

## Poster Session: Process, Criteria and Rationale

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I freely admit that my reason for choosing fairy tales as a subject for my poster was at least partially selfish, in that it is both my favorite genre and one which lends itself well to both a WebQuest and a poster. (We were encouraged to relate the two together because it would be easier on us if we did.) On the other hand, I developed my taste for retold fairy tales over ten years ago, when I was a young teenager, and I believe it is not unreasonable to expect teenagers today to find the genre as exciting as I continue to do.

I created my poster as a web page because my web design skills are much more proficient than my “analog” artistic skills, and a cardboard-and-ink poster of mine would have looked distressingly shabby. I attempted to recreate the feel of a poster with a very simple and clean-cut design and more color than text. Three boxes at the top of the page showcase the three books I featured on my poster. I considered putting all the text of my page in those three columns but decided that reading in those narrow columns would have been far too annoying for any reader. The covers at the top therefore link to fuller descriptions a little lower on the page.

The three books featured on my page are Robin McKinley’s *Deerskin*, Jane Yolen’s *Briar Rose*, and Ellen Datlow and Terri Windling’s *Snow White, Blood Red*. I chose these three books because I first read them and loved them as a teenager, and they are still among my most beloved books. They hooked me immediately, and I think they would hook other teens as well. I included *Snow White, Blood Red* there because it is a collection of short stories and poems, unlike the other two, which are novels; not only can it be read in smaller bites (possibly appealing to a more reluctant reader), but it offers a wide variety of fairy tales and of authors, all or most of whom have written other stories and novels (whether retellings or originals). In addition, *Snow White, Blood Red* is just the first of a series of six short-story collections edited by Datlow and Windling. If a reader decides he likes what he found and wants more of it, he can easily find more.

Fairy tales are ideally suited to reluctant readers because the stories are familiar and straightforward. Their impact is emotional rather than intellectual, and the stories are easy to read but often rich with language and imagery. The only disadvantage I see is that boys, especially, may think that fairy tales are “girly” and be wary of the genre for

that reason. This is another reason for including *Snow White, Blood Red*; Neil Gaiman's "Troll Bridge," in that collection is a decidedly non-girly tale. If I were specifically targeting teenage boys, I would have created my poster about retellings of the King Arthur myth, including Marion Zimmer Bradley's *Mists of Avalon* but also Mary Stewart's Arthurian trilogy and any other retelling I could find, including historical retellings like *La Morte d'Arthur* (for completeness' sake as well as historical context).

A final piece of the poster that I would like to add is a longer list of additional titles (without blurbs or cover shots). I did not do so because I could not decide how to format it visually without cluttering the page and spoiling the clean and simple, poster-like design.