

LAUNCHING LAUGHTER to Persuade

Tip #6: "It helps a lot if you have a keen sense of humor. This is not essential when writing for grown-ups, but for children, it's vital."—Roald Dahl

Witty Website: This activity will make strategic use of digital media to present arguments and support claims integrating humor as a persuasive tool.

Share the following passage with students: *"I is having a bath and I is discovering that if I press quite hard on my tummy button a funny feeling comes over me and suddenley my legs is not there nor is my arms. In fact, I has become absoloootly invisible all over."*

Ask students to consider how Roald Dahl uses humor to appeal to his audience of young readers. Share how advertisers use humor in their TV commercials and print ads. Ask students to explain how humor helps the writer, as well as the advertiser, to connect with a particular audience. Challenge students to examine whether writers and advertisers use a different type of humor when writing for adults vs. teens or small children.

Discuss the dietary preferences of the nine grumptuous, gruesome giants. Note that they are all carnivores. Instruct students to design a website to sell the newest vegetarian snack for giants, Snozzcubmers! How can they persuade their target audience—the nine giants—to try them? Instruct students to use humor, clever text and appealing graphics to sell their product. What flavors do Snozzcubmers come in? Where can they be purchased? What is their nutritional value? Why is a vegetarian diet healthier for a growing giant? Have students examine and rate each other's websites and vote for an overall winner based on humor and effectiveness of persuasion.

