

**This lesson is based on Professor Anne Duggan's TED-talk. The original video is here**



Can you remember the plot of Little Red Riding Hood? Why is the fairy tale called like this? Have you ever seen any hidden message or moral in this fairy tale?

**Listen to the first snippet from the TED-talk. What was the main difference between the earliest version of LRRH and the one you know?**

**Clip 1** \_\_\_\_\_



**Do you remember who penned this fairy tale? Listen to Clip 2**  
\_\_\_\_\_ **and decide whether these statements are true or false:**

1. This earliest version of Little Red Riding Hood was penned by Grimm Brothers in 17<sup>th</sup>-century Germany.    T            F
2. Perrault was a very important man in the age of Louise XIV.    T            F
3. Perrault told fairy tales to the government.    T            F
4. An elite group of women and men in a luxuriously decorated aristocratic home were the main audience of Charles Perrault.    T            F

***At the end of the tale Perrault appends a moral to the story which in fact recontextualizes the tale for such an audience and it reads as follows:***

**Moral:** Children, especially attractive, well bred young ladies, should never talk to strangers, for if they should do so, they may well provide dinner for a wolf. I say “wolf,” but there are various kinds of wolves. There are also those who are charming, quiet, polite, unassuming, complacent, and sweet, who pursue young women at home and in the streets. And unfortunately, it is these gentle wolves who are the most dangerous ones of all.

**Join the pairs of synonyms:**

charming

quiet

polite

unassuming

complacent

placid

adorable

silent

withdrawn

well-mannered

**Listen to clip 3 \_\_\_\_\_ and choose the correct set of missing words**

*So Perrault's moral makes the wolf into a \_\_\_\_\_ – \_\_\_\_\_ aristocrat who follows young ladies into salons to \_\_\_\_\_ them which we could understand in terms of \_\_\_\_\_.*

1. smooth-talking/ gobble/ satisfaction
2. smooth-talking/devour/seduction
3. smooth-taking/devour/seduction

*In fact, some \_\_\_\_\_ have argued that this is a story about \_\_\_\_\_ given the \_\_\_\_\_ of the tale.*

1. schoolboys/ rape/ violence
2. scholars/ ape/ violence
3. scholars/ rape/ violence

*In the 17<sup>th</sup> century French incarnation of Little Red Riding Hood the wolf clearly is a male \_\_\_\_\_ who \_\_\_\_\_ around French salons ready to \_\_\_\_\_ unsuspecting young ladies.*



1. seducer/ foams/pounce on
2. seducer/ roams/ pounce on
3. seducer/roams/ bounce on

*It is an \_\_\_\_\_ tale about seduction or rape and those connotations can play out in very \_\_\_\_\_ ways in different media. Little Red Riding Hood is often \_\_\_\_\_ which could suggest that she brought the tragedy upon herself.*

1. allergic/ suggestive/sexualized
2. allegorical/ suggestive / sexualized
3. allegorical/ digestive / sexualized



**Listen to another version of Little Red Riding Hood in clip 4 \_\_\_\_\_.**

1. What century was this version of Little Red Riding Hood published in?
2. How did the folklorist Paul Delarue call the fairy tale?



**Listen again \_\_\_\_\_ and put the lines in order – type in the number next to the snippet (the first line is in its place already).**

1. A mother sends her daughter off to her grandmother's house with a loaf of bread and a bottle of milk.

\_\_\_\_ Then the wolf tells her to take off her clothes, throw them into the fire and crawl into bed with him. The girl does so and then she started saying, oh granny, how hairy you are. But before the wolf can devour her, the girl says, I have to relieve myself.

\_\_\_\_ The girl goes to her grandmother's house and she's in the woods, and she encounters the wolf and in this version the wolf says, he asks her, would you be taking the path of the pins or the path of the needles?

\_\_\_\_ When the girl arrives, the wolf disguised as her grandmother has her come in the house and the wolf says, why don't she eat some of the meat in the pantry and drink some of the wine from the bottle.

\_\_\_\_ The wolf races to grandmother's house and we might expect he kills her. But what's a little strange in this version is he takes her body and cuts it up a little bit and he puts some of her flesh in the pantry, and he puts some of her blood in a bottle.

\_\_\_\_ And the girl says the path of the needles.

\_\_\_\_ The wolf ties a rope around her ankle, lets her go outside, and the girl goes outside, takes the rope, ties it around a tree and flees and runs to her (grand) mother's house before the wolf can catch her.

\_\_\_\_ The girl unknowingly eats and drinks her grandmother.



**Listen to clip 5 \_\_\_\_\_ and fill the gaps**

So, the \_\_\_\_\_ of grandmother \_\_\_\_\_ surprising in this version, but let's keep in mind the tale was told in the context of Catholic rural France.

This scene could be playing on Catholic Eucharistic ritual in which bread and wine are trans-substantiated into \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ, which believers consume and that incorporation is something that brings strength.

So, it could be precisely because \_\_\_\_\_ ingests \_\_\_\_\_ that she is able to outwit and outmaneuver \_\_\_\_\_.

She quite literally incorporates her grandmother's \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

If we go back to the scene where she's in the woods and has to choose between the path \_\_\_\_\_ and the path \_\_\_\_\_ – these are the \_\_\_\_\_ of the peasant woman.

So, her choice of needles, her ingestion of grandmother and her outwitting of the wolf could all be read in terms of a girl's \_\_\_\_\_ into \_\_\_\_\_.

So, this version of the tale focuses on female initiation and even empowerment rather than the \_\_\_\_\_ by a male aristocrat of a clueless young lady as is the case of Perrault's tale.

So, these two \_\_\_\_\_ tales communicate two \_\_\_\_\_ messages, but the theme of seduction remains a \_\_\_\_\_ in both versions.

This is the perfect example of how knowing the history of a tale completely transforms our understanding.