

## Building understanding: lesson plans

### The Story of the Riverside Park Protests Part Two

The activity has been developed by Richard Gore and is an adaptation and the further development of an activity in the book “Radicalisation and Terrorism” by Alison Jamieson and Jane Flint. The activity was trialled by Leanne Ashton and Y6 pupils at Millbrook Primary, Stalybridge; Lorraine Charles and her Y6 class at Summerville Primary, Salford; Claire Bartlett, Mount St Joseph High School, Bolton, and her year 8 RE class; by Saima Alvi and her Y9 class at Lostock College, Trafford; and by Susannah Haygarth and Helen Stedman with Y7 pupils at Chorlton High School, Manchester.

### Preface to the activity

#### Main Themes

Non-violent direct action. Process of “radicalisation” and violent protest. Responsibility for the attack.

#### Things to consider before carrying out the activity

This activity follows on from The Story of the Riverside Park Protests Part One. Part two considers the violent protest that follows. The story “mirrors” many of the factors present in the process of radicalisation to enable pupils to later make the connections between the story and real life. In the story, the characters go on line and find some kindred spirits and find out how to carry out an attack. Some teachers, for reasons regarding internet safety, may choose to amend or omit this section.

#### Feedback from trialing at Summerville

The children came up with the following questions:

- Were they right to destroy the beautiful park?
- What if the cleaners die?
- What if they were arrested and there was no-one left to save the park?
- **Were they right to attack the offices?**
- Why were they arrested for chaining themselves to the trees? What if they got hurt?

The children chose the question, ‘**Were they right to attack the offices?**’

#### A sample of the children’s comments – first thoughts

**MK** – Not right because they might get arrested.

**MC** – Were right to do it – the park is going to be attacked/destroyed, so they are going to attack the building. They are defending the park.

**GR** – It isn’t right to burn the offices down because they could get arrested and they injured two people

**FF** – They could have killed the cleaners

**OL** – The park was getting attacked. They could attack the offices to get revenge. There was no point in any more talking. They had done that, but the council decided to go ahead

We then had a show of hands to indicate whether the children thought that they were right or wrong to set fire to the offices. Ten children thought that they were right to do it. We then heard from children on both sides of the argument

#### Learning Outcomes

Increased understanding of why people may take part in direct action/ violent protests, and an opportunity for children to consider their own views in relation to such protests.

#### Resources needed and preparation

The Story of the Riverside Park Protests 2

The Park Protests 2.pptx **NB Use this PP for the different stages of the lesson**

#### Introduction/ Starter

Part one of the Riverside Park Protests looked at a peaceful protest and part two looks at a violent protest. In order to make a conceptual link between part one and part two, one of the following sayings could be presented for pupils to agree or disagree with:

“Sticks and stones will break my bones but words will never hurt me”

“The pen is mightier than the sword”

### **Carrying out the activity**

Start by re-capping with the children part one of the story in order to make a link to part two.

Ask the children if they think the council decided to allow the building of the shopping centre to go ahead or not. Then, tell them that council allowed the building to go ahead. Ask them what their response is to this. If most, or even some, of the children think the council made the wrong decision, now ask the children what actions the people of Newmarket should now take to try and stop the building of the shopping centre.

### **Step One: understanding the story**

The story is shared with the class. The story could be simply read to the class, or the PP can be used to introduce the story. The PP contains visual support to the story and provides both factual, recall questions and “thinking questions”.

### **Step two: moving to enquiry**

Ask the children to identify the big ideas and themes in the text. Write-up keywords on the interactive whiteboard or flipchart paper and get the children to develop philosophical questions around these keywords and themes and then continue to an enquiry in the usual way.

A small number of specific question stems may be helpful to give focus to the children’s questions such as Why...? Were they right to...? Is it right...? What if...? How....?

You may wish to close the enquiry by returning to one or more of the “agree or disagree” statements:

1. John and Sara were justified in chaining themselves to the trees.
2. John and Sara were justified in attacking the offices of Newmarket builders.
3. It is right to break the law to protest against something you think is very unfair
4. It is right to use violence to protest against something that you think is very unfair.

### **Step three: linking to real events**

*It is important towards the end of the discussion/ enquiry to make a link between the story of the violent protest and real-life events. Remind the children that we have been looking at a story and ask the children if they can think of any real life incidents in recent times that are like (in some ways!) what happened in the story. As part of this discussion the terms “terrorism” and “terrorist” may be highlighted and written up on the board.*

*This then makes a good link to the next lesson: the terrorism jigsaw.*

*NB: If time is short the connection can be made at the beginning of the next lesson*

### **Extension/ Follow up Activities**