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Abstract of “El laberinto del fauno: A Child’s Imagination and Coping with the Trauma of War”

Guillermo del Toro’s film *El laberinto del fauno*, known as *Pan’s Labyrinth* to English speaking audiences, opens up a fantastical world that is just a touch away from reality, but everyone believes this to be the imagination of one child, Ofelia. She tries to complete tasks and learns the truth of the land of post Civil War Spain that she currently resides in while she yearns for another. A child's imagination can be transported by a simple story; there seems to be a special connection between fairytales and There are methods of psychotherapy for children such as rational emotive imagery, or REI, to create pathways to subdue stress and anxiety that come from difficult situations. Through the medium of imagery in psychotherapy, a child can cope with their traumatic experiences and learn solutions to the problems that they face in their reality everyday, as Ofelia did in her own situation. Ofelia, in her fantasy world, ends up experiencing situations that are simultaneously happening in her reality, much like using REI. One could think that the director took a pessimistic approach by killing her in the end, after all psychotherapy is supposed to have a positive impact on a person’s life, but he tells a story of fantasy being reality, solidifying the importance of an active mind and storytelling, especially during tough times. A person’s imagination can teach them how to live in the real world.