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**ENGLISH ACTIVITIES**

**Starter**

1) In pairs, list all the ways in which children can be different from each other. If you think about this properly, there should be more than enough answers for each pair to contribute one.

**Reading**

2) Read the poem ‘Ain’t It Funny’ to yourself.

3) As a class,

a) read the poem aloud. Each person reads one stanza. Keep reading it until everyone has had a turn.

b) discuss what, if anything, reading the poem aloud added to your understanding of its messages.

c) what does **irony** mean? How is Stanza 6 ironic?

d) can you spot irony elsewhere in the poem? Is the whole poem ironic?

4) By yourself, write five good adjectives to describe the character of the speaker in the poem. Use a thesaurus to help you.

**Writing- Main Task**

Obviously, the issues listed in ‘Ain’t It Funny’ really aren’t funny at all.

5) Imagine you’re **one** of the children picked on by the bully in the poem. Write a poem called ‘It Ain’t Funny’, in which you show your feelings about your situation and his or her attitude to it.

**Writing-**  **Extension Tasks**

6) As the same character from your ‘It Ain’t Funny’ poem, write a letter to the agony aunt of your local newspaper. Be precise in explaining your problem, the fact you’re being bullied over it and how you feel about the situation.

7) When you’ve finished Exercise 6, swap letters with a partner. Now you’re the agony aunt. Write a reply to your partner’s letter. Your reply should make it clear you’ve read their letter carefully and that you understand the feelings of the child.

Mr. Conner says: Exercises 6 and 7 are excellent for building GCSE skills. By this, I don’t just mean English. In all subjects with a lot of reading and writing, you will get your best marks for

a) showing you’ve understood the **details** of what you’ve read.

b) being extremely accurate and precise in your writing.

**CITIZENSHIP ACTIVITIES**

In pairs…

8) Read the poem ‘Ain’t It Funny’.

9) Discuss if there might be any reasons why the bully deserves sympathy.

As a class…

10) Feed back and discuss your responses to Exercise 2.

11) Widen the discussion to consider more generally why people become bullies.

In groups of four…

12) Devise a short drama based on characters showing their feelings about a sensitive issue. One person is the bully in ‘It Ain’t Funny’, one is a child from the poem and the other two are up to you, but they should be clearly different.