

## Qualities of Folktales

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### Elements of Folktales:

- Folktales are usually about ordinary people and everyday life.
- The stories include setting, characters, and a problem.
- The characters are often flat, representing one particular trait such as cleverness.
- Hyperbole is always found in tall tales.

### Common Folktale Motifs:

- wishes granted
- a monster
- magic objects
- use of trickery
- a poor person becomes rich
- the number three is significant
- the youngest or smallest of siblings is successful after others in the family fail
- a variety of unwise characters

### The Folktale Formula:

- The plot begins quickly.
- Characters are one-sided.
- Plots move along well-trod paths.
- All questions are answered before the story ends.

### Types of Folktales:

- tales of talking animals
- tales that tell why ("pourquoi")
- tales of magic (fairy tales)
- cumulative tales
- tales of exaggeration or legendary tales (tall tales)