

Play 4: *Making My Mark* Support Notes

Issues Covered

Graffiti, tagging, peer pressure, getting a buzz, danger of climbing on buildings, effect of graffiti on the environment.

Plot

We start with a funeral - but whose funeral? Young Jez fancies Lindsay, but he has to engage his friend Paul to help him chat her up. Lindsay's a bit of a dare-devil and needs to be impressed. Jez sprays his name on a wall, but this isn't impressive enough. Jez embarks on more than more dangerous places to graffiti.

Eventually, encouraged by Lindsay and discouraged by Paul, Jez sprays under a high railway arch. One of them falls and is fatally injured; the drama concludes with the effect on the two who live.

Suggestions for Points to Notice and Follow-up

- Explore the various pressures on Jez to 'tag' the walls - the need to appear 'cool' to his mates, to feel good about himself, to impress his girl, to fit in with the crowd.
- Is any one person more to blame for the accident than any other? How could the accident have been avoided?
- Explore the dangers of climbing on to or across places you shouldn't be - a quick search on the Internet will produce some real life examples.
- What's the effect of graffiti on different groups of people? Young people may like it, other people think it's horrible, it may encourage other kinds of damage.

In addition

- Explore the different effects of peer pressure (positive and negative) on different people in different situations.
- Explore the techniques that could be used to help encourage or discourage Jez in the film; what swung it was the threat of calling the police.
- Look at some of the devices the play uses to tell the story - serious v humour, flash-back, thought voice, 'Are we in a play?' reruns.

Filmed Audience Response

The focus of this play is about personal responsibility and risk taking as well as about the issue of graffiti.

In this filmed response you'll see how the young people engage in the debate about who was to blame and about how to address the risky behaviour. One group has been asked to help encourage Jez, the other to discourage him. Because they work in groups 'supporting' the characters you'll see that students readily engage in the activity.

Although it's not possible to pick out what they're saying they are all inventing unselfconsciously. This is based on an earlier discussion of what could be said to encourage or discourage Jez.

Role-play, Replay Possibilities

Role playing can help young people examine rights and wrongs within a powerful emotional context.

- Jez decides to come back from the roof and not graffiti (there's no accident) - play the scene between Lindsay and Jez after this; does Lindsay dump Jez?
- Imagine that Lindsay dumps Jez in the scene above, play the next scene between Paul and Jez.
- In small groups create a risky situation - play it twice, once with risks carefully considered, once without proper risk preparation.