

Lockdown Tales Activities



The Vain Little Mouse (*La Ratita Presumida*)

Traditional Spanish Folktale

Read for Wonderful Beast's Lockdown Tales by Montserrat Roig de Puig, with original music by Sylvia Hallett.



How translated words change meaning

The English version of this Spanish folktale translates *presumida* as 'vain'. Do you think 'vain' is the word you would choose to describe the mouse? Which word do you think suits this little mouse best?

Presumida also has many other translated meanings, including 'smug', 'snooty', 'stuck up', 'boastful', 'pompous' and 'presumptuous'. You can Google *presumida* to discover more. And, if you don't know the meaning of some of the English words, you can look them up too!

Some words in different languages share the same '**root**' word, meaning they both come from **the same original word**. Do you think *presumida* and **presumptuous** might share a root word? Can you play detective, and find out what it is?

Put your own spin on it!

Make a list of stories you know with characters who are **vain**, or **smug**, or **snooty**. You might choose the stepmother in 'Snow White', or Cinderella's sisters. You could choose people, or animals.

How many vain characters can you find? There are quite a few in Lockdown Tales, especially a certain **king** who cares a lot about his appearance, and a woman who is very **snooty** about where she should live.

As you identify each character, choose the word/s that **you think** best describes them. You might have a better word than 'vain'. How would **you** tell the story?

This is how folktales are passed down through time, with each new teller using **their own words** to **make their own version**, like Montserrat does with **her new ending** to the story.

There are lots of folk tales where a mouse gets eaten by a cunning trickster cat.

How did you feel about that ending? Were you happy to hear Montserrat's alternative ending about the vegetarian cat?

Can **you make up a different ending** to 'The Vain Little Mouse'? We would love to hear your ending. Get your parent or teacher to **send it to us** using the links and tags at the bottom of this page.

Send us videos and pictures of your activities! Use the hashtag **#LockdownTales**
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Become a story maker

Close your eyes, and **imagine three things** you might buy if you found a gold coin like the little mouse did.

Draw your three things, and write down or say **why** you want them.

Then, like the little mouse, **choose** which one you want the very most.

Write or tell a story about it. Think about things like what **colour** it is, what it is **made of**, what **noise** it makes, where it would **live**, how **old** it is, what **language** it speaks, where it **comes from**. Include **lots of detail** to make it come to life.

One of our Lockdown Tales was **written by a boy** who was only **9 years old**. How old are you? Do you think you could become a story maker? **Send us your stories!** We'd love to see them.

Illustrate it!

Draw the vain little mouse, with the pink ribbon tied around its tail. Maybe it's looking at itself in the mirror and saying something. What might it be?

What else can you imagine the mouse be doing?



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