

English and Literacy: Bullying

Lesson plan 2: Hurtful statements, positive statements

Age group: 6-8

Resources:

You will need:

- the book *Hurrah for Ethelyn* by Babette Cole;
- a set of ten pre-prepared cards containing negative, hurtful statements, such as:

Shut up!	You're not my friend!
You're thick!	Stop copying me!
Go away!	Get out of my way!
You are stupid!	What are you looking at?
No, you can't play!	You're really horrible!

Introduction and whole-class activity:

Read pages 7-18 of *Hurrah for Ethelyn*. Ask the pupils to look for words and phrases that show the passing of time. They should be able to find 'after', 'until', 'eventually' and 'during'.

1. Where do these words usually occur?
2. How do they change the story?

Group activity:

Give out the cards containing hurtful statements to the pupils in groups. Ask a pupil from each group to read out the hurtful statement. As each card is read out, each group needs to think of a positive way of saying what is written on the card. The pupils discuss and decide on the best alternative and write it down. The pupils should be encouraged to begin their new, positive statement with 'I feel' or 'I think' or 'I am'. This helps them to focus on themselves and how they feel, rather than being negative about the other person.

Each group can read out their new, positive statement. For example 'Shut up!' could be replaced with 'Please don't talk, I'm trying to work.' 'You are stupid!' could become 'I have another idea!', and so on. The pupils will have many and varied ideas.

Next, ask the pupils to think about other 'put-downs' and things said to them that they find insulting. This can be done individually or in groups or pairs. Anonymously the pupils put their insults into a box. Each one is picked out and read by the teacher and alternative comments are suggested.

Insults to do with race, culture, size etc. need particular care, because they are sensitive issues. The aim is to encourage the pupils to respond rather than not say anything. But the response should be specific.

Rather than saying 'You sad cow', encourage the pupils to say 'I'm angry because you kicked me!'.

Each put-down reversal should begin with 'I feel', 'I am' or 'I think'.

Plenary:

Do the pupils feel happier with the positive statements? Do they think they could use them in situations where they may feel angry or frustrated? How could this make class time and playtime more pleasant? Is it better to insult someone or to say what you really think or feel in a positive way?