
For decades many researchers have noticed that the gender of the characters in children’s books have a great impact on the overall view of the book. The gender of the main character usually defines whether a children’s book is aimed towards boys or girls. Research was conducted at elementary school reading groups to investigate the way children perceive messages regarding the gender of a certain character, this turned out to be true for the most part. For example in Walt Disney’s book, Cinderella, the main character is obviously Cinderella. This book was greatly favored by the girls rather than the boys of the reading groups.

A major topic in fairy tales and archetypes is that there characteristics have to do with the gender of the character. Cinderella and most of the other females in her archetype, which is itself an archetype, plus many others are also largely based on female stereotypes and how they should act. This article mainly focuses on the Disney versions of fairy tales, but can easily be used to compare and contrast these points with the classic fairy tales.
from which they are based. In the end the way females are portrayed is an important
subtopic in the Cinderella topic which clearly shows the beautiful Cinderella as being
beautiful on the inside as well as the outside as opposed to her step sisters who were ugly
in both regards.

Gavin Helen and Jacquelyn Bent. Damsel in distress: not as sweet as she is painted? n.pag.

This is an article that serves as a counter example to the damsel in distress archetype. In
this article the author lists various examples of damsels in distress that were not as sweet
as fairy tales usually paint them. The article goes on to list various real life situations and
also fictional situations. Also it goes on to describe all the famous damsels in distress,
and other damsels that may not have been in an obvious distress scenario as Aurora from
Sleeping Beauty. The article includes information on everything from Snow White to
Little Red Riding Hood.

This is a great article to describe the archetype and what it teaches to its audience. In this
article the author lists and explains examples of where this archetype went wrong and did
not follow the typical damsel in distress characteristics. In order to explain accurately
what a certain archetype is and how it’s characterized it is a great idea to list examples
were the archetype fails so that the assumptions and characteristics can be seen clearly by
the audience. The damsel in distress is also another subtopic of the larger Cinderella
archetype and will also help clearly identify what makes the Cinderella archetype.

The article the author talks about the role the fairy godmother had in Cinderella. She goes on to cite example were there are characters with similar roles as the Fairy Godmother in Cinderella. It shows different fairy godmothers in not just other types of books, but in shows and movies and other types of stories. Apart from the various examples used, the author also gives a brief history of the role and how it evolved. Throughout the book it also gets deeper into the descriptions from various books. The article also offers examples from Shrek which is a movie series were the roles of various fairy tale characters are changed into something not characteristic of them.

I plan on using this essay to define the fairy godmother archetype as a sub topic of the much larger Cinderella archetype. It will define the role the fairy godmother has and show that in reality the fairy godmother is the guiding and driving force that is not just found in Cinderella stories, but also in other stories across different genres. It will fit nicely as a major topic in the essay and a paragraph. Also, if I decide to write a different direction this would be a great archetype to explore.

Four versions of the famous story Cinderella are analyzed to see if children will take different sides depending on the how feminine or masculine the character is and if they do take sides, how will their perspective vary between the different versions of the story. The main idea of this article considers this idea and how the cultural messages embedded in the plot also affects if the characters are viewed positively or negatively on how accurate they are to their gender. For example how “girly” the female characters are made to be or how “manly” the male characters are portrayed, and how the children respond to these characteristics.

In this great article, the Cinderella archetype is changed so that it is mostly masculine. It is shown to children in order to see how they will react and what version of the character they will side with. This will be a perfect article in comparing the Cinderella archetype to its sub-topic archetype of how females are viewed and how the female stereotypes shape the Cinderella character and how changing this will also affect the Cinderella character. Although this is not a sub-topic of the larger Cinderella archetype, it is very important to see how one archetype feeds and shapes another and what changes in one will do to the other.

The first time that Disney animated a fairytale was with the story, “Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs.” By making this movie Disney began to portray women in a certain way that continued onto their other movies. Usually making the female characters, for example princesses, seem to be these obedient, good natured women, waiting for a prince charming to save them or sweep them of their feet. However in the animated movie, Shrek, a new version of a hero rescuing a princess appears. One in which the princess is not portrayed as the usual “girly” princess. The princess in Shrek has her own morals and solid standpoint. The story still ends up with a happily ever after, but the point of this article is to show that happily ever after in animated fairytales don’t always have to follow the same plot of a conventional princess being rescued by a prince charming.

This is another article that serves to compare the archetypes that are part of the Cinderella one. Although the article focuses on the movie versions of all the fairy tales it can be easily compared to the classic versions. In the article the use of Shrek as a way to compare and define what the archetype is in the Disney version is a great way to see the aspects that make up that stereotype. It also only compares it to the Disney version, but it does also compare it to various fairy tales by Disney, and will give me a lot of evidence to support all the other sub topics planned.