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A folktale is a general term for any of numerous varieties of traditional narrative. The telling of stories appears to be a cultural and universal tradition, common to primitive and complex societies alike. Folktales are demonstrably similar from culture to culture, and comparative studies of themes and narrative techniques have been successful in showing these relationships. Fairy tales are entirely fictional and often begin with such formulas as Once upon a time. Which is not the case in most folktales which usually express something common to that culture. Folktales are stories that give people a means for sharing their culture, history and values.

And so was the case in Mother to Son by Langston Hughes. Hughes discussed problems common to people of color from his culture. One of the most powerful tools used by Hughes is imagery. Hughes uses strong imagery to get a clear picture across to the reader. As does he use irony and metaphors such as Life for me ain't been no crystal stair Its had tacks in it, And splinters, And boards torn up.

Hughes work can be described as a folktale. He writes exactly to fit the definition of the word folktale. And the same formula is used by many writers

Bibliography: