



# A Newspaper Report

## Skill

*To write in a journalistic style considering both balance and bias.*

## Organisation

Class discussion primarily, to establish some identity to an imagined arson attack – possible motives, possible culprits, possible victims and possible outcomes.

Break class down:

1. Individuals work on their own article or
2. Activity could be group based. Each group is given the same basic story, but given a different set of instructions in order to offer various slants (for example, irresponsible parenting being blamed).

## Resource

The ACT playscript. Use as the main arson attack either in the 70s or in the present day.

Local newspaper reports for arson attacks in own area.

Class make up their own story as basis.

## Possible Extensions

- Read the finished articles aloud to class or group, then the other students identify which instructions were allocated in this portrayal.
- Make the chosen report or article into a radio report and then record it on to tape.
- Make the article into a news report and video as for T.V.

## Task

Students to be given the task of writing a news article on an imaginary arson attack at a school:

- For local newspaper
- For national broadsheet/tabloid

The article should include main events, witness statements and outcomes.

Students should be asked to write either a fair, balanced account, or with a biased slant – for example anti-teenager, or just in a pure sensationalised style, exaggerating events.



# An Essay

## Skill

**To understand reasons behind actions and to look further into feelings than the obvious.**

## Organisation

Individuals should plan their essay then come together in groups to debate and explore possible alternative emotions.

They should then finish their essay individually.

## Resource

The ACT playscript.

The list of 'feelings' vocabulary, to stimulate ideas and extend group discussions.

*(photocopiable sheets a, b)*

The list of 'victims' – those affected by an arson attack.

*(photocopiable sheets c, d, e, f)*

## Possible Extensions

- Write an essay, (opposite to above) condemning the actions of a chosen character.
- Write a poem, using either all the negative feelings or positive feelings from photocopiable sheets.
- Split the class into two and let one half take the 'condemning' view of a character, and the other 'justifying' the actions. Let them debate the situation.

## Task

Students to be given the task of writing an essay justifying the actions of someone of whom they 'disapprove', for example:

- **CARMEN** or **CHAD** in the actual script.
- **Of an arsonist who has burned the school down, in order to cover the fact that their examination marks were poor.**

Students should be asked to put themselves in their character's position and describe their feelings, their possible excuses and their justification to themselves.



# Diary

## Skill

*To imagine underlying motives that cause certain people's actions and behaviours, putting themselves in their position.*

## Organisation

As a class, discuss various arson attacks from newspaper reports locally or nationally and/or read the ACT playscript.

Give some prompts as to perceived attitudes, personalities etc.

Then each individual write their own diary entries.

## Resource

The ACT playscript.

Articles on arson attacks – especially on school arson, that may be in local or national reports.

## Task

Students to write a diary entry for a specific character involved in an arson attack in some way – reflecting on the events and retelling it in a very personal and private way:

- a) as a character from the ACT play
- b) as a convicted arsonist
- c) as a victim
- d) as a rescuer – police, Fire and Rescue Service or teacher/caretaker

Students should write in an informal 'chatty' style.

## Possible Extensions

- Each individual could read out their diary entry to the rest of the class.
- Class could be encouraged to debate and question that person – in character role, as to why they did it, what they felt etc.
- Debate moral issues (broadly) and how/when conscience plays a part.



# Letter

## Skill

**To be able to construct clear, understandable letters in an appropriate style and format for their purpose.**

## Organisation

As a class:

Conventions and layouts of formal and informal letter writing may need to be taught or revised.

Having knowledge of the various expected styles, the students should then work individually.

## Resource

Examples of different styles of writing.

The list of 'feelings' vocabulary given in the pack.

(photocopiable sheets a, b)

## Task

**Students to write letters**

- a) formal – a letter of condolence to parents who have lost a child in a school arson attack – from headteacher, local councillor or other public figure.
- b) informal – a letter of sympathy to the parents – from the child's friend, from an adult friend or a neighbour.
- c) informal – a letter of remorse, guilt and sorrow from the arsonist (who has not been suspected, found or charged) to the parents – sent anonymously.

## Possible Extensions

- Class debate could follow on what "wordings" were most appropriate in the circumstance.
- Discuss how construction of sentences could alter or convey feelings.
- Discuss the difficulty most people have when trying to convey sympathy for a loss of life, rather than, say, happiness at a birth.



# Character Development

## Skill

To create their own believable characters and then develop them.

## Organisation

Individuals to work through, preferably on their own.

Alternatively, could be completed:

- as a group for all stages
- a mixture of group and individual
- or in pairs.

## Resource

The ACT playscript.

The chart of physical details.  
(photocopiable sheets g, h)

The drawings of stereotypical body types.  
(photocopiable sheet i)

## Task

After a class reading of the Act playscript, students to develop certain characters of their own.

1. Make a chart of the physical appearance of this person.
2. Create the personality to fit.
3. Write full descriptive paragraph to encapsulate the 'character' created.
4. Use that character in another narrative story or play.

## Possible Extensions

- Individuals read out their descriptions to the rest of the group/class then they in turn comment on the description.
- Role play their chosen character by performing a 'snippet of their story'.



# Wordsearches

## Skill

To develop awareness of a wide range of vocabulary, recognition of word formation and increase spelling ability.

## Organisation

Photocopies to be given to each individual.

Timed sessions could be given to complete, or

Students could work in pairs (this may allow less able students to enjoy the activity).

## Resource

The sheets given in this pack.  
(photocopiable sheets j, k)

Dictionaries so that students can find the exact meanings of the words given.

## Task

Students to take the two wordsearch puzzles provided in the pack, and look for the words given at the side.

**Wordsearch - Feelings** deals with emotional responses, which may be experienced by various people, from the arsonist to the victim.

**Wordsearch - Fire Words** focuses on words related to the arson attack itself.

(Answer sheets are also provided.)

## Possible Extensions

- These provide a range of vocabulary which could also be used to generate discussion.
- These could be used to create a narrative or newspaper article (acting as a vocabulary list).
- Hold class competitions where students take each word and have 30 seconds to verbally explain the meaning of the word to the others.



# Debate

## Skill

**To debate a contentious issue and formulate ideas/views and then comment.**

## Organisation

Full class participation.

Create an open environment with equal opportunity for all to contribute. Either be the 'chair' person or designate a 'chair' person to make sure everyone gets an opportunity to express their opinion.

Make sure that 'pros' and 'cons' get fair representation.

## Resource

The ACT playscript.

Optional – watch recording of any prime time television studio debate.

## Task

**After a class reading of the ACT playscript, organise a class debate.**

**Questions to initiate:**

- **Why did the 70s school disco fire occur?**
- **Who were the victims?**
- **Why was Carmen's behaviour so different from Lisa's?**
- **Peer pressure – why does it happen? What are the usual consequences, who wins?**
- **Why are there arson attacks on schools?**
- **Who is to blame? – The school? Individuals? Parents? Society?**

## Possible Extensions

- The debate can be extended into considering different ways that anti-social behaviour can be handled – by the authorities, by peers, by parents or by school.
- Or, discuss how an arson attack could be avoided; what can be done to reduce risk.



# Media Representation

## Skill

*To develop knowledge and understanding of key issues, as shown through recent and contemporary drama and fiction written for young people and adults.*

## Organisation

Individual or group work.

## Resource

Footage or recordings of current “soaps”, series or performances on television or radio.

## Task

Research soaps and/or popular series such as *Coronation Street/Emmerdale/EastEnders/Neighbours/Hollyoaks* etc. to see how many have included fire setting, arson or actual fires in their programmes.

Discuss what’s been behind each storyline – anger, peer pressure, family breakdown, crime etc.

Discuss whether it’s been fairly presented or biased in a specific way.

## Possible Extensions

- Groups could give resumés of the events leading up to incidents in each case.
- Discuss any similarities or differences between different programmes.
- Discuss what effect these storylines have on audiences.
- Debate how key issues in storylines are portrayed if written for an older audience.

**Key Stage 3 / SI-S2**



# Emergency Procedures

## Skill

*To be aware of and learn how to react in an emergency and be confident in carrying out the necessary procedures.*

## Organisation

Full class participation.

## Resource

The school's own fire drill.

The procedure sheets included in this pack in the Miscellaneous Section.

## Task

Students to be instructed clearly on different procedures:

- a) a fire drill
- b) phoning emergency services
- c) stop, drop, roll techniques
- d) if caught in a burning building

Class discussion should follow to allow questions and debate on why such procedures need to be remembered.

## Possible Extensions

- Give small groups one set of procedures muddled up, ask them to sequence correctly and discuss possible consequences if incorrect.
- Ask groups or individuals to illustrate the instructions with pictures or graphics rather than with words.
- Group discussions on the complexities of emergency procedures for those with disabilities and how their needs can be accommodated.

**Key Stage 3 / SI-S2**

**PSHE & Citizenship  
PSD/Envir.St. - Social**

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# Choices

## Skill

*To consider alternatives, to weigh up decisions. To encourage taking responsibility for own actions.*

*To consider the impact of actions or behaviour towards others.*

*To consider how responses and decisions may change under differing circumstances.*

## Organisation

Whole class, group, or individual.

## Resource

The question sheet 'Choices' in pack.

You could construct your own scenarios.

(photocopiable sheet 1)

## Task

For each situation students to discuss:

- a) What are the possible alternatives and outcomes?
- b) What would be the most sensible course of action given the circumstances?
- c) What would happen if the responsible course of action was not followed?

## Possible Extensions

- Drama or role play with the audience (other students), responding and commenting on the 'choices' made and speculating on further consequences.



# Choices and Alternatives

## Skill

*To develop flexible thinking, to be able to consider more than one possibility. To begin to hypothesise.*

## Organisation

Whole class, group or individual.

## Resource

The ACT playscript.

## Possible Extensions

- Choose an alternative ending to the play, then create into a narrative prose format. Alternatively, replace the ending of the play in script format.
- Improvise possible alternatives as scenarios.
- Decide which ending is more powerful.

## Task

Students to be given a range of situations from the play and asked to consider, then suggest, alternative ways in which the situation could have developed.

Possible scenes:

- The initial meeting of Danny, Chad, Carmen and Lisa.
- The meeting between Danny and Mr Eames (the caretaker) on the roof.
- Danny overhearing Carmen and Chad planning to ruin the school disco.

**Focus:** the changes/responses must be plausible.

**Consider relationships and group dynamics.**

Ideas then presented and discussed with other pupils – who should debate if these alternatives are workable, sensible options in reality.





# Sequences and Responsibilities

## Skill

**To look at cause and effect, the consequences of actions.**

**To select key events which predict outcomes.**

## Organisation

Group activities and discussion, or all to work on tasks individually.

## Resource

The ACT playscript.

The sequence photos.  
(photocopiable sheet m)

## Task

a) Students given the sequence of photos of main events and asked to explain how one leads to the other (*this should serve as a 'warm up' activity for more able pupils to do b and c).*

b) Using the script for reference, students to select the key events and consider how these influenced the rest of the play.

c) Students to predict outcomes for Lisa, Danny, Carmen and Chad.

**Consider various possibilities and consequences, but take into consideration moral issues.**

## Possible Extensions

- Debate could follow on the outcomes – if they were appropriate, do the group agree.
- Act out/write or improvise possible outcomes of c).
- Discussion on penalties and punishments, or alternative ways of dealing with convicted arsonists.

**Key Stage 3 / SI-S2**

**PSHE & Citizenship  
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# Consequences

## Skill

**To consider other people's points of view. To understand the responsibility of actions and possible consequences – short and long term.**

## Organisation

Class discussion followed by group or individual work.

## Resource

If possible use the 'Consequences' video produced by Lincolnshire Fire Brigade.

Question sheet provided.  
(photocopiable sheet n)

## Task

**Set the scene:**

**A young arsonist guilty of a huge blaze at a school, which kills a girl, leaves the caretaker seriously burnt, a neighbour's dog dead and the school razed to the ground.**

**Take the statement:**

**"I don't know how you're going to live with this... what it's done to the family... to you... This will be with you for the rest of you life!"**

**Discuss.**

## Possible Extensions

- Role play the arsonists parents' reactions to the discovery that their child is guilty.
- Improvise a scene in prison – the thoughts and feelings of that young arsonist, now a middle aged or elderly person, looking back on the misery they've caused; the pain, the suffering, the lost life of the girl, together with their own 'lost' life.

**Key Stage 3 / SI-S2**

**PSHE & Citizenship  
PSD/Envir.St. - Social**

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# It's in the Picture

## Skill

**To analyse visual images and draw conclusions – looking beyond the facts and interpreting physical and emotional repercussions, possibilities and assumptions.**

## Organisation

Class given visual images and discuss as a whole. Then split into groups or work individually.

## Resource

The ACT playscript.

The emotions/feelings vocabulary list included.

*(photocopiable sheet a)*

The visual images – either from pack or selection of own.

*(photocopiable sheet m)*

## Task

- a) Students given visual images in groups. Link them to the ACT playscript if possible. Focus upon fact and all the possible interpretations e.g. *fact* – funeral; *assume* - people sad.
- b) Students to create their own version of a story around the image.
- c) Students to look at the emotion list and say how the picture makes them feel.

## Possible Extensions

- Each individual to imagine they are a character in that scene, write an account from their point of view.
- Drama – get class to act out the scene/hot seat characters.

**Key Stage 3 / SI-S2**



# Risk to Individuals – Discussion

## Skill

To understand ‘risk taking’ oneself and the consequences of putting other people’s lives at risk.

## Organisation

Whole class debate.

## Resource

The ACT playscript.

Any videos on explorers, mountaineers, emergency services etc.

## Possible Extensions

- Students could grade risk taking activities on a scale of 1-10. 1 being least dangerous through to maximum danger at 10.
- Discussion on whether risk taking has any linkage with age/maturity/responsibility.

## Task

Class to discuss risk taking:

- Those who risk their own life by pushing boundaries e.g. mountaineers and Formula One drivers (*where training/equipment makes calculated risk*).
- Those who risk their own life through wanting to help others e.g. firemen, police, paramedics (*who again rely on training/equipment to reduce the risk as much as possible*).
- Those who risk their own life through peer-pressure, boredom or the immediate buzz/thrill e.g. drug takers, joyriders, firesetters (*where risk is high*).
- Those whose own lives are put at risk through no intention or desire of their own, in a school arson attack e.g. victims, innocent bystanders, neighbours etc.



# The Question of Arson?

## Skill

*To become informed citizens through knowledge and understanding.*

## Organisation

Individual research leading to class interaction/discussion.

## Resource

Useful resources and contact list/library and ICT resources.

Background information sheet in this pack.

## Possible Extensions

- Compare increase in incidents to statistics of other 'crimes' such as
  - Drug taking
  - Truancy
  - Burglary
  - Car crime
  - Mugging etc.

## Task

Students to research through libraries and ICT resources and find out the facts on the following:

- a) The increase in arson today since 1950.
  - b) Cost of arson nationally.
  - c) The level of school arson.
  - d) Who are the arsonists?
  - e) How is arson viewed legally?
  - f) The work of the Arson Prevention Bureau.
- As a class debate the findings, discuss the issues, their views, their suggested solutions etc.
  - Discuss why arson was one of the last crimes punishable by the death penalty.



# Local Problems

## Skill

**To develop skills of enquiry, gain knowledge and understanding about being informed citizens.**

## Organisation

Whole class or group project with possibilities of individuals being tasked with researching certain sections.

## Resource

Library and ICT resources.

Local media.

Local Fire and Rescue Service information.

Local authority information.

## Task

Students to plot on a map of the local area – all the cases of arson in the last 10/20 years.

- a) school arson attacks
- b) other sites

- Are there any cluster areas?
- Have the targeted communities got any similarities – (*near wasteland, near rubbish, high crime areas, lower socio-economic areas*)?
- Are there any cultural or religious reasons or motives that can be identified?

Use class discussion to debate what influences or reasons could be given.

## Possible Extensions

- Extend to look at incidents in neighbouring counties.
- Compare local figures with national average.
- Explore the legal system and process of charging for arson.
- Make a presentation to the whole school regarding the problem of arson in the area.

**Key Stage 3 / SI-S2**

**PSHE & Citizenship  
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# Community Action

## Skill

*To become informed citizens through knowledge and understanding, and to develop skills of enquiry and communication.*

## Organisation

Individual research leading to class interaction/discussion.

## Resource

Useful resources and contact list.

Library and ICT resources.

Local newspaper, local yellow pages.

## Possible Extensions

- Look at other 'Watch schemes' e.g. 'Business Watch', 'Pub Watch', 'Church Watch'.
- Join a local voluntary group to see how you can make a difference.
- Set up your own 'Class Watch'.

## Task

Students to research through local newspapers, national media, local authorities, libraries and ICT resources to find out about community action groups.

- a) Neighbourhood/Home Watch
  - b) Victim Support
  - c) Other local groups such as Resident Associations, Youth Groups, Enterprises, Environmental Groups, Help the Aged, Samaritans etc.
- Look at their history, their development, their aims and objectives, how they are viewed etc.
  - Discuss how groups such as these can make a difference in preventing arson, or how they can help after an incident – their value in today's society.



# The Wider Picture

## Skill

**To consider the impact, or potential impact – emotionally, physically, socially or financially, that a school arson attack can make, on various members of the community.**

## Organisation

Class discussion, followed by group or individual work.

## Resource

Visual images of an arson attack on television, video, internet or photographs.

The 'Repercussions' list included in pack (*photocopiable sheets b, c, d, e, n*)

## Task

**Set the scene:**

**Describe an arson attack on a school using newscuttings, the ACT playscript or ask students to imagine their own classroom has been completely gutted and several of their friends have been injured and/or one has died.**

- **Ask them to discuss as many small and large consequences that result.**
- **Use the checklist of lives involved in an arson attack.**
- **Decide whether each individual is affected physically, emotionally or financially, or a combination of these.**

## Possible Extensions

- Follow up discussions on the values put on life, property, possessions and physiological well being in our society today.
- Who is directly/indirectly responsible?

**Key Stage 3 / SI-S2**



# School Watch

## Skill

**To become informed citizens and develop skills of participation and responsible action.**

## Organisation

This could be an open invitation to the whole school or to a specific year, group or class.

It could be an after school club.

## Resource

Useful resource and contact list.

Local group listings.

Yellow Pages.

Any leaflets, publications available from volunteer groups in the area.

## Possible Extensions

- Encourage the group/class to meet with other specialists – the Fire Rescue service, the police, drug action teams, etc.
- Carry out risk assessments for all problem areas.
- Devise a name, design a logo for the group e.g. 'THE WATCHERS' 'THE FIRECHECKERS'.

## Task

Students asked to explore all the possibilities of setting up their own 'School Watch' scheme – partnering the local Neighbourhood/Home Watch if at all possible.

- Study the problem areas in your school:
  - a) bullying, peer pressure
  - b) drug taking
  - c) truancy
  - d) graffiti, damage, theft
  - e) fire play.
- Seek advice from specialist groups on actions required.
- Devise an action plan.
- Encourage volunteer participation from peers.
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the group.
- Continue to seek help, advice and meet other partner groups.



# Improvisation

## Skill

*To understand emotions and characteristics and portray them sympathetically, powerfully.*

## Organisation

Individuals can select own character and then work up their improvisation on their own.

The results can then be class interaction.

## Resource

The ACT playscript.

Key vocabulary of words that can identify these characters.

## Task

Students to be given task of selecting a character from ACT play –

- The Head
- Lisa's dad, the fire-fighter
- Carmen
- Carmen's mum
- Danny
- Chad
- Mr Eames, the caretaker

They then must imagine that they are that character and tell the story as they see/ experience it.

Focus on – how characters respond, the retention of facts and events, reasons and consequences.

## Possible Extensions

- Can develop into improvised scenarios between two or three of the characters.
- Individual scenarios can be mimed for the rest of the class to guess which characters were involved.



# Free Expression

## Skill

*To use different ways to convey action, character, atmosphere, and tension in performing playlets.*

## Organisation

Group work.

## Resource

The ACT playscript.

## Task

Improvise the action of the play trying to develop an individual character (as in page 21) and interpret the tension through pure dance, movement and expression to the recordings.

Work on small sections of the play.

When linking these scenarios to the whole, concentrate only on the main events.

## Possible Extensions

- Try to listen to other pieces of 70s music and interpret a story throughout with movement only.
- Look at videos that accompany record releases. Discuss how the story the video portrays is often different from the words of the song, but is often an alternative interpretation of the music.



# Arson Combated Together

## Skill

*To participate in drama activity conveying action, character, atmosphere and tension, to not only entertain others, but to communicate important messages.*

## Organisation

This could be group or class participation. Perhaps the whole year group could be involved. It could also be utilised as an after school drama club activity.

## Resource

The ACT playscript.  
Script and resource activities.  
Hall, props, rehearsal time.  
Time slot on school timetable for performance!

## Possible Extensions

- Give performance to P.T.A., Governors.
- Give performance to parents, the local community.
- Invite the press in to write an article or advertorial.
- Adapt the play to be suitable for a younger audience.

## Task

After reading the ACT playscript and having worked through several (if not all) the activities in this pack, it is hoped that a year group or a class can read, learn, improvise, rehearse and ultimately perform the play to the rest of the school.

- The more students have explored the activity sheets, the more understanding they will have of motives and consequences, and have empathy with the characters.
- The more they understand the underlying messages, the more dramatic and powerful they can make their performance.



# Design a Fire Detection System

## Skill

*To develop, plan and communicate ideas on a safety system, to evaluate the process and understand the system.*

## Organisation

Whole class, group or individual.

## Resource

School risk assessment sheets.

Plans of the school if possible – if not students draw/plan to scale.

Access to computer and necessary software.

## Task

Students to survey the school and carry out a school risk assessment noting potential dangers, hazards, fire door access etc.

- a) To design a fire detection system, pinpointing where detectors would be needed.
- b) Using computer techniques, draw up a plan to communicate the design proposal to others.
- c) Modify the design to take into consideration disabilities.
- d) Find out how smoke detectors and sprinkler systems work.

## Possible Extensions

- Incorporate on the plan intruder alarms and detectors, audible and visible.
- Carry out surveys in local community on areas that have detectors, alarms or CCTV: are these in high risk areas? Debate.
- Carry out an evaluation as to the effectiveness of these systems.



# Design a Safer Classroom

## Skill

*To identify potential fire/larson hazards. To develop understanding and awareness of creating safer environments and how to avoid unnecessary dangers.*

## Organisation

Classroom discussion, followed by group and individual work.

## Resource

General plan with hazards marked.

Outline plan of your own classroom.

Risk assessment sheets in pack.

## Task

Students to be given a plan of a classroom with deliberate dangers marked.

- a) Students then asked to identify and discuss all the potential dangers.
- b) They redesign the classroom layout to make it safer.

## Possible Extensions

- Students should carry out basic fire risk assessment of individual classrooms, and the school environment, and report back on findings.
- They could then redesign their own classrooms etc., justifying any changes, inclusions etc.
- They could design a poster with safety tips (learnt from risk assessment, either with statements only, or key words and pictures, or annotated drawings).