

Talk about it

SECTION

5

Defending the indefensible

Objective: To present a spoken argument, sequencing points logically, defending views with evidence and making use of persuasive language.

What you need: Copies of *Pig-heart Boy*, photocopiable page 23.

What to do

- Ask the children how they would feel if they told their best friend a secret, and that friend broke their trust.
- Ask the children if it is possible to defend the indefensible, listing, with the children's help, some of the effects that Marlon's breaking Cameron's trust had on him and his family:
 - home under siege
 - lies and half-truths spread across the papers
 - impact on friendships
 - the stranger's assault
 - daily deliveries of hate mail.
- Ask the children to re-read a passages relating

to one of the consequences of the story being released to the press. In doing so, ask them to choose one character who behaved unkindly towards Cameron, either unintentionally (as Marlon), through ignorance and fear (as Julie), or with malice (as the woman attacker and the letter-writers).

- Provide each child with a copy of photocopiable page 23. Challenge the children to plan and practise a spoken defence, justifying their behaviour, using the planning sheet to note and sequence their argument.

Differentiation

For older/more confident learners: After delivering their planned defence, challenge the children to take the hot-seat to answer questions, in role.

For younger/less confident learners: Ask an adult to work with the children to help them to locate textual evidence to support their chosen character's viewpoint.

This house believes

Objective: To participate in a whole-class debate, using the conventions and language of debate, including standard English.

What you need: Copies of *Pig-heart Boy*, photocopiable page 24.

What to do

- Explain that formal debate has conventions in the way and order in which an opinion is argued and counter-argued. It begins when one faction, called for debating purposes a 'house', makes a proposal. The proposal sets out a belief based on a considered thought process. Both houses' speakers take it in turns to speak, with a chairman to oversee proceedings and sum up.
- Hand out copies of photocopiable page 24. The sheet shows in which order the participants speak, and the purpose of each speech.
- Invite the class to choose an area of debate,

based on issues raised in *Pig-heart Boy*. Divide the class into two groups, appointing speakers and a chairperson. Speakers can make notes on their photocopiable sheets.

- Carry out the debate, asking non-participants to vote according to the conviction of the speakers rather than on the issue itself. Explain that they must consider: the speakers' use of persuasive language; their quality of reasoning sequence; their ability to build on points raised; their clarity of oral delivery. (The audience could award each speaker points out of 10 in each of these areas.)

Differentiation

For older/more confident learners: Challenge the children to hold their debate in front of another class, to increase their confidence-building experience.

For younger/less confident learners: Encourage the children to write brief notes on numbered cards to help them to keep track of the sequence of speaking.

PAGE

21