Introduction:
In preparation or post-visit for seeing Into the Woods, students will dive deeply into the study of fairy tales, understanding how they were passed down, the messages they contain and why they continue to capture our imagination.

Learning Objectives:
• Students will understand how fairy tales have been communicated and recorded.
• Students will identify key characteristics of fairy tale structures, plots and characters.
• Students will study the Cinderella fairy tale throughout time to identify and compare how social messages, including gender roles, economic status and class are communicated.
• Students will write a modern fairy tale, incorporating the themes and elements found in Cinderella.

Guiding Questions:
• What clues do fairy tales provide about social order?
• What messages do fairy tales send about family, gender, class, environment and survival?

Common Core Standards:
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.7: Analyze the extent to which a filmed or live production of a story or drama stays faithful to or departs from the text or script, evaluating the choices made by the director or actors.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.9: Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works such as the Bible, including describing how the material is rendered new.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.6: Analyze a particular point of view or cultural experience reflected in a work of literature from outside the United States, drawing on a wide reading of world literature.
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.7: Analyze multiple interpretations of a story, drama, or poem (e.g., recorded or live production of a play or recorded novel or poetry), evaluating how each version interprets the source text. (Include at least one play by Shakespeare and one play by an American dramatist.)

Materials:
- Three early versions of Cinderella
  - 1634 version, by Giambattista Basile
  - 1694 version, by Charles Perrault
  - 1812 version, by the Grimm Brothers
- Cinderella, Disney feature film, 1950
- Into the Woods, Cinderella video clip
- Cinderella Comparison Chart (included)

Procedures:
- Lesson Activity One: The History and Structures of Fairy Tales
  - Students will be introduced to the history of fairy tales and how they changed once they were published.
  - Students will learn about the messages within fairy tales and why they exist.
- Lesson Activity Two: Cinderella Through the Ages
  - Students will read, watch and discuss several versions of Cinderella, from 1634-1950, to compare and contrast how the story has changed over time.
- Lesson Activity Three: Crafting A Modern Fairy Tale
  - Students will write a modern version of Cinderella, set in the present, that reflects current ideals and social order.

Lesson Activity One: The History and Structures of Fairy Tales
Students will be introduced to the history of fairy tales and how they changed once they were published. Students will learn about the messages within fairy tales and why they exist.

- Ask students what they know about fairy tales: Where they come from? Who wrote them?
- List their responses on the board.
- Lead a student brainstorm about the literary elements of a fairy tale. Sample responses include:
  - They are short.
  - The characters are clearly delineated as good or evil.
  - They include elements of magic and magical characters.
  - There is a hero/heroine who overcomes evil.
  - The setting is an unspecified time and place.
  - They have a happy ending.
They have a moral message.

Briefly discuss the history of fairy tales.

- Fairy tales were mainly an oral tradition, dating back hundreds, if not thousands, of years.
- Fairy tales come from all parts of the world, and many cultures have similar tales, even though they are geographically far apart.
- Tell students that today, we are going to focus on Western European fairy tales that provided the basis for Into the Woods, and how those have influenced American culture. (See additional resources at the end of this lesson for non-Western versions of Cinderella.)
- For centuries, oral folk tales were used to explain the natural world such as changes in the seasons or shifts in the weather. Others folk tales were used to celebrate the rites of harvestings, hunting, marriage and conquest. The purpose of them was to emphasize communal harmony.
  - Ask students: What does that term mean to you? How might stories about marriage contribute to communal harmony?
- Fairy tales were often tales of initiation, worship, warning and indoctrination.
- The tales were told in private or in a large public gathering.
  - Ask students: How might a story change when told in public?
- With the rise of the printing press in the 17th century, fairy tales were printed and published in books. Access to published fairy tales was restricted to those who could read and afford books (which were far more expensive than they are today). Thus, fairy tales became a staple of the ruling social class and underwent an enormous change.
- In France, for instance, published fairy tales became a means through which proper behavior and etiquette were instilled.
- One famous writer of this genre was Charles Perrault, who, in 1697, published his versions of popular stories, including Cinderella, Puss in Boots and Little Red Riding Hood.
- Oral traditions continued for the masses, however, and would build upon or change the published versions. This borrowing back and forth went on for hundreds of years.
- By the 19th century, fairy tales had become linked with national culture. The Grimm Brothers in Germany, who first published in 1812, sought to celebrate German culture by writing and publishing the country’s folk tales. This also happened in Denmark with Hans Christian Andersen and in Italy with Carlo Collodi.
- These published fairy tales were written to be read in private, at home. They were written in sophisticated language, intended for the ruling classes.
- These versions of fairy tales had many aspects in common:
  - They reinforced the social order wherein men had power, and women should be content in a domestic role.
- They were often scary but had optimistic, happy endings.
- They usually had “rag to riches” themes and ideas about dreaming and miracles.
- They had illustrations, which further reinforced who was meant to be part of the story.
  - In the United States, Walt Disney reinvented these age-old fairy tales in 1922, when he began to animate them into feature films. This returned the fairy tales to a public consumption, and the story could be seen rather than heard.
  - Disney’s early versions of fairy tales has many aspects in common:
    - They did not include many of the scary or gory aspects of the tales.
    - The stories were simplified, and a greater emphasis was places on the quest for love and marriage
    - Deserving female characters are saved by a prince and rewarded with a life of wealth.
    - Male characters who show ingenuity and perseverance “get the girl” of their dreams.
    - Women were often pitted against each other.
    - Emphasis is placed on cleanliness, control and hard work.
  - Ask students: How do these aspects align with the Disney fairy tale movies you’ve seen?

Lesson Activity Two: Cinderella through the Ages
Students will read, watch and discuss several versions of Cinderella, from 1634-1950, to compare and contrast how the story has changed over time.

- Divide students into small groups.
- Assign each group one of the three early versions of Cinderella.
- Have students read their assigned version out loud to one another.
- Ask students in small groups to create a short synopsis of the story they have read, and then have one person from each group share their group’s synopsis.
- On the board, note interesting plot points that differ from our current understanding of the Cinderella story.
- Ask presenting students:
  - How is Cinderella’s physicality described?
  - What themes do they notice in the story?
  - If there is a social message to be received in the story, what is it?
- In class or for homework, have students watch the 1950 Disney film, Cinderella, and complete the Cinderella Comparison Chart.

Lesson Activity Three: Crafting a Modern Fairy Tale
Students will write a modern version of Cinderella, set in the present, that reflects current ideals and social order.

- Give students a few moments to discuss their Cinderella Comparison Chart.
• Ask students:
  o What were the social messages of the film?
  o What were the themes? Were they different than the earlier versions they read previously?
  o Why has this story endured for so long?
• Assign students the task of writing a new, modern version of Cinderella.
• Ask students to consider:
  o Gender: What gender is Cinderella and how does that influence the story?
  o Class: How does social standing and class figure into this story? How is it different today from the older versions, if at all?
  o The Stepsisters: What are they like? What is their role? Do they have to be stepsisters?
  o Location: Where does your version take place?
• Remind students to they should ask themselves: What social messages do I want to convey or reinforce?
• Remind students to include the literary elements mentioned above in their fairy tale.
• [Optional] Have students share their fairy tales. Or, have them act them out! Consider also allowing students to present their fairy tales as:
  o A long form poem
  o A song/rap
  o A coding project
  o A play

Assessment:
• Students will write a modern version of Cinderella, demonstrating their understanding of the elements of fairy tales. A rubric is included.
### Cinderella Comparison Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Early Version of Cinderella</th>
<th>1950 Disney Film Version of Cinderella</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>What is Cinderella like?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(race, class, appearance,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>personality, etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>**How does Cinderella get</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to go to the ball?</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>**What happens when the prince</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>comes with the shoe?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>How does the story end?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What are the themes?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**What is a social message you</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>got from the story?</td>
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</tbody>
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*Into the Woods: A Mirror, Mirror to Ourselves*
**Rubric**

### A Modern *Cinderella* Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The student’s original fairy tale communicates a social message on gender, class, sexuality or another idealized social norm.</strong></td>
<td>The student’s original fairy tale tells the story of Cinderella in a new or updated way but lacks a complete social message.</td>
<td>The student’s original fairy tale demonstrates an understanding of the story of Cinderella and incorporates one new element.</td>
<td>The student duplicated the Cinderella story without adding anything new.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>The student completed the <em>Cinderella</em> Comparison Chart, providing insightful analysis.</strong></td>
<td>The student completed the <em>Cinderella</em> Comparison Chart.</td>
<td>The student completed part of the <em>Cinderella</em> Comparison Chart.</td>
<td>The student did not complete the <em>Cinderella</em> Comparison Chart.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Points: /**

**Comments, Suggestions, and Questions:**