



Hans Christian Andersen is a well-known author of traditional fairy tales but how much do you know about these well-loved tales?

- Hans Christian Andersen started by retelling stories told to him by his mother and grandmother but then began to write his own.
- Aside from his fairy tales, Andersen wrote poems, books and plays specifically for adults, including six novels, five travel journals and three autobiographies.
- At first he wanted to be a writer of adult drama and was not very proud of his fairy tales. He then started to think about them as a form of poetry.
- Although his tales were written for children, he also considered the adult who may be reading the fairy tales to children to be part of his audience. With this in mind, he wrote so they too would enjoy the experience.
- In total he wrote 168 tales. His most famous are Princess and the Pea, The Ugly Duckling and The Little Mermaid.
- Many of his tales contained both a biographical and an autobiographical element. For example his parents were very poor and his mother told him about how she had to beg when she was a little girl. This stayed with him and inspired him to write The Little Match Girl.
- Another of his tales The Ugly Duckling summed up his experiences growing up when he considered himself to be ugly and skinny. The end of the tale highlights the fact that we all have an inner beauty.
- Andersen published his first volume in 1835 and continued to publish editions throughout his life. His final volume was published in 1872 three years before his death.
- This first volume included The Tinder Box, Big Claus and Little Claus, The Princess and the Pea and Little Tiny (also known as Thumbelina).
- Other popular fairy tales included:
  - The Little Mermaid written in 1836
  - The Emperor's New Suit - 1837
  - The Snow Queen - 1845
  - The Little Match Girl - 1846

