

Being a Reporter and Writing a Newspaper Report

ACTIVITIES:

Roleplay:

Tell the class that they are going to be in role as reporters for a local newspaper and that the editor wants to talk to them about a new story that's come in. The teacher explains that she/he/they will play the role of editor of the newspaper (pretend to be the editor, and the children will be the reporters).

1.

Newsroom Meeting

The editor explains why he's called the meeting (paraphrase the following):

“Early that morning I received a call by a man who claims to have been chased by Dandy last night in Clitheroe (or your local town). He said he only managed to escape by running as fast as he could back home and slamming the door in Dandy’s face, but now he won’t come out because he swears Dandy is still outside waiting for him. I rang a friend who lives close by to check but there’s nothing outside his door now.

Now we all know that this isn’t the first time we’ve been told that Dandy comes to life at night and has been terrifying The Neighbourhood. This time I want to get to the bottom of it and this paper to be the first to write the story of what’s been going on. I want us to talk to a wide range of local people and gather the stories together so that we can work out what is really going on.

Does anyone have any questions?”

The ‘Editor’ fields the questions and encourages discussion between the ‘reporters’ and then closes the Meeting.

2.

Out of role now, ask **the children’s response to the meeting.**

Discuss the kinds of scary stories that might be being told about Dandy. Encourage them to expand on ideas and elaborate.

3.

Create Questions

As a class, draw up a list of questions they could ask local people. Encourage 'open' questions. Include: What have you seen? What happened? "What did you think about it? Discuss the difference between 'open' and 'closed' questions. Discuss making sure you get detail; exactly where, when and what.

4.

Improvised Interviews:

Pair children up. Ask one child from each pair to put their hand up. They are 'A's. The others are B's. Explain that they will take it in turns at being a reporter and being a 'local'.

'A's are the reporters and 'B's are local people with a story to tell, either of a Dandy story that happened to them or one that they have heard from someone else.

The 'reporters' use the questions they have created at least as starting points.

The reporter knocks on their door and the conversation is improvised in role.

Allow about 5 minutes for the meetings, then gather the class and explain that 'B's are now the reporters and 'A's the locals and set up interviews with new partners.

5.

2nd Newsroom Meeting

The teacher, again as the Editor, calls a meeting to find out what the 'reporters' have discovered. The children are all reporters again now.
Start the meeting.

Begin by reminding the children that they are exceptional reporters and that you're looking forward to reading their news reports.

In role go through elements for this news report and leave them in view:

The Name of the Newspaper at the top

Headline that grabs attention

A subtitle that that gives a bit more information and makes the reader want to find out more.

Reporter's name

First short paragraph explaining briefly who, what, where, when and why.

The Story: Include direct and indirect speech, using 'quotes' from the local people.

Further questions.

Conclusion: What might happen next.

6.

Writing the report

Children write their newspaper reports.

These could be edited and a class 'special edition' about Dandy created for all to read.

Further ideas:

Create a map of the locality and mark all the sitings and stories.

For an older / more able group, explore the history of James Device and the Pendle Witches (see links below) first and play the session as if it were happening at the time of the Pendle Witch trials.

SUBJECTS: English / Drama / Geography

LINK TO:

“ Drama Techniques”