

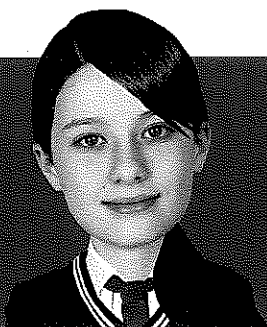


Keep Britain Tidy!

Litter bugs

- Jess** Are you doing anything after school today, Amy?
- Amy** Not sure yet. I mustn't be home late. Why?
- Jess** We really must arrange an XOL meeting. Very few of the new kids know anything about us!
- Amy** That's bad. I thought everybody knew about *Xpress Online* by now. How are we going to get more publicity?
- Jess** Good question. You know, it's amazing, this playground looks like a rubbish tip already.
- Amy** True ... But what's that got to do with XOL?
- Jess** Think about it! Our classrooms are untidy, the whole place is a mess. The school gates have got lots of graffiti on them already. Somebody didn't waste much time with the paint spray! XOL should start a 'Keep the School Tidy!' campaign!
- Amy** Maybe ... but you know, people aren't going to like it.
- Jess** Take that boy over there, for example. He just spat his chewing gum on the ground! Hey you!





Amy

We've got a problem in UK schools and it's litter! People leave their rubbish all over the place and it looks horrible. I agree with Jess – a campaign is a good idea – but I wish she wasn't so bossy!

What do you think about an anti-litter campaign in school? Who should organize it? Teachers or pupils?

Boy Who, me?

Jess Yes, you! Pick that gum up!

Boy Why should I? You pick it up!

Jess What! You cheeky little ... Did you hear that, Amy? I'm going to get his name.

Amy He's just a little kid. You don't have to talk to him so bossily, it's not exactly a sin to chew gum.

Jess But you shouldn't spit it out and pollute the pavements with it. Some people just throw things out of car windows, it's terrible! They should put their rubbish tidily in a bin or take it home with them.

Amy Of course they should, but you mustn't tell people what to do, Jess. You're just going to become really unpopular, that's all.

Jess Speaking of unpopular ... here comes Donny.

Amy Let's ask him. He usually has a lot of really cool ideas.

Jess I don't think he's interested in XOL any more. Anyway, I'm off.

Amy Fair enough. Donny, hi! What do you think about an anti-litter campaign? Jess wants to clean up the school.

Donny She does?

Amy Except when she told a Year 7 boy to pick up his gum, he just laughed at her!

Donny I'm not surprised. Poor Jess. But there must be a better way ... There is an old family friend I can contact ... I wonder ...

Back to the drawing board

Jess OK everybody? Welcome to this term's first meeting. Nice to see so many familiar faces – oh, and there are a few I didn't expect.

Cat Hello Jess. Can I join you?

Jess What can I say?

Spud How about, great to have you with us Cat?

Jess And Spud, not late? Incredible!

Spud Well I have a little spare time today. And I heard about Donny's graffiti campaign ...

Jess What campaign?

Spud ... so I said to myself, Spud, you have to be there.

Jess I don't think the editor should be the last person to know about a new campaign!

Cat Donny's just coming – he can explain. He had an appointment with the Head but he said we should start without him.

Jess Donny went to see the Head? Why?

Spud Here he is now!

Donny Hi gang! Hi boss! Good news – the Head's all for it!

Jess All for what!?

Donny OK, OK, so here's the story. Jess had this idea for a clean-up campaign in school.

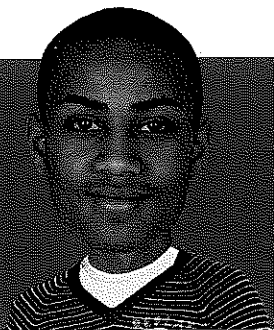
Jess It's not just in school.

Donny Sure. School first, and we tackle the rest of the world tomorrow, eh? And as well as a lot of litter, there's some really bad graffiti on the gate, and in the toilets. OK, so we put an advertisement for a competition in XOL, to find the best graffiti artists. People send us their design ideas, right? And then, we have this graffiti wall and the winners can tag it – add their signature to it – as long as their work is good and imaginative. Things that people like can stay. But the artists have to clean off graffiti which is bad, or rude, or in any way uncool.

Jess You must be mad! Graffiti all over the school?

Donny No. The Head agreed the bike shed wall is going to be the graffiti spot. Nobody can see it from the street – and it's massive. Graffiti is allowed there, but nowhere else.

Spud Sounds like an excellent idea to me!



Donny

Some graffiti is really colourful and good fun. Bad graffiti is a mess and I can see why people don't like it. Here in the UK, you see graffiti on walls, bus shelters, bridges, everywhere.

Is there a lot of graffiti where you live? Is it good or bad? Do you like it? Why do people do it, do you think?

Jess

Well I suppose it's OK, but it doesn't even begin to solve the litter problem. You just have to think of something better Donny!

Cat

Hey, that's not fair! She shouldn't ...

Donny

No, no, no problem ... another idea coming up ...



Coming clean

Cat Honestly, Donny, I don't get it. Jess doesn't have to talk to us the way she did in that meeting last week.

Donny Yeah, but she means well.

Cat She's so bossy, isn't she? I bet she's an only child.

Donny Yeah, she is actually. How did you guess?

Cat Obviously she hasn't got any older brothers to shut her up.

Donny She works really hard on the journal though. I'm going over to her place now with my new idea. Want to come along?

Cat No, Amy and I are going into town together. But don't be disappointed when she doesn't like your story – whatever it is!

Donny Don't worry about me, Cat. I'm pretty confident she's going to like this one.

Cat See you tomorrow then!

Donny Bye! ... Hi Jess.

Jess Donny! You're not going to believe what I found in the XOL letterbox.

Donny Oh right, sure, you can take my coat ...

Jess Sorry, sorry, come on in, throw your coat over there ... I'm so excited about this letter.

Donny Oh yeah? Tell me about it.

Jess Well I can hardly believe my eyes. It's a letter from Bill Bryson. To me personally, look! Jessica Adams, Editor XOL, Westgate College, Tolchester.

Donny Awesome.

Jess You know who he is, don't you?

Donny Well actually, he went to college with my dad ...

Jess OK, so at first I thought, he's just another stupid American.

Donny Hey, thanks Jess.

Jess He wrote a funny book about the British. My parents read it, loved it. It was a best seller, but I thought, he's a foreigner, what does he know about us?

Donny Well in fact, he lives here now and ...



Jess

I really love my job as editor of the school journal, XOL. An interview with the head of the CPRE is very exciting! That's an organization that protects the English countryside.

Can you name an organization that looks after the countryside in Holland? What does it do?



Jess

I know, but he doesn't have to be rude about us, does he? Anyway, now he's President of the CPRE, that's the Campaign to Protect Rural England, and he's totally anti-litter! You should see his website!

Donny

Funnily enough ...

Jess

But the best thing of all – wait for it – he's going to come into school and give me an interview for XOL! I'm going to be a real journalist, he's a really famous author. I can't wait to meet him.

Donny

Oh, he's an extremely nice guy, you're going to like him a lot ... oh ...

Jess

Donny? Donny ...

Donny

I only gave him a call ... You don't mind, do you ... ?



In the news

www.thestar.co.uk

The Star Tuesday, June 23

Rewards for shopping graffiti vandals

By Ian Hoogie

A new campaign by South Yorkshire police is targeting the busiest graffiti vandals in the region. Police are asking residents to tell them who the vandals are, in exchange for a cash reward.

The vandals each have their own tag, or signature. The graffiti is now on walls and buildings across the whole of South Yorkshire, and it costs £1 million



pounds a year to clean it off. So the council is offering a £1,000 reward for information that results in a vandal's arrest.

Anyone with information about graffiti vandals can call Crime-stoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.



TODAY'S VOTE

Do you think it's a good idea to shop a tagger?

If you agree, vote YES

If you don't agree, vote NO

To join our vote:

- log on to www.sheffieldtoday.co.uk
- text STARVOTE, followed by a space, and your answer YES/NO, and send to 84070
- by phone, call 0901 801 5640 for YES or 0901 801 5641 for NO

I myself am a graffiti artist, not a tagger. And I'm certainly not a vandal.

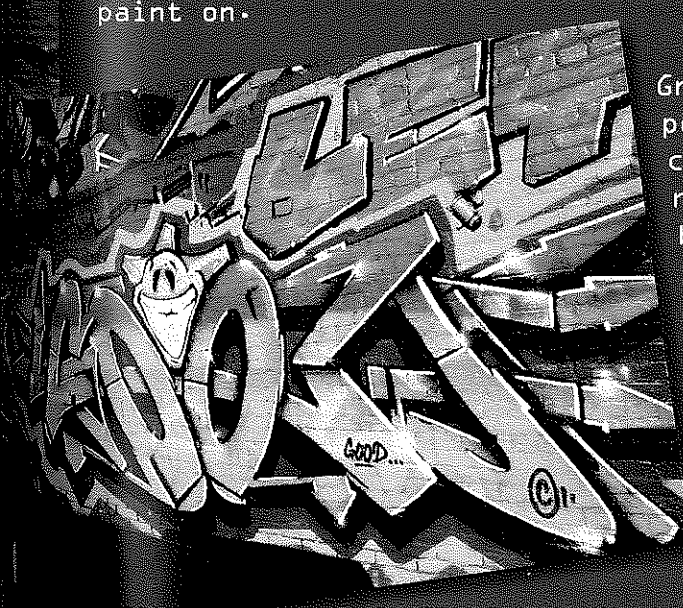
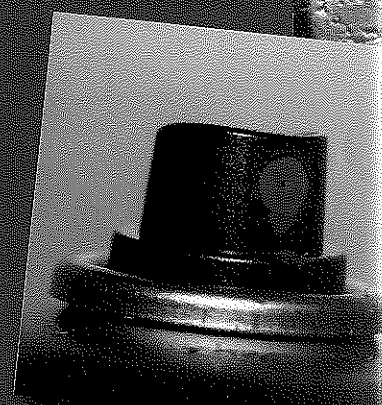
Taggers are the people who just write their 'tag' on a surface. I hate these. I find them offensive and not at all artistic. But calling Crimestoppers is not the answer. As soon as a tagger thinks people are beginning to know his name, he can simply change it. I did this once after signing my street art.

Most taggers, when you cover their work, just go back over it bigger. One way of stopping it is to paint the walls certain colours. In my opinion dark greens are a problem to paint on.

Graffiti artists on the other hand are people who use artistic skill to create characters and images. These can brighten up neighbourhoods and give people something to be proud of, especially young people.

One thing I am thinking of doing is painting over my own graffiti after a week or so. Then the council don't have to pay to clean it up. I'm interested to hear what others think of this idea.

I hope you have now got a little more understanding of the way a 'vandal' thinks.



Signs of the time

A

Attention Dog Guardians

Pick up after your dogs, Thank you.

Attention Dogs

Grrrrrr, bark, woof.

Good dog!



District of North Vancouver.

Bylaw 5981-11(l)



Dog Tidy Bag Dispenser

B

Be Smart!

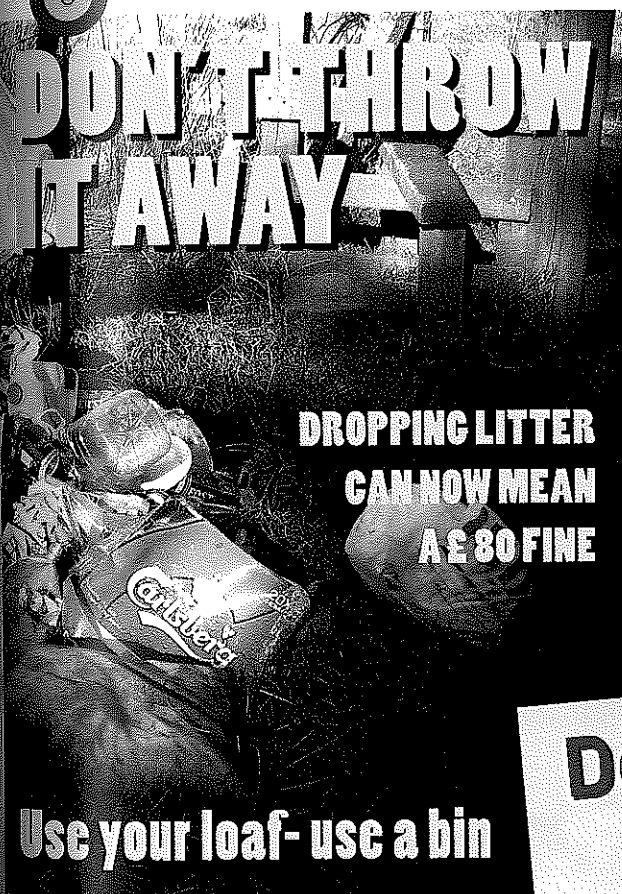
Don't tolerate abandoned vehicles, dog-mess,
fly-tipping, fly-posting, graffiti, litter or vandalism call:

0800 581281

Create a cleaner, greener Thurrock

C

DON'T THROW IT AWAY



**DROPPING LITTER
CAN NOW MEAN
A £80 FINE**

Use your loaf- use a bin

E

\$300 Littering Fine Enforced

**Pitch It In or
Pay the Price**



The City of Cilla
By-law 839.1.1
and 839.2.1

D

Don't turn a blind eye



Fly Tipping - it is a criminal offence
maximum fine £ 20,000 and/or 2 years imprisonment

City Direct 01902 551155



Throwaways

The story so far:

Sky and her younger brother Chip find themselves alone when their parents leave them. A man selling apples cheats Sky out of the little money they have, and the Catchers, always looking out for homeless kids, chase after them. They get away with the help of Dig, who lives as a Picker on the rubbish tips on the outskirts of the rich city.

'Follow me!' Dig called over his shoulder.

Sky bent double and darted after him. If she didn't have Chip with her, she could have kept up easily, but Chip, with his short legs, kept tripping over and falling. They got further and further behind until there was no sound or sign of the fast moving boy. Sky began to think they might be lost forever.

Then as they came out into a clearing in the middle of the waste ground, they found the boy sitting on the grass, waiting for them. 'They'll never follow us here,' he grinned breathlessly. 'You OK? I thought I'd lost you for a minute.'

'I'm fine, it's my brother who can't run fast,' Sky said, pulling at Chip's hand.

'He did better than I could, at his age,' the boy said, getting a grateful but shy smile from Chip. 'I'm Dig.' He was a little older than Sky and had lively brown eyes and a lot of thick brown hair.

'I'm Sky and this is Chip.'

'You certainly made yourselves a few new friends back there!' Dig said, chewing on a piece of grass. 'That greengrocer accused me of stealing,' Sky explained, 'but he was the thief. He took my money, didn't give me any change and then said I hadn't paid at all.'

The boy nodded. 'Happens all the time. Bad luck, the Catchers arriving when they did though.' Dig looked more closely at the two of them. 'You're new around here, aren't you?'

Sky didn't want to tell this strange boy too much but before she could stop him, Chip said:

'Our mum and dad have gone away and left us.'

'Oh I see. Then you'll be looking for the Tip.'

'What tip?'

'That's where the street kids, Throwaways like us, live. The Catchers don't bother with us there, they only pick us up when we come into the city where posh people can see us.'

'What do you mean by the Tip?' Sky asked.

'It's a rubbish tip.'



Chip looked amazed.

'You live on a rubbish tip?'

'Yes, I'm a Picker. You're welcome to come and share my place for a while.'

As things were, Sky couldn't see that there was any choice. 'Thanks,' she said.

Dig smiled. 'You're welcome. But we'll not go yet. We need to go back into the city after dark and get something to eat.'

By the time they reached the city centre again, darkness had fallen and Chip was hungry, tired and grumpy. 'When are we going to eat?' he moaned. 'My stomach hurts.'

'Soon,' promised Dig.

Sky looked in the brightly lit shop windows. She couldn't help smiling when she read the price of one dress, a mass of wild silk and silver ribbons. The money somebody would spend on that dress would feed them all for at least a month!

Dig stopped outside a fast food restaurant. Chip pressed his nose against the windows, his eyes big. 'Is this where we're going to eat?' he asked Dig. To Sky's surprise, Dig nodded but as Chip ran to the open doors, he pulled him back. 'Not inside! There's nearly as much food out here.'

Everything became clear as Dig went up to the litter

bin on the pavement outside the restaurant.

He waved away the flies with his arms and then pushed his hand deep into the bin.

'Don't just stand there,' Dig said, passing her a pile of takeaway boxes, 'you look too!'

Hungry as she was, Sky felt sick. Slowly, one by one she opened the boxes. They were all so light she hoped they were empty, but one had a handful of French fries and a half-eaten hamburger together with a cigarette end, a plastic knife and fork and an empty sauce sachet. The cold food was covered in tomato sauce and cigarette ash.

'Yuck!' Sky said.

She was about to throw the box back when Dig stopped her. 'Don't waste it!'

'Waste it? It is waste! It's rubbish! I can't eat that!' Sky said, angrily.

'Well I can,' Chip said as he grabbed the box greedily from her. 'I'm starving!'

Throwaways by Ian Strachan

