

Finding a Voice

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Teaching Guide

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RATIONALE & THEMES

An inspiring and uplifting story describing how Jo overcomes the social isolation caused by her mother's erratic public outbursts, mental illness and challenging behaviour, as she struggles to find a voice for herself and Chris, her non-communicating and physically disabled friend.

Jo is increasingly unable to cope; when, after a major incident, her mother is hospitalized, her grandmother moves in to take care of her.

Isolated at school, she volunteers to 'buddy' Chris.

The story charts their relationship and how it supports each of them to cope with the challenges they face.

The themes explored include:

- Coping with mental illness
- Dispossession
- Being a carer
- Physical disability
- Isolation
- Accepting diversity
- Bullying
- Self esteem
- Friendship
- Taking responsibility

SUMMARY

When Jo starts a new school she hopes to escape the isolation she endured in her previous school due to her mother's mental illness.

During her first term she meets Sarah and one day impulsively agrees to go to her house for a while after school, in the process upsetting her own delicately balanced home routine, which provokes a psychotic episode for her mother that requires several weeks in-patient care in a psychiatric hospital.

Now, cared for by her grandmother and blaming herself for her mother's relapse, Jo shuns all contact at school, volunteering as a lunch time 'buddy' in the Special Education unit for Chris, a non-verbal boy with cerebral palsy and a huge smile.

As their relationship grows, Jo discovers that she is able to confide in Chris and with growing amazement, realizes that despite his disabilities, Chris is able to communicate with her.

Assuming the role of Chris' champion, Jo determines to find a way to give him a voice, however a misunderstanding prompts her to undertake an expedition that leads them both into danger.

Rescued and recovering, Jo realizes that isolation is not a solution and finding her own voice at last she is determined to use it to seek the help that she and her mother and Chris need in order to live lives fulfilled and free from stigma or labels.

APPROACH

In the story of Jo, the issues and challenges of living with mental illness are highlighted with a sensitive honesty.

The story challenges stereotypes and asserts that everyone, irrespective of their condition can, with support, achieve fulfillment in their own life's journey, enriching not only their own lives, but also the lives of those around them.

The structure of the story dictates three sections and the activities allow the class to explore the issues in a sensitive way.

The nature of the issues require and suggest whole class/small group discussion techniques within the curriculum areas of SPHE & PDMU.

Useful resources include Active Learning Strategies,

www.nicurriculum.org.uk/docs/key_stages_1_and_2/altm-ks12.pdf

and mental health support for adolescents.

www.nami.org/Content/ContentGroups/Helpline1/Coping_Tips_for_Siblings_and_Adult_Children_of_Persons_with_Mental_Illness.htm

www.youngminds.org.uk/for_parents/worried_about_your_child/parents_mental_health_drug-alcohol_problems

Section 1 Silenced Pages 7 - 87

SUMMARY

Fleeing home, unable to control either her mother's psychotic outburst or her own sense of guilt in provoking it, Jo seeks comfort in the solitude of her own private place of refuge.

At her new school, desperate to make friends, a fresh start and escape the shame and isolation of her elementary school where everyone knew of her mother's eccentric behaviour, Jo accepts an invitation to spend time after school at Sarah's home without first agreeing it with her mum.

Arriving home later she realizes that the delicate balance between her mother being able to cope with even the simplest disturbance to her routine and chaos has been compromised.

Despite all the strategies she has learned, her mother's behaviour continues to spiral towards a psychotic episode and Jo has to call for help.

With her mum in hospital and her gran

in charge, Jo is able to relax and abdicate all the simple household decisions she had been making as her mum's carer.

A visit arranged by the social worker, to see her mum, confirms that it will be some time before she is well enough to return home.

At school, in order to escape the whispering and lunchtime isolation, Jo volunteers with the Special Education Dept. to 'buddy' Chris, a non-verbal boy with cerebral palsy.

When Mr Jenkins gives her a tour of the Dept. and they meet Chris, Jo experiences a genuine warmth and welcome from everyone.

On the school bus the following day, Lisa, a former friend from elementary school invites Jo to share a seat. Too late, Jo realizes that Lisa's only interest is the gossip concerning the disruption of her mother's late-night removal to hospital by ambulance.

In school Jo meets up with Sarah, her new friend who is unaware of her mother's mental illness, however when Lisa joins them, Jo fears that Sarah will learn her secret and shun her like the others do.

Later in drama class, Jo's suspicions are confirmed when Lisa greets her with malicious mock concern; Jo runs from the school.

Determined to hide as best she can, Jo volunteers to Mr Jenkins for additional time with Chris, both at lunchtime and in art class, changing her timetable to avoid Sarah and the shame of her knowing about her mum.

After she is introduced to Chris, Jo takes over the task of feeding him, a task complicated by her having to avoid his constantly flailing limbs.

In the silence when the meal is finished, Chris settles and as he watches her intently, Jo finds herself spontaneously telling him about her isolation and her mother's mental illness.

A hospital visit to her mother confirms that she is still too ill to hear about school and Jo's sadness deepens.

At school Jo continues to confide in Chris and Mr Jenkins remarks how contented Chris has become with her.

At home, her gran's constant criticism of her mother provokes Jo's anger and their exchange leaves the atmosphere

resonating with unspoken anger and guilt.

DISCUSSION POINTS

- (Read p 11): Jo's mum realizes that it is important for Jo to have the 'right' clothes. Do you agree with her? Why is Fashion Fascism tolerated? Are girls more likely to be aware of it? Why is there comfort in conformity?
- (Read p31): Self-harm is a desperate response to an intolerable situation and needs prompt professional help. How could you create a lifestyle that would protect those who are vulnerable to this type of action?
www.youngminds.org.uk/for_parents/whats_worrying_you_about_your_child/self-harm
www.rcpsych.ac.uk/healthadvice/problemsdisorders/self-harm.aspx
- (Read p42): Jo feels a little uneasy at the behaviour of one of the patients in the psychiatric hospital. Why do we judge people so quickly on what we see? Why do we notice eccentric behaviour so quickly and why is it so difficult for most of us to tolerate it? Is it easier to tolerate unusual behaviour in public or in private?
- (Read p69): Mr Jenkins is anxious that Chris has the opportunity to smile. Is it important for us to smile? What benefits to others or ourselves can smiling promote?
- (Read p78): Mr Jenkins has adjusted Jo's timetable so that she can help out in the SE Dept. Is he neglecting her educational needs? What is the purpose of school and education and how might these be fulfilled for Jo as she helps Chris and Lily?
- (Read p81): Jo is able to talk easily to Chris. Why can she talk to him so openly? What is it about Chris that prompts her to talk to him? Is it important to have someone that you can talk to in this way?

ACTIVITIES

1. De-Stress (Read pp7-19)

Jo flees home in an agitated state, counting her steps as she retreats to the calm of the deserted cabin where she can be alone.

What strategies would you recommend to her to help her de-stress? Can you describe any that you use and explain why you find them effective?

The site below has some that you might like to use.

www.youngminds.org.uk/for_parents/worried_about_your_child/anxiety/treating_anxiety

2. Attraction: (Read p12)

Being attracted to other people, places and things is a normal human trait. Sarah and Jo reveal their own preferences in the way they describe the boys in their class.

Can you work in groups to identify the top 5 traits in people, places and things that attract you?

When you have done this, try to match how the traits are used by adverts to encourage you to buy things.

3. Countdown (Read pp15-18)

Jo realizes that an explosion is inevitable, as she recognizes each of the signs of her mother's deteriorating control.

Later she gathers her thoughts and decides to write a 5 line poem (cinquain) to chart how each sign leads to the next and on to the final explosive reaction when she leaves the house.

She calls her poem **COUNTDOWN**.

In the first line she describes coming home and in the final line, fleeing home.

Can you help her to capture the atmosphere and write the poem?

www.poetry4kids.com/blog/lessons/how-to-write-a-cinquain-poem/
www.writeshop.com/blog/writing-a-cinquain-poem/

4. Jo's Wounds (read p32)

Francie is an experienced social worker and knows that Jo has been wounded as well, although Jo's wounds are emotional and not physical.

She wants to explain to Jo how she has been hurt, but all her material has a lot of difficult medical vocabulary. She needs something that Jo can read and understand easily.

Can you help her create a cartoon version showing facial expressions, simple figures and very little text to illustrate the wounds that Jo has suffered?

www.barnardos.org.uk/family_minded_report.pdf
www.youngminds.org.uk/for_parents/worried_about_your_child/parents_mental_health_drug_alcohol_problems

5. Facts and Fictions (Read p33)

There are many fictions related to mental illness and Francie knows that Jo is aware of some of them.

She is concerned that Jo still does not have a clear understanding of the facts relating to mental illness and decides to create a fact/fiction chart to explain some of the myths. Can you help her to compile the table for some of the common mental illnesses?

www.nami.org/Content/ContentGroups/Helpline1/Coping_Tips_for_Siblings_and_Adult_Children_of_Persons_with_Mental_Illness.htm

6. Sensory Database (Read p44)

When Jo hugged her mom, the sensation flooded all her senses in a rush of emotion.

The author had considered writing an extra paragraph here to describe how each of her senses was stimulated.

Using the author's style, can you create the paragraph she might have written, describing the feelings that each of Jo's senses provoked?

7. Buddy Me (Read pp49-50)

Dr Sharon has handed Jo Chris' flyer appealing for a 'buddy' to assist him in school. It outlines what is expected and the possible benefits.

If you had to create a 'buddy' appeal flyer for yourself, what would it look like?

How would you structure it and what would you include so that the idea of being your 'buddy' would be appealing?

8. I'm Strange Too (Read p54)

When Mr Jenkins introduces Jo to the children in the unit, he explains that some of their behaviour might seem unusual.

Jo realizes that everyone's behaviour can seem unusual at times and that it is perfectly normal to be different.

Working in small groups, can you make a list of 3 ways that you think you or your behaviour are different.

Can you explain why people might find it unusual?

9. Comfort Zone (Read p67)

Jo is beginning to create a 'comfort zone' for herself inside the unit, a place where she feels safe and where the activities

are non-threatening.

What is your 'comfort zone' like?

In the centre of a large sheet of paper draw a circle and inside add a picture of yourself and a list of all the activities / friendships that you feel comfortable with. This is your 'comfort zone'.

Outside the circle include all the activities / friendships that are not as relaxing.

Each day for a week choose to do something that is outside your 'comfort zone' and write a short diary entry to describe the experience.

10. Chris (Read p73)

Jo has spent time with Chris and is beginning to realize that there is another Chris beyond the wheelchair and the flailing limbs. She understands now that he is very sensitive and caring.

To help her to explain it to herself and to Chris she decides to create a collage of images that she researches from the Internet and magazines showing both sides to Chris, his disability and his sensitive nature.

Can you help her to create the collage?

Section 2 Searching for a voice Pages 88 - 153

SUMMARY

Jo is beginning to settle into a rhythm. She is learning that Chris likes to make decisions for himself and at the hospital the new medication regime has improved her mother's condition.

During lunch Jo makes a startling discovery when she realizes that her bruised shin from Chris' kicking is his way of communicating his dissatisfaction for an unappetizing meal. His wide grin confirms it when she blends and substitutes some of her gran's shepherd's pie for him.

Mr Jenkins reaction deflates her when he doesn't share her excitement.

With her mom at home and stabilized, Jo concentrates on devising a way to communicate with Chris. Her initial attempts are promising but when she confides in Dr Sharon, she is cautioned not to expect to have the answer for every problem.

Dismissing the idea that she herself

might need support, Jo is determined to communicate effectively with Chris and be a support for her mother.

Her initial euphoria wanes when she and Chris exhaust the gambit of yes/no questions and answers. Jo is forced to consider how their system can be improved and decides to keep it secret until they have compelling evidence that it works.

Her questions about Chris' family prompt Mr Jenkins to arrange a visit to the supported community home where Chris lives and she begins to get an insight to his life there.

Jo encourages her mother to take up a project and is pleased when she decides to develop a library project for children.

Jo meets with fierce resistance from Chris when she tries to use picture cards and fears their exchanges will remain monosyllabic; meanwhile her mum's progress with the library project is beginning to unravel.

Reading one of her mum's project books at lunchtime Jo makes the startling discovery that Chris can read too.

Discreetly questioning Mr Jenkins, Jo learns that Chris had been in an integrated class in elementary school where he must have learned to read, however with his stubborn refusal to co-operate, everyone assumed that he was unable to.

Receiving an invitation to visit Chris at home and mindful of the chaos that erupted at home from the last time she was late, Jo coaxes her mum to visit some of the libraries to promote her project idea and then arranges to meet her later in town.

Although the carers and those who share the house with Chris are friendly and welcoming, the regime of the supported community distresses Jo and she makes assumptions about how Chris might feel living there.

Jo confides her anxieties about Chris and her mother to Dr Sharon, but becomes irritated with her cutting the session short when Dr Sharon tries to probe how Jo feels about herself.

Promoting the project to the libraries had not been successful and when her mother shreds all the materials they had laboured to create, Jo is unable to contain her anger and lashes out in frustration before retreating to her

secret refuge in the woods, returning only when she is sure that her mother has gone to bed.

DISCUSSION POINTS

- (Read p90): When Chris splashes paint on Jo's face in the art class she does not think it is funny despite the amused reaction from the class. Why does Jo not feel amused by the incident? How has the amusement of the others suddenly become hostile?
- (Read p109): Dr Sharon makes a cryptic reply to Jo, giving her advice about both her mom and Chris. What was she trying to say to her and what was Jo actually hearing? Why did she misunderstand?
- (Read p139): Alison is careful to make eye contact as she introduces each of Chris' housemates. Why does she do this? What does it tell the person you are speaking to if you make eye contact with them? Are you happy to make eye contact with everyone that you speak to?
- (Read p146): The attitude of the carers who deal with Chris' needs shocks Jo. Do you think her reaction is reasonable? What does their attitude say about how they feel about Chris? Is it appropriate that they maintain a degree of detachment?
- (Read p151): Jo's patience finally snaps with her mother and she delivers an angry tirade before storming out. Do you think that this was a useful interaction? Why do you think that Jo's feelings had changed from panic to anger and why do you think that she chose to disregard the possible consequences and reveal her anger?

ACTIVITIES

1. Invisible People (Read p89)

Jo realizes that both she and Chris have become invisible because the other children in the class will not engage with them.

Unfortunately, this is a reaction that many people experience daily because they are seen to be different in some way.

Work in small groups to identify a list of 5 categories of people you meet during the day who might be 'invisible' to you.

Explain why they are invisible and how could you help to make them visible.

2. Food (Read p96)

Chris is unhappy with his food, however because he cannot speak he has to tolerate eating it. His only reaction is to kick out randomly.

Despite this, he is able to deliver a commentary in his head as he is fed each spoonful.

Since Chris has a sense of humour, this commentary is sharp, colourful and amusing.

Work in pairs to create the commentary in his head up to the point when Jo finally realizes that he doesn't like the food.

3. Choices (Read p98)

Chris's condition dictates that every decision is made for him. He has no input at all in deciding where he goes, what he eats, what he watches on TV or what he wears.

In pairs with someone who is not your best friend, make a list of the choices you expect to make over the next few days; these can be minor choices about your daily routine.

Now ask your partner to make the decisions about what you are going to do and you make the decisions for their choices.

How many of the decisions would you be happy to comply with? Can you explain why?

4. Conversations (Read p103)

Everyone in the car was silent, however Jo realizes that there is an animated conversation taking place inside each of their heads.

Can you create the conversation that Jo imagined, the questions and replies, the accusations and explanations and the feelings and opinions that were expressed?

Are the conversations joyful or hostile?

5. Chris (Read p106)

The author is aware that Chris only rarely speaks in the story. He is non-verbal and she wants to maintain this, however she did think of writing a short paragraph at this point to allow Chris to describe how *HE* felt when Jo realized that he could communicate.

You will have to get inside his head to express his feelings and remember that

what he 'says' and the way he 'says' it will reveal his character.

6. Jo MacNamara

(Read pp106-109)

Jo has noticed that Dr Sharon says very little during their sessions except maybe to ask a question or make a comment.

After each session, Dr Sharon writes her notes in a brief and factual way.

Each page of her notes has two columns, one headed **OBSERVATIONS** and the other headed **COMMENTS**.

In the observation column she records everything she sees about Jo; the way she sits, talks, how she looks etc and in the comments column what each of these tell her.

Can you create the page for this session?

7. Personal Stuff (Read pp112-113)

Each of us has a lot of personal information that we prefer to keep confidential.

This is reasonable and helps to protect us from being exploited or bullied.

If you were moving to a new school and had to create two profiles for yourself; one for the class and one for the teacher, could you work in small groups to decide the types of information that would appear in each profile?

8. Books (Read pp121&147)

Jo is very busy, but still feels guilty that she is not able to give her full attention to helping her mom to prepare for her presentation.

She realizes that her mom has difficulty speaking to people and so has decided to help her prepare a PowerPoint presentation using images to show what the workshops will focus on.

She will include a short lively commentary to describe how the children will benefit by attending.

Can you work in small groups to create the presentation? (You can use iMovie if you prefer)

9. Home (Read p137)

When Jo enters the community home, she gets the feeling that it is not an ordinary home. Every home has its own unique character that you can sense when you enter. This character reflects the people who live there.

Could you briefly describe your own home from the point of view of a person who is visiting it for the first time? What do you think that they might notice?

What impression might they form from what they see?

What are the main characteristics of your home and how might they impress a visitor?

10. I Don't Care

(Read pp151-152)

When Jo sees her mother sitting among the shredded remains of the work she had helped her to prepare, she becomes very angry and shouts at her before storming out.

However, although she has fled, Jo cannot erase from her mind the image of her mother with her head in her hands screaming.

When she reaches the cabin, in an attempt to calm the anger and frustration she feels she decides to draw what she saw.

Can you create the picture she drew?

(You might like to look at how Edvard Munch created this type of image)

legomenon.com/meaning-of-the-scream-1893-painting-by-edvard-munch.html

Section 3 Listened to Pages 154 - 232

SUMMARY

Chris' mood remains downbeat despite his developing interest in art, while Jo's idea to remove him to a more stimulating environment stubbornly refuses to germinate into a plan.

A solution presents itself when she sees a conference announcement for disabled children, however she has only two days to organize everything.

As Jo tries to co-ordinate a feasible plan, her composure is shaken when Dr Sharon seems to expose her determination to help Chris as a cry for support for herself.

After the counselling session, Jo spends a quiet lunch with Chris who has picked up her mood and delivers a simple supportive message. Jo misunderstands, and interprets it as a plea from Chris.

Immediately all her frustration galvanizes into an effort to rescue him and without further thought she wheels him out of the school and into the unknown.

Outside the school and with no other plan than to escape, Jo decides to take him to the abandoned cabin where she herself goes to be alone and as they wait for the bus, Jo interprets Chris' repeated 'NO' signal as his approval for what she is doing.

The riverside path to the cabin is not able to accommodate the wheelchair and when it tumbles into the stream, spilling Chris and Jo into the water, he is soaked and she is injured.

Fortunately Chris remained strapped into his chair and despite the pain in her leg Jo manages to scramble him out of the water and across the field to the cabin.

Realizing that he must be kept warm, Jo manages to start a fire, however the cabin has no provision for an overnight stay and as she attempts an explanation to an uncommunicative Chris, he has a seizure.

Unable to help, Jo is forced to watch until the seizure ends and Chris slumps exhausted in his chair.

Realizing he needs to rest, Jo drags an old bed close to the fire and as she maneuvers Chris onto it, she collapses in pain from the injury to her leg.

Spending the night reeling between pain and anxiety about Chris, Jo decides to go for help as the sky begins to lighten. Her injured leg won't take her weight so she improvises a crude splint and hobbles back along the path they followed the evening before.

Recovering consciousness in hospital, she learns that her leg is badly broken, but that Chris is well and recovering.

As the bureaucracy of investigation and explanation takes its course, Jo fears that her actions will spell disaster for her, however she learns that Chris has used his 'voice' to support her and there will be no repercussions. In addition her social worker has managed to secure help for her mother so Jo has respite from being her sole carer.

Back in school, relationships are restored and matured through apology and explanation, while Chris has been able to secure an electronic communication device due to the media attention over

their adventure and he now has access to a world denied him by his disability.

DISCUSSION POINTS

- (Read pp162-163): Jo's mum seems determined to be unhappy despite every effort that Jo makes. This is a symptom of her illness. How can you help a person who does not want to be helped? How would you cope if you were close to that person? Should there be limits to what you are expected to do?
- (Read p166): After her discussion with Dr Sharon, Jo is unsure of her own motives for helping Chris. It is common for people to disguise their true motives for doing things. How would you identify your own motives for doing things?
- (Read p171): The passengers on the bus are impatient with Chris for causing a delay. Do you think this is because he is disabled? If the delay had been caused by a young mother with twin babies do you think there would have been a similar reaction? Why do you think there is a difference and what does this say about how we view disabled people?
- (Read p207): Although Mr Jenkins had spent two years without success trying to establish a communication with Chris, he quickly realized that Jo's success was because Chris *WANTED* to talk to her. Why was this so? What was special about Jo that encouraged Chris to develop a friendship with her?
- (Read p212): Dr Sharon knew that the process of apology and forgiveness needed Jo to realize the full extent of the consequences of her actions and the impact they had on others. This was a learning process for her. Is it important to identify consequences for our actions and what might we learn from them?

ACTIVITIES

1. Miro (Read p155)

Chris and Jo have taken heed of the art teacher's suggestion and look at some of Miro's work for inspiration.

With Jo's help, Chris has produced a piece of work that the teacher now wants to display.

Look at the examples of Miro's work on site below and recreate the piece you

think Chris created.

Give your work a title and a very brief comment to explain how it might be interpreted from Chris' point of view.

www.deepspacesparkle.com/2011/12/05/miro-art-lesson/

2. Chris (Read p158)

Jo had considered creating a flyer that she could distribute among the delegates at the conference to persuade them to help Chris.

Unfortunately events have overtaken her and she now has no time to complete it.

Can you create one for her?

What will you include and how would you persuade someone to help? What might Chris himself have to say on the flyer?

3. Silence (Read p164)

Jo notices that Dr Sharon seems to be at ease with silences, whereas she cannot stand them except when she is with Chris.

In small groups see how many different types of silence you can identify. How would you describe each of them and how many of them are you comfortable with?

Perhaps you could write a short poem (Haiku or Cinquain) to explore your own favourite silence.

4. Fear (Read p174)

Jo has taken Chris on a wild adventure. He confesses later to the police that though he trusted Jo he was still terrified.

Much later, using his new communication tools, he describes in his own words how he felt. He even adds sound effects.

Can you use your computer to create a version of his account? Remember that Chris has quite a dry sense of humour and his own style of expression.

You can download a useful tool from here:

audacity.sourceforge.net/download/

5. First Aid (Read p180)

Jo is terrified when Chris has a seizure and is unsure what to do.

Mr Jenkins had meant to create an information / do / don't card to stay with Chris, but was always too busy to finish it.

Can you create one for him? Use the site below to help.

www.redcross.org.uk/What-we-do/First-aid/Everyday-First-Aid

6. 911/999 (Read p188)

When the jogger finds Jo she is shocked and immediately calls the emergency service on her mobile.

Unfortunately the shock of the discovery has upset her so much that she is unable to give clear details and begins to babble incoherently to the operator.

The operator has to calm her down and keep asking very focused questions in order to get the information that she needs to send help.

All calls to the emergency number are recorded and this one is now used to train other operators.

Can you work in pairs to create the call?

Record it and play it for the class.

7. The Charter (Read p192)

Jo has a responsibility for her mum. She is her carer. This is a very demanding and challenging role even for an adult to cope with.

How do you think that Jo could best be supported? Are there things that should be done for children in this situation?

Work in groups to draw up a charter of support and rights that you think every carer should have.

Use the sites below for further information.

www.actionforchildren.org.uk/our-services/young-people/supporting-young-carers

www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/our_work/young_carers.htm

www.childrensociety.org.uk/sites/default/files/Young-Carers-Web-Pub-v13/player.html

8. The Report (Read pp197-204)

After he has interviewed both Jo and Chris, the police officer reads the witness statement from the person who found Jo, the medical reports and the descriptions of the scene at the cabin.

In his report he includes everything he thinks relevant and uses two headings: **FACTS** and **OBSERVATIONS**.

The final section of his report is for his recommendations and includes his reason for each.

He makes three recommendations.

Could you create a copy of his report?

9. Dignity (Read p213)

One of the reasons for Jo's action was her belief that because of his treatment at home, Chris was being denied dignity.

This was Jo's misunderstanding and Chris later explained that he was happy at home.

However, later both she and Chris began to discuss the idea of human dignity and how everyone should expect to be treated.

They have asked you to help them draw up a code of behaviour and understanding that they hope will ensure everyone is treated with dignity no matter what their circumstances are.

Work in small groups to create the 1st draft to show them.

You might find this site useful:

www.kidsforglobalpeace.com/content/human-dignity-and-kids

10. Assumptions (Read Kim Hood's notes on disabilities)

An assumption is a judgement you make about someone based on very limited evidence and it is usually incorrect.

Think carefully about who you have met over the last few days and try to identify what assumptions you have made about them and what evidence you have used.

Can you decide how your assumption might have been incorrect?

CLASS PROJECT

The main theme of the book looks at finding a voice for those in our society who do not have one.

The book focuses on the stories of Jo and Chris who are dispossessed by mental illness and disability.

However there are many other groups who are invisible and do not have a voice.

A class project could profitably consider the different groups both nationally and internationally who have become invisible and whose voice is either not heard or not listened to.

An initial brainstorm may identify different groups specific to local interests and then a follow up might suggest ideas to ensure that their voice is identified and listened to.