

# WEEKLY ENGLISH PRACTICE

### By the book

Woke publishers have made a major call amid the Roald Dahl censorship row after revealing they were rewriting the beloved books to remove "offensive" language.



Puffin UK backed down and announced it will publish an unedited classic collection alongside the newly **released** versions "for young readers".

The publishers said they made the call "to keep the author's classic texts in print" following the recent **uproar**.

Last week it was revealed the books were being re-edited to include politically correct changes to mentions of weight, mental health, gender and **race**.

Publisher Puffin and the Roald Dahl Story Company, which manages the writer's stories, worked with a collective of inclusion, diversity and equality **champions**.

Changes to the words "fat" and "ugly" are among "hundreds" of others.

Dahl died in 1990 and his books, including Matilda, James And The Giant Peach, Charlie And The Chocolate Factory - which features Willy Wonka - and The BFG have sold more than 250 million copies.

At the time the Roald Dahl Story Company said: "We want to ensure the wonderful stories and

characters continue to be enjoyed by all children. "When publishing new print runs of books written years ago it is not unusual to review the language used."

But they were **slammed** by Brits – including Rishi Sunak, who told them not to "gobblefunk" the author's words. Mr Sunak's spokesman **blasted**: "When it comes to our rich and varied literary heritage, the Prime Minister agrees with the BFG that you shouldn't **gobblefunk** around with words."

Penguin's managing director said: "At Puffin we have proudly published Roald Dahl's stories for more than 40 years in partnership with the Roald Dahl Story Company. "Their **mischievous** spirit and his unique storytelling genius have delighted the imaginations of readers across many generations.

"We've listened to the debate over the past week which has reaffirmed the extraordinary power of Roald Dahl's books and the very real questions around how stories from another era can be kept relevant for each new generation.

"As a children's publisher, our role is to share the magic of stories with children with the greatest thought and care. Roald Dahl's fantastic books are often the first stories young children will read independently, and taking care of the imaginations and fast-developing minds of young readers is both a privilege and a responsibility."

"We also recognise the importance of keeping Dahl's classic texts in print."



Adapted from this article by ECP coach

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### **Word list**

**release:** to make a book, a song or a film available to the public; to put the book on sale

**uproar:** a public expression of protest or outrage; loud complaints by angry people

**race:** any one of the groups that humans are often divided into based on physical traits regarded as common among people of shared ancestry

**champion:** a person who vigorously supports or defends a person or a cause

slam: to criticise severely

**blasted:** to express anger or annoyance at something

or someone

**gobblefunk:** one of Roald Dahl's invented words. "If you gobblefunk with words, you play around with words and invent new words or meanings"

mischievous: causing trouble in a playful way

### Let's chat about that!

- 1. What is the play on words in the heading of the article, 'by the book'?
- 2. Do do think publishers are right to remove "offensive" language from books?
- 3. Do you feel good about the social movements taking place nowadays or is the new woke culture a little too much?
- 4. Are you comfortable using words such as fat and ugly in your own language or do you tiptoe around the topic?
- 5. Do you think people are less inclined to give their opinion nowadays?

## Use of English: Past Simple Passive

### Which sentence is written in the passive?

Jk Rowling **wrote** Harry Potter.

'Harry Potter' was written in English.

The past simple passive is formed by using was or were plus the past participle.

The passive is used when the person or thing that did the action is of no importance or simply not the focus of our attention. You can, if you wish, use **by** to identify who or what did the action.

### Active vs. Passive

My uncle **built** this house in 1975.

Here, I'm proud to tell you that my uncle built the house. I feel it's important information and I want you to know who did the action.

This house was built in 1975.

In this example, I couldn't care less who built the house. I don't consider it to be of any importance or relevance. However, if I want to give my uncle some credit for the building the house, I could say "This house was built in 1975 by my uncle". But the year the house was built is clearly the most important piece of information.

### **Sentence Transformation Practice:**

Shakespeare wrote Hamlet around 1600. -> Hamlet \_\_\_\_\_Shakespeare around 1600.

They designed the pub to appeal to young people. -> The pub \_\_\_\_\_\_ to appeal to young people.