

Folktales



Characteristics of folktales:

- 🐾 They contain magic
- 🐾 They explain **WHY** something happens or **HOW** people should act
- 🐾 They have good and bad in them; good is often rewarded whilst bad is punished
- 🐾 There is a problem which needs solving
- 🐾 They have happy endings



Morozko

Ivan lives in the forest with his mother. One evening after Ivan had finished his chores he set off into the forest for a walk. Whilst travelling through the forest he meets a wise old man called Father Mushroom. Father Mushroom decides to give Ivan a present - a fine bow and quiver of arrows. He asks Ivan to bow before him to thank him for the gift, but Ivan is too proud and tells him "the bear may bow before you, but not Ivan" and leaves.

Later, Ivan meets a beautiful girl called Nastenka who is collecting flowers. Ivan immediately falls in love and asks her to marry him claiming that he would make a very good husband. Nastenka says no as she thinks Ivan is too boastful and proud. Ivan catches sight of a mother bear with her cubs and thinks he can impress Nastenka by shooting it with his new bow and arrow. Father Mushroom is watching nearby and is very angry with Ivan for attacking the bear. He uses magic to turn Ivan's head into a bear's head as a punishment; Nastenka is terrified by Ivan's head and runs away. Father Mushroom confronts Ivan and tells him off for being selfish.

Ivan thinks that maybe doing a good deed will turn him back to normal and he sets out to find people he can help. However everyone he approaches is scared by his bear's head and runs away. Finally he comes across a blind old woman carrying sticks and offers to carry her to her home which is a long way away. The old woman thanks Ivan but his head remains that of a bear. Returning to the woods, Ivan comes across the old woman's walking stick and takes pity on her, vowing to return it. Nearby Father Mushroom is watching and pleased at his selflessness, restores Ivan to human form.

Ivan is delighted and searches everywhere for Nastenka. Once he finds her he explains everything that has happened and once again asks her to marry him. Nastenka sees that Ivan has changed and agrees to marry him. The couple return to Ivan's home where they are happily married.

