According to the text, traditional tales had their beginnings around the campfire. The stories were fantastic in nature, involving magic or talking animals.

**Traditional Fantasy: A Part of Every Culture**

Because these stories were born in the oral tradition, no one really knows who first told the story or what the original version is. The definition of traditional fantasy is that the literature (1) originated orally and (2) has no author.

**Peculiarities of traditional Fantasy**

1. Traditional stories differ in various ways from more modern writings and therefore are held to a different critical standard.
2. Characters must be well developed in modern stories, but in traditional tales character development is lean and spare.
3. Traditional tales, then are stories of the human experience told in primary colors, the nuances of life stripped away to revel the basic component parts; love, fear, greed, jealousy, mercy and so on.
4. Plots are also simple and direct in traditional fantasy.
5. These story lines are accompanied by typical themes, such as the rewards of mercy, kindness and perseverance; justice, particularly the punishment of evil, and the power of love.
6. Settings are quickly established and always in the distant past (“Once upon a time…”) and time passes quickly (sleeping Beauty’s 100 years of rest pass in a flash.)
7. Another hallmark of traditional stories is repeated patterns or elements.

**The Universal Nature of Traditional Fantasy**

1. Although tales certainly vary from culture to culture, it is amazing how alike in form they are, how the basic sorts of literacy elements are similar in Chinese stories, in stories from Native American tribes, and in stories from Europe (Frye 1964).
2. However, simple and straightforward traditional fantasy may seem, it is the mother of all literature. There are literacy no character types, basic plots, or themes that have not been explored in the oral tradition.
3. Unless these stories have been dumbed down for painting in educational reading materials or oversimplified picture books, traditional tales are a blueprint for rich, masterful language.

**The Values of Fantasy Stories**

1. First, on the very surface of it, the sheer delight of “let’s pretend” and eager suspension of disbelief; excitement, wonder, astonishment
2. Second, fantasy has the ability to work on our emotions with the same vividness as a dream.
3. Another value of fantasy [is its ability to develop a capacity for belief]
4. Perhaps, finally the ability to hope is more important than the ability to believe....
   Hope is one of the most precious human values fantasy can offer us- and offer us
   in abundance.

Types of Traditional Fantasy
Categories of any gene of literature are never cast in concrete.

FOLKTALES: Quite rightly, all traditional stories could be called folktales or stories
of the people. The most common kinds of folktales follow.

1. Cumulative Tales: these stories are “added upon” as the telling unfolds.
   Typically, the story is told up to a certain point, then begun again from near
   the beginning and told until a new segment is added. An example is, “I Know
   an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly.”
2. Pourquoi tales: Pourquoi means “why” in French. These folktales answer
   questions or give explanations for the way things are, particularly in nature.
   An example is, “Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People’s Ears.”
3. Beast Tales: their distinction is simple: Beast tales are stories with animals as
   the principal players. An example is, “The Three Little Pigs or The Three Billy
   Goats Gruff.”
4. Noodlehead, or numbskull, tales: These humorous stories center on the
   escapades of characters who are not too bright. A couple examples include,
   “Raven, and Coyote” both books are written by Gerald McDermott.
5. Trickster Tales: Often a Variety of beast tales features a character who
   outsmarts everyone else in the story.
6. Realistic Tales: Realistic tales seem to have their basis in an actual historical
   event or to feature an actual figure from history.
7. Fairy Tales: Of all the folktales, the fairy tale, or wonder tale, is the most
   magical. This category is probably the favorite with stories like, “
   Cinderella,” “Sleeping Beauty,” and “Beauty and the Beast.”

Tall Tales
Exaggeration is the major stylistic element in tall tales. Tall-tale characters, such as Paul
Bunyan, Pecos Bill, Johnny Appleseed, John Henry, and Old Stormalong, were based
either on actual people or on a composite of rough-and tumble lumberjacks, sailors, or
cowboys.

Fables
Fables are brief stories meant to teach a lesson, and they usually conclude with a moral,
such as “A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.”

Myths
Myths grew out of early people’s need to understand and explain the world around them and their own existence; they therefore recount the creation and tell of the gods and godness who control the fate of humans.

**Epics, Ballad, and legends**

1. Epics are lengthy hero tales or even a series of tales focusing on a hero
2. Ballad’s are typically hero stories in poetic form
3. The heroes in legends are rooted a bit more firmly in history.

**Religious Stories**

Classifying religious stories as traditional fantasy or as myths may bother many people, but myth in this series can be broadly defined as humans’ quest to discover and share with one another truth concerning the spiritual aspects of existence.

**In Defense of Traditional Fantasy**

“about once every hundred years some wiseacre gets up and tries to banish the fairy tale. Perhaps I had better say a few words in its defense, as reading for children” (Lewis 1980, p. 213). Yet, in far less than 100 years- in fact, on a regular basis – “wiseacres” have been attempting to censor traditional stories. We have already discussed the important of fairy and folktales but now wish to provide some responses to the major complaints voiced against traditional literature. These objectives mainly fall into four categories: psychological fantasy, violence, frightening to young children, and waste of time (tunnel 1994).

1. **Psychological Fantasy:** Some adults fear that fantasy stories will lead children to be somehow out of touch with reality to suffer from fantasy in the clinical, psychological sense of the word. In fact children who read stories that contain “unrealistic” elements – animals who talk, magical events, time travel – are actually less at risk of losing touch with the realities of daily life (Bruno Bettelheim 1977).

2. **Violence:** Critics suggest that violent acts in some traditional tales will breed violence in young children. In his experimental study, Biblow (1973) showed that children with rich fantasy lives responded to aggressive films with a significant decrease in aggressive behavior, while “low-fantasy” children showed a tendency toward increased aggression. Much of the violence in fairy and folktales involves the punishment of truly evil villains.

3. **Frightening for young children:** Many adults worry about some of the traditional tales will frighten children, causing nightmares and other sorts of distress. Fairy and folktales provide children a message of hope. Some adults feel they can circumvent the problem of frightening children by choosing softened versions of fairy and folktales.

4. **Waste of Time:** Perhaps the most insidious complaint is that traditional fantasy is a waste of time. Adults simply bypass fairy or folktales when making selections to use with children in favor of more “substantial” stories and books about the real world.