

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.34069/AI/2024.80.08.5>

How to Cite:

Ruban, L., Didenko, I., Oliinyk, I., Petrovsky, M., & Seminikhyna, N. (2024). The healing power of stories: How to create therapeutic fairy tales for children and adults. *Amazonia Investiga*, 13(80), 54-62. <https://doi.org/10.34069/AI/2024.80.08.5>



The healing power of stories: How to create therapeutic fairy tales for children and adults

Інструменти та техніки створення терапевтичних казок

Received: July 1, 2024

Accepted: August 20, 2024

Written by:


Larysa Ruban¹ <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5539-931X>**Iryna Didenko²** <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2047-7239>**Iryna Oliinyk³** <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5933-6818>**Mykola Petrovsky⁴** <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3267-7123>**Nataliia Seminikhyna⁵** <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6246-4132>


Abstract


The article examines the potential application of fairy-tale therapy by educators, specialists in the socionomic sphere, and parents to provide psychological and educational support to children. The article aims to reveal various aspects of therapeutic fairy tale writing aimed at an individual's psychological and pedagogical assistance. To achieve the research objectives, several theoretical methods were utilized: content analysis of both Ukrainian and foreign scholarly works to identify effective methods for crafting therapeutic fairy tales; a typological approach to delineate strategies for developing storytelling skills for therapeutic purposes; the method of translating theoretical concepts into the practice of composing original therapeutic fairy tales; and the examination, analysis, and synthesis of specialized psychological and pedagogical literature. It is emphasized that therapeutic fairy tales help to correct a child's behaviour, and some psychological deviations reveal creativity and instil moral values. In addition, therapeutic fairy tales heal the soul and touch the most important


Анотація


У статті акцентовано увагу на можливостях використання казкотерапії вчителями, фахівцями соціономічних спеціальностей, батьками у процесі надання психологічної та педагогічної допомоги дитині. Мета статті – розкрити різні аспекти творення терапевтичних казок, які спрямовані на психологічну й педагогічну допомогу особистості. Для досягнення поставленої мети застосовувалися переважно теоретичні методи дослідження: контент-аналіз праць українських та зарубіжних дослідників для визначення способів ефективного казкотворення; типологічний метод для окреслення підходів до розвитку навичок творення терапевтичних казок; методика трансформації теоретичних положень у практику написання авторських терапевтичних казок; вивчення, аналіз та узагальнення спеціальної психолого-педагогічної літератури. Підкреслено, що казкотерапія допомагає скорегувати поведінку дитини, певні психологічні відхилення,

¹ PhD., in Education, Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Ukraine.  WoS Researcher ID: N-2908-2019

² PhD., in Education, Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Ukraine.  WoS Researcher ID: N-3098-2019

³ PhD., in Philology, Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Ukraine.  WoS Researcher ID: N-4098-2019

⁴ PhD., in Philology, Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Ukraine.  WoS Researcher ID: JOK-8705-2023

⁵ PhD., in Education, Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Ukraine.  WoS Researcher ID: AAA-8719-2021



human senses. It was concluded that the uniqueness of telling therapeutic fairy tales as a method of practical psychology and pedagogy is that it has no age restrictions and, secondly, it can be applied to people who develop "normally" and people with special needs.

Keywords: fairy tale, fairy-tale therapy, therapeutic fairy tale, pedagogical and psychological assistance.

розкрити творчий потенціал, прищепити моральні цінності. Крім того, терапевтична казка лікує душу і торкається найважливіших почуттів людини, а саме: дружби, любові, стосунків у родині, життєвих цінностей, особистого зростання. Зроблено висновок, що унікальність казкотерапії, як методу практичної психології і педагогіки, в тому, що вона, по-перше, не має вікових обмежень і, по-друге, її можна застосувати як до людей, які «нормально» розвиваються, так і до людей, які мають особливості психофізичного розвитку.

Ключові слова: казка, казкотерапія, терапевтична казка, педагогічна і психологічна допомога.

Introduction

Fairy-tale therapy has gained prominence as a therapeutic approach that uses storytelling to address psychological and pedagogical challenges. This method leverages the power of fairy tales to aid individuals in overcoming personal difficulties, enhancing their emotional well-being, and fostering developmental growth. By integrating fictional narratives with therapeutic principles, fairy-tale therapy aims to provide both psychological and pedagogical support.

We all come from childhood, where fairy tales played an essential role in our lives. We remember that special moment when Mom or Dad opened a book and began the journey into a fairy tale. All children live in a fantasy world: some draw giant castles in their imaginations, some fly under the clouds, and some talk to animals. A fairy tale helps a child overcome difficulties, self-doubt, and anxiety. The world of childhood is coloured in emotionally sensitive colours, and they help the child to perceive information about the surrounding world most effectively. Fairy tales help children learn how to overcome difficult situations and foster a belief in the strength of goodness, love, justice, and beauty. Children love fairy tales because they compensate for the lack of actions in real life, and it becomes possible to realize their creative potential (Leshchenko, 2003). It is a mistake to think that fairy-tale therapy is aimed only at children. A small child lives in the soul of every adult, who, with great pleasure, likes not only to listen to various fairy tales but also to create them on his/her own. Adults like to create fairy-tale heroes who overcome various obstacles, difficulties, and fears. Parents often tell their own fictional stories to children. As children, we all look for ourselves in fairy tales and believe everything will be fine in real life, just like in a fairy-tale kingdom (Skoromovska, 2004).

The *article* aims to reveal various aspects of therapeutic fairy tale writing, which is intended to provide psychological and pedagogical assistance to individuals.

The article begins with a literature review that outlines significant research contributions and identifies gaps in the existing body of work. Methodological approaches are then examined, detailing different techniques for creating and applying therapeutic fairy tales. Theoretical frameworks are discussed to understand the psychological and pedagogical foundations of fairy-tale therapy. Practical applications are highlighted through case studies and real-world examples, illustrating how fairy-tale therapy is implemented in various settings. The article also addresses controversies and debates within the field, including methodological challenges and the balance between theoretical and empirical evidence. Finally, the article concludes with a summary of key findings, implications for practice, and suggestions for future research in fairy-tale therapy.

Literature Review

The role of literature in human development and education has been the focus of many scholars, with a range of perspectives emphasizing its educational, emotional, and aesthetic dimensions. A group of authors highlights the pedagogical and moral role of literature, while others focus on its capacity for emotional engagement and artistic merit. These perspectives converge in recognizing the holistic impact of children's

literature on a child's growth. The scholars focus on different aspects of children's literature; their views converge on the idea that literature serves multiple functions. M. Landsbergs (1986), and L. Petrovic-Androustopoulos (1990) highlight its pedagogical and moral significance, emphasizing the role of literature in shaping values and fostering development. In contrast, R. Lukens (1995), A. Chambers (1999), and J. Glazer (1981) focus on the emotional, psychological, and aesthetic experiences literature offers, showcasing its ability to engage readers beyond the mere dissemination of information.

Together, these perspectives reflect the multifaceted role of children's literature in education, emotional development, and aesthetic appreciation. Whether focusing on its moral lessons, emotional engagement, or artistic merit, children's literature remains an essential tool for nurturing well-rounded individuals.

The pedagogical and psychological literature analysis shows that scientists are actively researching the peculiarities of fairy-tale therapy. Thus, the method of fairy-tale therapy was put into practice by Doris Brett, a clinical psychologist and the author of "therapeutic stories" for children. The researcher created a series of short stories about a girl named Annie who gets into difficult situations. D. Brett added comments to her stories that help parents determine how therapeutic stories will affect children. In addition, the psychologist teaches parents to create stories that can help children solve their typical problems: fear of darkness, parental divorce, and childhood impulsiveness. (Brett, 1988). Wonder serves as the fundamental driving force in the world of fairy tales, shaping its core features. It encompasses characters, objects, places, and events whose existence or actions defy logical explanation. (Wróblewska, 2023). Maria Molicka, a Polish researcher, created the genre of fairy-tale therapy. In the therapeutic fairy tales by M. Molicka, a fictional world is depicted, which helps the child find a way out of a difficult life situation and free himself/herself from fear and anxiety. (Molicka, 2002). Vasyl Sukhomlynskyi, a prominent Ukrainian teacher, noted that a fairy tale is a cradle of thought and manages to educate a child in such a way that he/she will keep exciting memories of this cradle for the rest of his/her life (Sukhomlynskyi, 1977). The research conducted by I. Danyliuk & S. Zolnikova explores the fundamental nature of fairy-tale therapy as a psychological approach, highlighting its role as a tool for psychotherapy and psychological correction. Researchers underline that fairytale therapy is a psychological method that uses the fairy tale form to integrate the personality, develop creative abilities, expand consciousness, and improve interaction with the surrounding world (Danyliuk & Zolnikova, 2019). I. Tymkiv's scientific work is focused on the philosophical and educational reflection of fair-tale therapy. The scientist claims that a fairy tale is a unique source of moral and ethical principles and instructions that shape a child's worldview (Tymkiv, 2022). At the same time, scientific works did not pay enough attention to therapeutic fairy tale writing aimed at an individual's psychological and pedagogical assistance. The literature indicates a rich but contested field where fairy-tale therapy is recognized for its potential benefits but also faces scrutiny regarding its empirical validation and methodological rigor. The debates highlight the need for further research to establish more concrete evidence of its effectiveness and to address the methodological challenges faced by researchers and practitioners.

Methodology

The following theoretical research methods were primarily employed to accomplish the goal: *content analysis* of papers by Ukrainian and foreign researchers to determine the methods of effective fairy tale writing; a *typological method* was used to categorize the sources and approaches for developing therapeutic storytelling skills, along with a *method for translating* theoretical concepts into the practice of creating original therapeutic fairy tales. Additionally, the study involved analyzing and synthesizing specialized psychological and pedagogical literature to assess the current state of the researched issue. Writing author's therapeutic fairy tales; *study, analysis, and generalization* of specialized psychological and pedagogical literature to identify the state of the researched problem.

However, a key limitation of the methodology is the absence of an empirical component, which limits the study's capacity to provide evidence-based conclusions regarding the practical effectiveness of therapeutic fairy tales. Without empirical testing, it is challenging to validate the real-world impact of the methods proposed. The findings of the study rely on theoretical frameworks and existing literature rather than direct observation or experimentation, which hinder the generalizability of the results. This study, therefore, is considered as a *preliminary investigation*, offering foundational insights into the theoretical underpinnings of therapeutic fairy tale writing. Future research would benefit from including empirical studies to test these concepts in practice, evaluate their efficacy, and make the results more replicable and generalizable across different contexts.

Results and Discussion

Fairy-tale therapy is one of the most common types of work with children of different age categories. Teachers and sociomic sphere specialists resort to it more and more often. This method of work is also relevant when raising children at home.

The method of fairy-tale therapy plays an essential role in psychotherapy. A fairy tale helps correct a child's behaviour, overcome certain psychological deviations, reveal creative potential, and instil moral values (Leshchenko et al, 2023). A fairy tale is the basis of the soul.

A fairy tale becomes therapeutic only when a child identifies with its characters, can draw a parallel between the plot and his/her life, and receives a particular lesson.

M.J. Kuciapiński notes that popular myths and fairy tales are vital to education. Researcher stresses, "...They are often the only clue to the child's life" (Kuciapiński, 2014). Fairy tales can be divided into the following groups: 1) *fictional*; 2) *didactic*; 3) *psychocorrective*; 4) *psychotherapeutic*; 5) *meditative*. *Fictional tales* are literary works (fairy tales, legends, short stories, etc.). *Didactic fairy tales* are fairy tales that have a motivational function and are intended to motivate a person to study a certain material. *Psychocorrective fairy tales* are fairy tales created by psychologists, doctors, and parents in order to eliminate a specific psychological problem of a person. *Psychotherapeutic fairy tales* are fairy tales that help a person change himself/herself and his/her worldview. Such fairy tales are resorted to when other ways of solving the problem are ineffective, such as when a person is forced to come to terms with a certain situation. The main task of a *meditative fairy tale* is to relieve certain psychological tension and stress (Danyliuk & Zolnikova, 2019).

A therapeutic fairy tale is a special kind of fairy tale, listening to which psychological work occurs subconsciously (Jorgensen, 2021). It heals the soul and touches the most important human feelings, such as friendship, love, family relationships, life values, and personal growth. If you carefully read the fairy tale, you can indeed find an essential source of wisdom.

It is quite difficult to trace when a fairy tale appeared. The fairy tale probably appeared when the first person started talking. In ancient times, no one wrote down fairy tales, and they were passed on from mouth to mouth. Therefore, it is not surprising that several versions of the same fairy tale exist. Thus, the fairy tale about Cinderella can be found in 340 versions. The tale tells about a girl who lost her crystal slipper at a royal ball. The prince found the owner of the shoe and married her. An early Chinese version of the tale, recorded in 840, was about a festive carnival with the emperor as the prince.

We are convinced that the fairy tale, as one of the types of therapy, attracts the attention of specialists because it is a universal method of treatment, as it can be effective both when working with children and adults. The main functions of fairy-tale therapy include *diagnostic*, *prognostic*, *educational*, and *corrective*. The *diagnostic function* is the fundamental function of fairy-tale therapy, as it aims to determine the person's psychological state and ways to solve the problem. The *prognostic function* of fairy-tale therapy helps to predict the person's future actions and the peculiarities of his/her behaviour in certain situations. The *educational function* is designed to help a person overcome his/her problems and difficulties with the help of events, heroes, and plots in the fairy tale. The *corrective function* is the final stage of fairy-tale therapy, as we get the desired result in the person's behaviour (Kobzieva, 2022; Ruban et al., 2023).

An Australian writer and clinical psychologist, Doris Brett, emphasizes that children find feedback from their own lives in fairy tales. They seek to use the example of a positive hero in the fight against their fears and problems. In addition, fairy tales give hope to a child, which, without a doubt, is quite an important point. A child who has lost hope and refuses to fight will never succeed (Brett, 1988). In our opinion, an adult who has lost hope will never achieve a successful result in his/her affairs. This is another proof that fairy-tale therapy is a treatment that can be applied to adults as well. In addition, fairy tales help children and adults get to know themselves. A fairy tale gives childhood.

The author must follow specific rules for the fairy tale to acquire a psychotherapeutic character (Hammel, 2018). Firstly, a fairy tale should indirectly correspond to the child's problem. Secondly, a fairy tale solves a problem that theoretically enriches the child's life experience. Listening to a therapeutic fairy tale, the child finds options for solving his/her own problems. If the child is unable to find his/her options, then

adults can offer their options for solving the problem. Thirdly, the plot of the fairy tale must have a clear sequence, namely: *once upon a time* (the beginning of the fairy tale, the meeting with the fairy-tale characters), *suddenly* (the hero of the fairy tale meets a problem that is consonant with the problem of the child), *because of this* (the fairy tale goes to another channel, i.e. an option for solving the problem is proposed), *climax* (the heroes of the fairy tale overcome the problem, conflict, etc.), *denouement* (the point where all conflicts have been resolved. Denouement of the therapeutic fairy tale should always have a positive character), *the moral of the fairy tale is...* (the heroes of the fairy tale learn a certain lesson from their actions) (Kazachiner et al., 2022; Hohn, 2000).

Working with children, therapeutic fairy tales can be divided according to the following issues:

- 1) Fairy tales for fearful children;
- 2) Fairy tales for aggressive children;
- 3) Fairy tales for hyperactive children;
- 4) Fairy tales focused on the settlement of family relations (for example, parental divorce, etc.);
- 5) Fairy tales focused on coping with difficulties in socialization;
- 6) Fairy tales aimed at preventing neurotic disorders;
- 7) Fairy tales aimed at supporting a child facing death;
- 8) Fairy tale aimed at solving problems with self-esteem;
- 9) Fairy tales for children of war.

Let's cite the author's therapeutic fairy tale as an example. It tells the story of a princess named Kelly and her loyal friend Teddy Bear, who knows the language of people.

Once upon a time, there was a girl. Kelly was her name, and while she loved all of her toys, the Little Teddy Bear was her favorite. A generous autumn replaced the golden summer, which gave Kelly many exciting and fun adventures. All the children were getting ready to the first day of school. There will be the first bell holiday and Kelly, who turns 7 in summer, is also going to put on her nice new school uniform and hold a beautiful bouquet in her hands: it's time for her to sit at the school desk.

Having never attended school before, Kelly was anxious the night before September 1st since she was unsure of what to anticipate. Kelly lay in bed, unable to sleep, her mind racing with fear and expectation. She was overcome with feelings as she imagined making new acquaintances, learning fascinating things, and exploring the unknown. She could not help but wonder what adventures awaited her in the world of school. Beside her on the bed, Kelly's loyal companion, the Little Teddy Bear, was sitting patiently, his worn fur and threadbare patches telling the story of countless bedtime stories and comforting hugs. Teddy's wise, stitched-on smile seemed to reassure Kelly that everything would be alright, silently promising to stay beside her as she was going to embark on her new journey into the world of school. Her Little Teddy Bear reassured the girl: "Kelly, don't worry. I am sure you'll enjoy school. There, you will learn amazing things such as arithmetic, writing, and reading. Kelly excitedly replied, "Teddy Bear, what if I don't understand anything?" the Little Teddy Bear said, "Kelly, you are a very smart and intelligent girl, so I am sure you will work great and you will have a lot of friends." He added, "Dear Kelly, the first bell holiday of your life tomorrow will be a very important day, so lie down to rest and show strength." Kelly listened to the advice of the Little Teddy Bear, fell into a deep sleep, and wandered through the world of interesting school topics.

In her dreams, Kelly found herself immersed in a classroom filled with vibrant colors and lively discussions. She eagerly raised her hand to answer questions about dinosaurs, planets, and famous historical figures. Her confidence increased with each right response, and she couldn't help but feel happy and accomplished. Knowing that her dreams had shown her a peek of the fascinating information that awaited her, Kelly was eager to start her real-life experience in the world of school the next morning.

In the morning of the first of September, her Little Teddy Bear woke up at sunrise and collected the most beautiful flowers for Kelly, which the girl gave to her first teacher. It was an exciting day. Kelly crossed the school threshold for the first time, sat at the school desk, and met her peers.

Day by day, it turned into a frenzy of school anxiety. Kelly studied hard and got excellent grades, which pleased her best friend, the Little Teddy Bear. How many new and interesting things does a girl learn every day? After school, she ran to her house, where the Little Teddy Bear was eagerly waiting for her. Kelly's

house was a cozy haven filled with warmth and love. Her room exuded imagination and creativity thanks to the vibrant posters she had made with her favorite animals and motivational sayings. With each flip of the page, the books on the shelf beckoned her to go on new adventures.

Kelly talked about the interesting world of mathematics and reading, and the Little Teddy Bear listened carefully to the girl's story, fearing to miss at least some details. After a month at school Kelly viewed mathematics and reading as not just subjects to study, but as gateways to unlock new worlds of knowledge and imagination. Through mathematics, she discovered patterns and logic, while reading transported her to different times, places, and perspectives. These subjects became her companions, guiding her on a journey of exploration and growth.

Kelly worked a lot, so she rarely played in the garden. One day the girl returned from school, ate lunch, and sat down to do the homework she received at school as usual. Suddenly, Kelly felt a sharp pain in her back. The girl couldn't even move. the Little Teddy Bear began to worry because he did not know how to relieve Kelly's unbearable pain. The only thing the caring bear advised Kelly to do was to lie down and rest. The girl listened to the advice of her best friend and tried to go to sleep. The pain was so intense that the girl did not close her eyes all night.

Little Teddy Bear thought of her trouble and in the morning decided to take action. He was sure that the best solution would be to call the doctor. He said to the girl, "Kelly, don't worry. Your pain will go away soon. I called the doctor, and he is already on his way here." After a while, the doctor came. After giving the girl a thorough examination, he noticed the girl's inactive lifestyle was the main reason for her back problems. Medical experts say back pain is mainly due to spine issues. The doctor explained the spinal cord in the spine's center controls body functions. Doing specific exercises to strengthen back muscles and enhance spinal flexibility is important. It is crucial to perform certain workouts to strengthen the back muscles and increase the spine's flexibility because of this.

Additionally, back muscle exercises in November and October will aid in improving posture, which is crucial for both internal and exterior beauty. The doctor suggested that Kelly include regular stretching and strengthening exercises in her daily routine to help maintain the health of her back and avoid further problems. This could involve core- and back-muscle-targeting workouts like yoga, Pilates, or basic back stretches. The physician also told Kelly to take short breaks from prolonged sitting and partake in exercises encouraging mobility and posture correction, such as swimming, walking, or standing at a desk. Finally, the doctor prescribed some medication and told her to begin daily exercise as soon as the discomfort subsided. At last the doctor gave her medication and advised her to start exercising every day as soon as the pain goes.

Kelly understood that as she worked so hard at school, she spent little time outside playing in the garden. Kelly took the medicine prescribed by the doctor, and eventually the back pain subsided. the Little Teddy Bear said to the girl, "Kelly, your back pain has passed, so from today on, you do physical exercises, breathe fresh air, and have freedom in the garden." So, every morning the girl did various gymnastics, and then she went to school, and after preparing her homework, she went out, and a cheerful bear was waiting for her. They ran and played in the garden as before. In the garden, Kelly and the bear would chase each other around the trees, play tag, and roll down the grassy hills. They would also have mini picnics on a blanket, sharing sandwiches and lemonade. It was their special place where they could forget about all their worries and have fun together.

Thanks to physical exercises and fresh air, the girl forgot about the problems with her back forever.

The proposed fairy tale has several purposes. Firstly, to prepare children for the first day of school, because children usually get ready to this important day with all responsibility, and some have inherent fear and insecurity. Secondly, to overcome the negative consequences of a sedentary lifestyle, which have serious disadvantages for the child's health, particularly regarding the formation of posture. Thirdly, tell children and adults what to do in case of health problems. This story describes neurological problems related to the spine due to a sedentary lifestyle. The solution to these problems is need to get a doctor's consultation and then carry out preventive measures in the form of gymnastic exercises and following a certain regime, such as walking in the fresh air. It is worth noting that, beyond the therapeutic objectives established by the author, the fairy tale also yielded an additional unexpected positive outcome: after listening to it, several children wrote their own fairy tales on a similar topic. Children showed interest in writing their own

therapeutic fairy tales. In addition, it is worth emphasizing that one of the means of therapy can be therapy by making a puppet theater for children to use in the proposed fairy tale. The adult can help children make dolls from the proposed material, allowing them to develop their artistic abilities (Schubert, 2020).

It should be emphasized that the mentioned fairy tale has not only a psychocorrective character, but also a didactic one. With the help of a didactic fairy tale, you can work out a situation, a model of behavior, a system for finding solutions (Otverchenko, 2017). We will analyze the features of creating a didactic fairy tale in more detail in our further research.

When creating a fairy tale, people often face a problem when they do not know about the fairy tale. In this case, we advise them to "let loose" their fantasy and imagination. The fairy tale is created from anything, from those things that surround us, as toys, furniture, household items, etc. The heroes of fairy tales can be both ordinary people and fairies, sorceresses, witches, giants, dwarfs, birds and animals who know the language of people (Ruban et al., 2023).

Let's imagine the morning of the current day and describe in the form of a fairy tale the emotions and experiences that this morning caused. For example, a person woke up and the first thing he/she saw and what he/she focused his/her attention on was the rays of the gentle sun, which filled the entire room with warmth. The variant of the fairy tale, *"In the distant, distant times, there lived evil tribes of people who had never seen sunlight, the rays of which would give them their warm touches. Since the tribes did not see the sun, they never smiled, were not happy and did not know how to rejoice. One day, a small creature flew to this tribe, which emitted light and enchanted the eyes with each sweep of its wings..."*. Next step is to connect fantasy and create an author's fairy tale. When the fairy tale is written, we proceed to the next stage – working with it.

The findings of this research on therapeutic fairy-tale writing have significant theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, the study contributes to our understanding of how narrative-based interventions can be utilized in psychology and pedagogy to facilitate emotional healing and cognitive development. By highlighting the psychological mechanisms that make therapeutic fairy tales effective – such as identification with characters, symbolic problem-solving, and emotional well-being – the research supports broader psychological theories on the role of storytelling in mental and emotional well-being. It also deepens the understanding of narrative therapy, expanding its application to populations with diverse emotional and cognitive needs, including children and individuals with special needs.

Practically, the research presents a structured approach for educators, psychologists, and parents to design and implement therapeutic fairy tales in a way that addresses specific psychological issues. The step-by-step process for crafting stories that resonate with children facing emotional challenges provides a valuable tool for practitioners in various fields. For instance, the focus on identifying a problem, designing a relatable protagonist, and guiding the child through the story's moral allows therapists to use fairy tales as a method of cognitive-behavioral intervention.

The versatility of fairy-tale therapy – applicable to individuals of all ages and developmental stages – makes it a powerful resource in educational settings, family counseling, and psychotherapy. Furthermore, the research suggests that fairy-tale therapy can be adapted to address not only developmental issues but also trauma, anxiety, and other emotional disturbances, making it a promising therapeutic modality in diverse contexts.

The research's practical implications extend to preventive care as well. By identifying psychological issues early on through narrative exploration, educators and psychologists can intervene before problems escalate, promoting mental health and resilience. Additionally, the findings encourage creativity and self-expression, allowing individuals to unlock their imaginative potential, which is particularly important in educational settings. Overall, the theoretical and practical implications of this research open avenues for further exploration and refinement of fairy-tale therapy, establishing it as a valuable tool in both psychological and educational practices. However, a key limitation of the methodology is the absence of an empirical component, which limits the study's capacity to provide evidence-based conclusions regarding the practical effectiveness of therapeutic fairy tales. Without empirical testing, it is challenging to validate the real-world impact of the methods proposed. The findings rely on theoretical frameworks and existing literature rather than direct observation or experimentation, which could hinder the generalizability of the results.

This study, therefore, should be considered as a *preliminary investigation*, offering foundational insights into the theoretical underpinnings of therapeutic fairy tale writing. Future research would benefit from including empirical studies to test these concepts in practice, evaluate their efficacy, and make the results more replicable and generalizable across different contexts.

Conclusions

Thus, fairy-tale therapy helps to find a way out of a difficult situation, promotes personality transformation. The uniqueness of telling therapeutic fairy tales as a method of practical psychology and pedagogy is, firstly, it has no age restrictions and, secondly, it can be applied to both people who develop “normally” and people who have special needs.

We have found out that in order to create a fairy tale that will have a therapeutic effect, you should focus your attention on the following points:

- 1) The primary task is to understand the problem faced by a child; find out what decisions you want to convey to the child as a result of working with a fairy tale;
- 2) Create the main character of the fairy tale, find similarities between the main character and the child; outline not only the problems, anxieties, and difficulties faced by the main character, but it is also important to emphasize his/her strong qualities;
- 3) Introduce a problematic situation (for example, *a small ray of sunshine was very afraid of the darkness...*, *a beautiful spring flower was afraid of the noisy buzzing insects...*, etc.);
- 4) In the course of the fairy tale, the main character must cope with his/her problem; the child understands, that the hero of the fairy tale coped with his/her problem; therefore, I will also be able to cope with it;
- 5) Discuss the moral of the fairy tale with the child.

The research’s prognostic potential lies in its applicability for future studies in psychology, pedagogy, and psychotherapy. Its findings and conclusions can be used to develop effective methods for fairy tale therapy, identify and prevent certain psychological deviations, and unlock the individual's creative potential, among other applications.

Bibliographic References

- Brett, D. (1988). *Annie Stories: A Special Kind of Storytelling*. Workman Publishing Company.
- Chambers, A. (1999). *The reading environment: How adults help children enjoy books*. Exeter: Thimble Press.
- Danyliuk, I., & Zolnikova, S. (2019). Fairy-tale therapy as a method of psychological influence on an individual. *Psychological Journal*, 5(6), 161-173. <https://doi.org/10.31108/1.2019.5.6.12>
- Glazer, J. (1981). *Literature for young children*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Hammel, S. (2018). *Handbook of therapeutic storytelling*. Taylor & Francis.
- Hohr, H. (2000). Dynamic aspects of fairy tales: social and emotional competence through fairy tales. *Scandinavian journal of educational research*, 44(1), 89-103. <https://doi.org/10.1080/713696665>
- Jorgensen, J. (2021). The Thorns of Trauma: Torture, Aftermath, and Healing in Contemporary Fairy-Tale Literature. *Humanities*, 10(1), 47. <https://doi.org/10.3390/h10010047>
- Kazachiner, O., Boychuk, Yu., & Halii, A. (2022). *Fairy-tale therapy: scientific and methodical aspects*. Monograph. Boston: Primedia eLaunch.
- Kobzieva, I. (2022). Overcoming mental trauma in children by means of fairy-tale therapy. Bulletin of the Dnipro Academy of Continuing Education. *Philosophy & Pedagogy*, 1(2), 66-72 (In Ukrainian).
- Kuciapiński, M.J. (2014). The therapeutic and educational properties of fairytale therapy in the early stages of children’s development. *Family Pedagogy*, 4(2). DOI: 10.2478/fampe-2014-0019
- Landsbergs, M. (1986). *Michele Landsber's guide to children's books*. Penguin Books Australia.
- Leshchenko, M. (2003). *A child's happiness is the only true happiness on earth*. Educational and methodological manual. Kyiv: ASML. (In Ukrainian).
- Leshchenko, M., Tymchyk, L., & Ruban, L. (2023). The works of children’s writers as a means of pedagogical and therapeutic influence in modern educational realities. *Historical and Educational Review*, 66(3-4), 108-118. DOI: 10.17460/PHO_2023.3_4.08
- Lukens, R. (1995). *A critical handbook of children's literature*. New York: Harper Collins College Publishers.
- Molicka, M. (2002). *Fairy tale therapy*. About children's fears and a new method of therapy. Media Family.

- Otverchenko, I. (2017). *The secret of the didactic "universal" fairy tale: methodical recommendations for fairy tale therapy*. Mykolaiv: OBU. <https://acortar.link/Bhz77Q>
- Petrovic-Androutsopoulou, L. (1990). *Children's literature in our times*. Athens: Kastaniotis. ISBN 9789600304893
- Ruban, L., Leshchenko, M., Oliinyk, I., Petrovsky, M., & Sandyha, L. (2023). Fairy tale therapy for children of war. *Amazonia Investiga*, 12(68), 78-84. <https://doi.org/10.34069/AI/2023.68.08.7>
- Schubert, M. (2020). Dramatherapy and Fairytale: Entering the fantastic reality. *Dramatherapy*, 41(1), 25-36. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0263067221996923>
- Skoromovska, N. (2004). *A fairy tale is a genre that makes it possible to easily talk about serious issues*. Galicia. <https://acortar.link/gnzKld>
- Sukhomlynskyi, V. (1977). *The birth of a citizen*. Selected works: in 5 volumes. (In Ukrainian).
- Tymkiv, I. (2022). Fairy tale therapy: philosophical and educational reflection. *Philosophy of Education*, 27(2), 56-65. <https://doi.org/10.31874/2309-1606-2021-27-2-4>
- Wróblewska, V. (2023). *Wonder*. Folklore Research Workshop of the Nicolaus Copernicus University Catholic University of Lublin. <https://bajka.umk.pl/slownik/lista-hasel/haslo/?id=228>

