The role of the adults in the play

In the play we only meet two adult characters but we hear about a lot of others.

Bev and Barb

The adult characters that we do meet are Bev and Barb, the canteen staff. Look again at the conversations between Bev and Barb.

1. At what point in the scenes do the conversations take place? Do they appear in every scene?
2. Why do you think that David Grant has chosen to do this?
3. What do you think is the purpose of the two characters? Why have they been included in the play? Consider as many possible purposes as you can.
4. Draw a table like the one below for each of the two characters. Fill the tables with quotations which tell us something about their personalities, opinions and relationships with each other and the children.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Quotation</th>
<th>What does this tell us about her?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Discussion or essay questions

Remember that whether you are writing or speaking you must support your arguments with evidence from the play. Use your notes from the last task to help you.

1. ‘David Grant has included Bev and Barb in order to inject some humour into an otherwise quite serious play.’ Do you agree with this statement?
2. What stereotypes are there about canteen staff? Do Bev and Barb fit or challenge the preconceptions?
3. Why has David Grant chosen to leave out all the adult characters except the canteen staff?
4. What impression of Bev and Barb does David Grant want the audience to have? How does he present them to us?
5. Are Bev and Barb the only comic characters in the play?
Here is a list of the adult characters who are mentioned in the play but we never meet.

- Charlie’s mum (Mary Walker)
- Kate’s mum
- Hollie’s dad
- Jack’s mum
- Zoe’s mum
- Emma’s dad
- Mr Drayton – head of humanities
- Hollie’s mum
- Hollie’s doctor
- Abi’s mum
- Reporters
- The child nutritionist
- Barry Penn
- Edward Gibbons the accountant

1. Look back through the play and note down the page number of every reference to each of the adult characters. Also make a note of the person who is talking about them and briefly what they are saying about them.

You might like to use a table like this to record your ideas:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Charlie’s mum</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Charlie</td>
<td>Remembering what she made him for breakfast.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Consider the following:
   a. Which adult is mentioned the most?
   b. Is it always by the same person?
   c. Which character talks about the most adult characters?

3. How important are the different adults in the play? Rank the character cards in order of their importance in the play. Consider the following things:
   a. Do any of them have an impact on the plot?
   b. Do they influence any of the younger characters’ actions or opinions?
   c. Do they tell us anything about the themes or morals in the play?
   d. Any patterns which emerged in the previous question.

4. Choose the adult character that you think is the most important in the play. Prepare a short speech justifying why you have chosen this character. Be prepared to answer questions and challenges from other members of the class.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Charlie’s mum  (Mary Walker)</th>
<th>Hollie’s mum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kate’s mum</td>
<td>Hollie’s doctor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hollie’s dad</td>
<td>Abi’s mum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jack’s mum</td>
<td>Reporters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zoe’s mum</td>
<td>The child nutritionist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emma’s dad</td>
<td>Barry Penn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Drayton  (Head of humanities)</td>
<td>Edward Gibbons (the accountant)</td>
</tr>
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