

Get writing

SECTION

6

A portrait of Barney

Objective: To write a portrait of a character.

What you need: Copies of *Stig of the Dump*, writing materials, flipchart or board, paper.

Cross-curricular links: Art and design.

What to do

- The children need to have read enough of the story to have formed a good understanding of Barney's personality and behaviour.
- In pairs, ask the children to consider what kind of boy Barney is. (For example: brave; trusting; clever.) Share ideas as a class, prompting the children to support their suggestions by referring to what happens in the story.
- Guide the children to think about different issues, for example: Barney's relationships with other people or whether he changes. It would also be interesting to consider what the reader

does *not* learn about Barney, for example: what he looks like, and his home and parents.

- Ask the children to write a portrait of Barney. To support this, you could display a selection of words and phrases for the children to refer to, for example: brave; foolish; change; his grandmother; his happiest moment.
- Share and discuss the children's completed work. What is the most important thing about Barney? Is there anything the children disagree on?

Differentiation

For older/more confident children: Encourage the children to cover a wide range of issues and to consider why Stig is the perfect friend for Barney.

For younger/less confident children: The children could draw a picture of what they think Barney looks like and surround it with sentences describing him.

A meeting across time

Objective: To use reading as a model for writing own stories.

What you need: Photocopiable page 30, writing materials, paper.

Cross-curricular links: History.

What to do

- Use this activity after the children have completed the novel.
- The lesson focuses on the meeting between a character of the present day with a character from the past. Prompt the children to recall how this works in *Stig of the Dump*. (Who meets? How? Where? What do they do? How are they different?)
- Tell the children that you want them to invent a story in which a child living in the present meets someone from the past. Encourage them to choose a period with which they are familiar from work in history. Select one possibility,

and discuss aspects of it they could focus on, for example: a Victorian school pupil or an Elizabethan actor.

- Hand out the photocopiable sheet to each child and briefly explain how this can be used to make decisions about the meeting of these two characters.
- When the children have completed this planning stage, ask them to write an account of the first meeting.

Differentiation

For older/more confident children: Encourage the children to elaborate the episode by including detail and dialogue, and by focusing on underlying issues, especially differences in attitude and understanding.

For younger/less confident children: Suggest that the children work in pairs on the planning sheet and then develop their ideas through role play – one playing 'the character from the present', the other 'the character from the past'.