

Shared reading

SECTION

3

Extract 1

- Read the extract on photocopiable page 8 together.
- Ask the children to talk about the neighbours in Aristotle Street. Discuss the possible reasons why they don't talk to each other. Is it because they don't like each other or could there be other reasons? (Perhaps they are too busy, or only recently moved to the street?)
- Draw attention to the conversational style of the text. It is as though the author is telling the story to the reader in person.
- Highlight the use of commas to break up the two sentences. Demonstrate that this allows the reader to pause and to emphasise certain phrases. Re-read the second sentence, emphasising the final phrase, 'theirs, and theirs alone'. Discuss how this is a loaded sentence (charged with hidden meaning) reiterating the aloofness of the neighbours and hinting at what is to come.
- Ask the children to re-read the extract with expression appropriate to the punctuation. Ask them about the conversational style.

Extract 2

- Read an enlarged copy of Extract 2 using appropriate expression. Note the use of repetition to emphasise the repetition in Sid's different lives: 'six different names... six different ways to behave.'
- Focus on the line 'It wasn't easy being six people's pet.' Talk about difficulties that Sid might face in maintaining his lifestyle, and relate it to the children's own experiences. Ask, for example, *Have you ever needed to be in two different places at once?*
- Highlight the use of alliteration: 'Sid... swanky airs', 'silly as Sally', and the use of rhyme: 'Bob... job', 'rough and tough'. Use familiar names to demonstrate alliteration further. (For example, 'as happy as Hannah', 'as tough as Tommy'.) Encourage the children to think of similar alliterative phrases.
- Discuss the reasons why Sid would have a different personality for each owner. (Perhaps this would help him to remember his different names.)

Extract 3

- Read an enlarged copy of the text.
- Focus on the simple conversational style, noting how the extract begins with 'Now'.
- Ask the children to re-read the passage with appropriate expression, acknowledging the use of commas.
- Look at the use of other punctuation in the text and circle the exclamation marks and ellipsis. Ask the children about the effect of these when reading. (Used for emphasis, or as a natural gap or pause before important information is delivered.)
- Highlight the word 'furious'. Ask the children what this word means. Use the illustration as a prompt if the book is available. What other words could have been used? Role play this part of the story with children taking the parts of the vet and the owners. Talk about the personalities of the different owners by studying their pictures, and their choice of names for Sid. What might they say to the vet?
- Ask the children if the author is sympathetic towards Sid. How do they know? (Through the use of the words 'oh dear'.) Encourage the children to describe their own feelings at this point in the story. Do they have more sympathy for Sid, or for the owners? Do they think that Sid has been doing the right thing by eating so many dinners? How would they feel if he was their cat?

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