



## A PERSPECTIVE ON HUMOR

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Humor can be a lot of different things to different people.

For many, it is a refreshing and ultimately fresher way of looking at things. It could serve as an ice-breaker, atmosphere-enhancer or boredom-dispeller. Can you just imagine an English class where the only comic relief you ever get is static (if you're in an online class) or the whirring of the fan blades? Or a TV program where the only respites you receive are from the show's host every time she thanks the sponsors for all the stuff she gets? (Some people have all the luck!) Or a live show where the only breaks you see are the ones between the stage curtains? Truly, anything would be rendered a total loss were it not for moments of comical humor that occasionally invade the most silent (and boring!) moments.

In addition, humor can also be culture-sensitive. What may be rollicking-funny in one country might prove to be disgusting or incomprehensible in another. For foreigners in my particular country, for instance, the native citizens' penchant for smiling and laughing even in the direst circumstances seems to evade reason. For foreign employers, too, the natives' party attitude is difficult to understand, much less give in to. I guess I can only agree with the downright observation and conclusion of one native host: my race is particularly resilient, so much so that we can still afford to smile at the camera, find a comic angle to anything, or inject humor in an otherwise tense situation, which can make other races look at us funny and say, "Are you so laidback and easygoing that you fail to see the seriousness in any given situation?" In fairness to my race, the reason why we still find humor in the most intense situations is because we see no point in crying over spilled milk. We do know how to take life seriously in our own little way, but we consider life to be too short to dwell on its pressures in a prolonged manner. Some might consider that a queer way of seeing things, but that's what makes us uniquely lovable.

For some, humor has its own place and time. I agree with such a concept. However, what makes humor funny is the fact that it can come in the most unexpected forms and the most unlikely situations. There was a time when toilet humor seemed to be a trend, but such types will always fall flat. Slapstick comedy hurts more than it humors, so those who prefer to poke fun at others by hurting them or pointing out their unique traits have a very limited time onstage and great potential to go on storage.

Humor, after all, also chooses its audience.

### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. What would you consider as funny?
2. Give some examples of common jokes in your country.
3. What makes your race unique in humor? Why?
4. Have you ever been laughed at? Talk about that particular situation.
5. Do you feel that your country's humor is misunderstood by other races? Why or why not?