

## Introduction

The stories in this collection are by a professor of literature and poet who wrote one of America's most revered poems, "America the Beautiful." It's worth remembering that Katharine Lee Bates was inspired to create that verse by a trip to the top of Pikes Peak while she was far from her New England home. Although she traveled to fairyland only in her imagination, this 19th century woman was clearly curious, adventurous and awake to the marvels that surrounded her in the real world as well!

The line between "fairy tales" and "folk tales" is quite subjective, and some of these stories don't even contain magic, except the magic of imagination. Although we think of folk and fairy tales as children's fare, they were once the stories of all the folks, stories that were told around the fire to enchant young and old listeners alike. The stories that have lived down the centuries are those which best captured the spirit and imagination of the people who told them, and, although this selection is chosen and told for young readers and listeners, they remain stories that contain real meaning for people of all ages. We hope you will enjoy the stories with your young readers, but also use them as jumping-off places to discuss the very real issues they address.

This guide contains lesson ideas and exercises you may apply to any of the stories, as well as specific material for use with specific stories. In the end, however, your use in the classroom of the Fairy Tales of Katharine Lee Bates, like your use in the classroom of the newspaper in general, will be limited only by your imagination.

After all, in teaching, as in fairy tales, imagination is the most important ingredient!



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