

Title: Digging for Details	Grade: 6th Grade
Content: English Language Arts	Duration: 30 minutes

Standard:

- **RL.1:** Students will be able to cite evidence to support what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text to make connections to stories they already know.

Objective:

Students will read a variation of a fairytale, picking out evidence that corresponds with one or more American fairy tale classics.

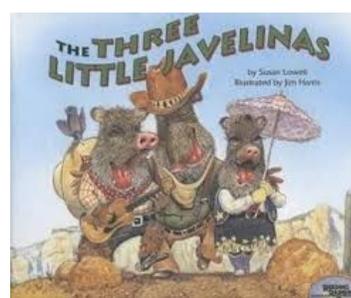
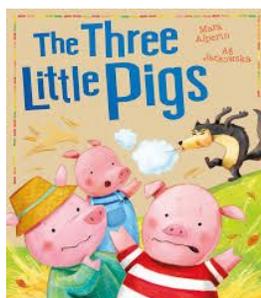
Resources Needed:

- CommonLit Story: “The Anklet”
- Template found below.

Introduction/Description:

Fairy tales are unlike any other kind of story. They are magical. They almost always end with the line “...and they lived happily ever after.” One of the best things about fairy tales today is that there are so many versions to enjoy. Today the main characters no longer look identical. Now, we are able to get a look into other cultures in these stories and visit many different countries.

Example:



Steps:

- **First, read the CommonLit story:** “The Anklet.” Read the story the first time through without a pencil in hand. Read aloud if you can, in your best author’s voice. If there are young children in your house, read it to them!
- Now, you’ll **read the story again.** This time, I want you to look and listen for **details or elements in the story that remind you of other fairy tales** you’ve heard of.
- Use the **double-entry journal** below to record your findings and thoughts. Here’s how to do it.

- When you find something that reminds you of other fairy tales, **write the quoted** words, phrases, sentences **on the left side** of the double entry journal template.
- On the **right side, write your personal connection/response**: what it made you think of/remind you of. What do you notice about characteristics of fairytales, in general? (*See example below*)
- Include a **minimum of five entries** with corresponding evidence/connection.

Textual Evidence:	My Connection:
Paragraph 1 Sentence 2 & 3: “The youngest was also the prettiest, graceful and radiant...” “Her elder sisters were born to a different mother...”	This makes me think of Cinderella because Cinderella was stuck with her step-mother and two ugly, mean step sisters. Also, it seems like the number three is used in fairy tales a lot: three little pigs, three wishes, etc.

Finished Product:

Share the double entry journal with your teacher and/or peers as directed.

Adaptations:

Questions and discussion topics are offered from Commonlit.org:

<https://1.cdn.edl.io/PRSHggugT1eCgTWLnXyypVHsRET6mV6tONaDIdqCbVJoNRf5.pdf>

Textual Evidence:	My Connection:

Name: _____ Class: _____

The Anklet

By Neil Philip
1994

Neil Philip is a writer and poet who has retold the best-known stories from The Arabian Nights for a modern day audience. The Arabian Nights is the English-language nickname frequently given to One Thousand and One Arabian Nights, a collection of folk tales written and collected in the Middle East during the Islamic Golden Age of the 8th to 13th centuries. In this tale, a poor young woman must deal with mistreatment by members of her own family. As you read, take notes on the youngest sister's actions and feelings.

Sheherazade told stories night after night: all the voyages of Sinbad the Sailor, and the adventures of Land Abdullah and Sea Abdullah, the fate of the man who stole the dog's golden dish, the story of the ruined man who became rich again through a dream. And one night she told the story of



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The Anklet

- [1] It is said, O King, that there were once in a city three sisters, who lived together and earned their bread by spinning flax.¹ The youngest was also the prettiest, radiant² and graceful as the moon. Her elder sisters, who were born to a different mother, hated and envied³ her, both for her beauty and for her skill at spinning.

One day the youngest went to the market, and, finding herself with a small coin left over, bought a little clay pot to hold flowers.

"You silly girl," shrieked the sisters. "We can't waste our money on fancies and fripperies."

She made no answer, but placed a single rose in the pot, and sat down to her spinning.

- [5] The days passed, in drudgery⁴ and silent toil.⁵ The two older sisters kept nagging the poor girl and making fun of her. Her only pleasure in life was to fill the little pot with flowers, which she could look at and smell as she worked.

1. Flax is a plant fiber that can be woven to make cloth.
2. shining or glowing
3. **Envy (verb):** to desire to have a quality or possession belonging to someone else
4. hard, menial, or dull work
5. **Toil (noun):** exhausting physical labor

Now one day the sisters were out, and the girl, alone with her thoughts, burst into tears. "Oh, little pot," she said, "you are my only friend. My sisters have gone out and left me to work all by myself, without anything to eat."

And the little pot heard her, and brought forth sweetmeats for her to eat. For there was a jinni⁶ in the pot, and whatever the mistress of the pot asked for, the jinni would provide.

The girl kept the secret of the pot from her sisters, but whenever they were out, she would ask for whatever she fancied.⁷ She would eat and drink her fill, and dress up in beautiful clothes; but when her sisters came home, she was always careful to be back in her rags and hard at work at her spinning wheel.

Now it happened that the king announced that he was going to hold a great feast for all the people of the city. Everyone was invited, even the three poor sisters.

- [10] The two older sisters dressed up in their threadbare best, and set out for the feast. "You can't come," they said. "You would shame us in those rags. You're not fit for such fine company."

But as soon as they were gone, the girl asked her pot for a beautiful green robe and scarves and garments of the finest silk. She asked, too, for sparkling rings and turquoise bracelets, and gold anklets studded with diamonds to wear around her slender ankles.

When she entered the king's harem, where the women's part of the entertainments was being held, everyone there gasped at her beauty, and at the richness of her magic clothes and jewels. Even her sisters were moved to tears at her grace and charm, and never guessed that this lovely princess was their own despised⁸ sister.

The girl slipped away before the end of the feast, so as to be home first. She took off the diamond anklets in order to be able to run faster, and in her haste she did not notice that she dropped one. It fell into the water trough where the king's horses drank.

Next morning the horses refused to drink, shying away from the trough in terror, for the anklet shone and flared beneath the water, frightening them.

- [15] The groom took the jewel to the king's son. He turned it around and around in his hands, saying nothing. Finally he declared, "The girl whom this anklet fits shall be my wife!"

He took the anklet to his mother. "Mother," he said, "you know about such things. Please find the girl to whom this anklet belongs. I am in love with her already, and long to see the anklet gracing her slim, shapely ankle."

So the queen organized a search of the whole city. She visited all the harems, and all the houses, but no one had an ankle slim enough to wear the anklet. Finally she went into the very poorest quarter, to the house of the three sisters. The two older sisters tried in vain to force the anklet on, but when the queen tried it on the youngest, it fitted perfectly. The search was over.

6. an intelligent spirit able to appear in human and animal forms

7. **Fancy** (*verb*): feel a desire or liking for

8. **Despised** (*adjective*): hated

The queen led the girl back to the palace. The celebrations went on for forty days and forty nights, while the wedding was prepared. At last, the day arrived, and the bride was taken to the baths by her sisters, who were to dress her.

The older girls had worried away at the poor, trusting girl until they had wheedled⁹ the secret of the magic pot from her and they, too, had made requests of the jinni. They dressed her hair with the diamond pins the jinni provided, and as the last pin went into place, the girl was turned into a white dove, which flew out the window in panic. She had been transformed by the magic pins.

[20] When the queen asked where the bride was, the sisters just said, "She has gone."

The prince sent out search parties to scour¹⁰ the city for his bride, but she was nowhere to be found. Without her, he began to sicken and waste away.

Every day, at dawn and at dusk, the white dove came to the prince's window, and cooed to him in his misery. The prince grew to love the bird, which seemed to be the only creature that could sooth his lonely heart. Once a day he reached out to touch her and, seeing she did not fly away, took her in his hand.

The dove cooed at the prince, and he began to smooth her feathers. Noticing something hard beneath them, he scratched the place, and out fell a diamond pin. He pulled out another, and another. And when the last pin was gone, the dove ruffled her feathers and shook herself back into her true shape, his bride once more.

The prince and his love lived many years in happiness, blessed by children as beautiful and kind as themselves. But the two sisters died of jealousy, poisoned by their own spite.

"The Anklet" from The Arabian Nights retold by Neil Philip. Copyright © 1994 by Neil Philip, published by Orchard Books. Used with permission. All rights reserved.

9. to use flattery to persuade someone to do or give something
10. to look through a place carefully