

# TWISTED TALES EDUCATIONAL TOOLKIT

By presenting the stigmas within the familiar narratives of fairy tales, we raise awareness for the stigma in question and educate children and parents on how to “de-stigmatise”.



Presented by Institute for Transmedia Design  
contact: [sara@transmedia-design.me](mailto:sara@transmedia-design.me) or [petra@transmedia-design.me](mailto:petra@transmedia-design.me)



POKRAJINSKA IN ŠTUDIJSKA KNJIŽNICA MURSKA SOBOTA





# TWISTED EDUCATION

*Twisted Tales Educational Toolkit* is aimed at educators and parents to teach kids critical life lessons through the *Twisted Tales* method of participatory teaching where fairy tales become a tool to teach social values and skills, and the kids become stars of acceptance in their lives - through storytelling, drawing, sound creation, and animation.

*Twisted Tales Educational Toolkit* is an entertainment and teaching universe offering empowering perspective on the well-known stories and characters from fairy tales by adapting them to modern times and themes. For use at home or in the classroom, educators and parents are able to choose among six stories with each re-imagined story tackling a different topic of stigma. The first tale is *Cinda Real* (our take on *Cinderella*), a story about a girl who is stigmatised for having only one leg, and her intention to come to a dance “just to dance”. *Cinda Real* offers a new perspective on the well-known story by introducing the stigma of physical disability into the narrative. Sexual stigma is told through the story of *Sleeping Girl* (our take on *Sleeping Beauty*). Mental disability is explored in the new version of Rapunzel called *Real Punzel*, and racial stigma is woven into the story of *The Not So Ugly Duckling* (our take on *The Ugly Duckling*). Social status stigma is problematised in the re-imagined *Midas Touch*, our *Golden Touch*, while gender identity stigma becomes the subject of *The Princess and the Real Frog* (*The Princess and the Frog*).

We believe that a re-telling of well-known fairy tales provides an important familiarity to the child listening/interacting with such, something which helps in their navigation of the world and more effectively emphasizes the new and unexpected narrative developments. *Twisted Tales* rewrites fairy tales with an eye to lessons for a world of empathy and understanding and without bias of the stigmas in question. Fairy tales, as originally written, were perfectly suited to the subject of stigmas. It is only in the more recent sanitised re-interpretations that their valuable lessons have become lost. With the darker layers glossed over and removed, more simplistic messages took root. The modern versions of fairy tales like *Cinderella*, *Sleeping Beauty*, and *Snow White* are very different than their originals. Instead of important life lessons, they teach girls to wait for a prince to save them. Stereotypes like passive women with dubious life goals were not always part of the tales, either. It is our aim to reclaim the lost lessons of these fairy tales of old.

The *Twisted Tales Educational Toolkit* is designed as an interactive tool to increase immersion/engagement into the narrative and to provide a deeper understanding of the topic. Through a series of workshops enriched with didactic games children create illustrations, sound, and animation based on the story heard to become the storytellers in their own right. Why?! Because, by presenting the stigma within the familiar narrative of the fairy tale, we raise the awareness for the stigma in question and educate children on how to ‘de-stigmatise’. Both, those who witness someone being stigmatised and those who have suffered from being stigmatised will be able to recognise first the stigma and its harmful effect, and secondly, they will be shown ways of overcoming the stigma (from within as well as socially).



# THE METHOD

The method of the *Twisted Tales Educational Toolkit* is published in the e-tutorial, available to educators and parents to download and guide kids through the participatory scenarios of *Twisted Tales*. The sessions are delivered in a kid-friendly environment, followed by our methodology of participatory teaching, co-created with a child behavior specialist.

## Co-creation process method:

- Workshop Session 1: Illustration
- Workshop Session 2: Sound
- Workshop Session 3: Animation

The main goal of this approach is to foster creativity through participatory creation - whether at a narrative level, through storytelling, visual level, through drawing, or at a listening level, through sound creation. The sessions are enriched with didactic games to increase children's focus, participation, and ability to work in a group. At the same time, all interactive experiences have as their aim engaging with the audience and furthermore, educating.

## Workshop Session 1: Illustration

The co-creation process starts with storytelling (reading/presenting the narrative), as an introduction into the chosen *Twisted Tales* story, and is used to inspire kids to create illustrations of, for example, prince, princess, castle, animals, environment, etc. The challenge of the workshop is to visualise, as for example *Cinda Real*, a princess with only one leg and a prince who is as child-like as they are, is allowed to be dirty or have holes in his pants.



After the workshop session, the illustrations are filtered and used as the basis for the Workshop Session 3 in which kids are taught to animate the tale and become storytellers on their own right.

## Workshop Session 2: Sound

Through the sound design session, we focus on creating and recording “real life sounds” based on the scenes covered in a story. As, for example, in *Cinda Real* creating a sound of baking pancakes, mopping the floor, laughing, etc. The recordings are further on used in the Workshop Session 3, where they are merged with drawings.



## Workshop Session 3: Animation

Through the animation workshop process, kids are drawn into the world of cartoon production and taught how to use basic 2D animation principles, to inspire them to innovate. The materials from Workshop Session 1 and Workshop Session 2 are used to create kids driven films based on a topic covered in each twisted story.



This method of teaching was co-created with Nina Cigüt, a child behavior specialist.



# WORKSHOP RESULTS

The *Educational Toolkit* development started with a series of workshops each led by a child behavior specialist and an in-field mentor (teacher, sound designer, animation specialist), delivered in Murska Sobota, Slovenia, in December 2017. The research taking place at the time of the workshop showed that the parents and nursery teachers were impressed by the quality of the educational approach and requested the *do it yourself* tutorial.

The workshops, held in Slovenia, showed the need and appreciation of the local community, and through our experimental approach, we learnt new ways to present the chosen topic — through a constant exchange of ideas and with new approaches to the art of effective communication. Driven by the audience's demand we have designed a *Twisted Tales Educational Toolkit* to teach kids social values and skills worldwide in a form that is playful and gamified.

## EXECUTION AND FINANCING

Each *Twisted Tales* story is co-created in a different cultural environment. The 1st one was created together with kids in Slovenia, the 2nd one is about to be delivered in Croatia, based on *The Princess and the Real Frog*, to be followed by *Sleeping Girl*, in Peru, *The Not-So ugly Duckling* in the Netherlands, *Real Punzle* in the UK, and *Golden Touch*, in India. Each individual story/film is produced and financed together with our country co-producer: Minya Films & Animation, Croatia, Lucida Media, Peru, Zelović Film, The Netherlands, Plug-in Media, UK and Imira Entertainment, India, in order to understand the topic on a worldwide level. After the initial market entry, we are planning a thorough *Toolkit* dissemination, online and in schools/kindergartens in all 6 territories.

Dissemination of the *Educational Toolkit* is planned from beginning of May, 2019, with start in Slovenia, accompanied with *Cinda Real* animated film premiere event. To follow are all our co-productions countries based on the production schedule: Croatia, Peru, UK, India, The Netherlands. The toolkit dissemination will be accompanied with a strong social media and advertising campaign.

The project is financed by Creative Europe MEDIA, the Instituto do Cinema e do Audiovisual in Portugal, and the Slovenian Film Center. It will be presented at the *Berlinale* with *Kids Regio*, Berlin, Germany, February 2019, as well as at the *Financing Forum for Kids Content*, Malmo, Sweden, in March 2019, to secure additional funding needed for its full transmedia implementation.

**Just living is not enough...  
one must have sunshine, freedom,  
and a little flower.**

Hans Christian Andersen