

Jack Tales Syllabus

Week One:

Definition of Folktales and Jack Tales (tall tales, wonder tales, trickster tale), Structure of the Jack Tale, Historical Context and earliest examples including rhymes and other references. “Jack and the Stepdame,” “ Jack the Giant Killer,” and “Jack and the Giants” will be discussed.

Week Two:

Focus on British Isles Jack (Irish, Scots, and English); We will examine “Jack and the Beanstalk” and “Jack and his Bargains.” Other stories will be shared.

Week Three:

American Jack, Historical context (tall and bawdy tales), Stories including “Master Thief” and” Hardy Hardass” Storytellers and collector Richard Chase and others. African American version of Jack tales.

Week Four:

Appalachian Storytellers: Ray Hicks, Harmon family, examples of modern tellers (Donald Davis), movies, and books. How Jack lives on.