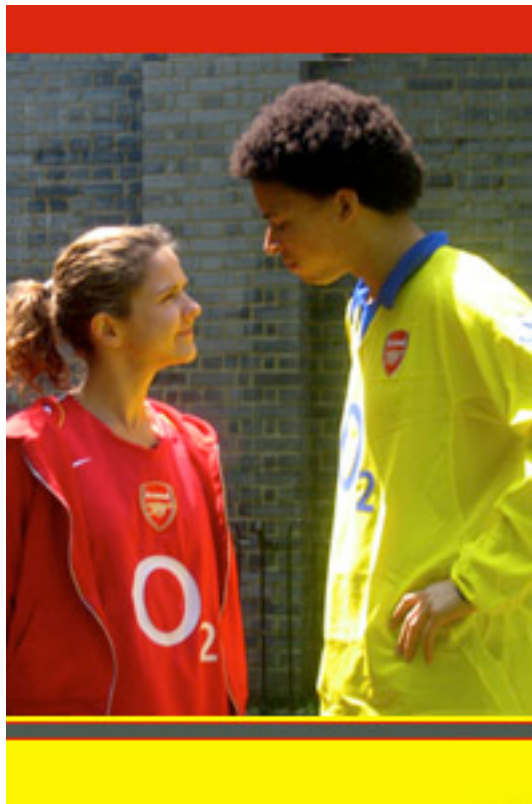


DISCUSSION TRIGGERS



YOUTH CULTURE AND FOOTBALL

Full Time Teachers Resource

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Discussion Triggers

The aim of these triggers is to deepen the students' understanding of the issues posed explored in the play. This is done through the provision of a range of key discussion triggers stimulated by the characters and the dilemmas that confront them at different points in the play.

The discussion triggers relate directly to the characters and the situations in the play. These suggestions are intended to be used as soon as possible after the company has visited the school when characters and situations are still fresh in the mind.

Discussion Guidelines

In discussions, the views of all students should be heard wherever possible. It may be necessary to speak for groups of individuals who are too vulnerable or not represented in the classroom.

Try to avoid using students as representatives of their religious or cultural groups. If a student makes a prejudiced remark, try to respond by asking for their reasons and by giving hard factual information in a neutral way.

Remember, values are learnt informally, by example. Be aware of your own values, attitudes and assumptions, so that you can avoid promoting them unconsciously or inappropriately.

Discussion Trigger 1: Why are there many less girls that play football than boys?

Sabina: I do want to.

Ryan: Then why don't you?

Sabina: I'd look ugly.

Ryan: What?

Issues/Prompts:

- Are girls less into sport than boys? If so, why?
- What might put girls off sport in general, and football in particular?
- There are no professional female team-sport players in the UK, compared to x males.
- How does body-image effect girls' participation in sport?
- Girls tend to drop out of playing sports around the age of 12/13. Why? What could encourage them to stay active?
- Should boys and girls be allowed to play in mixed teams after the age of 11?

Discussion Trigger 2: Is football the new religion?

Ryan: It brings people together, dad. It's a language, yeah, spoken all over the world.

Issues/Prompts:

- Is football a universal language?
- Why is the love of football such a world-wide phenomenon?
- Does football fill a void left by a lack of religious/spiritual ritual in the western world?
- How does supporting a team compare to being the follower of a particular faith?

Discussion Trigger 3: Are Asian players marginalised by the game?

Omar: Name some.

Ryan: There's loads.

Omar: Have a go.

Ryan: Ji-Sung Park. Michael Chopra. Zesh Rehman...Zesh Rehman...

Omar: Lee Young-Pyo. Seol Ki Hyeon. Fangzhuo Dong. Andranik Teymourian.

Ryan: That's seven.

Omar: Out of four thousand.

Issues/Prompts:

- Why are there so few professional footballers of Asian origin?
- What are the barriers facing Asian players, especially girls?
- What could/should be done to change the situation?

Discussion Trigger 4: Why are there no openly gay footballers?

Sabina: ...This myth's grown up that if you're a gay footballer you'll kill yourself. It's rubbish.

Ryan: If I make it, either I lie, like they all do, or I come out and it'll be hell.

Issues/Prompts

- Are footballers not gay, or are there gay players who choose not to come out?
- How would a player be treated by colleagues and fans were he to publicly come out as gay?
- Is it likely that there will be openly gay players in the future?
- Why is homophobic behaviour perceived as more acceptable than racist behaviour in football culture?

Discussion Trigger 5: Where is the line between banter and abuse?

Omar: 'Why don't Asians play football? Because every time they get a corner they build a shop on it'.

Ryan: See, that's funny.

Omar: Yeah, but there's a line. I don't need that shit.

Issues/Prompts

- Who decides when a joke becomes abusive?
- Homophobic chanting has been banned from premier league grounds since September 2007.
- Is everything becoming too politically correct?
- What about freedom of speech?
- Chanting and banter are part of football culture; is it wrong to try and relegate it?
- Many fans are self-regulating (i.e. the fans themselves will challenge one of their comrades over abusive banter).

Discussion Trigger 6: What are the negative aspects of football culture?

Steve: Football? It's just noise.

Ryan: Dad-

Steve: Noise and mess and blood and yobs.

Issues/Prompts:

- Are hooligans attracted by football, or does football turn people into hooligans?
- Why do English fans have such a bad reputation abroad?
- Does football encourage violence and intolerance?
- What role does alcohol have to play in the negative aspects of football culture?

Discussion Trigger 7: What are the positive aspects of football culture?

Sabina: What's it like, playing football?

Ryan: It's like... you walk out on that pitch and you're part of a team, you're part of something bigger than just you. You never know what's gonna happen- you could do anything before full time...

Issues/Prompts:

- How does football tackle help tackle social issues such as exclusion?

- What does playing football, or being a fan teach you about life?

Discussion Trigger 8: Why do some people bully others?

Jez: You little fairy.

Ryan: What?

Jez: Taking my place.

Ryan: Jez-

Omar: All right-

Jez: Fuck off, Paki

Issues/Prompts:

- Why do bullies find it fun to terrorise other people?
- What happens when your friend is also a bully?
- Should bullies be helped, or simply stopped and disciplined?
- Can someone be a bully and a victim at the same time?
- Who tend to be targets for bullies? Why?

Discussion Trigger 9: Should children be expected to look after their parents?

Ryan: Dad's nuts.

Omar: They all are.

Ryan: No. I mean. He's lost it.

Omar: What d'you/mean-

Ryan: When mum died. Something broke. Thinks it's still 1998.

Issues/Prompts:

- If their parents are in trouble, should children be responsible for them?
- Where can children in this kind of situation find support?
- Why might they want to keep the situation a secret?
- What kind of effect could having to care for a parent have on a child's future?

Discussion Trigger 10: Is football still a sport, or a money-making commercial enterprise?

Sabina: Why are they doing that?

Ryan: Relegation. Costs a bomb.

Sabina: Says there the women's team costs £250,000 a year to run. They're getting £16 million from the sale of Darren Bent. How's cutting the women's team going to help?

Issues/Prompts:

- Do football stars deserve their massive salaries?
- Are premier league tickets too expensive? Does this put some people off going to matches?
- Do big clubs over-dominate, putting smaller clubs out of business?
- Why have some major clubs recently slashed their women's teams? Is this right/fair?
- Should more money be put into women's football? If not, why not? If so, where should this funding come from? (e.g. Clubs, Sponsorship, Government)