FRIENDSHIP

The activities that follow focus around the theme of making friends and being kind or unkind to others. They encourage children to explore and share feelings everyone has about belonging and not belonging. Using material of this kind can help the teacher and the class to establish what is acceptable behaviour and what is not.

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Polly Makes a Move

Moral reasoning

- Should the children in Polly's new class have been more friendly? Why?
- What reasons can you think of why people should help one another when they need it? Make a list of all the reasons on the board. Are some reasons better than others? If so, which ones?
- Imagine that the two girls who picked on Polly claimed they were just having a bit of fun and that it was harmless. What could you say to them to help them realise it was more serious than that?
- Polly exaggerated her tummy upset in order to stay home from school. Does it matter if people are not honest with each other? Is it right always to tell the truth?
- When Polly noticed that Adam the new boy was feeling left out, do you think she should have done something about that? Why? If she knew he was feeling lonely, did she have any kind of duty to help? Did the fact that she was a girl make any difference, in your opinion? If so, what? Should someone else in the class make sure Adam is feeling all right?

Thinking things through

- What is a true friend? Make a list of the qualities people look for in real friends and discuss why these are generally thought to be important.
- People often speak about their "best" friends. Can you have more than one best friend?
- In what ways are friendships good for us and in what ways are friendships bad? Use your own experiences to explore this question and share your ideas.
- Schools are often lonely places for many children. What does this mean? What can being lonely involve? Share ideas and experiences with each other.
- When is it good to be on your own?

Community building

Thinking about bullying

This topic is worth spending a good deal of time considering from the point of view of how the children feel about it when it happens to them and about what is not acceptable behaviour in school.

Ask the children to think of as many kinds of bullying as they can. Does it always have to be physical? Can you be a bully with words? Are some kinds of bullying worse than others?

Collect examples of different kinds of bullying and ask the children to think about the best way to deal with them. Is it right or wrong to report someone who is bullying in school? Ask the children to consider carefully their reasons for their answers.

Bullying in some form is something that will have happened to many children. Ask children to write about and comment on their own experiences of bullying. Later, these might be fed back to the class anonymously.

What makes a friend?

Ask the children to write a poem about having friends and about what it might be like not to have friends. Some examples may be found in anthologies but the children's own work should provide lots to talk about.

Ask the children to work with one or two friends. Ask them to draw their friends as carefully as they can, taking notice of the colour of their hair, eyes etc. If someone is always smiling, they show that in the picture. Underneath ask them to write about what they like about their friend.

Getting to know people

It isn't always easy to get to know people. Thinking about the similarities and differences between children in the class creates opportunities for the children to learn more about someone they might never otherwise talk to. This might be particularly useful at the beginning of the year. The work could give rise to some maths work, if surveys of likes and dislikes, or physical characteristics were carried out.

Ask the children to work with someone they do not usually work with. Through questions of all kinds they should try to find out as much as possible about their partner in a given period of time, say five minutes. It might be useful to interrupt the activity fairly early on to discover what is being found out and to give children ideas about what to ask. Alternatively, go round the class offering suggestions such as "Do you know what your partner's favourite food is?" Ask the children to think about what they have in common with the person with whom they are working.

Old friends

Ask the children to talk to a parent, grandparent or carer, about their best friend at school.

Prompts for this could include:

- what was your friend like?
- what sorts of things did you do together?
- how did you meet or get to know one another?
- for how long were you friends?
- are you still in touch with your friend?

The value of this exercise is to enable children to talk to grown ups as equals about things they have in common. Many children see adults in this light too rarely. As their teacher share some memories of your own with the class.

Polly Makes a Move

Polly was very excited. At last the day had come when she was to move house. She had liked living in the country, but moving to the town was a big adventure. She was looking forward to having neighbours nearby and making friends with other children. She had missed this living on a farm.

Polly was also excited about starting her new school. Her mum had bought her a school uniform and a new pencil set.

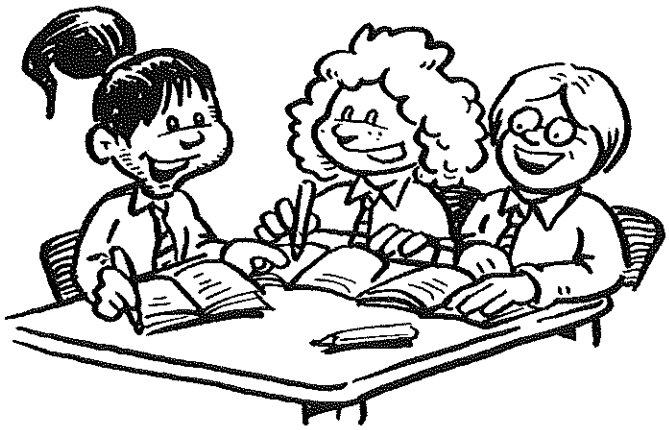
By the time she reached her new class on Monday morning the other children were already working. The teacher introduced Polly to the rest of the class and asked Polly to tell everyone where she had come from.

Then Polly looked for somewhere to sit. Everyone was busy working with their friends and no one seemed to notice her. She noticed two empty chairs nearby and sat in one of them. She got out her new pencil set and put it on the table.

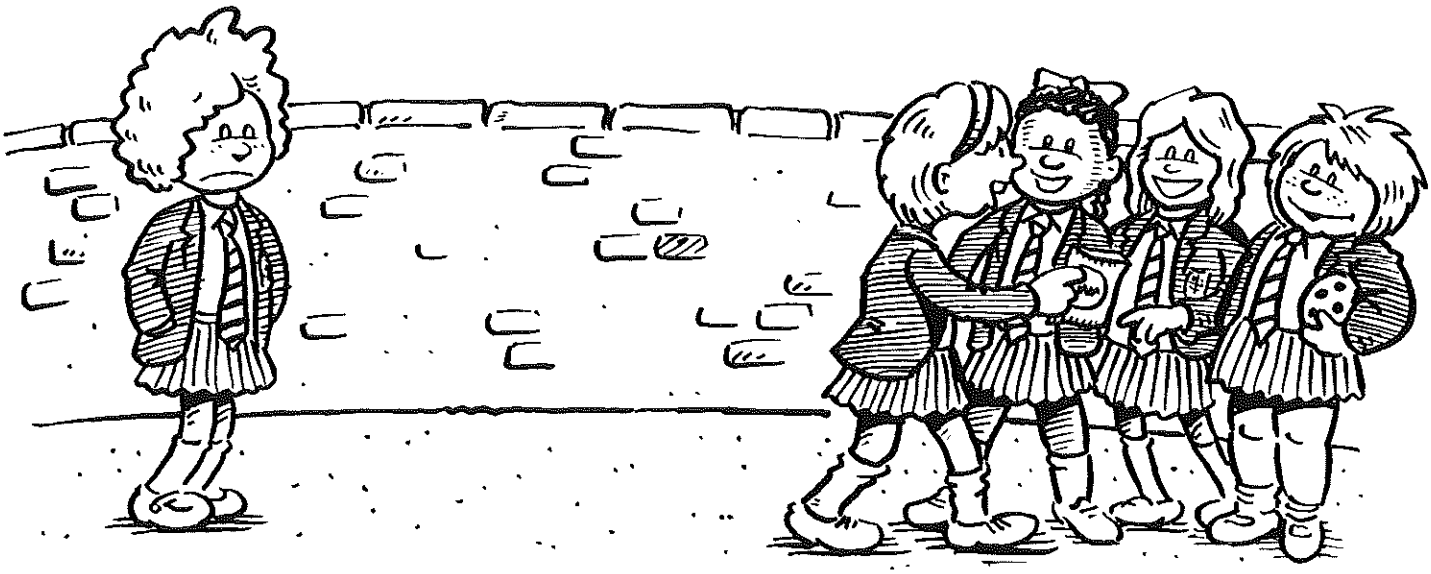
"Look at her," said a voice.

"She thinks she is so good," said another, "listen to the way she talks."

"That's not fair," thought Polly, "I can't help the way I talk. Anyway they're the ones who talk funny." Polly was glad when the teacher came over and invited her to work with a group of children at another table.



Kelly and Payel talked with Polly and helped her with her work. Polly was so pleased that they were nice to her, but at playtime the two best friends ran off together to play, leaving Polly alone.



The same thing happened at lunch time. Over the next two weeks, Polly got used to being left alone at playtimes. She was always left out at PE when you had to choose a partner to work with. Then, two girls in the class began to pick on Polly. They would ask to borrow her rubber and not return it to her and they would push her out of line at dinner time. One day, they hid her coat behind a cupboard and Polly missed most of her playtime searching for it.

Polly began not to like school. One day she told her Mum that she had a pain and didn't feel well enough to go to school. Mum let her stay at home. The same thing happened the next day and as it was Friday, Mum let her stay at home again. "Perhaps she'll feel better on Monday," Mum thought. She was beginning to worry about Polly.

By the time Saturday came, Polly seemed much better. This was the day Polly's Aunty Jane and cousin Sam came to visit. After lunch, Polly and Sam went off on their own into the garden, looking for snails. The snails were part of what Polly and Sam used to call their nature museum. The museum was a row of ice-cream tubs with different collections. Polly especially loved making the labels.

After they had found some excellent snails, Sam asked Polly about her new school.

"It's all right," said Polly in a flat sort of voice, "there are two girls who are nice. I sit with them in class."

"Are they your friends?" Sam asked.

"Yeah, sort of," Polly answered, "but they don't sort of notice me at playtime and dinner."

"Can't you ask them if you can play?" Sam suggested.

"Well, I did one day but they said they weren't doing anything. So I just walked around and talked to one of the dinner ladies."

"Then play with someone else," said Sam. "Simple. That's what I'd do."

"I don't want to," Polly replied, her voice beginning to sound angry. "Everyone else in the class is horrid. And two girls pick on me all the time." Polly paused for a moment, staring at a huge snail who seemed to be trying to crawl all over the others. Then she lowered her voice and said, "Can you keep a secret, Sam?"

"Course I can. I didn't tell that time you tore your dress when you fell out of the tree, did I?"

"That was an accident," said Polly, "this is different. This is *a proper* secret and you must promise not to tell anyone."

"All right, what is it?" Sam asked.

"Last week I pretended to be ill, so I could stay at home," Polly said. "I said I had a bad tummy ache but it wasn't all that bad, really. Mum would kill me if she found out."

"Lucky you," said Sam, "My Mum never lets me stay home."

Next Monday Polly told her Mum that she had a pain and didn't feel well, but Mum insisted that she went to school.

When she got there she noticed that Kelly was by herself. Payel had chicken-pox and wouldn't be in school for a week. Polly sat by Kelly and they worked together in class. At playtime they played skipping together in the playground. During PE lessons Kelly chose to work with Polly.

They had a lovely time playing together and by the end of the week they were very good friends. The other two girls didn't seem to bother Polly so much now and when they did, she didn't really mind now that she had got a friend.

When Payel came back to school it was her turn to feel jealous that Kelly and Polly were friends. Sitting at their table, she watched Kelly and Polly working together, making a model machine with parts that moved. They didn't seem to notice that she, Payel, had no machine to work on. She felt left out and lonely and at playtime was just about to go off on her own when Polly called out "Come on, Payel, where are you going?" From that moment, the three girls were good friends.

Not long after that, a new boy called Adam joined the class. The teacher introduced him to the class and asked them to look after him. Adam sat with some of the boys on the other side of the class to Polly. He seemed happy enough but at lunch time Polly noticed Adam standing on the side of the playground watching all the others play football. Polly knew just how he was feeling.

Feelings

Use the simple line drawings for the children, working in small groups, to look at and suggest what is happening. Ask them to think about how the people in the picture are feeling. What do they think about what is happening? Is it good or bad? Encourage the children to share their ideas about why they think these things are good or bad. If they are bad, what should be done about it? Why do they think this?

The drawings suggest the following situations:

1 being left out;

2 fighting or quarrelling (three illustrations showing both boys and girls);

3 being friends, involving two and three people;

4 being comforted;

5 sharing and not sharing;

6 taking something;

7 being lonely in a crowd; and

8 telling a secret.

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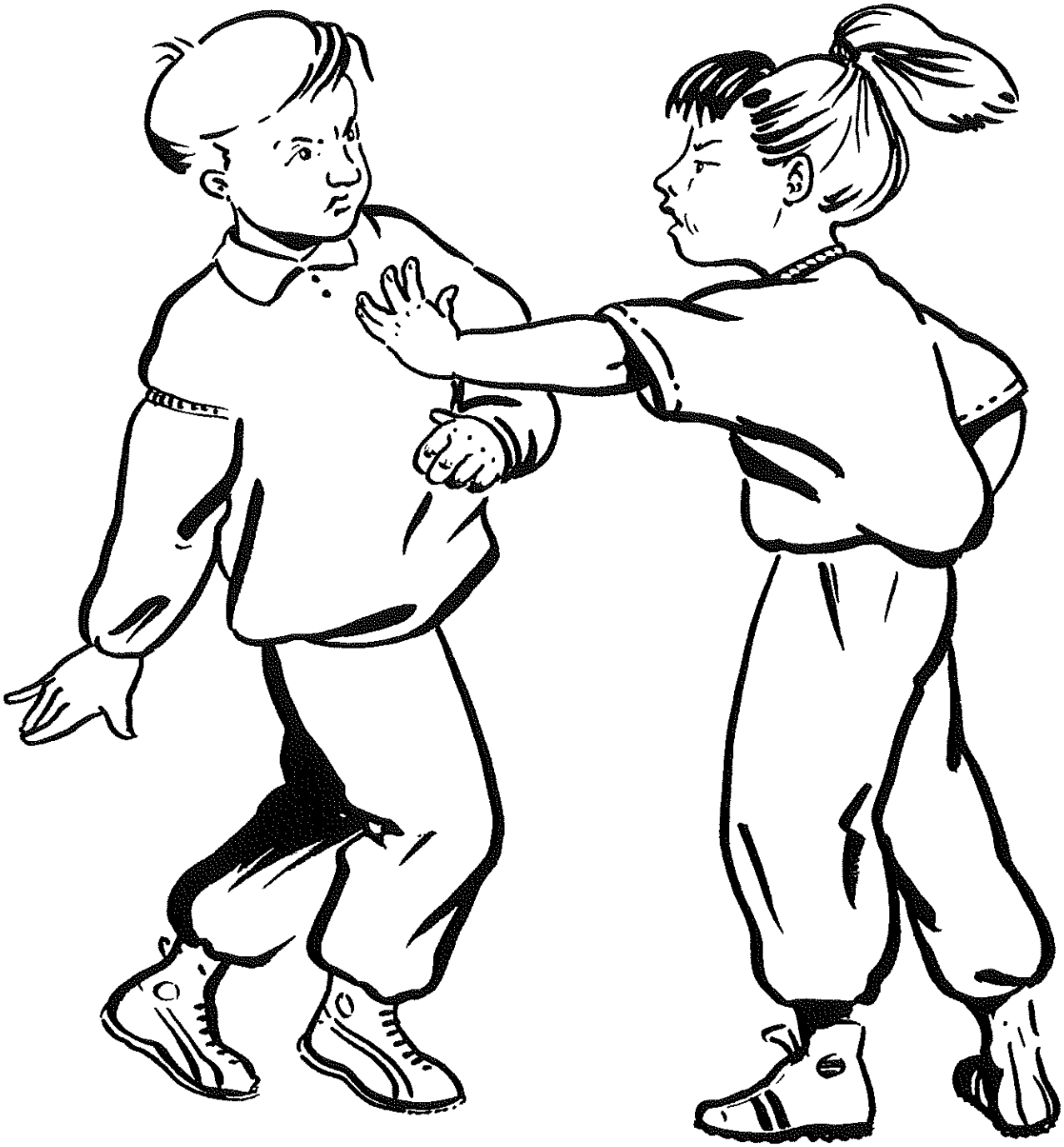

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Run to Safety

Key ideas

- children's rights
- respect for others

This story looks at various aspects of safety and caring for others when they need help. In the story, which is set in the Second World War, two children are evacuated from Portsmouth to the safety of a small community near the Welsh border. However, the children find that, though there is safety from the bombing, there are other dangers that face them.

This story, which is designed for use with Key Stage 2 pupils, might be used to complement work in history if the children are studying Britain since the Thirties, though its value should be seen principally in allowing children to reflect on issues which face them in their own lives.

Historical note

Following limited bombing of British towns and cities during the First World War, plans were laid during the 1920s and '30s for the evacuation of certain categories of civilians from large centres of population in the event of war.

Although there was understandable confusion in the months leading up to the declaration of war, arrangements were well advanced by the summer of 1939. As a result, on 1 September 1939, the day Germany invaded Poland, local authorities were able to begin the evacuation of primary school children and mothers with children under 5. Four days later, the main evacuation had been completed. About one and a half million children had been moved.

There was no compulsion on parents to evacuate their children. Despite many people's fears, the bulk of the civilian population did not encounter major hostilities during the first nine months of the War, and this period became known as the 'Phoney War'. With dangers less than had been feared, many children started to return home.

Towards the end of 1940, however, enemy bombing of civilian targets sharply increased. There was severe damage in towns and cities and in rural areas in south-east England. As a result, a second wave of evacuation took place, with many children staying away from home until the closing months of the War.

Children's experiences of the evacuation varied widely. For some it was the happiest part of their life, with great kindness being shown by all those who cared for them. But for others it was not such a good experience. Some adults found difficulty in accommodating children from a different background and others resented the intrusion that their presence caused. A few cases of neglect were heard by the courts.

Below are some of the issues you could explore arising from this story. Remember to ask the children if they would like to raise any issues of their own for discussion.

Chapter 1

Moral reasoning

- Is Mum right to want the children to leave home? What reasons can you think of for and against evacuating the children?
- Was Jenny right to want to stay at home with Mum? What would it mean for Mum if Philip and Jenny stayed in Portsmouth?
- Should Jenny have thought more about how her Mum felt when she was constantly worrying for the children? Should children think more about their parents' feelings? What makes that difficult sometimes?

Thinking things through

- Make a list of dangers which children and adults can face in their lives.
- Why do families leave their homes and move to other places? Do families have a right to travel away from danger or poverty to be safe? Can you think of examples where this has happened?
- Do you think that people in safer parts of the world have any kind of duty to help families who are less fortunate than they are? Why do you think this?
- The children's father was at sea fighting for his country. What does the word "patriotic" mean to you? What makes people feel patriotic? Are there any dangers in being patriotic, do you think?
- Why do you think wars are fought? What have you learnt from history? Who can prevent wars happening? Who are the victims of war?

Community building

- How do you think Mum feels about sending the children away from home?
- What makes us feel safe? When do we feel unsafe? Were Jenny and Philip safe at home?
- Do you know of anyone whose family has moved to another part of the country or the world to seek a better or safer life for themselves and their children? As a class make a list of as many examples as you can think of.

Chapter 2

Moral reasoning

- Was it fair that Philip and Jenny got to live in the big house whilst other children had to live in much smaller houses?
- What do you think about the way the children were treated? Why?
- Should the Benningtons have been kinder to Philip and Jenny? Why? What reasons do you think the Benningtons might have given in their own defence?
- Why do you think the children were not allowed to go into certain parts of the Benningtons' house? What do you think about that and why?
- Jenny's Mum had told her to be good in someone else's house. Why do you think that was? Was Mum right to say that, in your opinion?
- Should you help someone even if you do not like them very much? What reasons could you give in favour of this? Think of as many as you can.

Thinking things through

- It seems that some people are more caring than others. Why do you think this is?
- Most people are selfish in some ways. Is it natural to be selfish? In what ways? Is it bad to be selfish? When?
- Can you suggest reasons why Enid was nicer to the children than the Benningtons?
- Many people with small houses were happy to take in the evacuee children. Does the fact that the Benningtons were well off make any difference to their duty to help the evacuees?

- What are the good points and bad points about sharing what we have with others?
- What would you do if you and your family were suddenly given a large amount of money? What would be the choices you faced?

Community building

- What is it like when we go to new places? How do we feel? Write down some of your own experiences, then share them.
- If you had suddenly to leave your home for any reason, how would you feel about it? What things would you like to take with you? Make a list of five items you would really value. What makes them valuable?
- How should we treat other people who are new to our school, our road, or our family?
- What could have been done to help Jenny and Philip feel more welcome? Do the Bennington's have a duty to be kind to the children? Why?
- How do we know how other people are feeling?

Personal writing

- Imagine the thoughts that were going through Jenny's head as she lay in bed that night.

Chapter 3

Moral reasoning

- What do you think about the way Joseph Mulligan treated Jenny at first? Why do you imagine he was like that? Was he being fair to Jenny?
- Should we only be helpful to people who are helpful to us? Why or why not? Think of a good rule about how we should try to treat other people. Why is it a good rule?
- Do you think Mr Evans should have behaved better towards the new children? In what ways? Why do you think he was rather unkind? Was this a good excuse?

- The boys next to Joseph were friendly at first and then changed their attitude. Why do you think they did this? Was that fair on Joseph and his brother?

Thinking things through

- Do you agree with Enid that there are lots of things in life which are unfair? What things do you think are unfair? Make up a list of things in small groups – about unfairness at home, at school, between friends or in society? Remember you must say for each one "I think this is unfair because...". With the whole class together, share your ideas. Do other people agree with you? Why are they unfair? Can anything be done to make them fairer?
- Mr Evans seemed to resent the new children? Why do you think newcomers are sometimes not welcomed?
- Joseph looked as if he had settled in quickly at first. Underneath he was less sure. What makes people cover up their feelings?
- What do you think Jenny meant when she said "Why can't they treat us just like human beings"? Can you think of some ways in which all human beings deserve to be treated whoever they are and wherever they find themselves?

Community building

- How do we form impressions of one another? Are they always accurate? Talk about the differences between people's appearences and what they are like as people. Can you think of examples of mistaking people's appearances?
- Some people give impressions of what they are like but inside they are not like that at all? Can you think of why this can happen?
- How can we make it easier for other people to get to know us?
- How can schools be more welcoming to new children?

Chapter 4

Moral reasoning

- Should Jenny tell Enid about what had happened in the library? Why do you think this? Can you think of any reasons why Jenny should not tell Enid about what happened?

Thinking things through

- Is everyone kind to children? In what sorts of ways might some people be unkind to children? What should children do if this happens to them?
- Think of some rules which grown-ups ought to follow when they are in charge of children.
- Jenny trusted Enid but did not trust the Benningtons. How did she make this judgement? How do you know who to trust? If you met someone for the first time, would you know whether to trust them? Would it make a difference if the person was:
  a) a relation;
  b) the parent of a friend;
  c) a neighbour;
  d) a babysitter; or
  e) a teacher?

Community building

- What kind of feelings or thoughts do we keep to ourselves? Why do we do this?
- Is it always good to keep these to ourselves?
- Why was Jenny uneasy about what happened in Mr Bennington's study? Do you think she was sensible in deciding not to go back there again on her own?
- Jenny didn't feel happy about some of the things that were happening to her and wanted someone to talk to. If you wanted someone to talk about what was happening to you, who could you go to? Why is it important for there always to be someone who can listen to you?

Chapter 5

Moral reasoning

- What do you think about the way Mr Evans and the headmaster treated Jenny? Was it fair or unfair? Why do you think they were like this?
- How should Jenny have been treated when she was accused of doing wrong? What rules should apply when someone is accused of doing wrong like this?

- Jenny and the other evacuees are called "city people" by Mr Evans and labelled as bad and trouble-makers. What is wrong with treating people as "stereotypes" like this?
- Enid and her family were very kind to Jenny and Philip. Why were they like this? Do you think they had any kind of duty to help them? If not, why did they do it?
- What sort of people do you think we should help?

Thinking things through

- Looking back on the story, and using your own experiences, draw up a charter of rights for children setting out what you believe should be respected by people who look after children. You could begin like this: "We believe all children should have the right to..."

Community building

- What sorts of stereotypes can you think of in school and the wider community? What do you think it feels like to be stereotyped? Think about racial stereotypes. Why are they so often unkind?
- Jenny was worried about getting a bad reputation at school. How do people get bad reputations and should we always believe them? What effect can getting a bad reputation have on the people themselves? Can you ever get rid of a bad reputation once you've got one?
- How was it that news of what happened to Jenny got round the school so quickly? What do you think about people spreading rumours? Why do they do it? Do you believe rumours when you hear them?
- Why do you think Enid said she was ashamed of the way the Benningtons had behaved? Would you be ashamed of someone who let down your school, or a group you belong to? What makes people feel part of a group so that they care about what happens to the whole group?

Run to Safety

Chapter 1

Jenny looked down at her toast and then across the table at her brother Philip. She wasn't hungry. Though she hadn't eaten anything for hours, in her stomach it was not hunger she felt but a tight knot of fear. Although she was eleven years old and in some ways quite grown up now, all she wanted to do at this moment was fling herself into her mother's arms and cry. She had just learnt that Mum was thinking of sending her and her brother Philip away from home.

The family lived in a small house in the middle of Portsmouth. To tell the truth, it was really just their Mum they lived with most of the time. Dad had been away such a long time that Jenny sometimes almost forgot what he was like. If it wasn't for his picture on the mantelpiece above the fire, Jenny thought she might go for days without thinking about him.

Dad was in the Navy. He worked in the engine room on a destroyer. Sometimes he was away for months on end before returning for a few days' leave, then going off again on yet another voyage. Where he went to was always secret, it had to be. Even Mum never knew where he was going next. There was a war on and a lot of things had to be kept secret now. People had even taken down all the road signs – in case, they said, the enemy landed and needed to know where they were.

The war had made other differences to their lives. Food was in short supply. Lots of things were rationed, which meant that you could not get much of anything, even if you had the money. But the thing that Jenny and Philip really hated was the bombing.

On most days and nights came the ghostly wail of the sirens, warning everyone of the start of an air raid. If they were all at home, Mum would take the children down the steps into the shelter. Sometimes they stayed there for a few minutes. At other times it was hours.

When the bombing first started, a lot of children, including some of Jenny's friends were moved away into the country, where there was less danger from bombing. Mum had refused even to think about sending the children away. She had hoped that the war might quickly be over but after a year of worrying for their safety she was beginning to change her mind.

One night there had been a very heavy bombing raid. Jenny and Philip had only just got inside the shelter when there was a huge rumble of sound. It felt like an earthquake. Everything shook and vibrated. "Sounds like they hit the whole street,"

said Mum, putting her arms around both of them. She was almost right. Just two rows of houses away, a massive bomb had flattened ten houses and created a huge hole in the road. How many people were killed they did not know.

It was at breakfast, late the following morning, that Mum began to talk about the future. She didn't find it easy.

"I think we have got to make a decision," Mum announced.

"What about?" Jenny asked.

"About going away from here," Mum said, "to the country, where it's safer. Where the bombers don't come."

"Hooray!" shouted Philip. "Let's go and live on a farm where there are chickens and cows."

"Could we really do that?" asked Jenny. Then she had a thought. "But how would Dad know where we were?"

"Well," replied Mum, "you could go away, but I would stay here. I would look after the house, and be here when Dad comes home and you would, well, go to stay with someone else for a while until the bombing's over."

"On a farm?" said Philip, who was only eight and did not quite understand what Mum was saying.

"Well, we won't know where it will be until you get there. But lots of other children have gone away. You'll be well looked after and I could come and see you at weekends. Dad too, when he's home."

Jenny knew that some of the children in her class at school had left Portsmouth but she didn't know where they had gone and had never thought it would happen to her.

"No," she said suddenly, "I am not leaving. I don't want us all to be apart."

"You and Philip would stay together," said Mum. "I'd make sure of that."

"I didn't mean just us two," Jenny replied, looking up at her Mum. "What will happen to you?"

"I'll be fine," said Mum. "In fact I'll be better not having to worry about you in the air raid. I'm not sure I can carry on like this for much longer."

Jenny thought of having to stay somewhere strange. She had never lived anywhere else other than Portsmouth, a busy city with a large dockyard full of ships. She hadn't often been outside of Portsmouth, except for an occasional train ride to see their aunty in Southampton. She just couldn't imagine what it would be like to have to make new friends and go to a new school – and all without Mum.

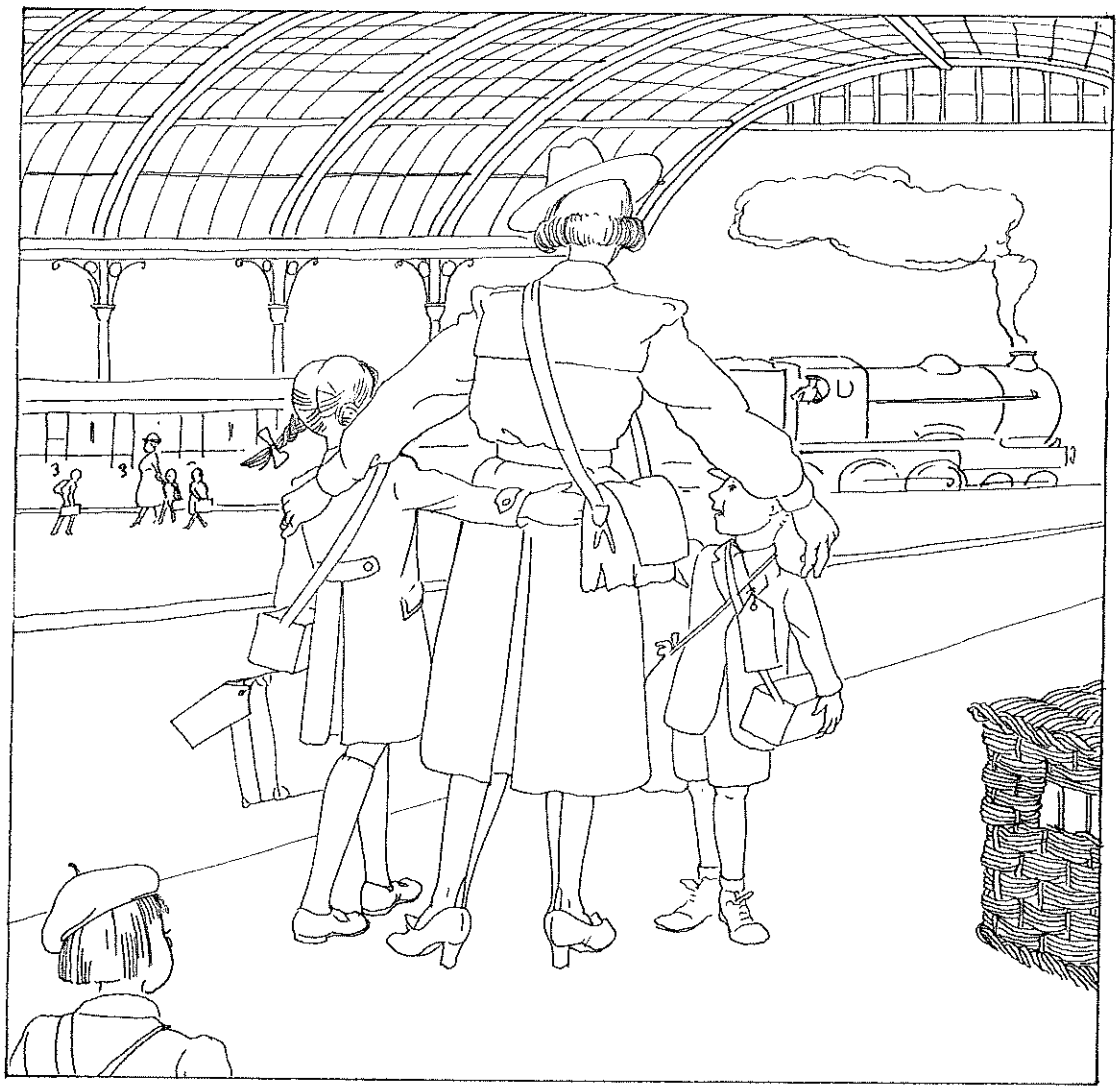
"What if we go away and no one knows where we are?" Jenny continued. "We might never see you again."

"You won't be going to another country," said Mum. "As soon as you arrive you can send me a postcard with your new address, and I can come and visit you the next weekend."

Jenny didn't know what to think or say. Just the thought of it all made her mind go blank. She reached up and put her arms round Mum's neck and held on tight. Philip came over and tried to do the same, but he couldn't quite reach Mum's neck. The three of them stood for a while saying nothing, clinging together as if refusing to let the war split them up. Then Mum said: "I know it's hard but sometimes for your safety you have to be brave. It will be for the best in the end. You'll see."

Chapter 2

The day of their departure came. When they arrived at the station, Jenny was surprised to see many other children like themselves. For some reason she had forgotten that she and Philip were not the only ones going through this ordeal. She noticed that all the children were carrying small cases or bags. She imagined that, like hers, their bags contained a gas



mask, some spare clothes, a toothbrush, comb and handkerchief and enough food to last the day.

They saw a large knot of children and adults at the end of one platform. Through the barriers, Jenny could see the train waiting to take them away into the country. The smoke from the steam engine lazily curled up into the huge iron roof of the station. But not for much longer – a lady with a loud voice was already ticking off the children on a list and someone else was showing them where to sit on the train.

Mum bent down and gave each of the children a big hug. She seemed unable to speak so she checked the name tags attached to Jenny and Philip's coats and took them over to the lady with the list. Then they were walking down the platform and climbing aboard the train. After a final hug and a kiss which seemed somehow to be more like a dream than real, the children found themselves in a carriage sitting nervously together waving goodbye through the window to Mum, who was walking alongside the slowly moving train.

For a long time, Jenny and Philip just sat and held hands. Two boys sitting opposite them seemed wild with excitement. They seemed almost pleased to be leaving home and school behind, as if they thought they were getting rid of grown-ups for ever. The boys began to eat their lunch

almost as soon as they were on their way. They jumped up at the window and shouted whenever they saw something new. Jenny wished they would go away.

It was some hours after leaving Portsmouth, when the afternoon was wearing on and Philip was asleep across his sister's lap, that the lady with the list came to tell everyone in their carriage that they would be getting off the train at the next station. The train drew to a halt and the children climbed down on to the platform. Jenny and Philip walked in a crocodile of children along the platform holding on to each other as tightly as possible. As the train drew away into the distance and the children walked out into the station yard, Jenny noticed how quiet it was. Waiting for them at the entrance to the station were twenty or thirty grown-ups. There was a lady in some kind of uniform who seemed to be in charge of things. The first thing Jenny noticed was that she spoke with a lilting kind of accent she had never heard before. Jenny liked the sound of it. The lady announced to the children that these were the people with whom they would be staying.

"Line up everyone," she boomed to the children. "Let these good people see what they are getting."

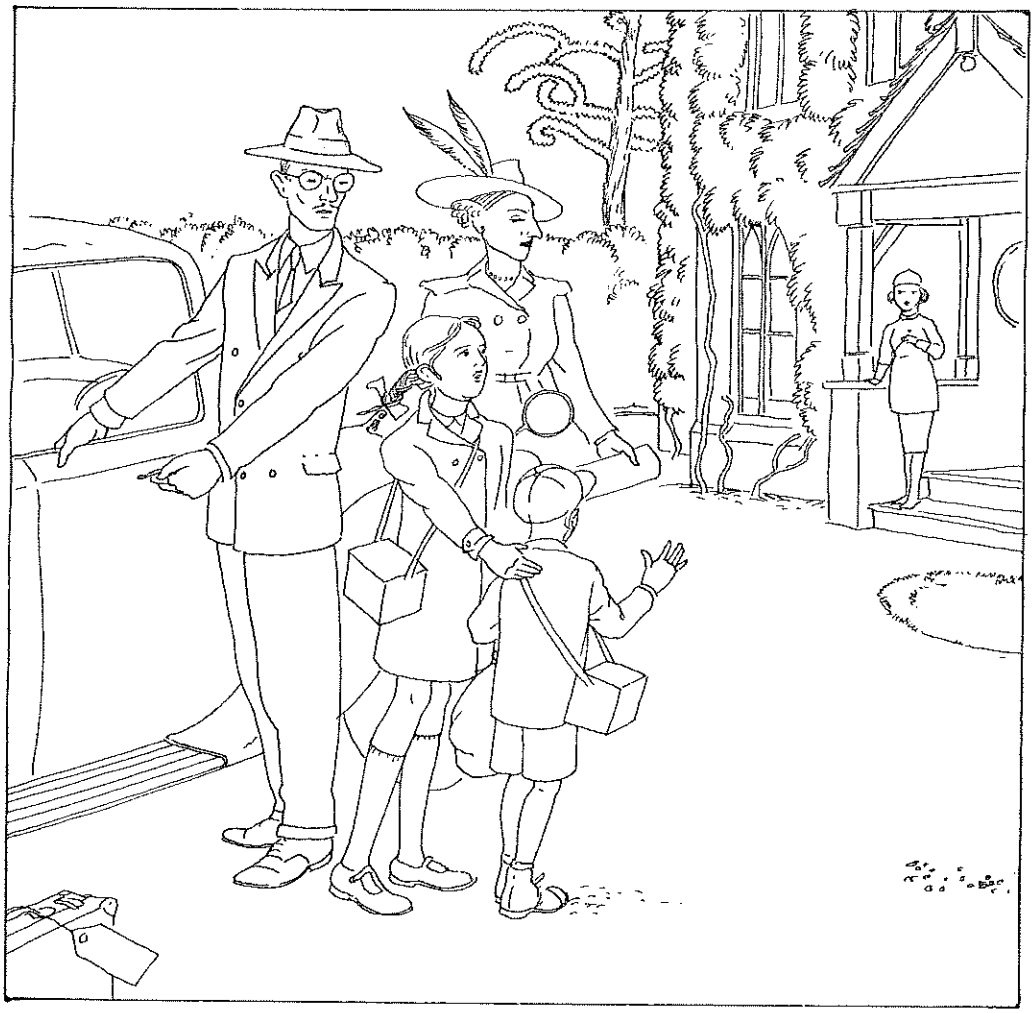
She read out the children's names, in alphabetical order, and the name of the family they would be staying with. Jenny saw the two boys from her carriage going off with a man pushing a bicycle. They didn't look so happy now, she thought. Being called Wilson, Jenny and Philip were the last to be called. The lady introduced the two children to their new foster parents.

"You'll be staying with Mr and Mrs Bennington until it's safe for you to go back to your own house," she said.

Mr Bennington was a tall man, with glasses and a small moustache. Jenny guessed he was a little bit older than her Dad. He said something under his breath to the lady, which Jenny couldn't hear and then turned to her and Philip.

"Come with me, then," he said and turned to lead the way. Jenny was just wondering how far they would have to walk when the man stopped at a huge black car and opened the door to the back seat. A smartly dressed woman, who must have been Mrs Bennington, was sitting in the front passenger seat. She was wearing a hat with an enormous feather sticking up from it. She turned round and looked curiously at the children. Jenny smiled at her, a little nervously and the woman half smiled back before turning to say something to her husband.

Jenny had not known what to expect when she got off the train but she was amazed to find herself in this huge car. She had not had many car rides in her life and this was really exciting. She looked at Philip whose eyes were



wide with excitement. As the car picked up speed, they passed the two boys and the man with the bicycle. Jenny waved at them as they passed, feeling almost like a rich person herself. The bigger of the two boys stuck his tongue out, so Jenny did the same in return.

The car left the town and was soon in the country. After about a mile, it swung into a curving driveway and stopped outside a large house, built of red bricks and almost covered with ivy. The children were disappointed that their ride had been so short.

Each carrying their own luggage, Jenny and Philip followed Mr and Mrs Bennington up the steps to the front door. The door was opened by a maid, who was joined a few moments later by a man who Jenny guessed must be the butler. Inside, the house seemed so grand, just like a house in a story book. They stood, amazed, in the entrance hall. In front of them there was a huge staircase covered in red carpet which led upstairs. The walls were lined with portraits of people, some of them in old-fashioned clothing and opposite the stairway was a massive stone fireplace and a blazing fire. As Mrs Bennington began to climb the stairs, she turned and spoke to the maid.

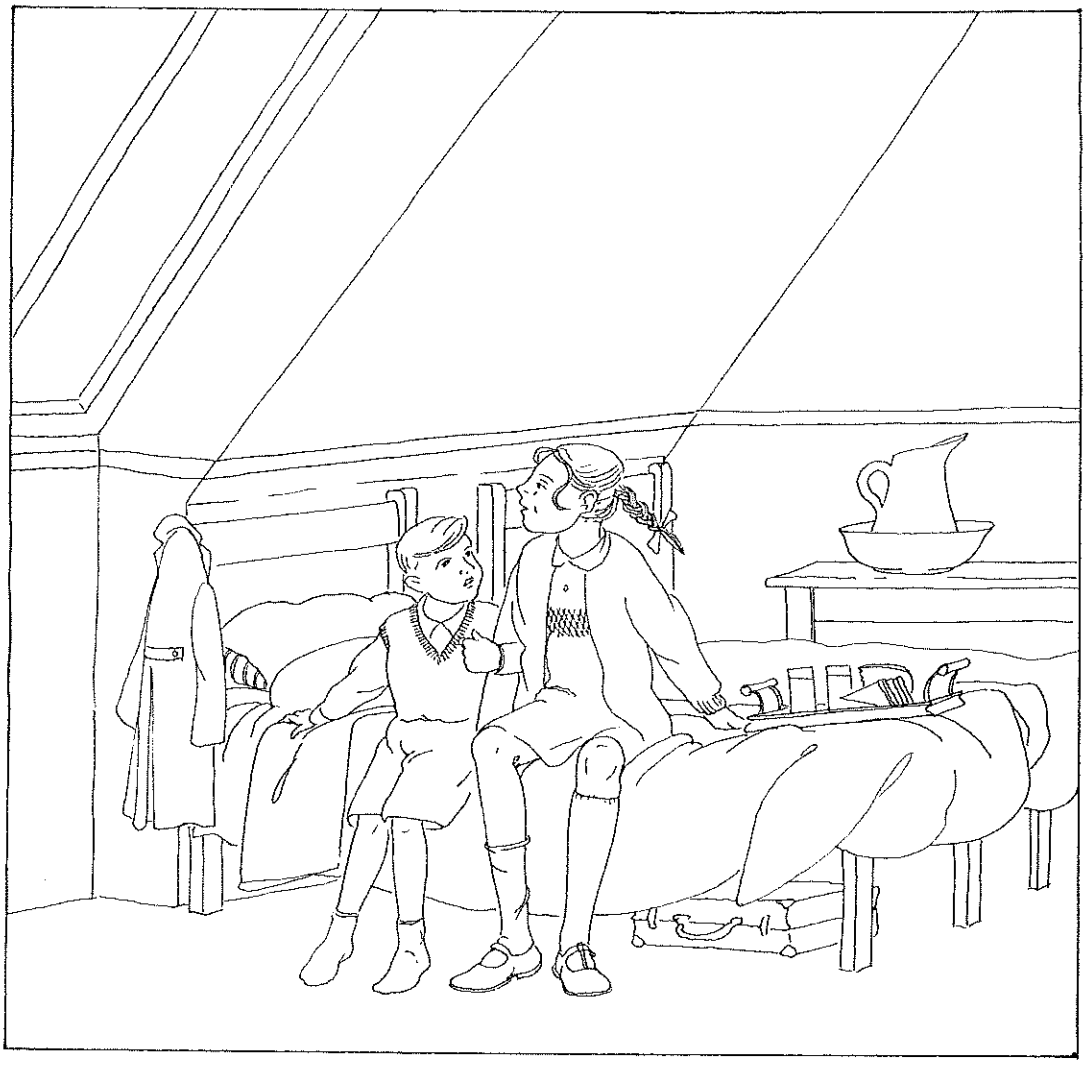
"Enid, take these two upstairs and show them their room. Help them unpack their things, although I don't think it will take them long," she said, looking down at the small bags. "Oh, and give them something to eat."

"Yes, Madam," Enid replied, and led the children to a door at the side of the hall. Down a narrow corridor, the children were led up a very steep flight of stairs, which, unlike the one in the main hall, had no carpet and was very narrow.

They climbed three flights of stairs, and down another long corridor until they reached a door at the end of the passage. Enid opened the door and showed the children in. Inside the room there were two beds, two chairs, a cupboard, a table and a bowl with a large jug beside it for washing. The ceiling was low and sloping down towards the beds. Jenny guessed they were up in the roof. There was a window in the ceiling out of which they could see the sky but not much else.

"I'll leave you to unpack your clothes," said Enid, "and then I'll bring you something to eat."

On their own for the first time since leaving home, both children suddenly felt very different. Jenny realised that



in all the excitement of riding in the car and arriving at such a grand house she had forgotten all about Mum. She felt ashamed of herself – as if she had let Mum down in some way.

Twenty minutes later Enid returned with some food on a tray. Bread, jam, cake and two glasses of milk.

"Aren't we going down to have tea with Mr and Mrs Bennington?" Jenny asked.

"Bless your life, no," laughed Enid. "What would the world be coming to?" Jenny didn't understand what Enid meant, but was too nervous to ask.

In a couple of minutes, Jenny and Philip had eaten the lot. It tasted all right, but it wasn't exactly filling.

"Don't worry," said Jenny to her brother. "There'll be more later for supper. Let's have a look around."

They explored the top part of the house, which mostly consisted of rooms full of junk and old furniture. On the next floor down, Jenny noticed a large door at the end of the corridor. Turning the handle, she and Philip saw that they were on the landing above the main entrance where they had come in. All around the walls were huge pictures of country scenes and grand people, and hanging from the ceiling high above was a huge chandelier sparkling with thousands of tiny glittering glass pieces. Suddenly, there was a shout from the floor below which made them both jump.

"Hey, you two!" came the butler's voice. "What do you think you're doing? Get back through that door and up to your room." With their hearts beating wildly Jenny and Philip ran to their rooms and slammed the door. For a few minutes they waited for someone to come and tell them what they had done wrong. But no one came. It began to get cold as it grew darker and as there seemed to be no heating or lighting in the room, the children climbed into one of the beds to keep warm. Jenny couldn't understand why their supper hadn't come.

"They must have forgotten about us, because we're new here," she thought. She wanted to go and find Enid, but she didn't know where to start looking and she didn't want to get into trouble again, not on their first day. After all, she had promised Mum that she would be good in someone else's house.

"When people are being so kind to you," Mum had said, "you must respect their house and make sure you do as you are told." Thinking of her Mum made Jenny long to be at home. She cuddled Philip tighter.

"If we go to sleep now," she told him, "it will make breakfast come quicker." But the only sound that came back was Philip's breathing as he lay fast asleep in his sister's arms.

Chapter 3

At seven o'clock the next morning Enid placed a breakfast tray on the table. The children were starving.

"When you've had your breakfast, get yourselves washed and dressed and wait downstairs by the kitchen door," she said, "and mind you stay in the servants' part of the house. I heard what you did last night."

"But nobody told us we couldn't go there," Jenny protested. "It's not fair."

"Yes, well there's lots of things in life that aren't fair," Enid said, "but you just have to put up with them. Now hurry up. Then I'll show you how to get to school."

At eight thirty, the children were standing outside the kitchen door waiting to leave. Enid appeared once more and told them how to reach the school. It was about twenty minutes' walk along the lane into the town. The school was just past the railway station where they had arrived last night.

As they walked along the road, Philip and Jenny talked about their new home. For all its size, neither of them was impressed.

"They don't give us much to eat," said Philip, who felt that his slice of toast for breakfast hadn't nearly made up for the lack of food the day before.

"Mr and Mrs Bennington don't seem very interested in us," said Jenny. "We've only seen them once."

"Perhaps we dreamt them," said Philip.

The figures they saw as they turned the corner near the school were definitely real. In the playground, children were running around as a teacher came out ringing a handbell. Everyone started to line up.

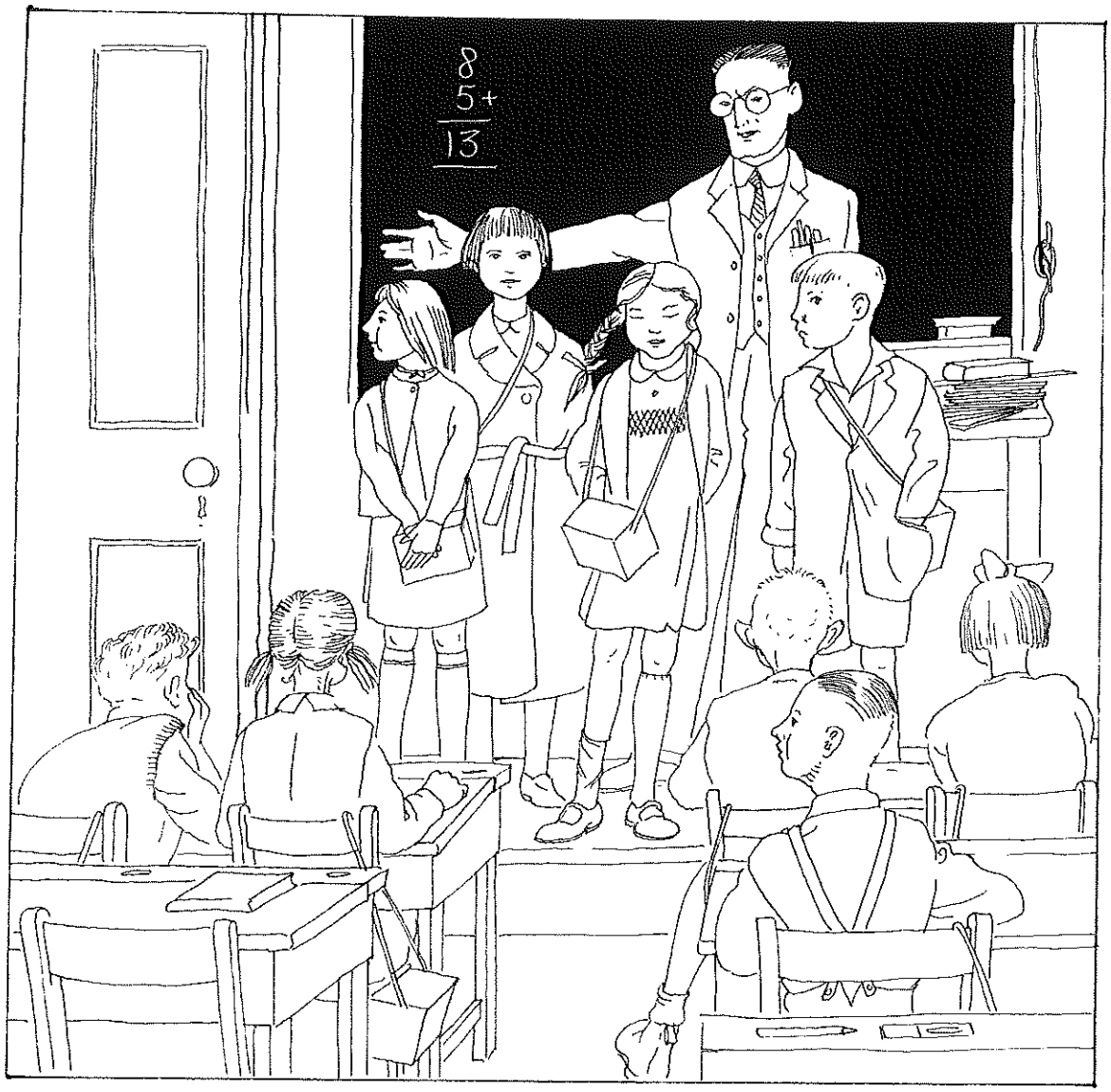
Jenny and Philip didn't know where to go so they just stood in the playground looking lost. For some reason it looked as though all the other children knew what to do. Suddenly Jenny spotted the two boys who were in their compartment on the train. They were with several other boys who were kicking something around on their way to a long line of boys. She ran over to them.

"Hello," she said, "do you know where to go?"

"Yes, we do," replied the taller of the two boys, "and you don't, so HA!" And he poked out his tongue as he had done the day before.

Jenny was startled by this reply. She had expected the boys to be helpful. After all, they had come together from Portsmouth so why was he being unkind?

"YOU TWO!" boomed a voice from near the door. "GET INTO LINE!" Just as at their old school the boys and the girls lined up separately. Without even having time to say "Goodbye" or "See you at playtime," Philip and Jenny ran to the separate lines so as not to be shouted at again.



As the line went indoors, Jenny passed the teacher. He looked at her without smiling.

"How old are you?" he asked.

"I'm eleven, sir," Jenny said.

"Class Six," said the teacher, "and you call me Mr Evans when you speak to me, is that clear?"

"Yes, sir, Mr Evans," Jenny said and followed the line in towards Class Six.

In the classroom, Jenny and three other children stood at the front near Mr Evans' desk whilst the rest of the class stared at them curiously. There were two other girls and the boy from the train who had just been unkind to her.

"Right, Class Six," said Mr Evans, "these children have come to join the class, though I don't know whether we'll have enough desks for them. They're from Portsmouth where the enemy planes have been bombing the dockyard. We don't know how long they're going to be here, so we'll all have to do our best to manage until it's safe enough for them to go home. I know it's a nuisance, but there it is." He turned to Jenny and her three companions. "Right, what are your names? No one tells me anything." He picked up his pen and got ready to write in his register.

The two girls were called Kathleen and Jane and they seemed to have been friends in Portsmouth. The boy was called Joseph Mulligan and Jenny saw several children giggle at his accent. This made her feel very angry but she soon forgot all about this when she had to tell her own name and then go and sit next to Joseph at the back of the class. She moved to the edge of the desk so as to be as far away from Joseph as possible.

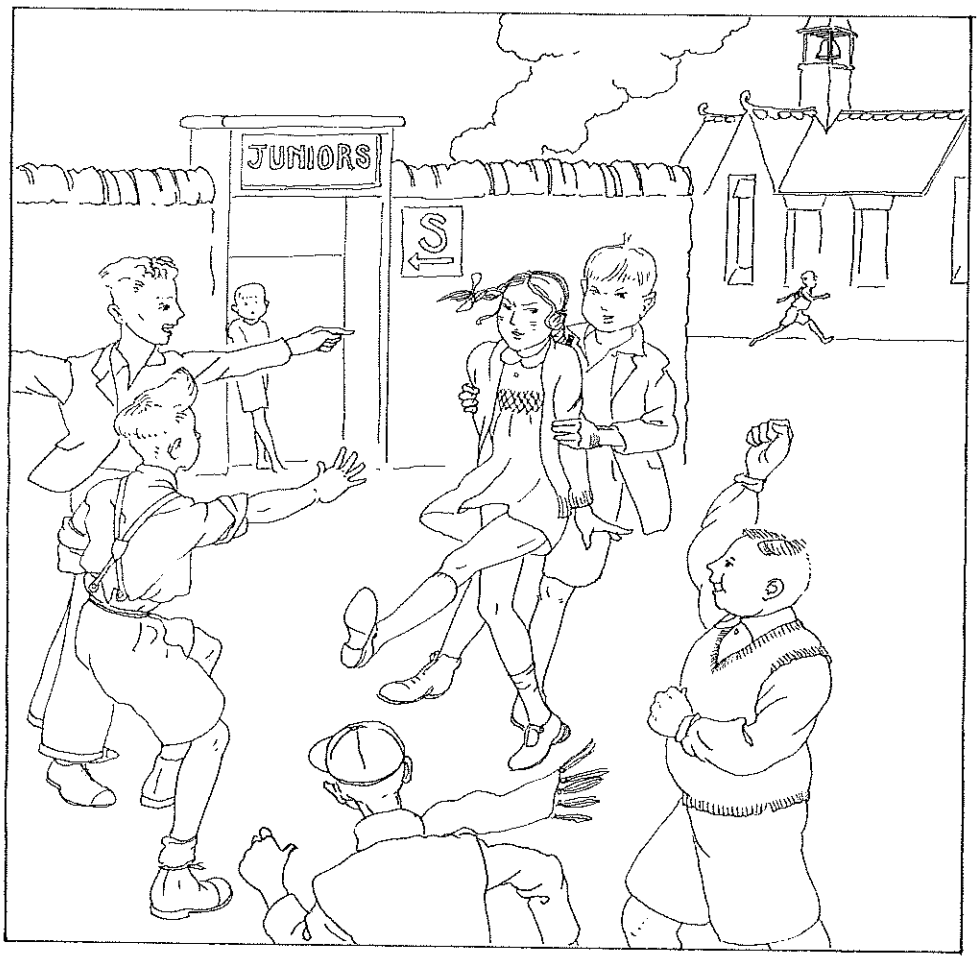
All that morning she tried to take notice of what Mr Evans was saying but she couldn't concentrate. Everything was simply too strange and too new. She kept wondering how Philip was getting on. Why hadn't the teachers let them stay together, at least for the first day until they got used to the school? Didn't anyone care about them? They were supposed to be there to be safe but at that moment Jenny had never felt less safe in her whole life.

As soon as the dinner bell went and Jenny had had something to eat, she ran off to look for Philip. At first she couldn't see him. She was sure he would be looking for her. Across the playground, there was a grassy area where there was a school garden next to some air raid shelters. Suddenly Jenny spotted Philip with two other boys actually playing around the air raid shelters. What was worse, they seemed to be playing bombers, holding out their arms like the wings of a plane and swooping in on the air raid shelters, making firing noises in their throats. Philip seemed to be telling his new friends about the raids they had in Portsmouth. He seemed pleased to be the centre of attention.

"How can he do that?" thought Jenny, "when Mum might be caught in the air raids. He knows how dangerous they are." She waved to him and when he waved back quite happily, she turned away. "At least he's happy," she thought, "and he's still only young. He doesn't really understand too much about the war. I wish I was that young again." Suddenly, she felt very old indeed, far older than her eleven years. It was she who would now have to look after Philip and see that he was all right. She didn't think Mr and Mrs Bennington would care very much.

As she was walking back towards the school building turning this over in her mind, she was suddenly grabbed from the side and swung round in the path of some boys. The boys were chasing Joseph Mulligan and Joseph was hiding behind Jenny now, holding her arms by her side and using her as a shield to fend off the gang of local lads.

"Let me go!" Jenny shouted and began to kick out so that the gang of boys scattered to avoid Jenny's long flailing legs. Jenny twisted herself round and jerked one arm free from Joseph's grip. He let go the other arm and stood in front of her grinning



slightly and breathing heavily from the chase. Jenny was cross.

"Joseph Mulligan, you pig! What did you do that for?"

"They were chasing me!" panted Joseph. "They called me names. So I threw something at them and then they chased me."

"What did they call you?" asked Jenny.

"They called me 'Paddy'. Said I came from Ireland and to go back there. They called me a potato head and dared me to fight them."

"So you did, I suppose."

"No I didn't. I don't like fighting but they made me mad and I threw something at them to make them leave me alone."

"But you were friendly with them this morning, weren't you?" said Jenny. "I saw you playing with them when you came to school," and she added "I was jealous you'd made friends already."

"That was with Tommy and Dan who live next door to where we're staying. Me and my brother met them last night and Tommy called for us this morning. They were all right until that big kid came along. He started calling me names and they joined in."

"Why don't they like us?" said Jenny, thinking of the way Mr Evans had spoken that morning. "What have we done to them? Why can't they treat us just like human beings the same as them?"

"Dunno," said Joseph.

"What's your brother called?" asked Jenny.

"Michael. What's yours?"

"Philip."

"We're the same, you and me, then," said Joseph. "Where do you come from?"

"Portsmouth," Jenny said, "and do you come from Ireland?"

"Course not," said Joseph. "I've never even been there. I come from Portsmouth, like you. It's me Mum and Dad who come from Ireland."

The bell went for afternoon school just then and Jenny found herself walking back towards the line with Joseph who didn't seem to be so bad after all . . . for a boy.

Chapter 4

At home time, Jenny waited for Philip by the school gates. He was a little late in coming out because he had lost something in the cloakroom. As they turned down the road to walk back to the Benningtons, she could see Joseph and Michael ahead with the two boys from next door. They were all friends together as if the trouble at dinner time had never happened.

She had just asked Philip about his day and what his teacher was like when they heard a voice behind them they recognised.

"Hello, you two." It was Enid, the Benningtons' maid. "I thought I might bump into you if I came back this way," she said. "I've just been to the shops for some more candles."

As they walked out of the town, the road narrowed into a country lane with high hedges on either side. Jenny thought how peaceful it all was and she suddenly realised that she hadn't heard the sound of the air raid siren for nearly two days now.

"Enid," asked Jenny, "have you had any bombers over here?"

"Bless you, no. What have we got around here that anyone would want to bomb? A few wild sheep, perhaps," and she laughed. "No, up near the Welsh border, you wouldn't really know the war was on, except..." She stopped.

"Except what?" asked Jenny.

"Except that there's not many young men left around here who haven't been called up to the fighting."

"Our Dad's in the Navy," said Philip proudly. "He makes a destroyer go."

"Well, then," said Enid, "I shall pray every night for him to be kept safe."

"Is your Dad fighting, too?" Philip asked.

"No, he's too old to be called up, but my brother is in the army, along with my fiancé."

"What's a *finonsay*?" asked Philip.

"It means they're getting married, stupid." said Jenny. "When will that be?" she asked. Enid was quiet for a moment.

"I don't know. After the war. If everything's all right. I haven't heard from him for two weeks now."

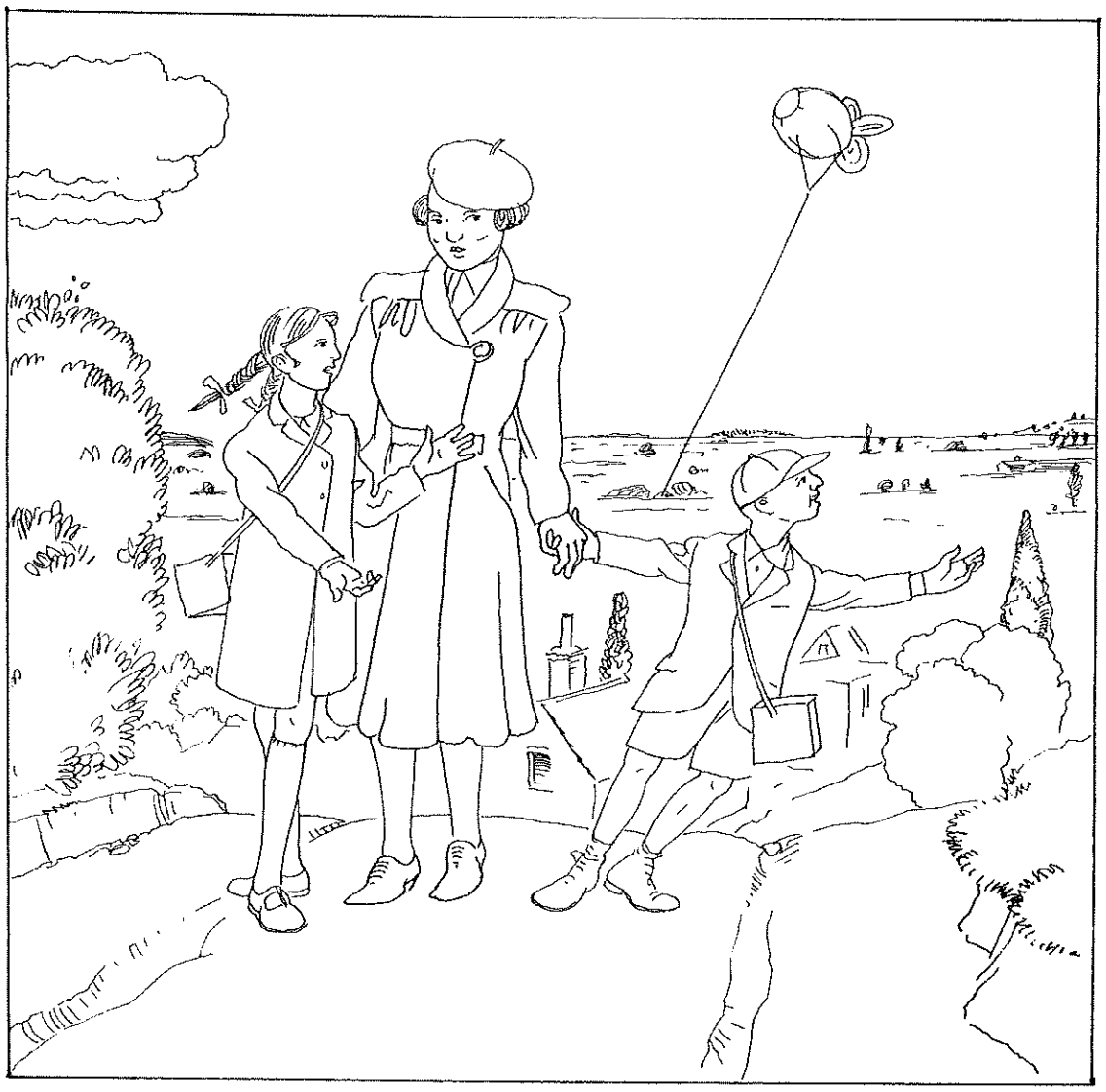
"Will you have children, Enid?" Philip asked, putting his hand into hers.

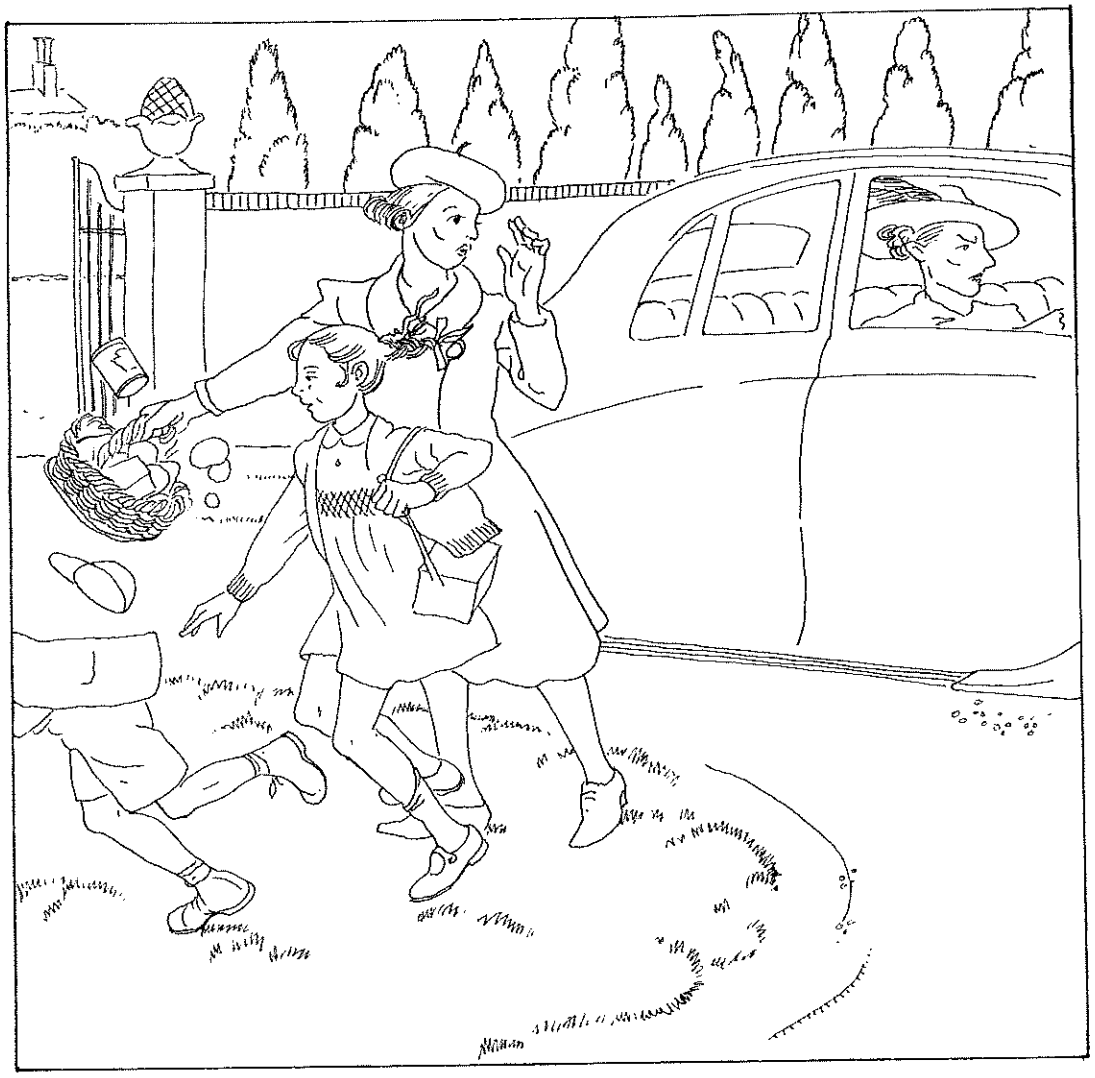
"Philip, don't be so nosy," scolded Jenny, feeling somehow that this was something they ought not to talk about. She changed the subject.

"Have the Benningtons got any children, Enid?" she asked. Enid laughed.

"Not likely, not them!" she said. "Far too busy making money to have children. As far as I know they don't even like children."

"Then why look after us?" Jenny said, slightly puzzled.





"Well, let's just say there are some things folks have to do that it's difficult to get out of, shall we?" Enid replied. Jenny couldn't really understand why the Benningtons had taken them in if they didn't want them there. Then she suddenly had another thought. What if they were there for years, stuck up in that little room all the time? She wouldn't be able to stand that, she told herself. She would run away. But how would they find their way back to Portsmouth?

By this time they were near the house and just as they turned off the road, Mrs Bennington's car swept out of the drive and turned towards the town, cutting the corner badly and forcing Enid and the children to jump onto the grass bank to escape injury.

"My life, that woman is dangerous," muttered Enid. "She drives far too fast for these roads. There'll be a nasty accident one day, mark my words. The Germans don't need to bomb us around here," she laughed. "Mrs Bennington will be the death of all of us."

Inside the house Enid told the children to climb the back stairs to their room and wait until she brought some tea up. Philip dashed off ahead but just as Jenny was about to follow, Mr Bennington came out of a nearby room and spoke to her.

"Ah, Jenny, there you are" he said, with a smile. "I hope you had a good day at school, hmmm?"

"It was all right," said Jenny. "Thank you, sir," she added, trying to be as polite as she could. She didn't really want to admit to Mr Bennington that she hadn't enjoyed it.

"Good, I'm so glad. We want you to be happy here, don't we?" He reached out and put his hand on her shoulder. "Look, come with me for a moment, I've got something I want to show you."

Jenny was puzzled by Mr Bennington's sudden change of attitude. Why was he being so much more friendly to her? Was it because his wife was out of the house? Perhaps she was the one who really disliked children. She began to feel that maybe if at least Mr Bennington was friendly some of the time, it would not be so bad. She was still puzzling things over as she followed Mr Bennington across the main hall and into a room full of books. There was a large wooden desk facing her with two chairs in front of it.

"That's it, close the door, Jenny, don't be afraid. Come and look at this." From a drawer in his desk, Mr Bennington took out the most beautiful doll Jenny had ever seen. Her face was made of fine porcelain china and her clothes were finely decorated all over with gold thread and lace.

Jenny closed the door and nervously crossed to where Mr Bennington was holding out the doll.

"That's it, you can hold her, if you like. Here, come and sit on my knee. We can be special friends – you, me and the doll. You can come here whenever you like . . . when Mrs Bennington's out. She doesn't much like little girls and dolls, I'm afraid."

"Can Philip come too?" asked Jenny.

"Well, I don't know. Why would he want to do that? Boys don't like dolls, do they? This could be our special secret, couldn't it?"

"All right, then," said Jenny, not knowing what else to say. She had an uneasy feeling about what was happening but did not know why. Mr Bennington had seated himself on one of the chairs and had put his arm around her waist to draw her closer. But this did not feel right to Jenny and she stiffened her body instinctively.

"I must go now," she said and turned away but Mr Bennington tried to stop her.

"No, don't go," he said, holding her back. "We can be friends, can't we?"

But Jenny didn't want to be friends and she jerked her arm away and twisted herself free, kicking out with one leg as she started to run out of the study and up the back stairs to where her brother was waiting in their room.

Jenny flung herself onto her bed and sobbed.

"What's the matter, Jen?" Philip asked with a puzzled look.

"Nothing," said Jenny. "Leave me alone."

It had been horrible when the Benningtons were so unfriendly and now it was just as unpleasant with Mr Bennington being too friendly in this strange way. She knew she must not go back into that study again on her own. She felt as if she needed to tell someone what had happened but who could she talk to? She felt she could trust Enid but should she say anything, or not?

Chapter 5

The following morning Enid walked with them on the way to school, so Jenny told her about the doll in the study. Enid appeared to be surprised and said that to her knowledge there never had been a doll or any other kind of children's toy in the house. At least, she said, she had never seen one and she had cleaned Mr Bennington's study many times. Enid said that Jenny had been right not to stay in the study on her own and something about having to watch Mr Bennington carefully. Then she said: "Now promise me, you'll think no more about it and go to school today and enjoy yourself. It will soon be the weekend and then your Mum will be coming to see you."

To Jenny the thought that Mum would be coming to see them soon was both wonderful and at the same time unbearable. At school, Jenny found that most of the time she could stop herself thinking about home and Mum and Dad by getting on with her work but then suddenly, as if her mind grew tired of fighting off thoughts of home, it would all come sweeping over her and her eyes would mist with tears.

That morning, Mr Evans told the class to work on some English and then they had to do some arithmetic, which Jenny always enjoyed. Working away at these sums, Jenny was for a while in a world of her own. But suddenly the door of the classroom burst open and in strode Mr Bennington with a face like thunder.

"Mr Evans!" he thundered, "can I interrupt you for a moment? Are you aware there is a thief in this class?" A total hush fell over the children. Mr Bennington must have been a governor of the school because Mr Evans jumped to his feet and stuttered something apologetically about finding out the thief whoever it was.

Jenny wondered whether this happened often in this sort of school because nothing of the kind had ever happened in Portsmouth. She looked around to see if anyone in the class was going red. She wondered what they might have stolen from the Benningtons and how. After all, the house was quite a long way from the village.

"Yes, Mr Evans," Mr Bennington was saying in the loudest voice he could

manage, "I cannot tell you how upset and angry I am to find that after I and my wife have taken in two of these evacuee children, they have the nerve to steal money from my desk. Jennifer Wilson, stand up, if you please, and accompany me to the headmaster."

Jenny was struck dumb. She didn't know what to say or think. She stood up with a face burning with shame even though she had done nothing. All the children looked at her with a kind of horror and disbelief. Mr Bennington was holding up two £5 notes.

"This is what I found in that girl's bedroom, Mr Evans, hidden underneath her pillow."

"You ungrateful girl," shouted Mr Evans, "what have you got to say for yourself, eh? I can't believe you could behave in such a way after the Benningtons have been so kind to you. Is this the way to repay them?"

"But Mr Evans, sir, I didn't take . . . "

"Silence! How dare you answer back!" shouted Mr Evans. "You children are nothing but trouble, the lot of you. You don't belong here and you never will. It's too good for you city people out here, isn't it? Is that why you have to come and spoil it? Now get out of here and go with Mr Bennington to the head."

The next half hour passed in a daze for Jenny. She was totally bewildered by what was happening. Being accused of stealing from the Benningtons – what a disgrace! She knew she had done nothing to them but how could she prove it? And what would Mum say when she arrived on Saturday to find Jenny accused of stealing such a lot of money? She felt she had let her down so badly. And what of Philip? Would he believe she hadn't taken the money? She was supposed to be setting him an example to follow! Everything was turning out so wrong and it wasn't her fault – she knew that in her head – but she still felt guilty.

All these thoughts raced around Jenny's head as Mr Bennington and the head took it in turns to shout at her. They didn't seem at all interested in hearing her side of the story. Then the head took out his cane and advanced towards her but at this Mr Bennington seemed to soften a little and said that perhaps this wasn't necessary this time and that it would be enough if the ungrateful little wretch and her awful brother could be removed straight away from their house. The head calmed down a little and agreed to contact the lady in charge of housing the children.

Philip was sent for and together he and Jenny waited outside the headteacher's office until lunchtime, hardly speaking to each other. Then the lady in the uniform arrived who had met them at the station. She seemed to know what had happened and looked grey and stern as she told the children to come with her.

Philip and Jenny marched across the playground and out of the school gates. It seemed as if the eyes of all the children in the school were following them. Jenny wondered how they could have known so quickly what had happened.

"Thief! Thief! Thief!" shouted some girls from Class Six who were standing by the gates.

Jenny had no idea how long they had been walking, but some little way past a large church, the uniformed lady turned off the main road down a muddy little lane. As they approached a row of cottages, she seemed to slow down a little. Then she turned to Jenny and smiled. Her expression was no longer fierce.

"Don't worry my dear, I know you didn't take that money." Jenny didn't understand at all.

They had stopped at the gate of a thatched cottage which had a long garden full of vegetables. At the door there stood a man and a woman of about fifty. They seemed to be expecting them and, to Jenny's surprise, they were smiling.

"This is Mr and Mrs Hawkins," said the lady. "You're going to stay here from now on."

"Come in, you poor young things," said Mrs Hawkins. "What a terrible way to treat you! And you so far from home and your own mother. Now come on in, the Benningtons have just delivered all your belongings. We've heard a lot about you already."

"But, what do you mean?" asked Jenny. "Surely you don't want us. We're all bad, is that what you heard? We're supposed to steal things from people who have helped us. How do you know we won't do the same to you?" All this was too much for Jenny, who barely knew what she was saying. Philip stood holding his sister's hand and looking bewildered.

Mrs Hawkins was about to say something when there came a familiar voice from inside the house.

"Now mother, don't keep them talking on the doorstep. Bring them in and let them have some of this soup. They haven't had a decent meal since they arrived here."

"Enid!" shouted Jenny, rushing into the house past the two older people. "Oh Enid, it's you!" and she flung her arms around Enid's neck. "Is this where you live?" she asked.

"Well, this is where my parents live. I live in at the Benningtons' most of the time. You two can have John's room while he's away. It may not be as grand as the Benningtons' but I think you'll be happier here."

As the children tucked into the best soup they had tasted in their lives, made from fresh vegetables picked that morning, Jenny tried to make sense of what had happened.

"Why did Mr Bennington say I had taken that money?" she asked. "And how did the lady in the uniform know I hadn't, when no one at school believed me? And how is it we've come to *your* house?"

"One at a time, slow down", said Enid, holding up her hands. "You see, after you told me what happened in Mr Bennington's study, I was thinking about it all morning and then I heard the master come down from your bedroom shouting for his wife, saying that he'd found the money under your pillow. I just knew he wasn't telling the truth."

"But how?" asked Jenny.

"Well, for one thing I was certain you wouldn't do that sort of thing and, for another, Mr Bennington never goes into the servants' part of the house. So he had obviously gone to your room to put that money under your pillow. I made your beds when I collected your breakfast tray and there was nothing there then. I guessed that he was just trying to get you out of the house – after you had kicked him, and all."

"He deserved it," Jenny said, resentfully.

"I felt so ashamed that anyone around here could treat you like that, said

Enid, "that I telephoned Mrs Williams, the lady in the uniform, and told her what had happened. Mrs Williams is an old friend of ours so I suggested you could stay here."

"Can we really?" asked Philip, who had soup all around his mouth. It was even dripping down his chin, he was drinking it so quickly.

"Of course, you can, my lamb," said Mrs Hawkins. "It'll be lovely having some youngsters around the place again, won't it, Dad?"

"You'll have to earn your keep, mind," said Mr Hawkins with a smile. "Help me in the garden and all that."

"We will, we will. It'll be fun," Jenny said, feeling at last that they had come somewhere which could almost feel like home. But then she had a thought.

"But the children at school," she said, "they all think I'm a thief. We'll never make friends, now."

"Well, I wouldn't worry too much about that, if I were you," Enid said with a wicked twinkle in her eye. "The Benningtons aren't much liked in the town with their posh ways. The way news spreads around here, everyone will know what really happened before nightfall."

"We'll make sure of that," said Mrs Hawkins. "Now finish up your lunch. As soon as we've cleared the table, you've got to write to your Mum so that she'll know where to come on Saturday."

The next day at school was so strange for both Jenny and Philip. Suddenly they had become famous. All the children knew their names and everyone was saying hello to them and asking them what it was like up in the big house and had the Benningtons really tried to starve them? That made it so much easier to settle in and after that it wasn't so very long before it felt almost normal living in that quiet country town, apart from missing Mum and Dad between their visits.

But nothing would alter that. Except, of course, the end of the war.

Gone Fishing

Key ideas

- choosing friends
- peer pressure
- law breaking and wrong doing
- intention and responsibility
- victims of crime

This story is about a boy called Paul who is pleased when he is invited along with a gang of boys. But things begin to go wrong for Paul when he is dared to "borrow" something from an old lady's garden shed. The story raises a number of issues about activities which border on the unlawful and the criminal. Here are two definitions of laws relevant to this story.

Trespass

It is unlawful to be on or to enter someone else's property without their permission, or if you knew they would not give you permission if you asked for it.

If you go into someone's garden in good faith, knowing that they would not object, eg delivering a newspaper, or collecting for a charity, this is not unlawful. Note that trespass is not usually a crime. The trespasser has to leave when the owner of the property requests him or her to do so and the owner can use reasonable force to eject the trespasser. This can be backed up by a court order in serious cases. Refusal to obey the court order is a criminal offence. Notice that the law regarding mass trespass, eg new age travellers, is now different from the above.

Theft

There are three conditions which have to be satisfied before theft has taken place.

Theft is the *dishonest* act of taking *someone else's* property with the intention of *permanently* keeping it from the owner.

In the story, Paul and the other boys did not intend to deprive Mrs Godber of anything, so, strictly, would not have committed a crime (although what they did was still wrong). Intention is an important element in many crimes and none more so than theft. Without dishonest intent a crime will not have been committed.

Age of criminal responsibility

Paul is 11 and is old enough to be brought before a court of law if it is believed he knew that what he was doing was wrong. The law states that the age of responsibility for criminal activities is between 10 and 14 years, according to whether the court believes the child knew that what he or she did was wrong. Below the age of 10 a child cannot be accused of a crime but where there is cause for concern about the child's behaviour he or she could still be "supervised" or "looked after" by the community through social services. In rare cases this could be in secure accommodation.

Below are some of the issues you could explore arising from this story. Remember to ask the children if they would like to raise any issues of their own for discussion.

Moral reasoning

- In pairs, or as a class, make a list of things Paul did that you believe were wrong. Say *why* you think they were wrong. Does everyone agree?
- Which of these things were against the law? Which laws? Give the children the definitions of the laws of trespass and theft and ask them to say if these laws have been broken.
- Even if Paul's actions were not strictly against the law, do you still think they were wrong? If there is a difference between doing wrong and breaking the law, can you work out why they are not the same thing?
- Paul is 11 and can be taken before a court if he knew what he did was wrong. Do you think he knew he was doing wrong? What makes you think that?
- In what different ways was Paul dishonest in this story? List all the times you can think of. In what sense was he dishonest?
- Is dishonesty wrong? Think of all the reasons you can as to why dishonesty might be wrong? Is it ever all right to be dishonest? If yes, think of some examples. What do you think it is that makes it right?

- Paul felt he had no choice but to go into Mrs Godber's garden. Do you agree? Do you blame him for what he did? Why or why not? Is Paul more to blame than the other boys?
- Is it right to blame someone else for what you have done, by saying you were made to do it?
- Is it right to ask someone else to do something for which they might get into trouble?
- In the end, Paul was lucky to get away with what he did. But in what ways could things have gone badly wrong?
- In what ways could Mrs Godber have suffered as a result of what Paul did?
- Do you think Paul is likely to get himself into this position again? Why do you think this?
- *Below are a number of cases to think about. Did the people act dishonestly, if so how? Was the dishonesty wrong, in your opinion? Why?*

  1 Mary, who is 15, missed the school bus and spent the day in the town because she was already in trouble for being late for school. The next day she told her teacher that she had not felt well and that she had lost her absence note.

  2 Jim borrowed a pen from his father's coat intending to put it back when he had finished his homework, but he forgot. It was a very nice pen to write with so, when his father appeared not to notice it had gone, Jim kept it at school for his work there.

  3 Kevin had not learned the history for the test, but he was not worried because he sat next to Praful. Praful always learned the work and he wouldn't mind if Kevin copied because they were best mates.

  4 In the cloakrooms, Sean saw Parveen take the apple out of Sally's coat pocket but when Mrs Umbima asked if anyone in the class knew about the missing apple he did not tell her what he had seen.

  5 After tea, Tracey's Mum said that, if she had homework to do, she did not have to help with the washing up. Tracey pretended that her homework had to be given in the next day instead of later that week.

6 As she was given her change from the £20 note, Saskia realised that the assistant had not charged her for everything she had bought. She was going to say something, but then changed her mind and hurried out of the shop.

7 When Ravi got to the station there was no-one at the ticket office so he could not buy a ticket. When he arrived at the other end, the ticket collector was talking to someone and seemed not to notice him. Ravi decided to forget about paying.

8 Julie and Donna wanted to watch a video which Julie knew her Mum would not want her to see. So she told Donna to ring her and invite her to her house, so that they could do their homework together. Then they would watch the video.

Community building

- Why do you think there is a lot of pressure on people of your age to belong to groups or gangs and sometimes to do things you probably wouldn't do on your own?
- If someone feels their friends may be leading them into trouble, what should they do about it?
- In what ways are people **victims** of crimes or other people's behaviour. What kinds of people do you think are most likely to be victims of crime? What can it feel like to be a victim? Put down on paper, anonymously, some thoughts about how you think it feels. Listen carefully to the different points people have made.
- Some people will do things to avoid being teased or bullied. Is teasing very different from bullying? How are they different? How are they similar?

Story writing

Here is the beginning of a story you could finish. Think carefully about the conversation between Jake and Mike.

Jake and Mike were taking the long way home from school which meant going past the old people's home. Last time they had done this had been just before bonfire night and Mike had given Jake a firework to throw into the garden. It was dark and no one was about so Jake thought nothing of it. But next day, he heard from his gran that a friend of hers, who lived at the home, had just been letting her cat in through her window when the banger had gone off. It had given her such a fright that she had had a nasty turn and the doctor had to be called out. Jake had said nothing to Mike because he felt so bad about it.

Today, as they got close to the old people's home, Mike put his hand inside his jacket and pulled out two scary-looking rubber masks.

"Let's put these on and look in the windows," he said. "As soon as someone notices, we'll make a run for it."

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Gone Fishing

Paul felt happy. It was a Saturday morning and he was lying in bed thinking about the day ahead. The sun was already shining through the curtains and it made him feel good. He would go round to see his friend Mark and ask him if he'd like to go fishing. This would be the first time he'd had a chance to use the new rod he'd been given for his eleventh birthday. They would go for the whole day, he thought. He'd ask Mum for some sandwiches. If she was in a good mood she'd make his favourite, mushed up baked beans with thick bits of buttery bread.

Paul got up quickly and had breakfast. Then he collected all his fishing gear and, picking up the sandwiches Mum had made, he was soon off down the road.

He knocked at Mark's door and his Mum answered.

"Didn't they tell you at school?" she said. "Mark's got chicken pox. That's why he was away yesterday. He can't come out, I'm afraid."

Paul didn't know whether to go fishing by himself or go home. He decided he'd go fishing. What else was there to do? The trouble was that the path to the river went past the garage which was where Denzil and his friends hung around. It wasn't that he didn't like Denzil. It was just that Denzil didn't seem to like him. At school, Denzil was the best footballer in the year and, if you were one of his friends, like Mark was, you got to play in the one game there was room for in the playground. Not that Paul was any good at football but it would have been nice to be asked. Being Mark's friend didn't make Paul one of Denzil's friends. That's just the way it was.

Without Mark, Paul didn't particularly want to meet Denzil. But perhaps they wouldn't be there today. Perhaps they'd be at the park playing football. Perhaps anything.

But as Paul followed the path round the back of the garage, there they all were. They hadn't gone anywhere. Mick, John, Andy and, of course, Denzil. Only Denzil had his little sister Sophie with him. They all stopped talking when Paul came towards them. Denzil said: "What are you catching today, Paul – sharks?"

The others fell about laughing. Paul was about to carry on walking when, suddenly, he threw down everything he was carrying and made a dive towards the boys.

"Look out", he shouted. Behind Denzil and the others, where they could not see, Sophie had picked up a stick which was wedged underneath two or three old oil drums, lying at the top of a concrete ramp. As she pulled out the stick and walked away, Paul could see the drums beginning to roll towards Sophie. Without thinking Paul ran towards the drums as they gathered speed. He managed to reach them just before they caught Sophie in the back. He flung his weight against the first drum.

Though they were empty, the three oil drums were much heavier than Paul expected and he was knocked to the ground, scuffing his knees on the concrete as he fell. For a second or two he felt that the drums were going to carry on rolling but the weight of his body was just enough to spin the first drum sideways and it ground to a halt, stopping the other two behind it.

Whilst Sophie ran to Denzil, Paul just lay on the ground. Suddenly his knees started to hurt and he climbed to his feet, searching for something in his pocket to stop the bleeding.

Paul looked up to see if Sophie was all right. Denzil was standing there looking at him, his face white.

"They could have knocked Sophie flat. My Mum would have killed me," he said. The other boys crowded round.

"You're a hero, Paul," said Andy.

"Here's your gear, Paul," said Mick, who'd never really spoken to him before.

Paul felt dazed. They were all round him now talking and laughing, showing their relief.

"We were just going down to play football at the rec.," said Denzil. "Want to come? It's too sunny for fishing. The fish don't bite when it's sunny." Paul agreed – it was much too sunny to go fishing, he had known that all along, really. As they walked off together, Paul had a real feeling inside of belonging, of being **someone.** He put his hand into his bag and pulled out his sandwiches, even though it was nowhere near lunchtime.

"Anyone want a sandwich?" he said.

"Ta," said Denzil, taking a huge bite. But a second later he spat it out. "Yuk!", he shouted, "baked beans! Is that some kind of bad joke, Paul?" The others tried not to laugh.

"Yesterday," thought Paul, "he would have hit me for that."

They played football until lunchtime when Denzil left to take Sophie home. Paul ran off to dump his fishing gear in the garage at home, making sure Mum didn't see him, and then returned to the rec. When Denzil came back, they played some more. Paul was in goal all the time, which he didn't mind. He even made one or

two good saves. But as the afternoon wore on and it got hotter, they decided they had had enough and wandered back in the direction of the garage.

"Let's play Chicken," said Denzil. "We haven't done that for ages."

"What shall we do this time?" said Mick.

"I think we ought to give Paul a turn," said Denzil. They all turned to look at Paul. He felt a bit funny.

"OK," he said, his voice sounding calmer than he felt. They were just passing a rather large house with an overgrown front garden. By the side of the house was an old garden shed.

"I've got a good one," said John. "I bet you wouldn't dare sneak into that shed and bring back something to prove you've done it."

"Yeah, great one!" said Denzil.

"Someone might think I was stealing," objected Paul. "Anyhow, how am I supposed to get in there? I might be seen," he said.

"That's the point," said Denzil. "Unless, of course, you're chicken."

"Chicken," crowed Mick, flapping his arms and clucking round in a circle. The others began to join in, with Paul in the middle, going redder every second.

"I was only saying what **some** people are like," he said. "I was gonna do it."

"Make sure you get something big," said Denzil, "we won't nick it. You can leave it in the front garden after. We'll hide across the road behind the trees."

Paul didn't know what to do. He felt sick. If he got caught, would anyone believe the "chicken" story? What if the police were called – then his Mum would find out what he'd done, which would almost be worse.

"Go on, Paul," called Denzil, as they crossed the road, "go for it!"

Paul felt his legs shaking as he went up the path to the door. He decided to try to get to the front door without being heard, then sneak across to the shed. That would look less suspicious. He walked very slowly hoping no one would hear his footsteps on the gravel path. Then he knocked, as quietly as he could, on the door. As he stood waiting, he wondered how he had ever got himself into this.

"Why did they have to ask *me*?" he thought. "Why didn't I say no?"

In his mind's eye he saw all of them watching him from behind the trees on the other side of the road. "How could I have said no?" he thought. "They'd kill me if I didn't do it."

All this was racing through his head, as he waited. As there was no sound from the inside, he turned to make a dash across to the shed. But just as he started to move, the door opened behind him. Paul felt a stab of fear and panic in his chest.

"Yes, who is it?" said a voice. It was rather a quavery, thin voice.

"Um, do you want any jobs done?" said Paul, surprising himself.

The old lady looked at him. It seemed like forever.

"Wait a minute," she said. "Aren't you Mrs Reed's boy?" Paul nodded, smiling, but inside, his thoughts were tumbling over each other. Suddenly, he recognised the old lady as Mrs Godber, a friend of his Mum's. He hadn't realised this was her house.

"Come in, come in," said Mrs Godber. "It's really very kind of you, I must say."

Paul followed Mrs Godber into the house. It was rather dark inside but it was stuffed with things. Mrs Godber had everything from an elephant's foot to an ostrich's egg. She had things made of silver, glass, wood, pottery – everything. She saw him looking round.

"I can see you're interested in all my little things," she said. Paul felt himself go red.

"Yes, yes, they're very interesting," he mumbled.

"Pick up anything you like," said Mrs Godber. "Just handle them carefully. I like people looking at my treasures. They come from all round the world, you know." Paul picked up one thing after another and put them down again. Anything to kill time.

"Would you like something to drink?" asked Mrs Godber. "I'm just about to make myself a cup of tea."

"Um, yes please," said Paul. He tried to get near the window to see if he could see the others, but the net curtains were too thick.

Mrs Godber went into the kitchen. Paul noticed a brass ashtray with blue stones set into it. It was quite big. A thought struck him. What if he were to take something from the house? That would be magic! That would show he was no chicken. He'd find a way to bring it back, of course.

He tried to get his fingers to move towards the ash tray but they seemed to lock. "Everything all right?" said Mrs Godber coming back into the room. Paul jumped.

"Oh yes, fine, thanks," he said. He looked at her as if for the first time. Mrs Godber had masses of hair and underneath her fringe she had kind eyes but they were very dark. Paul felt they were seeing right through him.

"You asked if there was anything you could do for me," said Mrs Godber.

"Well there is, actually." She went over to a sideboard and picked up something that looked like a small trumpet.

"This is my old hearing trumpet," she said. "The handle has come loose. I don't use it any more, of course, but I'd like it mended. Perhaps you could take it down to Mr Lilley. He can mend anything, can Mr Lilley."

"Yeah, sure," said Paul. He took his time over his cup of tea and Mrs Godber showed him some of her old photos. "This is me when I was your age!" she said. In the picture stood a girl, her face all full of laughs, looking as if she'd just come in from running a race. Mrs Godber had been really young once. It gave him a funny feeling.

"I think I'd better be going now, Mrs Godber," he said. "It's getting late."

"Well, goodbye," said Mrs Godber, "I did enjoy your visit. Come again, some time." Paul waved and walked slowly down the path. He waited until Mrs Godber had closed the door and then he ran as fast as he could to where Denzil and the others were waiting.

"What took you so long?" sneered Mick.

"What did you get?" Denzil asked. Paul drew out the hearing trumpet from under his jacket.

"Hey!" said Andy, "that's big."

"And," said Paul, very slowly and deliberately, "it's from her *house.*" A hush fell over the group. When Paul had taken so long, they had thought he'd chickened out. But he hadn't, he'd done much better. Mick wondered whether even Denzil would have dared do that, but he didn't say anything. They were all seeing Paul in a new light.

"How are you gonna get it back, Paul," said Denzil, trying not to sound too impressed.

"That's my business," said Paul, "I know what I'm doing. See you." And he turned to go.

"Yeah, see you," they all said.

"See you at school, Paul," called Denzil, as Paul went off to find Mr Lilley.

As soon as he was out of sight of Denzil's gang, Paul's legs turned to jelly. He couldn't believe what had just happened. Yes, it felt great not to be called a chicken, but what if he had got into Mrs Godber's shed and she had found him by accident? She might have had a heart attack, or something. Suddenly he broke into a run. He wasn't sure whether he was running from Denzil or from himself.

On the way, he passed Mark's house and he decided to call in to see how he was.

"Come in, Paul," said Mark's Mum, "he's feeling quite a lot better. You can go up for a minute."

Paul told Mark about what had happened at Mrs Godber's and showed him the hearing trumpet. Mark listened with his eyes open.

"You could have been done for that, Paul," said Mark.

"Yeah," said Paul, "but I wasn't, was I?"

"But it was a bit stupid," said Mark. "Are you playing with Denzil next week?"

"He wants me to," said Paul, "but I think I'd rather go fishing. What about you?"

"Yeah, good idea," said Mark.

"Then, afterwards," said Paul, "we could go and see Mrs Godber again, she's got some really great stuff."

Alone and with Others

Key ideas

- peer pressure
- belonging and not belonging
- gangs and group behaviour

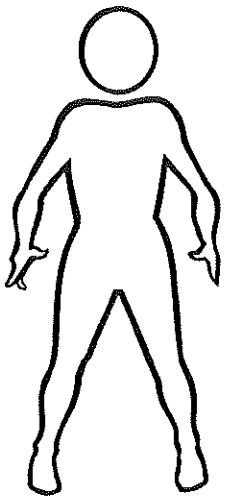
The purpose of this section is to encourage children to think about the fact that they are quite likely to behave differently according to whether they are alone or with others. Peer group pressure is clearly an important influence on children and the exercise that follows attempts to help them reflect on their different behaviours. The sense of value in belonging to groups gradually grows during the primary years and even younger children will be able to say how different it can feel when they are with others. The first activity can be used with both Key Stages 1 and 2 children. The suggestions for drama are more suited to Key Stage 2. They might be used in conjunction with the story "Gone Fishing" or on their own.

PUT YOURSELF IN THE PICTURE

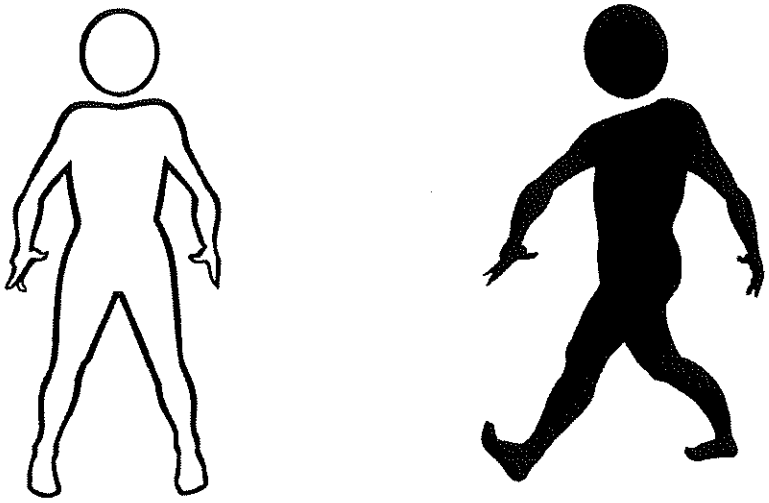
You are provided with a series of pictures. The first one is an individual child which should be copied and given out to each child. Ask the children to draw themselves the same size as the figure, adding features and clothes to make it a self-portrait.

Cut out the self-portrait and include it in each of the following pictures in turn. Then move on to the next situation.

The activity could be run as a whole class discussion. Similar, but larger, pictures could be used – perhaps with different children being the individual in different situations.

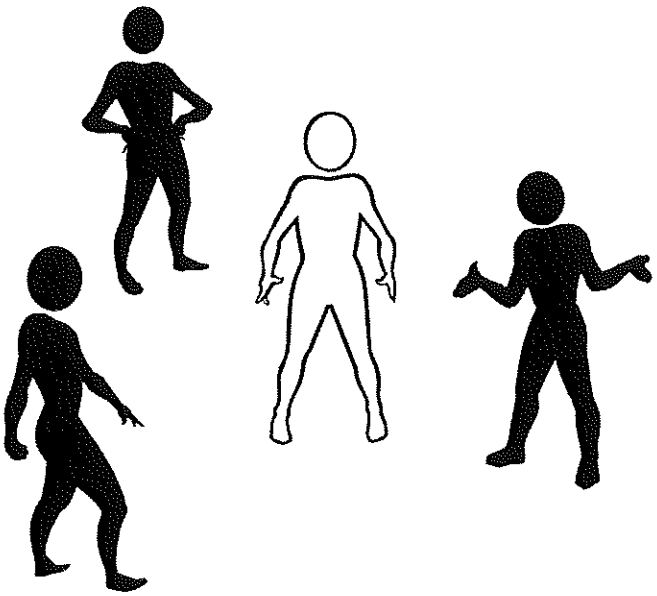


This is me on my own.
Add colour or features to this shape to make it look like you.
What do you enjoy doing when you are on your own?
What kind of person are you?

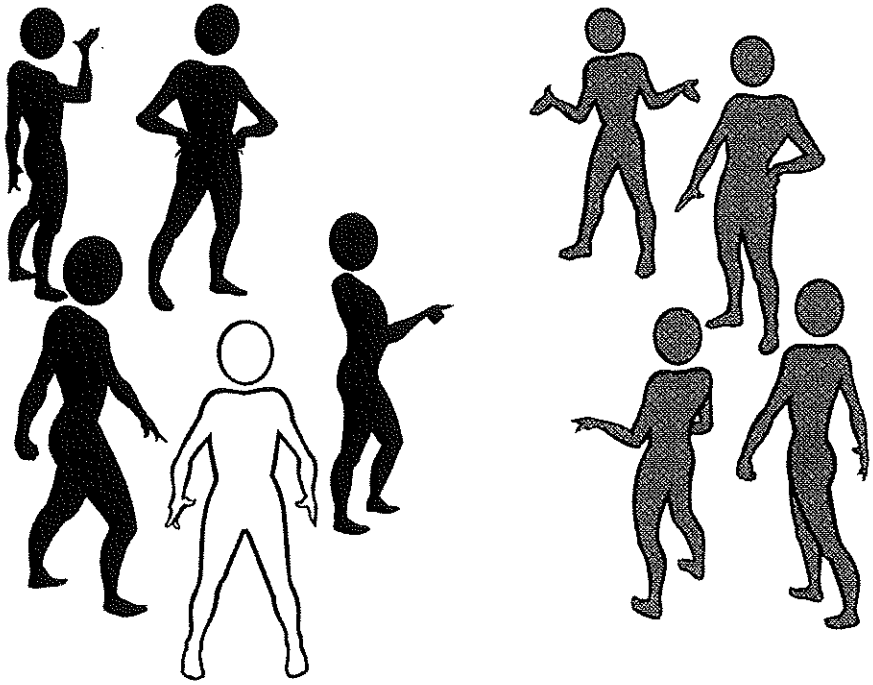


This is me with my best friend
Write about your best friend.
Why is it important to have friends?
When do you like to be with your best friend?
How can friends help each other?

This is me watching other people having fun
What does it feel like not to be part of a gang?
Write a story about someone who was left out of a group or a team.



This is me as part of a gang
Why is being in a gang important?
How could this affect your attitude to someone outside of the gang?
How will that person feel if the others "gang up" against him or her?



This is our gang – there's another one
How does it feel when another group is there?
Write a story about these two groups
– say how they get on with each other.
What are the difficult things about two groups/teams competing?
What are the good things about groups/teams working together?

These or similar groupings could provide the basis of a sequence which the children could tell in narrative or drama. Here is a possible sequence:

1 Individual child as shown in first picture.

2 Child sees group who are pictured with their backs to everyone else (perhaps they are plotting).

3 Child still outside the group – the group is now pictured looking at the individual – is it welcoming or threatening?

4 The child becomes part of the group – willingly or not? What do they do then?

PUT YOURSELF ON THE SPOT!

The following are suggestions for drama activities. The ideas assume that the teacher and class are used to working together in drama. Teachers will be aware of the need to warm up at the beginning of sessions and wind down at the end. It is also important to establish rules about physical contact.

Me on my own – guess what I'm like

(Could be used for KS1 & 2)

- The teacher provides a list of descriptions including: quiet – noisy – big – small – happy – sad – funny – serious – clever – kind – gentle – tidy – untidy – grumpy – etc.
- Each child is invited to think of one of the words which describes himself or herself well. With KS1 it is possible to do this as a whole class activity – invite a child to act the word to see if others in the class can guess.
- With KS2 the children could work in pairs. Demonstrate to each other a range of descriptions. Now demonstrate words which you think describe your partner.
- The children could work in pairs to prepare two scenes which demonstrate the children's characteristics (ie one scene per child but with both children involved in the drama).

Me on the outside of a group

Work in groups of four or five – take it in turns to be one on the outside. Make up scenes to show the following:

- You are walking down a street and you see a group of pupils from your school coming towards you. Not all of them are from your class but one of them you know quite well. You start to chat but she or he does not want to know.
- You have been chosen to play in the school football or netball team for the first time – the rest of the team are not very welcoming.
- A group of children is playing a game in the playground – you are watching and are very keen to join in, but they do not invite you. You try to think of ways to get invited.
- Some of your friends are planning to go somewhere on the way home from school without telling their parents. They invite you to join them but you are not keen because you have promised to visit your gran after school. They try to persuade you.
- Some graffiti appear in the school playground and people are saying that it has been done by a group of children from a nearby school. Your friends think they should be taught a lesson and try to persuade you to pay a visit to the other school.

After the groups have worked together on one or more of these tasks, discuss the feelings of different characters – the individual child and those who already belong to the group. Think about the moral implications of what was going on.

Me in a group against another group

These scenarios offer an opportunity to work through situations which bring groups into conflict.

- A group of children finds another group using a practice area on a local playing field which the former group has, unofficially, had all to itself up to that time.
- Two sets of opposing school team supporters are next to each other at a match.
- A small group of children walking home from school together after dark meet a much bigger group who start calling out names.
- Two groups of friends at a youth club argue about who should use the pool table or some other facility.

The class could rehearse these situations in groups of six or seven and then show their plays to the rest of the class. In this case, keep the numbers in each group to about three.

As an alternative to rehearsal, you could ask groups to improvise each situation in a live role-play and freeze the action at a number of points to discuss the situation in each phase of its development. Possible "freeze points" for the first scenario are:

1. After asking each group to decide who is already using the field and what game is being practised, allow some time for the group to practise. Encourage them to do this in such a way as to develop their sense of group solidarity. Then the other group comes on the scene and the first group makes an initial response.

   Freeze the action

   Discuss with the class the feelings likely to be experienced by the practising group and the newcomers. How might they express their feelings to each other and to the other group? Consider the range of possible feelings and actions. (Focus on verbal responses and insist on no physical contact.) Recommence the action for a few minutes.

2. Both groups withdraw to discuss tactics. They then approach the practising group and try to put their points of view. The practising group responds. Is an agreement possible or not?

   Freeze the action

   Talk about different forms of abuse – verbal as well as physical. Consider the difficulties and/or benefits of trying to resolve conflict without physical violence. Can they decide how to proceed? Ask the groups to think about the way individual members of the two groups react. Some will be confrontational or stubborn whilst others will be conciliatory or passive. Proceed with the action.

3. Individuals are now responding differently to the situation and trying to persuade the group to go along with their individual approach.

   Freeze the action and bring the role play to an end

   Encourage observation of the way in which people expressed their feelings. To what extent did they feel part of the group? To what extent were they acting as individuals? Encourage reflection on the way the children themselves behave in groups.