

Get writing

SECTION

6

Who's who?

Objective: To sustain engagement with longer texts, using different techniques to make the text come alive.

What you need: Copies of *War Horse*, whiteboard and photocopiable page 29.

Cross-curricular link: PSHE.

What to do

- Challenge the children to list the key characters in the novel (both people and horses), arranging them in order of importance to Joey and to the plot line. (Albert and his father, Topthorn, Emilie and her grandfather, Captain Nicholls, Trooper Warren, Friedrich, the gun team and so on.)
- Arrange the children into pairs and hand out photocopiable page 29. Explain that they need to identify each character from the brief notes describing them, then add some more words and phrases that could be used to describe them.

For example, the children could extend the description of Captain Nicholls with the following phrase 'A fine cavalier and an honest man who keeps his word'.

- Let the children complete the sheet with their partner, referring to the novel to help them.
- When they have finished, bring the class together and invite volunteers to read out their character notes. Encourage the children to offer constructive feedback.

Differentiation

For older/more confident learners: Challenge the children to expand their notes for one or two characters and draft short paragraphs describing them.

For younger/less confident learners: Identify one of the characters as a shared activity and model some character notes on the whiteboard such as, '*Friedrich: gentle, talks to himself, anti-war in nature*'.

Heroes' homecoming

Objective: To select words and language drawing on their knowledge of literary features and formal and informal writing.

What you need: Copies of *War Horse*, whiteboard and photocopiable page 30.

What to do

- Read together the last page of the novel, starting *And so I came home...*
- Explain to the children they are going to imagine that they are local newspaper reporters, and that they are going to write a front-page report describing the return of Albert and Joey from the war.
- Discuss what the newspaper report would contain, noting key ideas on the whiteboard for example: the heroes' welcome organised by the villagers, with church bells and silver band; an interview with Albert or his parents, or villagers who know the family.

- Suggest that Albert might tell the reporter about how he first came to know Joey and about the special relationship that they had. He might also tell him about his extraordinary reunion with Joey at the veterinary hospital, and the state that Joey was in. Point out, however, that Albert would not know everything that has happened to Joey, other than the fact that he went to war and what Emilie's grandfather told him.
- Hand out photocopiable page 30 for the children to complete.

Differentiation

For older/more confident learners: Invite the children to develop their newspaper reports using ICT skills.

For younger/less confident learners: Allow the children to discuss the newspaper report and complete the sheet in pairs.