

Writing in Role

Big Idea: To have students explore the thoughts and feelings of John and Jane from the play *Meet Cute*.

By the end of this lesson students will be able to:

- Deepen their understanding of the characters from the play
- Comprehend and reflect on the characters’ points of view
- Create and write a piece that reflects on their understanding
- Make inferences about the characters’ motivations and opinions

Materials: Projection or photocopies of the blog post “An Open Letter to my Stalker”, Paper and Pencils

Curriculum Connections

Health and Physical Education

C2.5 describe factors that influence sexual decision making, and demonstrate an understanding of how to use decision-making and communication skills effectively to support choices related to responsible and healthy sexuality

C1.3 demonstrate an understanding of how relationships develop through various stages, and describe the skills and strategies needed to maintain a satisfactory relationship as the relationship evolves (*e.g., communication and interpersonal skills, adaptive and coping skills, conflict resolution strategies*)

Drama

A1.3 use role play to explore the possibilities of different scenarios, situations, and characters

B3.2 identify problem-solving techniques they have learned through drama activities, and explain how they can be applied in work and other social contexts

English

2.2 demonstrate an understanding of several different interpersonal speaking strategies and adapt them to suit the purpose, situation, and audience, exhibiting sensitivity to cultural differences

2.3 use appropriate descriptive and evocative words, phrases, and expressions to make their writing clear and vivid for their intended audience

2.5 explain how their own beliefs, values, and experiences are revealed in their writing

Minds On

Read the blog post entitled *An Open Letter to my Stalker*. This letter was written by a friend of the playwright's (Erin Norah Thompson).

When asked permission from the playwright to use her blog post she responded by saying, "I'd be honoured to have my letter used in the guide. I'm glad you and I could connect through our stories and that you felt it was worth sharing. Being able to articulate my feelings toward that man helped me so much. After writing the letter for myself, the next time I saw him I had the courage to tell him he was making me uncomfortable and since then he has left me alone."

Action

What led the author of this blog post to write this letter? What actions did this individual do to cause her to harbour these feelings? How was her consent and her safety put into question?

Instruct students to take on the role of either the author or her stalker.

What was the letter this person gave to her? Instruct students to take on the voice of this individual in the form of a written letter. They may use instances from the play.

What led the author to write this letter? Instruct students to write a diary entry that chronicles her growing discomfort on her bus rides home from work.

Read out some examples of both the letter and the diary entries. How can we deal with instances like these in real life? How does this blog post and this situation connect to those experienced by John and Jane in *Meet Cute*?

Connect/Consolidate/Discuss

Why is freedom of expression an outlet for us to explore feelings? What resources do we use to express ourselves? What would you do if this situation started happening to you?

Further connect this discussion to John and Jane in *Meet Cute*: What made it clear that John/ Jane were both uncomfortable with how the conversation was unfolding in the first two scenes. What are some things that both John and Jane could have done differently in either situation?

Saturday, 28 January 2017

An Open Letter to my Stalker

Dear a.a.a,

I was very disturbed by your letter. It's been several months since we spoke that morning on the bus, and I was shocked to discover you've been harbouring these obsessive thoughts about me this entire time.

I knew I had made a mistake in speaking with you, because you immediately expected something more from me. It was apparent that you felt I was obligated to talk to you every morning on my commute into work. When I began to avoid you, I thought that would be the end of it.

The way you searched for me on my route, and stood for hours waiting with my colleagues, was completely unappreciated. I now feel unsafe within a job I truly love because I'm worried you are going to show up while I'm working and expect more from me. I do not owe you anything.

I have a boyfriend of four years, who I live with happily. I am sure I mentioned this to you when we spoke that morning. He, over time, has earned the right to love me and be loved by me. You, however, are a total stranger.

I understand that you are lonely, but your expression does not come from the right place nor hit the right target. I am at a completely different stage in my life than you are. You used small details I chose to divulge about myself to create some fantasy of who you think I am. Let me be extremely clear, you do not know me.

Keep away from me. Your presence brings me nothing but discomfort, and you are completely out of line. I hope this will help you learn the difference between polite conversation and an actual relationship.

Signed,

You do not have the right to use my name.