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TALK ABOUT IT

1. In the hot seat

Objective

To participate in role play.

What you need

Copies of *Hetty Feather*.

Cross-curricular link

History

What to do

- Use this activity after reading Chapter 6. Suggest that the reader sometimes wants more detail about characters' feelings and motives than is given explicitly in the text. For example, ask: *Why is Jem so patient with Hetty? How does Father feel about looking after foster children? Does Hetty mind getting into trouble so often?*
- Focus on Hetty. Ask the children, after partner discussion, to agree on and write two questions they would like to ask her. Organise the children into groups of four to compare questions. Ask them to agree on two group questions.
- Explain the term 'hot seat': a role play in which a character is interviewed. Put yourself in the hot seat as Hetty. Turn away and try to make a change to your appearance (add a pair of laced-up boots, for example). Turn and face the class, and invite the groups to ask you their questions, making sure that you answer in role.
- Let groups discuss what they found out about Hetty's personality and motivation. Compare findings as a class.
- Select a different character: Jem, Madame Adeline, Gideon or Saul. Repeat the task as a group activity, one group member taking the hot seat to answer the others' questions.

Differentiation

Support: Provide the children with question starters.

Extension: Ask the children to make close references to the text.

2. Listening to your conscience

Objective

To use spoken language to develop understanding through speculating, hypothesising, imagining and exploring ideas.

What you need

Copies of *Hetty Feather*.

What to do

- Use this activity after reading Chapter 7. Suggest that the author has made Hetty a mixture of good and bad, for example towards the end of Chapter 7, when Hetty decides to run away from home. Suggest that Hetty might also have thought of obeying Mother and going back to her own bed.
- Divide the class into two groups: Group A represents Hetty's better qualities, while Group B represents her more challenging characteristics. Ask Group A to think of comments to stop Hetty running away. Ask Group B to think of comments to encourage her to run away.
- Organise the two groups into parallel lines facing each other. Take the role of Hetty and walk down the 'alley' between the lines. As you reach children, nod to them to speak their comments. At the end of the alley, having listened to their voices, make your decision.
- Choose children to act as Hetty and repeat the 'conscience alley'. Does each Hetty reach the same decision?
- Try the activity with other situations from the book, for example when Hetty pushes Saul into the pigsty in Chapter 3. Create smaller conscience alleys so that more children experience listening to their conscience.

Differentiation

Support: Provide sample comments and let children speak with a partner in the conscience alley activity.

Extension: Ask children to plan a conscience alley situation for Jem or Mother.

Questions and answers

- Fill in what you know and what you still have to learn.
- Then write what you think may happen in the future.

	What I know about...	What I don't yet know about...
Hetty		
The Foundling Hospital		
Mother		
What I predict will happen...		