

Get writing

SECTION

6

Expressing a view

Objective: To establish, balance and maintain viewpoints in non-narrative texts.

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

Cross-curricular link: Citizenship.

What to do

- After completing the novel, tell the children that 27 January is Holocaust Memorial Day. Explain it is a time to remember the people who were murdered, mostly Jews, by the Nazis in the Second World War. Suggest that in this novel, especially its final, explicit three sentences, Boyne makes a significant contribution to this day.
- Comment that teachers may have mixed views about choosing this novel for their Year 6 class. Hold discussions in favour of using it, considering: historical knowledge; the need to know what mankind is capable of; it being a warning against the repetition of genocide. Move on to talk about the disadvantages, for example: it is a distressing

subject; there could be confusion between history and fiction; the brutal reality and tragic ending.

- Explain that school magazines help teachers make book selections. Suggest that a popular magazine is writing an editorial about this novel. Show the class an editorial, pointing out features including: clear standpoint, arguments, reasons, evidence, statistics and quotes. Emphasise that an editorial attempts to persuade readers to have the same view.
- Ask the children to plan and write an editorial about *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*.

Differentiation

For older/more confident learners: Ask the children to write a second editorial, taking the opposing view.

For younger/less confident learners: To help the children structure their editorial, provide a writing frame, signalling the introduction, arguments, reasons and summary.

Cover design

Objective: To use varied structures to shape and organise text coherently.

What you need: Copies of *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*, photocopiable page 30 and writing materials.

Cross-curricular link: Art and design.

What to do

- Explain to the class that some books are published in two editions, with one for adults and one for children. Discuss examples by authors such as, JK Rowling and Philip Pullman. Emphasise that these 'crossover' books appeal to adults and children.
- Point out that, in crossover novels, the two editions differ in their cover design: the front-cover illustration and the back-cover blurb (information) and quoted reviews. Show the children some example covers.
- Suggest that *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* is

a crossover novel. Then explain to the children that they need to imagine they are working with the publisher to agree on a new front and back cover for the children's edition.

- Arrange the children into pairs to discuss covers. Help them by asking: *How much information will you supply? How can you advise people about whether the book will suit them? Will the cover have universal appeal? Which newspapers and magazines will you quote reviews from?*
- Hand out photocopiable page 30 and invite the children to design their covers.

Differentiation

For older/more confident learners: Ask the children to also design the new book cover for the adult edition.

For younger/less confident learners: Invite the children to work in pairs and just focus on designing the front cover, adding one review quote.