

POLITICAL CORRECTNESS



A TALKING POINTS
LESSON PLAN FOR
ENGLISH READING
AND SPEAKING

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Introduction

What is political correctness?

Is political correctness reasonable?

Does political correctness exist in your country?

It's PC Gone Mad

Read Nigel's account below.

I have had enough of all this PC nonsense. I don't understand where it is going anymore.

The other day I found out that a cafe in town was in trouble for selling Chinese spring rolls.

A group of people gathered outside the cafe and said it was 'cultural appropriation'. They said that because the cafe owner is not Chinese, he has no right to sell Chinese spring rolls.

Apparently, according to the group, only Chinese people can do that.

And none of the people in the group were Chinese! They were mostly white people!

I mean, if I heard Chinese people were angry about it, I might understand it, but not one Chinese person complained.

My friend told me a story too...

He said his daughter is expecting a baby with her new husband. They are delighted.

But when my friend went to the hospital, he was told that

young pregnant women are now to be called ‘Birthing Persons’.

This is to show that we are inclusive of all people.

How is this possible? I thought the only person that can get pregnant is a woman — *so why not just call them ‘mothers’ or ‘pregnant women’?*

My mate says he has learned to just accept it...

And then last week, I found out that there will be no Christmas celebrations this year. Not in the local churches, not in schools, nowhere.

I thought Christmas was part of our culture and our history. So why can’t we have it?

Because it causes offence to non-Christians!

I mean, I’m not a Christian. I rarely go to church, but it won’t be the same this year without seeing all the Christmas decorations and hearing Christmas carols.

I don’t understand why we have to keep changing the English language and why we have to stop certain activities because a small group of people might be offended.

In the last ten years or so, it seems like Political Correctness has pervaded every part of our lives. It’s in our celebrations, the food we eat, the entertainment we watch on the telly — even in

football.

I'm a big football fan, and I was dismayed to see one top football player practically crying in an interview about racism in football.

He was demanding that other football players protest at the beginning of football matches.

I can't see that going down well with the average football fan. All they want to see is the beautiful game.

They don't want football players telling them what to think.

In the end, it just makes me want to shut myself off from the world.

Turn off the telly, don't read the news — *and don't go to any football matches!*

People have lost their minds over this.

I really hope that there is a change in the next generation and we can just get on with life without people being offended every five minutes.

Reading Comprehension Questions

What is Nigel so angry about?

What was his first example?

Is the cafe selling Chinese tea?

What was the cafe selling?

Why were people upset about it?

According to Nigel, were there any Chinese people in the protest group? What colour were they?

What was Nigel's second example?

Is his friend's wife having a baby?

Who is having a baby?

Does the hospital refer to young pregnant women as baby carriers?

What does the hospital call young pregnant women?

What is the reason for this?

Why is Nigel angry about this?

What is Nigel's third example in the article?

Is Easter no longer celebrated?

How about Thanksgiving?

Which holiday is no longer celebrated?

Where is this holiday no longer celebrated?

Why is it no longer celebrated?

Does Nigel like football?

Why is Nigel upset about watching football these days?

Does Nigel like political correctness?

Does he hope it can continue?

Essential Vocabulary

to have had enough of smth	cafe	spring rolls
gathered	cultural appropriation	no right to do smth
apparently	expecting a baby	delighted
pregnant	Birthing Persons	inclusive
mate	celebrations	to cause offence
Christians	rarely	decorations
Christmas carols	pervaded	entertainment
the telly	dismayed	practically
racism	football match	to go down well
average	fan	lost their minds
the next generation	get on with life	

Exercise

Write down all the words and phrases in your vocabulary notebook. Look in your dictionary and find the meaning of each word. Write the definition next to each word.

Then make up your own sentences using each word or phrase.

For example:

Cafe — *a small restaurant that serves light meals and drinks.*

“I often go to this small cafe in my neighbourhood. They have great coffee and it’s a nice place to sit down and read.”

Discussion Questions

Nigel seems very upset about the wave of political correctness going on.

Does he have a right to be angry about it?

What exactly is he angry about?

What is political correctness? Try to think of a clear definition.

Can you provide any examples of political correctness?

Does political correctness exist in your country? Try to think of some examples.

Does discrimination exist in your country? What kind of people are discriminated against?

Are there any terms for certain groups of people that are now illegal? Or are these terms believed to be outdated now?

In your country, if someone tells a joke that is racist or sexist, how do other people react? Do they think it is funny? Or offensive?

Are certain religions persecuted in your country? If so, why?

Do you agree with Nigel in the article that people need to stop being offended all the time?

Should political correctness be seen in movies or TV shows?

Should we see it in sporting events?

You Said What??

Look at the old-fashioned terms below — and match them with the more modern terms on the right.

cleaner	British
guys	Native Americans
man-made	maintenance hole
blind	chalkboard
English	synthetic
dead	a person with a chemical dependency
promiscuous	firefighter
brother/sister	Asian
poor	cleanliness technician
Third World	Winter Festival
manhole	administrative assistant
fireman	sibling
Indians	homemaker
bald	terminally unavailable
housewife	folks
drug addict	marginalised
Christmas	Developing Nations
Oriental	sight-impaired
blackboard	sexually liberated

secretary	follically challenged
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Which terms do you think sound better?

Do the modern terms on the right sound better? Or redundant?

Can you think of better terms for the old-fashioned terms?

Writing

This is a writing exercise.

You are going to write a personal account of some discrimination that you have witnessed — or experienced — in your own life.

- **First, introduce what the discrimination is.**
- **Then, write your account of what happened.**
- **Finally, give a possible solution to this discrimination, and how we can learn and move forward.**

When you have finished your article, read it out loud in front of the class.

Ask your classmates and teacher for feedback.

Credits

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