live (i.e., the student went on a field trip, went to the fair, won a contest, etc.). How would they tell that story differently if they were retelling it to someone inside of the community versus an outsider to the community? Are there certain aspects of the story that insiders would understand more easily than outsiders? Would students feel the need to adapt parts of the story in order for it to be more accessible to a wider audience? How would this affect the overall feel of the story? Would it lose some of its value?

ending. Once the students have determined where the story parts begin and end, students should underline those parts using different colored pencils or crayons to denote the different story parts (i.e., the beginning section can be underlined in red, the first event can be underlined in orange, the second can be underlined in yellow...the ending can be underlined in purple). They don't need to underline each and every event; the goal is to identify the major plot points.

Once all students have diagrammed their story, ask each student to find another student with a different story version (i.e., a student with *Molly and Blunderbore* should find a student with *The Golden Goose* and vice versa).

Ask students to briefly present on their story version to their partner, and then have the students compare their story parts side-by-side to visualize how different the stories are (i.e., both students should share what happened in the beginning section of their story, then they should each share their first event, their second event...and their ending).

Once students have compared the parts of their different versions, ask them to make side-by-side comparisons: *What is similar? Different?* Students should record their ideas in their Folklorist Journals using words or tables for comparison.

DIRECT INSTRUCTION: Retelling

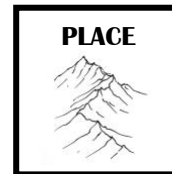


Ask students the following questions about the tales they read. Students with different versions will have different answers:

- *Who are the protagonists?* (Molly and Dummerly)
- *What are some ways that these stories reminded you of other stories you know?*

Read the following quote from Jane Yolen aloud:

“Occasionally, of course, a particular transcriber is so able, so, effective, so inventive, that the story itself is



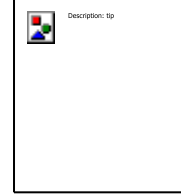
Encourage students to think of oral stories that may have been told where they live for many generations. Do you think it is important for these stories to be written down so that outsiders can access them too? Would translating the oral story into written language detract from the story's relevance and status in the community? What are the dangers of translating an oral story to written form? How would you feel if the story was embellished and reinvented by the translator?

changed forever.”

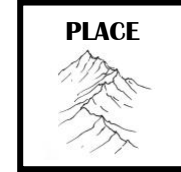
Tell students that the first reteller to make his versions popular was Charles Perrault, who was the Disney of the 1800s. Before, stories had only been told orally, but he decided to write them down. However, when he translated the stories, he also embellished them. His version of *Cinderella* is considered the “normal” type now. A translation error changed a gold slipper to a glass slipper; Perrault added the fairy godmother and the plump mice. Perrault also added the famous red hood to Little Red. Therefore, his inventive embellishments changed the traditional stories forever.

Explain that Walt Disney is probably the most modern **influential** reteller because his versions are the ones most people are familiar with. Add the word **influential** to the Word Wall.

Ask the students to reflect on the stories read today: *Do the embellishments, alterations, and inventions used in Molly and Blunderbore make the story better? Are there any dangers to deliberately changing a traditional story?*



Grimm and Lang also changed tales for their child audiences. Perrault and Lang thought tales should have a moral.



Encourage students to speak with someone where they live who can orally share a story. Encourage the students to attempt transcribing the story and then to reflect on the process: Is the story more powerful in its oral or written form? Did they feel the need to “fix” parts of the story in order to aid understanding or to make it more interesting?

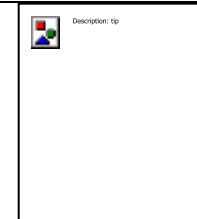
CLOSE/JOURNAL PROMPT: Story Adaptations



Ask students to write an entry in their Folklorist Journals that reflects on how the Grimm’s version of *The Golden Goose* differs from *Molly and Blunderbore* (not so much in terms of the plot points, which are different, but in the language used, descriptions, etc.).

Do they think the decisions made by Anne Shelby helped make her story better, or do they think the newer, inventive version detracts from the folktale?

Students should leave their journals on their desk so that the teacher can read their entries and leave feedback. The teacher can also take notes/informally assess student progress.



If students experience difficulty comparing the two stories on their own, encourage students to use a Venn Diagram as a pre-writing activity to organize their thoughts.