

Good fairy tales vs. film in teaching lessons and communicating messages to child...

[Life](#), [Love](#)



English

Thesis Statement and Introduction

Has it ever occurred to you that children love reading comics and watching fairy tale movies more than reading story books? Ask them what they've understood from a fairy tale that was screened on TV recently and they'll keep talking about it till you fall dead. On the contrary, ask them to read a story book and see what happens. I'll bet that they wouldn't get through to the second page. Pictures and color attract children and adults alike, and while adults like to watch movies, children love to watch cartoons and animated films. Whether it's Cinderella or Snow White, Barbie or Sleeping Beauty, Narnia or Harry Potter, children would sit for hours watching them without showing even the slightest hint of boredom. These moves are a source of learning just as much as entertaining. Movies such as Cinderella, Snow White and Barbie and so on, teach children what love, sacrifice, honesty, valor and commitment means. It is because of these that fairy tale films teach children more effectively than written fairy tales do.

Because of the visual impact that dazzling colors and caricatures leave on their young minds, computers can be considered to be effective tool in teaching and communicating messages to children. Children can be introduced to technology by the time they are 3 or 4 years old, says Haugland (1999), in Lacina (2007) Computers and Young Children. This is true because today, children as young as 3 or 4 years play video games on computers. Haugland (1992) " found that 3 and 4-year olds who use computers have greater developmental gains in comparison to others who don't have access to computers." Adams (1996), endorsed this view by

<https://assignbuster.com/good-fairy-tales-vs-film-in-teaching-lessons-and-communicating-messages-to-children-research-paper-example/>

saying that, “ Computers have helped children develop positive attitudes, in addition to developing their communicative skills.” Children who watch cartoons or movies like Cinderella and Snow White are easily influenced by what they hear and see that they try to imitate and speak like those characters. Therefore, such programs have a strong appeal and can assist in teaching and communicating messages to children.

Sinclair (2005), in *The Influence of Popular Culture on Children's Literary Preferences*, talks about how children are before they even go to school; “ children are already exposed to popular cultural forms such as music, television, movies, and videos much before they join school.” Dyson, in Sinclair (2005), says that Sinclair calls non-book forms as ‘ textual toys.’ She goes on to say that when children are asked to talk about something they liked, they would invariably talk about their favorite fairy tale characters. They would, she continued, “ use their powers of adaptation and improvisation’ from a broad range of narrative sources to create meaning for themselves.” Young girls love to dress like Barbie or Cinderella and say that they would love to fly like the fairies and help Barbie find her true love. Such an impact would be missing if children were told such bedtime stories. Yes, they would ask questions, but the emotions and interest in the story would be short-lived. This clearly shows that visual fairy tale movies and cartoons have a greater impact on children than the print media. Fairy tale movies like Barbie or Cinderella teach lessons and convey messages like loyalty, bravery, sacrifice and deceit. Through their portrayal, children understand what is good and what’s not. Children love colors, just as much as adults do, and cartoons and animation movies splash all kinds of colors and graphics to

attract them to the fairy tales.

Thompson (2008), talks about graphic novel conventions and says how graphic novels can be used to teach traditional reading comprehension strategies like monitoring and making connections. Graphic novels are visual-based tech tools that appeal to the eye and can be programmed to elucidate colorful animated characters as seen in fairy tale movies. The American animation cartoon serial 'The Simpsons,' is a very popular program liked by children and adults alike. The Simpsons portrays the fallacies of the social structure in America. The idea of talking about The Simpsons is just to impress the impact such animated characters have on their audience and is quite similar to fairytale movies like Cinderella and Snow White in their popularity.

Brode (2004), one of the first Disney scholars to examine Disney animation movies, says that "Disney's animation movies of the 1930s and 1940s were crucial to the formation of a radicalized value system that played a key part in the youth revolution of the 1960s." Disney's films helped to foster tolerance of diversity in American society. Disney' film, Snow White, highlights romance through music like 'Someday my prince will come,' and teaches good work ethics like 'Whistle while you work,' and 'Heigh Ho, Heigh Ho, its off to work we go.' In addition to the above, what is important that "While Cinderella could leave home and find a place to stay, she is easily tricked? This is an important theme for children, since it shows them that there can be drastic consequences if they do not follow their parents directions and talk to strangers," says Stringham (2011).

Armet (2007), in *Disney: A Pedagogical Power*, writes that "The Walt Disney

Company, a mass media and entertainment institution in the United States, with a stronghold in the production of animated films, produces movies and comic strips that transmits ideological messages to children.” In the same paper, Hannon (1997) says that “ We live in a ‘ media dominated cultural environment.” This is very true as just about any program that one sees on TV or in theatres, is run by media that has some message to convey to its audience.

Luce (2013) conducted a research to understand the impact of fairy tales, and came to the conclusion that fairy tales demanded more scholarly attention, as, not only did they present problems, they were used to socialize and control populations for centuries. They cover a wide range of subjects like social, political, historical and cultural issues. “ Fairy tales are not only artful platforms for speaking about often unspeakable realities; they are also potent tools for visualizing and cultivating change,” she ended. If fairy tale books can be so effective, imagine the power of fairy tale movies. Movies like Cinderella and Barbie has influenced the behavior of young children all over the world. Little girls want to dress like Barbie, act like Barbie and even dance like Barbie. In addition to the colorful presentations these movie elucidate, they come with wonderful graphical representations which overawes children.

Finally, Ajayi (2012) investigated how Hispanic ESL/literacy learners used their socio-historical experiences and multimodal resources to mediate the interpretation and representation of Cinderella. In her study, she followed the development of eighteen third-grade pupils, who read Cinderella and re-created their understandings in pictures and sentences. The findings

revealed that suggest that “ Cinderella could be included in the curricula as an object of social knowledge and critical analysis, and by re-conceptualizing elementary ESL/literacy classrooms as semiotic spaces, it would allow children to interpret videos with a wide range of multimodal resources, and in the process, become consumers and producers of systems of communications.”

Conclusion

The Cinderella story is the tale of the good conquering the evil, and of tragedy and triumph. What makes these fairy tale films and cartoons so effective is that they are able to influence the thoughts and actions of the children who watch it. It is because of this that one can confidently say that films like Cinderella, Barbie, and Snow White can effectively teach children important lessons of life and also help them improve their communicative skills through listening and practice. As the tale of Cinderella unfolds, children are offered important insights into life; the hardship, the struggle, ethics, solutions and success.

Works Cited

Adams, P. E, (1996), Hypermedia in the classroom using earth and space science CD-ROMS, *Journal of Computers in Mathematics and Science Teaching*, 15(1/2), 19-34

Ajayi, L, (2012), Video " Reading" and Multimodality: A Study of ESL/Literacy Pupils' Interpretation of Cinderella from Their Socio-historical Perspective, *The Urban Review*, 44(1), 60-89

Armet, J, (2007), *Disney: A Pedagogical Power*, Academia. edu, Web,

<https://assignbuster.com/good-fairy-tales-vs-film-in-teaching-lessons-and-communicating-messages-to-children-research-paper-example/>

Retrieved December 5, 2013, from http://www.academia.edu/1635172/Disney_A_Pedagogical_Power

[edu/1635172/Disney_A_Pedagogical_Power](http://www.academia.edu/1635172/Disney_A_Pedagogical_Power)

Brode, Douglas. *From Walt to Woodstock: How Disney Created the Counterculture*. Austin: U of Texas P, 2004

Hannon, C, J, (2007), *Aging with Disney: Depiction of Gender and Age in Seven Disney Animated Fairy Tales*, *Dissertation Abstracts International, Section A: Humanities and Social Sciences*, 58(2), Web, Retrieved December 5, 2013, from <http://www.proquest.umi.com>

Haugland, S. (1992), *The effect of computer software on preschool children's developmental gains*, *Journal of Computing in Childhood Education*, 3(1), 15-30

Haugland, S. (1999), *What role should technology play in young children's learning?* *Young Children*, 54(6), 26-31

Lacina, J, (2007), *Computers and Young Children*, *Childhood Education*, ISSN 0009-4056, 84(2), 113

Luce, C, (2013), *Once upon a Sibyl's tongue: Conjuring fairy tale [hi]stories for power and pleasure*, University of California, Santa Cruz, ProQuest, UMI Dissertations Publishing, 2013.

Sinclair, D, (2005), *The Influence of Popular Culture on Children's Literary Preferences*, *Ontario Institute for Studies in Education*, 35(2), ISSN 00304433, 15-16.

Stringham, E, (2011), *Disney and the Butchering of Snow White*, *Economics, Management and Financial Markets*, Addleton Academic Publishers, 6(2), ISSN 1842-3191, 637-652

<https://assignbuster.com/good-fairy-tales-vs-film-in-teaching-lessons-and-communicating-messages-to-children-research-paper-example/>

Thompson, T, (2008), Adventures in graphica: Using comics and graphic novels to teach comprehension, 2-6. Portland, ME: Stenhouse