

# Choose a Career You Love: Prince/Princess Charming is Not Coming

*By Libby Oldham*

**Grade Level:** 4 - 6



**Objective(s):**



To understand that traditional fairy tales give false messages  
To understand the concept of self-sufficiency  
To understand the importance of choosing a career you love  
To understand gender stereotypes

**Time:** 1 class period



**Materials:**



“The Myth of Prince Charming,” adapted from the  
Discover Curriculum, Women’s Educational Equity  
Act Program, WEEA Equity Resource Center,  
55 Chapel Street, Newton, MA 02458-1060

Pens or Pencils  
Paper

**Procedures:**



Have four different student volunteers read the four summaries of fairy tales in the exercise, “The Myth of Prince Charming.” Divide the reading evenly among male and female volunteers. Ask the students to write down common themes they hear in the fairy tales and share them with the class.

**Examples:**

- The main character is a beautiful, hard-working girl
- Prince Charming rescues her from a difficult situation
- They fall instantly in love
- They live happily ever after

Ask the girls if they believe they will live happily ever after with their Prince Charming who will always support them and their children. Ask the boys if they believe Princess Charming (i.e. a rich woman) will marry them and always take care of them and the children.

**Explain that it is unlikely that Prince or Princess Charming will rescue them and take care of them forever. Emphasize that everyone needs to be prepared to be self-sufficient: life is uncertain. Point out the following:**

- Only 56% of adults are currently married
- Remember that 42% of all marriages end in divorce
- Only 7% of US households with married couples and children have one income provider
- Sometimes a husband or wife dies or becomes ill

**Quote the Chinese philosopher Confucius, 551-478 BC who said, "Choose a job you love and you will never work a day in your life." Ask students what this means.**

**Explain what you love about your job as a teacher. Add that a student's chance of finding a job they love is greater if they consider all the possibilities. Ask students to name some jobs in which a woman might be surrounded by men while she is at work i.e. auto mechanic, construction worker, electrician. Ask students to name some jobs in which a man might be surrounded by women while he is at work i.e. nurse, elementary school teacher, cosmetologist. These are called nontraditional jobs.**

**Choose one of the jobs for men and one for women.**

**Ask students the following questions:**

**What are the duties for this job?**

**Could a woman do this job?**

**Could a man do this job?**

**Have the students list three careers they think they would enjoy.**

**Ask the students the following questions:**

**Is this a traditional job?**

**Is this a nontraditional job?**

**Why does it sound fun?**

## **The Myth of Prince Charming**

### **Cinderella**

**A beautiful, hard-working girl with a mean stepmother, two selfish stepsisters, and an absent father is rescued from a life of difficulty by a fairy godmother. She is sent to a ball where she meets handsome Prince Charming. The prince falls in love with Cinderella instantly and follows her when she runs away from him. They are soon together again and live happily ever after.**

### **Sleeping Beauty**

**A beautiful princess is placed under a spell by a wicked fairy and falls asleep for 100 years. Handsome Prince Charming cuts his way through thorns surrounding the castle, finds Sleeping Beauty, and falls instantly in love with her while she's still asleep. His kiss awakens her, and they live happily ever after.**

### **Snow White**

**A beautiful princess with a wicked stepmother and an absent father is sent away to die in a forest. She is rescued by seven cute little men who adore and admire her. She earns her room and board by happily doing their housework. Placed under an evil spell by her jealous stepmother, Snow White falls asleep. Her Prince Charming finds her sleeping in a glass case and falls instantly in love with her. His kiss awakens Snow White, and they live happily ever after.**

### **Beauty and the Beast**

**A beautiful, hard-working girl with two wicked sisters happily keeps house for her absent father. As her father is returning home, he enters the magical gardens of an ugly beast. There he picks a rose that reminds him of Beauty. The Beast is furious and says the father must die. Beauty offers to take her father's place in order to save him. When the Beast sees Beauty, he falls instantly in love with her. Beauty cries because she feels sorry for the Beast. Her tears break an evil spell, and the Beast is turned into Prince Charming. They live happily ever after.**