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## World Myths and Folktales: *The Stories of Human Kind*

“Once Upon a Time: How Fairy Tales Shape Our Lives” by Jonathan Young  
Study Guide

**Directions:** Answer the following questions as you read Young’s essay.

1. What is the purpose of the first paragraph (the anecdote about the Pied Piper) of Young’s essay?
2. “[Fairy tales] are clearly more than mere entertainment for children.”
  - a. Paraphrase this sentence.
  - b. What is the purpose of this sentence in Young’s essay?
3. In paragraphs 3-5, the author describes his experiences visiting the locations that serve as a setting in various fairytales. How have these experiences shaped his “sense of the world”?
4. Explain Young’s statement: “These tales are psychological mirrors and we become more complex as we mature.”
5. Why do storytellers intentionally load the adventures in their stories with heavy symbolism?
6. What two forms of our imagination create a “great inter-relationship”?
7. “A talking animal in a story is often \_\_\_\_\_.  
...Sinister or wicked characters may represent aspects of ourselves that may have been \_\_\_\_\_  
or \_\_\_\_\_. ...The deep forest is a common representation of the \_\_\_\_\_.”
8. What does the parable about the farmer plowing his field suggest? Explain.
9. What is the “key” to finding meaning in stories?
10. William Stafford explains that the work of creativity is to “follow the golden thread.” Discuss how does this metaphor parallels/connects to the author’s main points about fairy tales and other stories throughout this article.