

# *Into the Wild*

## by Sarah Beth Durst

### **Lesson Plan:** Growing a Story

The idea for *Into the Wild* grew from two separate ideas:

- 1) What if a girl had a monster under her bed, and her mother knew about it?
- 2) If Rapunzel lived in the here and now, she would own a hair salon.

From there, I had the idea that the girl was Rapunzel's daughter (whom I named Julie), and the monster was the essence of fairy tales (the Wild)... and the rest simply evolved over the course of many, many drafts to become:

Long ago, the fairy-tale characters escaped the fairy tale to live in secret in our world. But now the fairy tale wants its characters back, and it's up to Julie to save them.

In this lesson, students will discover how to grow their own story from a single idea.

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**GOAL:** Through brainstorming and writing, discover how a full story can grow from a single idea (much like a magic beanstalk can grow from a bean).

### **PROCEDURE:**

1. By brainstorming either in small groups or as a class, create a list of fairy-tale items, such as magic wands, glass slippers, pumpkin coaches, and magic beans. (Note: if the students are unfamiliar with fairy tales, you could read a selection of tales before beginning.)
2. Each student should choose a single item from the class list. (It is okay if multiple students choose the same item.)
3. For their item, students should answer the following questions:
  - a. Who would most want this item?
  - b. Why do they want it?
  - c. What do they do with it once they have it?
  - d. What goes wrong?
  - e. How do they fix it?

**EVALUATE:** Students share their responses.

**FURTHER ACTIVITIES:** Students can write a story based on their idea. Their answers to 3a and 3b define their main character. Their answers to 3c, 3d, and 3e are the story outline: 3c is the beginning of their story, 3d is the middle, and 3e is the ending.