

Drama

There are many stories from Belfast Park's history which pupils can re-enact or discuss. The following are site specific though can be used for any park.

1. Victoria Park

Charles McKimm is a very important man. He came to Botanic Gardens in 1874 and from there worked his way up to being General Superintendent of Parks in 1903. In 1906 he supervised the layout and landscaping of Victoria Park. One day he found a gang of boys taking blackcurrants from a bush. He was furious as he had spent a long time caring for the bush and ensuring it grew well, producing berries to feed the wildlife in the park.

When he saw the boys he chased after them – they were terrified and ran as fast as they could to get away. They jumped over some railings all escaping except for one boy.

What do you think Charles McKimm said to him when he caught up with him?

Split the pupils into 2 groups – one group pretend to be Charles McKimm and the other group pretend to be the children taking berries. What would you say? How would you defend yourself? How would you defend the park?

Once the pupils have done this, explain what really happened...

Charles McKimm caught the boy stuck on the railings and noticed he had torn his trousers in his attempt to escape. He said to him that as God had punished him this time he would not. However next time he wouldn't be so nice!

Ormeau Park

In 1898 one of the park rangers asked for a watchman box. He wanted this to sit in and make sure that no-one destroyed the flowers. He told Belfast Corporation (now Belfast City Council) that without one, he was getting wet! If you were Belfast Corporation what would you say to him? Would you allow this to be built?

Debate

The Actual Decision (the information below should not be known until after the debate).

Belfast Corporation reminded the park ranger that he had been provided with a waterproof coat and an overcoat and that he should be moving about the park in the course of his duties NOT remaining static! The result, no watchman's box!

Debate

Split the group into two sections. One group will be debating for Belfast Corporation and the other group will be debating for the park ranger asking for a watchman box.

Times:

10 minutes to discuss aim of the project.

15-20 minutes for groups to make notes for debate.

10 minutes per group debating groups position.

At the end, teacher or leader will decide which team presented the best argument before letting the group know the actual decision the Corporation gave.