

Using Fairy Tales in the Foundation Phase Reading Classroom to Raise Awareness on and Mitigation against Gender-based Violence in South Africa

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ABSTRACT Despite the number of legislations that combat gender-based violence in South Africa, many girls and women suffer from violence and its consequences because of their sex and their unequal status in society. This paper seeks to advocate the use of fairy tales as a platform to raise awareness on and mitigation against gender-based violence. Using content analysis, this paper examines the existence of gender stereotypes in the fairy tales that might lead to gender-based violence. Four fairy tales were selected purposefully from a list of popular ones so as to draw the learners' attention to the gender stereotypes and their vulnerability to gender-based violence. The findings revealed that gender stereotypes exist in the selected fairy tales. Females were portrayed as weak, subordinate to men, allowing men control them and have a lower social status. Men were portrayed as providers, saviors for females, better decision-makers, tough and aggressive. Recommendations were made highlighting the role teachers could play in order to develop the Foundation Phase learners' critical thinking so that they are able to challenge and critically analyze the text.