

# **AUNT FRED IS A WITCH: Teachers' Guide**

## **GENERAL THEMES AND CONNECTIONS:**

### **1) Stereotyping the elderly**

- \* society's concepts of what elderly people are able to do
- \* society's concepts of appropriate activities for the elderly
- \* society's concepts of the appearance of elderly people
- \* marginalization and devaluation of the elderly

### **2) Stereotyping**

- \* how lack of knowledge and information can lead to misconceptions of groups of people, whether they be people of different culture, language, appearance, socio-economic background, ability, gender.

### **3) Witches**

- \* the history of the term witch; how witches were healers; the term "witch" used to mean wise woman; witches were knowledgeable about the herbs of healing
- \* how the naming of a person as a "witch" was misused to get rid of enemies
- \* some of the famous Witch trials, such as in Salem, Massachusetts
- \* how fear of the unknown can induce mass hysteria
- \* traditional lore for warding away evil and witches

### **4) Rumours and how they spread**

- \* the power each person has to start and spread rumours
- \* how rumours grow and are exaggerated

## **CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES:**

### **1) Topics of discussion:**

- \* Why did Leila think Aunt Fred was a witch?
- \* Why do you think that Jeremy thought Aunt Fred was a witch?
- \* What did Leila feel when she was invited to Aunt Fred's and why?
- \* Why did Aunt Fred say she was called "Witch for short."

- \* What did Aunt Fred mean when she said, “I get so tired of people telling me to act my age...?”
- \* What did Leila and Aunt Fred have in common regarding people telling them to act their age?
- \* Why did Aunt Fred dress as she did at first when Leila’s mother dropped Leila off?

## **2) Writing exercises:**

- \* Write an account of what might happen if you visited a witch.
- \* Imagine that Aunt Fred is your aunt. Describe a day you spend with her with all your favourite activities.
- \* Write a letter that Leila might write to Aunt Fred with ideas for more time spent together.
- \* Write a sequel to this story about what happens when Leila and Aunt Fred go up in a hot air balloon.
- \* Make up a recipe for a “witch’s potion”. Describe the ingredients, and how to make it and what it might be used for.

## **3) Art Activities**

- \* Draw a picture of you and Aunt Fred enjoying your favourite activity.
- \* Draw a picture of a ride you would like to go on.
- \* Draw a picture of Aunt Fred’s rainbow dress.
- \* Draw a picture of Aunt Fred and Leila doing something together the next day. What else they might do other than go up in a hot air balloon?

## **4) Extra Study and Research activities:**

- \* Do some research on the term “witch” and write a report.
- \* Research a famous witch trial and do a report.