

Fairy Tale

# Charming Ella

by Yvonne Morrin • illustrated by Tyson Smith



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Graw  
Hill

PAIRED  
READ

Ivana and the Ogre

# STRATEGIES & SKILLS

## Comprehension

**Strategy:** Make Predictions

**Skill:** Sequence

## Vocabulary

brainstorm, flattened,  
frantically, gracious, muttered,  
official, original, stale

## Vocabulary Strategy

Synonyms

Word Count: 2,161



## Education

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A



Essential Question

Where do good ideas come from?

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## Chapter 1

### *"Ella, Do This! Ella, Do That!"*

There was once a girl named Ella. Her mother had died when she was a baby, and she lived with her father, who was an inventor. Ella loved spending time with her father, and she enjoyed tinkering with the materials in his workshop.

Ella discovered that she had a talent for fixing things. She also realized that she really enjoyed creating new things out of old materials. Her favorite activity was to buy used clothing from thrift stores and create interesting outfits out of old clothing.

When Ella was 16 years old, her father remarried. A few weeks after the wedding, he had to travel away on a long research trip for his work.

"Don't worry," he told her. "We'll be able to keep in touch on e-mail, and your stepmother will take excellent care of you."

The day after her father left, Ella's stepmother announced that her twin daughters, Polly and Molly, would be coming to live with them.

When the twins arrived, Ella greeted them excitedly, but instead of saying hello, they threw their bags at her feet and told her to carry them up to their room. As she carried their heavy bags upstairs, Ella overheard them snickering at her outfit.

Over the next few weeks, the spoiled twins made Ella take care of all the household chores. They were constantly asking her to go on errands. “Ella, this bread’s stale. Go and get some fresh bread from the grocery store,” Polly demanded. “Pick up some ice cream, too,” added Molly.

One day, Polly asked Ella to buy her a new flat iron because her old one wasn’t working.

“Let me take a look and see if I can fix it,” said Ella.

“Don’t be absurd,” scoffed Polly. “Why would you want to fix it when you can buy a new one?”



One day, Ella heard a loud shriek coming from the office and she rushed in to see what was wrong. She discovered the girls and her stepmother huddled around the computer gazing at an advertisement.

“I can’t believe it!” squealed Molly. “They’re holding a young designers’ contest next week, and they’re awarding a prize for the most original outfit. The famous fashion designer Troy Charming is the judge!”

“We have to enter!” Polly exclaimed.

“Yes, but what outfit should we make?” replied Molly. Then she noticed Ella, who smiled at her.

“It sounds exciting,” Ella said enthusiastically. “I think I could create a really original outfit out of recycled clothing.”

“I don’t think you can win a design contest with an outfit made from old clothing,” snickered Molly.

“Anyway, there won’t be any room for you in the car,” her stepmother added.

“Oh, I guess I can’t go with you then,” the gracious Ella replied, hiding her hurt.

As the day of the young designers' contest approached, the twins' demands became more and more outrageous. Every day, Polly and Molly sent Ella to the store to buy more materials for their outfits. They also asked her to cut out patterns, sew on buttons, and take up hems.



Ella really wanted to create her own outfit for the contest. She knew she could make something fabulous if she had the time. She'd show Polly and Molly what original fashion looked like. But with all the twins' demands, she would never have enough time, and anyway, how would she get there? Without a car of her own, she couldn't go anywhere.



## Chapter 2

### *Who Needs a Fairy Godmother?*

Finally, the day of the young designers' contest arrived, and the excited twins ran around the house, frantically putting the finishing touches on their outfits. When they finally emerged, Molly wore a huge pink puffy dress, and her hair was a mass of big, looping curls. Polly wore a purple tutu, green tights, and orange boots, and her hair was completely flattened, as if she had ironed it.

Ella smiled sweetly and told them that they looked amazing.





“Mom says we look exactly like famous models,” said Polly.

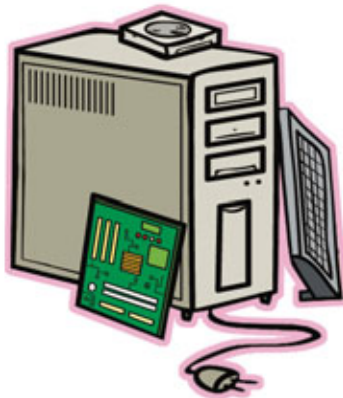
“We’re definitely going to win,” said Molly.

When they had finally left for the contest, Ella flopped down on the nearest chair and sighed. She had been looking forward to a day of peace and quiet, but the twins had written a long list of chores for her.

Ella looked at the first item on the list: “Check computers for viruses.” She groaned. Well, if she had to be online, she would read her father’s e-mails before she started.

Ella squeezed past the pile of old computer equipment lying on the floor and sat down at the desk. As she turned on the computer, she noticed a box sitting on the desk. She read the label: “Fairy Godmother Anti-Virus Takes Care of You!”

“I could sure do with a fairy godmother!” Ella muttered.



Ella moved the box to one side and logged on to her e-mail. She was excited to see a message from her father, which she hurriedly clicked open.

*My Dear Ella,*

*My research is a big success, but I miss you terribly. I hope you are well and are taking good care of yourself. I'm sure you are because you are such a clever young woman. Just a couple of months, and I will be home with you again.*

*Lots of love,*

*Dad*

Ella smiled, her spirits lifted by her father's words. Perhaps she didn't need to do everything the twins told her to do. After all, they weren't in charge of her. She looked again at the software box and at the magical fairy godmother pictured on the front.

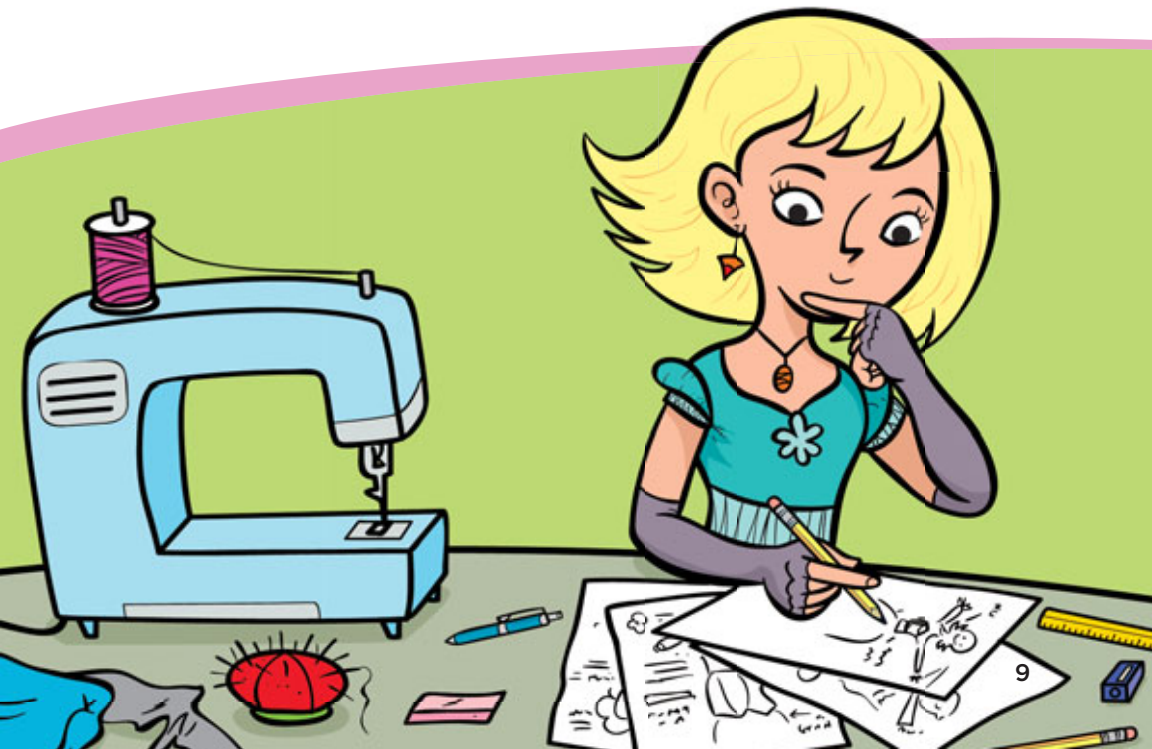
"I don't need a fairy godmother to take care of me," she told the picture. "I'm Ella, not Cinderella, and I'm going to take care of myself!"

Idly, Ella began to let her mind wander. She thought about how Cinderella's fairy godmother had solved a problem with a pumpkin and a magic wand.

"How silly these old fairy tales are," she said to herself. "You could never solve a real problem with a pumpkin!"

Ella thought about how disappointed she was that she couldn't enter the young designers' contest. Then she spied a carton on the floor that was overflowing with clothing the twins had discarded, and she began rummaging through it.

Suddenly, an idea sprang into her head, and she grabbed a piece of paper and a pencil and began to brainstorm. Before long, she had sketched out an idea, and it was time to turn her idea into reality.



Ella began to remove the clothes from the carton. She took out a gold dress, and although it had a stain on the bottom of the skirt, the bodice, or top, was fine. Then she discovered a glittery top, a metallic scarf, and an old black skirt.

Ella carried the clothing into her room and sat down at her sewing machine. Humming as she sewed, Ella soon transformed the old dress, top, scarf, and skirt into a new outfit. She put it on and rushed into the twins' room to admire the effect in a full-length mirror.

The sleek bodice looked fantastic with the glittery sleeves, which she'd fashioned from the top. She had used the material from the scarf and the skirt to create pants. "This might just work," she muttered, "but I need something else to complete my outfit." Her eyes drifted around the room, settling on the broken computer equipment. "This is just the thing."



Ella finished her outfit, but she still had a problem because she hadn't figured out how to transport herself to the contest. She started to put away her sewing materials, and as she was making her way over to the closet, she tripped over something. She retrieved a sweater and underneath it was a brand-new bicycle helmet, which looked like it had never been worn.

As Ella was putting the helmet away, she remembered the new Bike Share program in town. Racks of bikes had been placed around town so maybe Ella could use one of the bikes and ride it to the contest!

Now that she had solved her transportation problem, Ella realized she really could go to the young designers' contest. She felt confident that her new look was a winner. It was much more original than a puffy dress and a purple tutu.

"Watch out, Polly and Molly," she thought. "Here comes Ella, and no one's going to push her around ever again!"



## Chapter 3

### *A Surprise at the Contest*

Ella dashed down the street to the Bike Share rack. She chose a bike, put on the helmet, and cycled down the street. When she arrived at the theater, the doors were locked.

Ella's shoulders slumped, and gloomily, she began to turn away, but then she realized that someone was saying something to her.

"You're late for the contest," said a thin woman wearing a pink Troy Charming puff-ball dress.

Puzzled, Ella followed the woman inside the theater. A steady pulse of music throbbed over the loudspeakers, and she heard the murmur of the crowd. All of a sudden, the woman stopped, and giving Ella a shove, she wished her good luck.

Ella stumbled onto a long runway. Hundreds of eyes looked at her as she began walking down the runway, and she glimpsed her stepmother in the crowd, her wide-open mouth gaping.

**TROY  
CHARMING**  
Young Designers'  
Contest



“Well,” she thought, “I might as well have some fun up here.” She twisted and turned as she strode down the runway, and when she reached the end, she struck a pose. The audience cheered and clapped.

Then it was time to announce the winner, and all the other contestants joined Ella onstage. She saw Polly and Molly, who looked extremely unhappy to see Ella.

A man with a beaming smile accompanied them onstage. Ella thought she recognized him. Was it ...? Yes, it was! It was Troy Charming himself.

“I want to thank everyone for entering this contest,” Troy Charming said. “There is one outfit that is the clear winner,” he announced, walking toward Ella. “Congratulations!”

“Um ... er ...,” Ella replied, then shook herself and grinned. “Thank you!” she said.





After the applause died down, Ella and the other contestants walked offstage. Troy Charming rushed over to her.

“Your look is fabulous! You must come work for me!” he told her.

So Ella made a deal with Troy Charming. Troy created an official fashion label named Charming Ella, and Ella recycled used clothing into new designs for the label. She used the money to study fashion design in college.

As for Polly and Molly, they spent every cent they had on Charming Ella clothing.



# Respond to Reading

## Summarize

Summarize the story *Charming Ella*. Use your graphic organizer to help you keep the sequence of events in order.



## Text Evidence

1. How do you know that this is a fairy tale? Identify one feature that tells you this. How is this story different from some fairy tales? **GENRE**
2. What events happen after Ella reads the e-mail from her father? **SEQUENCE**
3. Find a synonym for the word *complete* on page 10. **SYNONYMS**
4. Write about the steps Ella takes to get to the contest. Tell what you learned about her character from her actions. **WRITE ABOUT READING**

## Compare Texts

Read about how Ivana used good ideas to fool the ogre.

# Ivana and the Ogre

Once, a woman named Ivana strolled into a village to find the entire village had been flattened and the villagers had vanished. Only one house was still standing, and inside, a distraught mother was cradling a baby and weeping.

“An ogre smashed up our village, and he’s returning this evening!” the woman wailed.

“No problem,” Ivana said, “I’ll handle him.”

That night, when the ogre returned, Ivana strode up to him.

“Why aren’t you frightened of me?” the ogre asked.

“I’m much stronger than you,” Ivana replied.

The ogre picked up a stone and pulverized it in one hand. “Can you crush a stone?” he asked.

“I can do much better than that,” Ivana said. “I can wring water from a stone.”

Ivana squeezed a muslin bag full of cottage cheese until the liquid ran out. The ogre was impressed and suggested they drink a cup of coffee together.

“First, go and uproot a tree for firewood,” he said.

Ivana realized that she must not reveal any weakness, so she hurried into the forest, where she began to attach 50 trees together. Presently, the ogre came along and asked her what she was doing.

“If I uproot 50 trees at once,” Ivana explained, “that will last us for 50 days!”

The ogre’s eyes bulged—he could only lift ten trees, so Ivana must be much stronger than him.

“We only need one right now,” the ogre muttered, pulling up one tree and carrying it back to the cottage.

The ogre then handed Ivana the bathtub and told her to fill it with water.



Ivana realized she didn't have enough strength to lift the bathtub once it was full, so she grabbed a shovel and dug a trench around the well.

"What are you doing now?" the ogre asked.

"I'm digging up the well so we have enough water to last an entire month," Ivana replied.

The ogre licked his lips nervously—he couldn't lift a whole well. He filled the bathtub and carried it inside. While they drank coffee, he stole anxious glances at Ivana.

"I don't need a weak friend like you," said Ivana. "Go away from here and don't ever return!"

The frightened ogre slunk off, and the villagers returned to rebuild their homes. Clever Ivana strolled on to the next village.

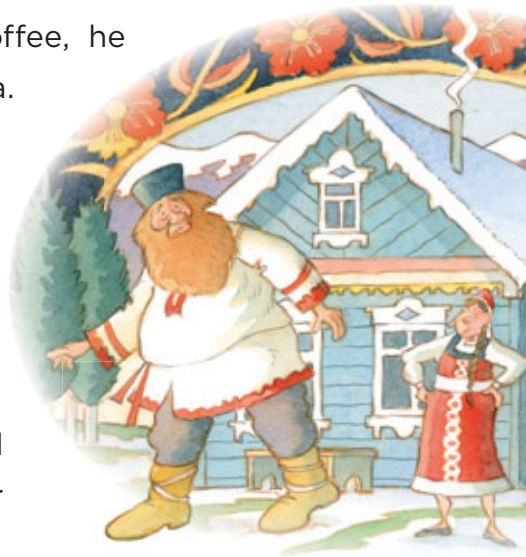


Illustration: Philip Webb



## Make Connections

What good ideas does Ivana have to get rid of the ogre? **ESSENTIAL QUESTION**

How are the main characters in *Charming Ella* and *Ivana and the Ogre* alike? **TEXT TO TEXT**

# Focus on Genre

**Fairy Tales** Fairy tales have imaginary characters and settings and events that are not realistic. Authors sometimes write updated versions of fairy tales that add a new twist to the story.

**Read and Find** In *Charming Ella*, the author takes a familiar fairy tale (*Cinderella*) and changes it for a modern audience. What elements can you find in *Charming Ella* that are the same as in *Cinderella*? What elements are different?

## Your Turn

Choose a fairy tale that you know. Change the setting and characters to make them more modern. Make a two-column chart. In one column, list the features of the traditional fairy tale. In the other column, list the ways these have been used in your modern fairy tale. Some will be the same; some will be different. Then write a short description of your new fairy tale.

Traditional Fairy Tale	Modern Fairy Tale

## Literature Circles

### Fiction

# Thinkmark

## Characters

Who is the main character in each story?

Who are the other characters?

What characteristic does Ella have that makes the plot possible?

## Sequence of Events

What happened in *Charming Ella*?

What happened first, then, next ... finally?

## Plot

What was Ella's problem?

How did she solve the problem?

What is the end result for Ella?

## Author's Purpose

What is the author's purpose for writing *Charming Ella*?

## Make Connections

What connections can you make to *Charming Ella*?

GR 5 • Benchmark 50 • Lexile TK

Grade 4 • Unit 1 Week 1

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Education