

Fairy tales

童话

What's your favourite fairy tale? 你最喜欢的童话故事是哪一个?

This is how some people in London answered this and other questions:

Presenter: How do you feel about fairy tales? 你对神话故事是怎么看的?

Woman 1: They're magical, we love them.

Man 1: I think that sometimes it is a bit patronising towards children to tell them about, you know, stories about how they should behave. And it's very much... there are so many stereotypes.

Woman 2: I like them. I think they're cool. I think it is nice to believe in and read fairy tales.

Presenter: Did you have any favourite fairy tales or folk tales when you were younger? 你小的时候有没有最喜欢的童话和民间故事?

Woman 2: Probably Jack and the Beanstalk.

Woman 1: I like the Princess and the Pea. I don't know why. I just used to like that one quite a lot.

Man 2: I used to like Billy Goats Gruff.

Did you know...? 你知道吗...?

Fact

Fairy tales were told or enacted and handed down from generation to generation. The oldest known written fairy tales appeared in ancient Egypt, around 1300 BC.

Language tip

It is traditional to start fairy tales with the words 'Once upon a time'. 'Upon' also means 'on' but it is rarely used because it can sound too formal. E.g. I rely upon/on my servants to move my heavy luggage.

Cultural tip

In some tales from Bangladesh the wicked stepmother of European fairy tales is replaced by a jealous wife.

Here is the webpage for this programme:

www.bbc.co.uk/ukchina/simp/elt/ask_about_britain/110726_ee_27_fairytales_story.shtml