



## Telling a story

Richard tells stories about when he was a child, and about how he got the idea for *The Can Caravan* from driving on a motorway behind a big truck. How does he make these everyday stories so interesting?

Laura says everybody is a storyteller. Tell the children a story about your journey to school today. Tell it a very simply – I walked to the bus stop, I waited for my bus, I got on the bus, I got off the bus, I walked from the bus stop to the school. You really need the children's help to make your journey to school story more interesting! Have some prompts ready – Did I walk fast or slow? Was I on time or late? Who did I see at the bus stop? Who did I sit next to on the bus? What did we talk about? What could I hear, see, smell...? Encourage lots of descriptive and interesting vocabulary.

## Mrs Tolen

Mrs Tolen is an important character in the story. A lot of things happen to her – she breaks her leg, she goes to hospital, she stays in a care home and thinks she might have to live in a house, and then she sees her Can Caravan! Talk with the children about the different feelings Mrs Tolen might have in different parts of the story. Why do they think she feels that way? The children could create a map of her feelings in words and pictures as a whole class or individually.

Richard and Laura talk about charity. Discuss what charity means with the children. What things have you raised money for at the school? How might people feel about charity and why? How can we make sure that charity is respectful?

## Use the Romani glossary

In *The Can Caravan* Janie, her Grandad, her mum, and Mrs Tolen use some Romani words, such as Traveller, trailer, folki, komli, kushti, and bar. Richard includes a glossary to explain what these words mean in Romani. As you read the book aloud to the children, take time to pause and use the glossary to find out about these words. Why do the children think it is important that Romani words are used in the book?

Grandad says to Janie 'You've got the rag-and-bone trade in your blood' – do the children know what 'rag-and-bone' is? Find out together. What could we learn from the rag-and-bone trade about recycling?

## Activities for

# The Can Caravan

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## Playing with words

Richard says that storytelling is about being playful with words – and that words absolutely love children!

Have some fun with words. You could ask the children what their favourite word's are and why - make a big list, a class book, or an audio collection by recording each child talking about their favourite word. You could begin each day with a new and unusual word – discover the meaning, can the children use it in their talk, writing, or play that day? Write individual words on lots of small bits of card, put them in a bag and invite the children in their talking partners to take out 3 words each – can they use them to tell a story? Do the children feel loved by words?!

## Richard's favourite page

Can the children remember which page Richard said is his favourite in *The Can Caravan*? Why did he pick this one? Look at the page with the children. What do they notice? Who can they see? What jobs need to be done and who is doing them? What is Janie doing in the illustration? How does she feel? How has Janie problem solved in the story?

Explore what 'community' means with the children. What community or communities do they belong to? How does Richard tell us about community in *The Can Caravan*? Why is community important?