

An Activity on

UNDERCOVER ALIENS

By CECI JENKINSON

Purpose To discuss issues surrounding **Citizenship**. It is necessary to have read *Undercover Aliens* to do the third activity, for which everyone will need a copy of the Handout.

Introduction Ceci says, '*Undercover Aliens* is about an extra-terrestrial family forced to flee their own planet and hide from their enemy on Earth. When I was writing it, I thought about all the people living in Britain who share many of the same problems: people come here from other countries for all sorts of complicated reasons: they need jobs, their families are here or they are escaping persecution. Some people take great risks to get here and arrive without knowing anyone and speaking no English.'

Activity 1: Imagine living in a country where you can't speak the language properly. How would you ask these questions without using any words:

- What's the time?
- What kind of meat is this?
- Where is the drinking water fountain?
- What's your name?

Now try to *answer* the questions in such a way that a person with almost no English could understand.

Activity 2: Ask the class to imagine that each of them has left home and gone to live in a strange country where they don't know anybody. Ask them to write down some phrases and adjectives to describe how they would feel. What would make them most anxious? What would they miss? Would it be more difficult in a country where they look very different from most people?

Activity 3: See Handout

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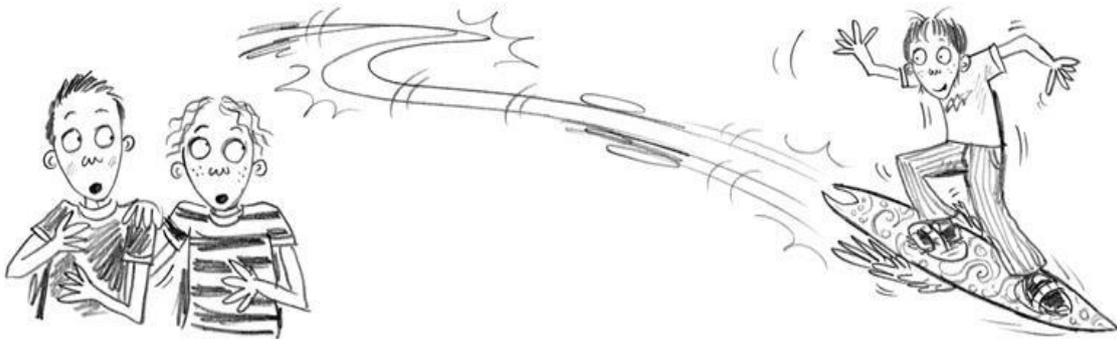
'A new family's moved into our road,' Oli's mum said that afternoon. 'They've got a boy about your age, Oli. It would be nice if you went round.'

Oli didn't think it would be nice at all. 'He probably knows loads of people already, Mum. He'll just think I'm a saddo.'

Oli and Ringo both feel embarrassed and awkward when they first meet. When was the last time you met someone completely new? Describe what it was like.

Why do you think Skipjack and Ringo get on so well right from the start, and how does this make Oli feel?

But Oli has a strong sense of what's right and fair, so when Ringo is really in trouble - when the potion that makes him look human wears off - Oli puts aside all his doubts and sets out to help and that's how he earns Ringo's firm friendship.



What can you do, the next time someone new arrives in school or in your neighbourhood, to make it less scary for them?

A Quick Quiz on

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1. What kind of crisps did Oli think the aliens should be told about?
2. What bait does Tara use to catch the Thing?
3. What did Skipjack give the Thicket children in return for information on the UFO?
4. What is the name of the mineral that Mr Kuznet - or Athex Toor - protects?
5. Why does Skipjack wish he was an alien?
6. What colour blob did Skipjack want Daisy to be on the Hostility Detector?
7. What does a purple blob mean?
8. When the boys play *I Spy* in the UFO lorry, what A and R words do they spy?
9. What's the first thing Corporal Johnson says when he wakes up?
10. What happened to the planet Blix Fomenta 5?