



Beauty, The Beast and You -
a creative challenge exploring
the 'tale as old as time'



TEACHER GUIDANCE

Immerse students in the oldest of all fairy tales, *Beauty and the Beast*, by bringing to life in the classroom the main characters from the book and Disney Theatrical stage show. Explore key themes of innovation, empowerment through reading and the downfall of judging on appearances.



THE CHALLENGE

Beauty and the Beast has three characters central to the story: Belle, the Beast and Maurice. This reading challenge encourages students to analyse, interpret and be inspired by these three main characters and explain their understanding through class discussions, written work and collaborative tasks.

In partnership with Disney Theatrical Productions, we have provided resources that can be utilised to help students understand the magical art of story-telling and encourage reading for pleasure.

These guidelines are written to support your delivery but of course, please adapt the challenge to suit the time you have available, the delivery methods you are using, and your students' needs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Firstly, it is important to familiarise your students with the story although many will know it from watching film versions or from traditional fairy-tale books. It could be helpful to discover their understanding of what they have seen or read so far, and to discuss their perceptions of the story, the characters, and the relevance of a fairy-tale in today's world.

Please take a look at the synopsis of the stage show provided by Disney Theatrical. This resource not only gives a summary of the stage show but also a background on the story, particularly around why literature and reading have such a defining role in Belle's life. (Resource download: background and synopsis).

Disney Theatrical has also provided some character descriptions for the casting of the stage show. Why not read aloud in class to see if the students can answer correctly who is being described (Resource download: character list and description).

FOCUS ON THE MAIN CHARACTERS

Extracts from the script are provided to draw attention to each character's identity and portrayal in the story. Perhaps some willing students could perform these aloud to the rest of the class? (Resource download: script extracts)

- first impressions: Belle is perceived as odd, a loner and cut off from reality whereas in fact, she reads constantly to broaden her mind and hopes for far wider horizons.
- conflicted characters: the Beast has hidden qualities of kindness and loyalty, contrasting with the shallowness and insincerity of Gaston, but displays only anger and cruelty
- stereotypes: Maurice, the fatherly and eccentric professor whose inventive ideas of limited success easily lead people to undermine him and not take him seriously.



GETTING STARTED ON THE CHALLENGE

Curriculum guidelines for Key Stage 3

Read critically through:

- studying setting, plot, and characterisation, and the effects of these
- understanding how the work of dramatists is communicated effectively through performance and how alternative staging allows for different interpretations of a play
- making critical comparisons across texts



- Students are challenged to create a monologue for each character that reflects that character's key themes. They need to explain feelings and events from the character's point of view which can mean seeing the character in a new light or discovering something about them they didn't see before. The script extracts and monologue explanation provided alongside the character descriptions can support with ideas and framework or you might like to provide them with your own "wagoll". As an optional extra they can provide a costume illustration to accompany each monologue
 - **Belle:** write a monologue for Belle that explores her aspirations, why she holds these, and what motivates them
 - **Maurice:** write a monologue for a new invention you have created that is sustainable and will have a positive impact on climate change
 - **Beast:** write a monologue for the Beast as he explores what beauty means to him and how his own understanding has changed over time
- Students could perform these monologues to the rest of the class, or direct willing classmates to perform them, and follow up with a discussion on how the themes of environmentalism, aspiration, beauty and acceptance of others are portrayed in the story.
- Discuss with the class the seven story archetypes. Which of these do the class feel are relevant to Beauty and the Beast? They must debate until they have agreed on the one key archetype for this story.

THE SEVEN ARCHETYPES



Overcoming the monster: The protagonist sets out to defeat an antagonistic force (often evil) which threatens the protagonist and/or protagonist's homeland. Example: **Dracula**

Rags to riches: The poor protagonist acquires power, wealth, and/or a mate, loses it all and gains it back, growing as a person as a result. Example: **Aladdin**

The quest: The protagonist and companions set out to acquire an important object or to get to a location. They face temptations and other obstacles along the way. Example: **The Lord of The Rings**

Voyage and return: The protagonist goes to a strange land and, after overcoming the threats it poses or learning important lessons unique to that location, they return with experience. Example: **The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe**

Comedy: Light and humorous character with a happy or cheerful ending; a dramatic work in which the central focus is the triumph over adverse circumstance, resulting in a successful or happy conclusion. Comedy is more complex than humour. Example: **A Midsummer Night's Dream**

Tragedy: The protagonist is a hero with a major character flaw or great mistake which is ultimately their undoing. Their unfortunate end evokes pity at their folly and the fall of a fundamentally good character. Example: **Romeo and Juliet**

Rebirth: An event forces the main character to change their ways and often become a better individual. Example: **Beauty and the Beast**

- Hand out the Seven Archetype resource. Task your students with completing the grid with the list of titles at the top; one has already been completed for them!
- We recommend that the conclusion of this task is done at home. Relating to stories they have read or know, discussed in class or at home with a wider audience, students can complete their seven archetype grid as fully as possible. On returning to class, students can collate all their ideas into one joint resource grid for the class, debating any that fall into multiple categories until settling on just one archetype per story.



HOW TO ENTER THE CHALLENGE

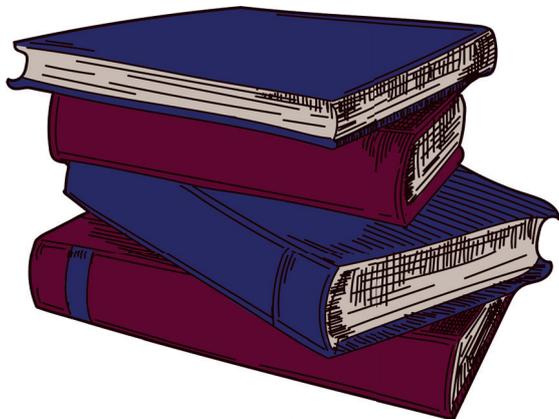
If you have completed this challenge in your school by **Friday 12 November**, you are invited to submit your class archetype grid as an attached document, scan or photograph with the name of your school to competitions@literacytrust.org.uk

You will be entered into a prize draw to win copies of *Beauty and the Beast*, branded stationery sets and a tote bag for the teacher!

You are, of course, welcome to complete the challenge without entering the prize draw. You can plan it for a different timeframe that suits you and we'll keep the resources available for you to access throughout the year.

If you have any queries about the challenge then don't hesitate to contact us at competitions@literacytrust.org.uk

See the attached terms and conditions for the prize draw.



WHY READING FOR PLEASURE IS SO IMPORTANT?

We've long known that a love of reading and writing can help children flourish at school and go on to succeed at work. But we now know that reading and writing for enjoyment can also play a vital role in helping children lead happy and healthy lives.

Furthermore, our [survey on reading](#) that we ran during lockdown proved that reading has provided refuge in this difficult time, supporting children's mental wellbeing and enabling them to dream about the future.

- **3 in 5** (59.3%) children and young people told us during lockdown that reading makes them feel better.
- **3 in 10** (31.6%) said that reading helps them when they feel sad because they cannot see their family and friends.
- Reading is encouraging **half of children** (50.2%) to dream about the future.

Our research, [Mental wellbeing, reading and writing](#), found that children who enjoy reading and writing in their free time have significantly better mental wellbeing than their peers who don't.