

Dear Parents, Guardians and Carers

We are passionate about using traditional fairy and folk tales in our magazines. They are tales that have been passed down through ages of storytelling, and we believe that they contain important messages about our past, that can also tell us something about our present and maybe even our future. However, we also know that through the ages, the people telling the tales have adapted, improved, extended, or edited to suit their own times and circumstances. This is something that we hope can continue, even in an age where oral storytelling has disappeared.



When we select our stories, we look at the content carefully and we often have long discussions about what to keep, what to adapt and what to discard. If a tale has been adapted, we make sure to state that under the title of the story. If it has not, we simply credit the author - or origin - of the story, if known. If we have made a significant change, such as to the gender of the protagonists, we will also make this clear in a short explanation before the story begins. We would encourage parents, guardians, and carers to read our stories too, and to always feel free to edit and adapt them in whatever way they see fit.

Many traditional stories have traditional gender roles and relationships. We encourage you to flip these roles or change the nature of these relationships if this is important to you or your child. You might wish to keep the story in its original form and ask questions afterwards. Or you might just want to read the story, let it sink in for a day or two and see what kind of questions come out of it. Many fairy and folk tales share a particular feature: there is a sense of resolve or harmony at the end of the story. We believe that in a world that is often chaotic, competitive, and full of disharmony, keeping this element to stories is an important way of helping to nourish a creative life in a child that is full of goodness and beauty.



When we were preparing Issue 13: Younglings, we discussed the inclusion of *The Ugly Duckling* by Hans Christian Andersen. Our discussion centred around the idea of 'ugliness' and the rejection of the duckling for this reason. We considered whether the sub characters in the story set a bad example through their judgement of the duckling's supposed 'ugliness'. However, we felt that the central moral of the tale is the opposite: no one should be judged on looks alone, and the true nature of something isn't necessarily visible to others. We also felt that it was a good example of a transformation or metamorphosis story, one that would provide a good starting point for examining other surprising animal metamorphoses in nature, from youngling to adult.

It is up to you if you want to bring these questions to the children you care for. You know them best!
Happy reading!

And thank you for supporting our magazine,

The A Year and a Day Team