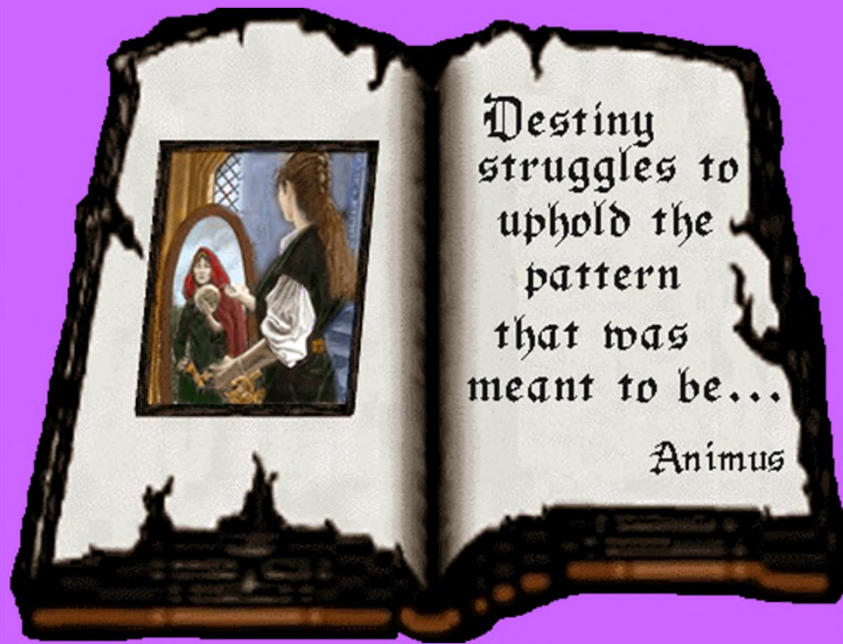


‘The Oldest Stories in the Book’



Why have we told each other tales ever since we could speak? What if there are no new stories; only exciting ways of telling old ones?

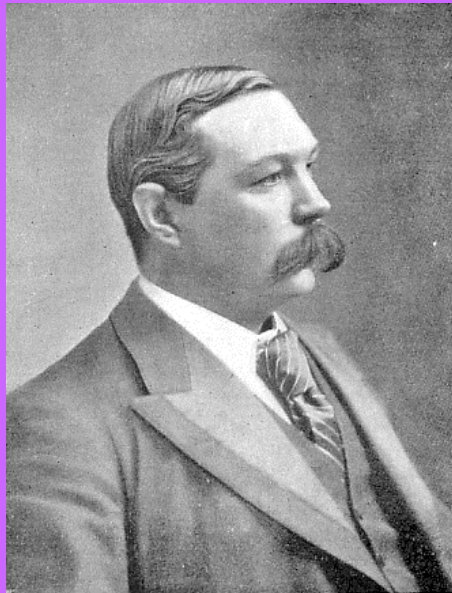
How can we use timeless plots and ancient characters to create original fiction and poetry today?



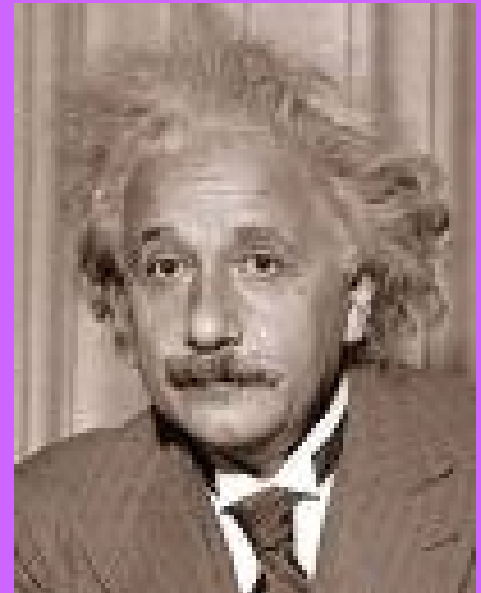
Fairy tale inductions:
don't cross the bridge, don't bite the apple,
don't talk to the wolf.

Fairy tale instructions;
Let down your hair, chop down the beanstalk,
leave the ball before midnight.



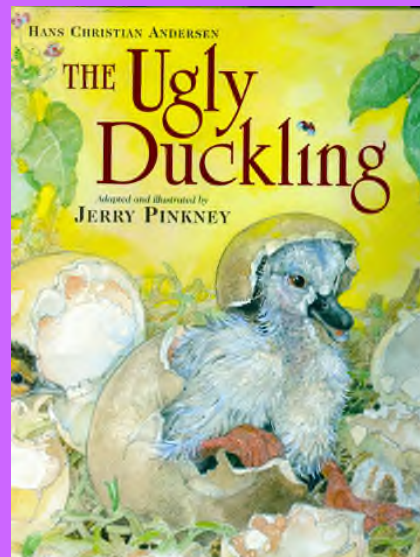


They both believed in fairies:
Conan Doyle literally,
Einstein metaphysically.

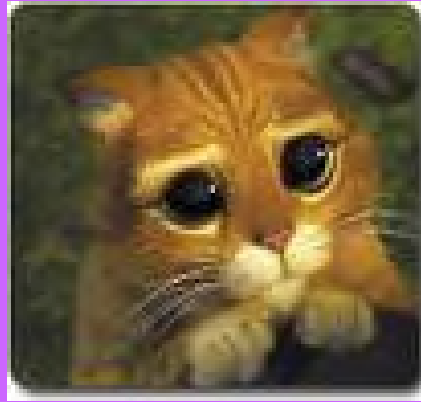




The Grimm brothers gave good tale, but they'd ripped off and sometimes cleaned up dirtier and darker tales from old times.



H. C. Andersen did that too, but he also invented new fairy tales like The Ugly Duckling which was said to be his 'gay autobiography.'



To be fashionable in the sun king's Paris you had to tell fairy tales. Charles Perrault, scholar and poet, made them funky, in 1697.



He published the first versions of Sleeping Beauty, Little Red Riding Hood, Bluebeard, Puss in Boots, Cinderella and Tom Thumb, though he didn't make them up...



They were first told by ‘Mother Goose’ representing the nannies and nursemaids, matrons and midwives, to keep children safe.



Without being able to read and write, they had to make the message clear: don't go into the woods!





This is what a female fairy tale teller really looked like.

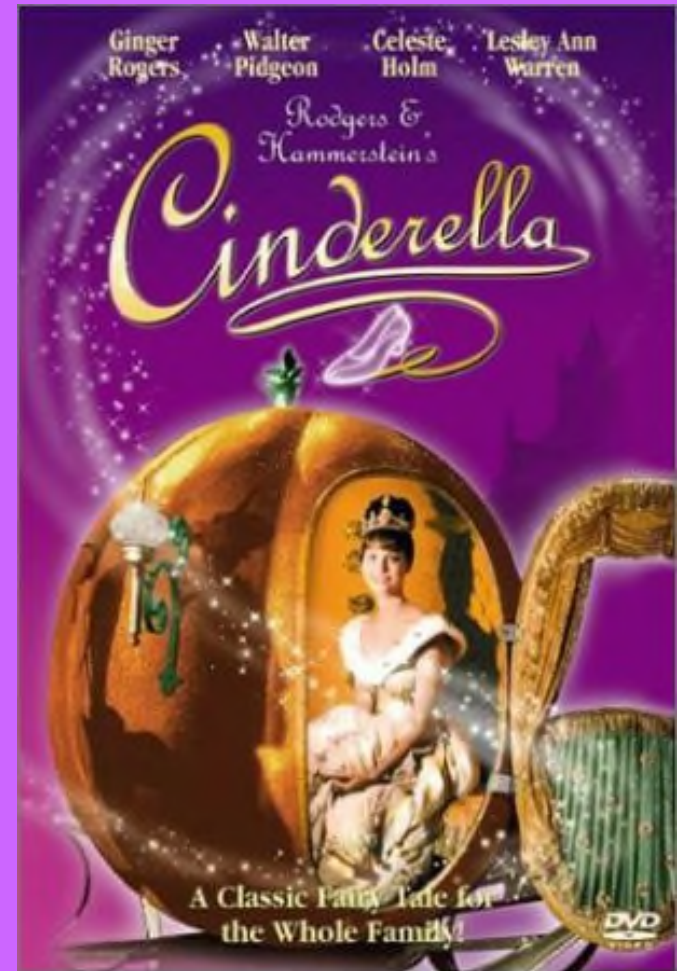
Once upon a time, Marie-Jeanne L'Heritier de Villandon entertained the salons of 17th Century Paris, instead of the TV.





Fairy tales are fertility objects :
(see the magic/organic fluid
calling the heroine to reproduce.)

‘Once upon a time’ could happen now
and the kingdom far away could be here,
so it’s a good start for storytelling,
even today.





Though the tales are told to warn children of the world's dangers, they feature images of grim child abuse.



So we may need a psychoanalyst! Jung understood the human psyche through stories and saw archetypes as the DNA of the soul. He said every hero has a shadow, the dark side, which he represses.



The Shadow

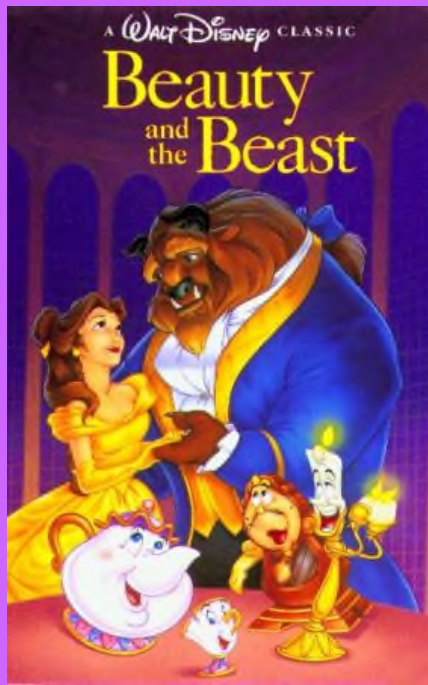


The Hero



Anima/Animus

You don't have to be white, young, attractive, heterosexual, etc. to live happily ever after. Jung thought we all have an inner prince and princess, (split, perhaps, like the male and female halves of the mind) who must become one, whole, for the happy ending...



If we trace the timeline of Beauty and the Beast back as far as it goes, we come to the fairytale's parents: Cupid and Psyche from Greek myth.



The Monkey Son-in-Law, The Lizard Husband, Bull-of-all-the-Land: the prototype plot spread across countries and continents.



See Marina Warner – From The Beast To The Blonde!



Disney told a nice version of the
Sleeping Beauty story:
the original version is nasty!

There's no spindle:
the (already married)
handsome prince rapes
the unconscious beauty
who's pricked her finger
in the woods.

He leaves her asleep till
a baby is born, and suckles
the splinter out...





Erato says: try these Creative Writing tasks at home.

If you were a fairy tale character, who would you be, and why?

Tell a story to teach somebody you know in real life a lesson!

Transform a princess into a pumpkin, an ugly sister into a slipper or dwarf into a stone.

Pick three things that never happen in fairy tales and write a new plot to bend or break those golden rules...