

## Going into business

On a cold day in January Mrs Peterson ran into a classroom at Tunbridge Secondary School. She dropped some papers onto the desk at the front of the class and called, 'Good morning, everyone!'

She quickly turned to the board, took a pen and wrote on the board – 'July 18<sup>th</sup>'. Then she turned and said, 'Year Seven, we are going into business!'

The students of Year Seven looked back at her. They didn't understand.

'What's she talking about?' said Granger Logan at the back of the class. Then he called, 'It's not July, Mrs Peterson. It's January.'

The class laughed.

'Thank you, Granger,' said Mrs Peterson.

The class laughed again and heads turned to look at the boy at the back of the class. Granger Logan didn't like his first name. He told everyone to call him 'Logan'. They never called him Granger. Or they got a black eye!

Granger Logan kicked the leg of the chair in front of him.

Mrs Peterson pointed at the date on the board. 'July 18<sup>th</sup>,' she said, 'is the date of the Tunbridge Town Fete. And yesterday I spoke to the fete committee. They are going to give us five stalls at the fete. And you are going to plan five businesses for those five stalls. You'll plan your business, make your product and then sell your product on fete day – July 18<sup>th</sup>. Miranda, give these papers out to the class, please.'

Mrs Peterson held up one piece of paper to show the class. At the top it said 'Our Business Plan'.



‘What will we sell?’ she read. ‘What will we need to make our product? Who will make the product? What are our jobs? What is the cost of the product?’ She looked at the class. ‘To plan a business well, you need to answer all these questions. Now, what could you sell at a fete stall? Who has an idea?’

Some hands went up in the air.

Granger Logan pointed at another boy and called out, ‘We could sell Colin Thurber!’

Everyone laughed.

Colin Thurber just gave a half-smile and looked down. Everyone always laughed at him.

‘Not funny, Logan,’ said Mrs Peterson. ‘Are there any better ideas?’ She looked at the hands in the air. ‘Yes, Penny?’

‘We could make things,’ said Penny. ‘You know – pretty little boxes, soft toys... We could have a craft stall.’

Logan groaned. ‘Baby Penny wants to play with her soft toys,’ he said to the boy beside him. They laughed.

Mrs Peterson turned to the board and wrote the word ‘STALLS’ and drew a line under it. ‘Good idea, Penny,’ she said, and wrote ‘1. CRAFT’. ‘Now, who wants to be on that stall? We need six people.’

Only girls raised their hands. Mrs Peterson wrote Penny’s name and five others on the board.

She turned back to the class and said, ‘Other ideas?’ She pointed to a boy in the centre of the room. ‘Yes, Josh?’

‘With the computer we could make people’s names and decorate them – with pictures and things,’ said Josh. ‘Then we could print them on pieces of paper and laminate them. And people could put them on their doors or hang them on the wall.’

‘A very good idea,’ said Mrs Peterson and on the board she wrote ‘2. NAMES’.

Nearly everyone in the class wanted to be on that stall. Mrs Peterson wrote six names on the board. 'Another idea?' she asked.

'We could cook things and sell them,' said Miranda. 'A cake stall.'

Mrs Peterson wrote '3. CAKES'. Then she looked at the hands in the air.

Casey Jones had her hand up.

'Don't put Casey's name on the list for that stall,' Logan muttered. 'She'll eat all the cakes. There won't be any to sell.'

The boys near him laughed.

'Not another word out of you, Logan,' said Mrs Peterson. 'Do you understand?'

'Yes, Mrs Peterson,' muttered Logan.

'All right,' the teacher said to the class. 'Any other ideas? Yes, Brad?'

'We could have a football kicking competition,' said Brad. 'We could make a large board with a hole in the centre. People could try to kick a football through the hole.'

'Good,' said Mrs Peterson and wrote '4. FOOTBALL KICKING'.

A lot of boys wanted to be on that stall. Justin was one of them. He put his hand up. Mrs Peterson wrote the names of six boys, but not his.

'Now,' she said. 'How many people are remaining?'

Justin put his hand up again.

'One, two, three, four, five, six.' Mrs Peterson counted the hands. 'Ah, good,' she said and started to write Justin's name and five others on the board. 'Then you six are stall number five.'

Justin looked quickly at the other hands. One of them was Logan. And another two were Colin and Casey. The



others weren't much better. Max and Vince – they never did any schoolwork. 'Why did I have to be in this group?' Justin groaned softly.

Mrs Peterson heard him. 'Do you have an idea, Justin?'

'No, Mrs Peterson,' he said unhappily.

'Okay,' she said. 'I want everyone to get into their groups and start planning.'

Everyone stood up and started to move and talk.

'The group on stall five,' said Mrs Peterson over the noise. 'I'll want to hear an idea from you tomorrow.'

Justin walked slowly across the room. Max, Vince and Colin sat on desks in the corner. Casey moved a chair to sit with them. Justin did too. Logan came and lay down on the floor next to them. He kicked Colin's leg.

'Oh, sorry, Colin,' he said loudly and laughed.

'Are there any ideas?' asked Justin unhappily.

There wasn't a word.

Then Colin said, 'I like clocks. We could sell clocks.'

Everyone just looked at him. Logan groaned. Max and Vince laughed.

'We have to *make* the things for the stall, Colin,' said Justin. 'We can't make clocks.'

'Oh,' said Colin.

'We could grow some plants,' said Casey.

Logan groaned again. 'Flowers?' he said.

'Have you got a better idea?' asked Justin.

'Yeah,' said Logan. He sat up. The group waited. 'We could sell cigarettes. Or guns.' He lay down on the floor again and laughed. Max and Vince laughed too.

Justin put his head in his hands. This wasn't going to be easy.