

Talk about it

SECTION

5

Personal dilemmas

Objective: To improvise using a range of drama strategies and conventions to explore themes such as hopes, fears and desires.

What you need: Copies of *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* and writing materials.

Cross-curricular link: PSHE.

What to do

- After reading Chapter 15, comment that the author has made Bruno a good character; nevertheless, fear of being in trouble is a weakness affecting his decisions.
- Tell them to consider the incident in the kitchen when Kotler accuses Shmuel of stealing and Bruno denies knowing Shmuel.
- Divide the class into two groups: Group A to represent Bruno's good side; Group B his bad side. Ask Group A to think of short comments so that Bruno will speak in defence of Shmuel. Then invite Group B to think of remarks to

encourage Bruno to deny knowing him.

- Arrange the two groups in facing parallel lines. In role as Bruno, explain that you will walk slowly down the 'alley' between the lines, while the children speak their points. Having listened to 'your conscience' (their voices), make a decision about whether Bruno will help Shmuel.
- Choose children to also play Bruno. Do they reach the same decision?
- Use new conscious alleys for other incidents such as, his claim of an imaginary friend. (Should Bruno tell Gretel?)

Differentiation

For older/more confident learners: Ask the children to plan a conscience alley for Mother after Pavel helps Bruno.

For younger/less confident learners: Allow the children to work in pairs and highlight events to help them focus on why Bruno is scared of Kotler.

Frozen moments

Objective: To consider the overall impact of a live or recorded performance, identifying dramatic ways of conveying characters' ideas and building tension.

What you need: Copies of *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*, photocopiable page 23 and writing materials.

Cross-curricular link: Drama.

What to do

- Pause after finishing Chapter 15. Suggest to the class that photographs of the story's tense moments would reveal the characters' feelings. Explain the term 'freeze-frame', in which children create a silent tableau of characters at a moment in the story.
- Arrange the children into groups of six. Provide each group with a card from photocopiable page 23 to act out. Encourage collaborative decision-making to allocate roles, consult text and rehearse a freeze-frame.
- Invite each group to present their freeze-frame

to the class. Does the audience recognise the moment? Let individuals step out of the tableau and speak their character's thoughts.

- For other characters use thought-tracking, by inviting a member of the audience to stand next to a frozen character and speak their thoughts. Ask: *How can you know what to say?* (Characters' facial expressions and body language.)
- Finish with the groups exchanging cards and repeating the activity, this time with more expressive facial expressions and body language.

Differentiation

For older/more confident learners: Ask the children to adapt their freeze-frame, departing from the story or changing a character's personality or reaction. Can they explain their alterations?

For younger/less confident learners: Help the children to analyse their chosen character's thoughts and reactions, modelling movements and expressions.

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