

Say “no” to teenage modelling competitions

I’m deeply dismayed at the decision taken recently by *Pinkie*’s editor to revive the competition in search of 13-year-old princesses.

Several years ago, as the former editor, I axed the competition. I agonised over the decision because it was such a bad commercial decision for me. It cost our magazine dearly, but at the time it was the only morally defensible course of action. To do otherwise was to betray our avid readers, most of whom are young girls on the cusp of adulthood.

Despite the flak, I was compelled to make the decision because I didn’t feel comfortable about putting a child into an industry that’s all about rejection. It’s like releasing a three-legged bird into the wild.

Even Miranda Kerr, a former competition winner, gets rejected, and I don’t think winning the competition at 14 was a great thing for Kate Fischer either.

It is impossible to dress it up. Modelling is all about being told you are too fat, too short, have the wrong teeth, have dimples in the wrong place, and a butt that’s either too round or too flat.

Many of the girls will suffer cycles of rejection and their self esteem will take a battering. Some never recover.

Ms Jane Cranton, former editor, *Pinkie Magazine*



**Ms Cranton’s authorial voice:
former editor of *Pinkie***



- Often the strength of an author’s conviction can motivate us to share their opinion. In this case, the author, relying on her professional experience, takes a principled stance and prioritises the girl’s welfare over commercial decisions.
- By adopting the high moral ground and defending the vulnerable, the author seeks to win our respect.
- How does Ms Cranton depict young models?



Introduction

Exercise 12

- What is the context of the debate?
- Who is the author(s); what is their purpose for writing? On whose behalf do they speak?
- Who are the target group(s)?
- Introduce the text type, the title/headline; author's main contention and tone/style.

1.

Authorial voice: How does Ms Cranton establish her credibility and what is its purpose? On what type of evidence does she rely and what does it prove?

Which words capture the author's determination? What do they imply? (See p. 16.)

In a candid tone, Ms Cranton expresses her disapproval of a competition that harms young models . . .

2.

Young models: How does Ms Cranton depict teenage models? Choose two phrases to unpack, such as her use of figurative language; see p. 16. What is the likely emotional response of the author's choice of words?

Parents and organisers: What would readers infer about the organisers of the competition and the parents? (See "Attack" on pp. 11-12.) What is the author's intention?

Embed the cartoon

Cartoon: How does the cartoonist reinforce Ms Cranton's views? (See pp. 20 and 61.)

⇒ *Capitalising on her well-earned trust to disarm sceptics, Ms Cranton* . . .

⇒ *Likewise, the cartoonist also sets up the industry for ridicule . . .*
