

An anecdote is a short, often funny story, mostly about something someone has done.

The Thing on his Head

The Danish fairy tale author Hans-Christian Andersen dressed very carelessly. Once a cheeky youngster asked him, "You call that miserable thing on your head a hat?" Andersen remained calm. He replied: "You call that pitiful thing under your hat a head?"

fairy tale: fable
cheeky: naughty
pitiful: miserable
stage: theatre
to rail: to criticize
pulpit: podium
habit: use
purpose: reason
novel: story
publisher: editor
to advertise: to promote
heroine: star
layman: non expert
wireless: radio
terms: words
pinch: squeeze
howl: cry
to offend: to insult
sermon: speech



A Good Publicity

The French stage actress Sarah Bernhardt was said to have led an immoral lifestyle. In 1880 she undertook a tour around the USA. The Bishop of Chicago railed against her so violently from the pulpit that the actress's manager sent him the following letter:

"Monseigneur! When I come to your city, I am in the habit of spending four hundred dollars for publicity purposes. But as you have done the work for me this time, I send you two hundred dollars for your poor."

Out of a Novel

The English writer William Somerset Maugham was angry with his publisher because his first novel was not selling, and the publisher did not want to spend money on advertising. Maugham tried it with a trick. He placed a marriage advertisement in several London daily newspapers. It read: "Young millionaire, athletic, cultivated, fond of music, agreeable character, desires to marry a pretty young girl resembling in every respect the heroine of W. S. Maugham's novel."

A few days after the advertisements appeared, the first edition of the novel was sold out.

The offended bishop

Mark Twain was a good friend of the bishop of a neighbouring town. He therefore often went to his sermons and then stayed at his table.

One Sunday, the bishop was particularly proud of his sermon. Mark Twain remarked: "Indeed, what you said to the people today was excellent. But you know, I have a book at home that has every word of your sermon in it." The bishop was offended and protested: "I really don't need to copy my sermons."

When Mark Twain left, the bishop was still angry. The next day, Mark Twain sent him a book and wrote: "Here is the book in question so that you can see that I wasn't lying."

It was a dictionary.

Are You a Donkey?

PUT THE SENTENCES IN THE CORRECT ORDER BY NUMBERING THEM:

- The heckler replied that his grandfather and father had been Democrats.
- Roosevelt had the laughs on his side with this question.
- At an election meeting he was interrupted by a heckler:
- ...**3**... "You don't convince me. I'm a Democrat."
- "Then I would be a Republican."
- In 1901 Theodore Roosevelt ran for presidency for the Republican Party.
- Roosevelt kindly asked the heckler why he was a Democrat.
- But then came an answer he hadn't expected:
- Roosevelt then said, "Well, just in case your grandfather was a donkey,
- and your father was also a donkey. What would you be then?"

to interrupt: to stop
heckler: critic, troublemaker
to expect: to anticipate
election: voting
to convince: to persuade
to run for: to campaign
donkey: ass (animal)
in case: if
also: as well
to reply: to answer
kindly: friendly
Democrats and Republicans are political parties in the US