

Grimm's Fairy Tales Came Alive in Saint John's Catholic School

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In January, the students of the Primary Unit had already made the characters of their favorite books come alive in Saint John's Catholic School (Kaelynn Tann wrote her experience [here](#)). On February 19, 2013, it was the Junior High School students who had their chance to go into the world of fairy tales with Frau Sabine Kolbe.

Frau Kolbe had asked the students to open the key into the world of the Grimm's stories. With her theatrical background, Frau Kolbe fascinated the students and introduced some new stories for them.

She used German language for the ninth graders as they are quite capable to understand it. The ninth graders have learned the language for three years. The seventh graders are newly introduced to the language. They are studying it for only about six months. So, Frau Kolbe used both English and German language when she presented the stories to the seventh graders.

Indonesian children are usually quite familiar with Grimm's stories like Cinderella (*Aschenputtel*), Little Red Riding Hood (*Rotkäppchen*), Snow White (*Schneewittchen*), or Hansel and Gretel (*Hänsel und Gretel*). Yet, the Brothers Grimm, Jakob Grimm (1785–1863) and Wilhelm Grimm (1786–1859) had more than 200 collections of stories. Frau Kolbe tried to introduce more stories for the students. Hearing it in its native language was also added the excitement of the students. The storyteller has the charm that was almost like magic which brought the students into the world of the fairy tales.



Despite of the fact that she was probably still in her jet lag after a long journey for her first visit to the South East Asia, Frau Kolbe was really energetic. After opening the world of the fairy tales together with the students, she started her line of stories with the story of [The Sweet Porridge \(Der Susse Brei\)](#). Then, she presented some other stories, such as [Mother Hulda \(Frau Holle\)](#), and [The Frog Prince \(Der Froschkönig\)](#). She was also attracting the students with the folded paper for her story "[The Wishing-Table, the Gold-Ass, and the Cudgel in the Sack](#)" (*Tischchen deck dich, Goldesel und Knüppel aus dem Sack*).



Students of grade seven also had some additional activities. They had to solve puzzles, to match pictures and words, and also to draw something from the stories that they have heard. It seems that being closer to the story of the Frog Prince, even though some of them have heard it in a different version, made most of them thought about this story in the drawing session. They also had the tongue twister session, which they found funny, but also a

bit difficult.

Frau Kolbe said that storytelling is actually helping the children to grasp the meaning of the unknown words. Through the actions, gestures, or mimic that were presented they can understand the story. She said that Saint John's students were really enthusiastic and interactive in listening to the stories. She can feel the enthusiasm through the gleams of their eyes, and their reactions in hearing the stories.

Through her experiences in telling stories for students, Frau Kolbe found out that informal environment like the museum, or a specially design corner of the library can be a relaxing place to transfer stories. Stories that would help those students to develop themselves from listeners into narrators.



She helped Saint John's students to experience how lively the Grimm's stories are, and how interesting to learn another language to open the world of stories. Danke, Frau Sabine Kolbe!

