Shout-Free Resolutions

About this resource

This resource is part of a series of resources that are designed to help support positive relationships within your school.

In this resource we will be looking at activities you can do with children to find solutions that can reduce or remove shouting from the school day.

We worked with children in two schools to come up with positive solutions to replace shouting. By working with children in your own setting you can build your own tool-kit of alternative solutions that work for you.

This resource is designed for pupils in P4-7. It works best when there is plenty of room for children to move around and interact with each other and the space.

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What's in this resource?

Character Game

A drama warm-up designed to get children excited and ready for the drama based activities to follow.

Shouty Scenarios

A drama based activity where children create scenarios where shouting might take place and then creatively problem solve alternative endings.

What do I need?

Character Game

Lots of room
Character Prompts
A willingness to be a bit silly!

Shouty Scenarios
Lots of room
Access to any props the children might want

Both activities should take around 50 minutes to complete.

Check-In

Start together, standing in a circle. Check in with each child by asking them to show how they're feeling in either a pose or a dance move.

You can get them started by giving some examples:
- If you're happy you might be skipping
- If you're excited you might be pumping your arms
- If you're a bit tired you might be moving in slow motion

Go round the circle and have everyone (you too!) copy the movements each time a child strikes their pose or does their dance move to get everyone warmed up and ready for drama!
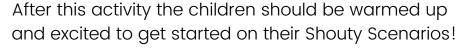
Character Game (optional)

Now the children are warmed up a bit you can play a game together. Start by teaching them a silly sentence that they will need to repeat throughout the activity. You can create your own or use this:

'There a worm at the bottom of the garden and his name is Wiggly Wigglesworth.'

Explain that you're now going to become a series of characters and you'll need to say the sentence the way that your character would say it, with matching actions! Below is a list of characters you might want to try with your children:
- A pirate
- A witch
- A very shy little mouse
- A ferocious lion

After this activity the children should be warmed up and excited to get started on their Shouty Scenarios!

This warm-up activity is optional and you may decide to skip it if you are short on time. It is very effective at getting children in the right headspace for the session and building confidence in children that may be anxious about acting.

Shouty Scenarios

30-40 minute activity working in small groups

This activity is designed to get children problem solving and finding solutions to situations that they find themselves in at school.

This is a drama based activity which will also get children to think about their use of voice, movement and expression.

Explain that today you're going to be working together on trying to find alternative solutions to shouting by creating dramatic scenes together. In the circle brainstorm some ideas for when adults might shout in school. It is important for the adults in the room to be in listening mode throughout. Please don't 'challenge' children's contributions, it will all be worked on together as the session develops.

Split the children into groups of 4/5 and make sure they have plenty of room to move around. Ask them to decide in their group on a scenario where an adult might shout. Have them act out a scene from a point where everyone is calm until just before the shouting is about to happen. As the adult is about to shout they need to **FREEZE**.

Allow children about 10 minutes to create their scenes and their characters. There will be a real buzz and good level of noise in the room, embrace this so that children can be committed to the development of their scene.

Bring everyone back together to watch the performances. Ask children some reflective questions after each scene:
- What was happening in the scene?
- Why do you think the adult was about to shout?
- Do you think there would be another way to resolve this situation?
- How far back would we have to go to ensure there is no shouting?

Having chatted through each scene encourage groups to think about changing what happened at any point in their scene to resolve it differently. This change could be early on or right up to the point they've frozen.

For example, in the scene pictured above children were fighting over a pencil. They took their scene back tot he start and made sure the adult noticed the issue quickly and provided another pencil before the fight started.

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Shouty Scenarios

Activity Continued

Have children go back into their groups and re-imagine their scenes with their alternate moments or endings. Give them at least 10 minutes to think through their changes and work on their scene.

Repeat the performances with the new scenes. Remember to applaud each scene!

Finish up by asking children to reflect on the new scenes:
- Do you think the second scene was more positive than the first?
- Do you think what was done differently would resolve the situation?
- Would you like to see these kind of resolutions happening more in school?
- What do you think the barriers are to resolving situations in these ways?

Bring everyone back into the circle at the end to reflect together:
- What do you think was the most important thing from today?
- What would you like adults in school to know after today?

Reflections

Following the workshop take some time to note down your key learning as the teacher/facilitator.
- What scenarios did children think caused adults to shout?
- How could those scenarios be avoided?
- What solutions did the children come up with to resolve the scenarios without shouting?
- What aspects or their solutions could I bring into my practice?
- What are some of the barriers in school that would get in the way of the children's solutions?
- How can I play a role in making our school a more shout-free environment?
- How could I share learning from the workshop today?

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