

Worksheet 1

What's So Funny?

Storybook Satire

On the way to Grandma's house, Red Riding Hood was accosted by a wolf. The wolf said, 'You know my dear, it isn't safe for a little girl to walk in these woods alone.' 'I find your sexist remark offensive in the extreme,' said Red Riding Hood, 'but I will ignore it because of your traditional status as an outcast from society, the stress of which has caused you to develop your own alien, if entirely valid, world view.'...
(James Garner, *Politically Correct Bedtime Stories*)

The term 'politically correct' is used to describe language, ideas and behaviour that reduce the possibility of causing offence to others. Areas of sensitivity include gender, race, beliefs, disability, age and socio-economic status.

Task 1: Select a popular fairy tale and rewrite it using a politically correct style. Here are some simple ideas to help you get started:

- ◇ Rename certain characters with politically incorrect names e.g. Snow White's seven dwarves being renamed as the seven 'little people' or the ugly stepsisters from Cinderella being described as 'beauty impaired'.
- ◇ Punish characters for breaking the law e.g. Goldilocks being arrested for destruction of property or the witch from Rapunzel being detained for kidnapping.
- ◇ Offer characters assistance of some sort e.g. the Beast from Beauty and the Beast having a makeover or the wolf from The Three Little Pigs receiving counselling to counteract his bullying behaviour.
- ◇ Include references to politically correct ideals e.g. the hen from Jack and the Beanstalk laying 'free-range' golden eggs.

Task 2: Present your politically correct fairy story in a big book format and read it to an appropriate audience.

Extension Activities:

- Identify movies you have seen where the concept of a traditional fairy tale has been altered in a politically correct style resulting in a humorous outcome e.g. Shrek, Tangled, Hoodwinked. How did this style of humour add to the entertainment value of the film?
- Write a personal response to *What's So Funny?* describing the types of humour you like and those you don't like identifying the reasons for each.