

INTRODUCTION

This book contains 32 assemblies for children aged 7-11, written specifically to resource the Non-statutory guidelines for PSHE and Citizenship at Key Stage 2. Each assembly begins with an introduction and then a main presentation, usually given by the teacher. There are both interactive and non-interactive follow-up ideas and every assembly concludes with an optional reflection or prayer. The assemblies use a wide range of stimulus material:

- Original stories
- Fiction: excerpts from children's books
- 'True life' stories: factual accounts of people's lives
- Factual accounts of events
- Information, e.g. how a book is made
- Mini drama sketches for children to perform, with play scripts
- Poems

Each assembly focuses on a single teaching requirement from the four strands of the PSHE and Citizenship guidelines, as listed in the contents and on the relevant assembly pages.

Follow up

Each assembly presentation is followed by suggestions for interaction to involve the audience in the assembly, and to reinforce learning. Interactive follow up activities include:

- Closed and open questions
- Active response, e.g. vote, hands up, thumbs up or down, giving scores
- Quizzes
- Use of volunteers to assist at the front
- Discussion

Non-interactive follow up suggestions include:

- A summary of the story
- Points to think about
- Reflection and prayer

Using the material

The assemblies in the book are designed to be used flexibly: it is intended that teachers select the most appropriate follow up activities and questions from the range provided in order to meet the needs of the children present. The basic core presentation of each assembly may also be adapted to suit the school, of course, and may be used, for example, in circle time, as the basis for role-play or other drama or for classroom discussion in Citizenship lessons. Questions to stimulate response from the children might include:

- What might it feel like to be in this situation?
- Have you experienced a situation like this in real life?
- Why did the characters do what they did?
- Were they right/wrong?

What makes a successful assembly?

Good preparation is essential, particularly if drama is involved. Other key pointers:

- Use of props or a visual focus (suggestions are included in the book; don't forget an OHP or data projector can be used if you can't find the object suggested).
- Relate the contents of the assembly to activities going on in the school or community.
- Interactivity: music, songs, drama or any kind of audience participation generates interest.
- Use the story or presentation to make a single clear learning point, which can be reinforced in the reflection or prayer at the end of the assembly.

CONTENTS

1a Giving Opinions	Story: <i>Not in My Back Yard</i>
1b Setting Goals	Story: <i>Stage Won</i>
1c Facing Challenges	Non-fiction: <i>Booker's Book</i> (Booker T. Washington)
1d Changing Emotions	Play Script: <i>Big Sisters and Brothers</i>
1e Jobs Carried Out by People	Non-fiction/information: <i>How a Book is Made</i>
1f Looking After Money	Play Script: <i>Money, Money, Money</i>
2a Topical Issues	Non-fiction: <i>Stronger Than Steel</i> (How Kevlar was invented)
2b Rules and Laws	Story: <i>The King's Head</i>
2c Antisocial Behaviour	Story: <i>Paying the Price</i>
2d Responsibilities, Rights and Duties	Poem: <i>The Newcomer</i> , by Brian Patten
2e Moral Issues	Non-fiction: <i>Nelson Mandela Beats Apartheid</i>
2f Resolving Differences	Non-fiction/information: <i>Resolving Differences, Big and Small</i>
2g Democracy	Non-fiction: <i>Emmeline Pankhurst and the Suffragettes</i>
2h Voluntary Groups	Non-fiction: <i>Sue Ryder Care</i>
2i The Range of Identities in the UK	Play Script: <i>Bhavesh's Amazing Class</i>
2j Resources	Non-fiction: <i>A Charity in Action – Workaid</i>
2k How the Media Present Information	Play Script: <i>The Media</i>
3a Healthy Living: Exercise	Story: <i>Swimming the Hill</i>
3a (2) Healthy Eating	Story: <i>The Hungry Alien</i>
3b The Dangers of Bacteria	Story: <i>What's Bugging You?</i>
3d Substances and Drugs	Story: <i>Friday Night</i>
3e Taking Risks	Non-fiction: <i>The Heroes of Telemark</i>
3f Peer Pressure	Non-fiction/information: <i>A School's Project on Peer Pressure</i>
3g School Rules About Health & Safety	Poem: <i>Cautionary Verse: Russell Wright, the Boy Who Lost His Smile</i>
4a How Actions Affect People	Story: <i>The Domino Rally</i>
4b People in Other Places	Non-fiction: <i>A Leaf in The Bitter Wind</i> (the story of Ting Xing Ye, a Chinese woman)
4b (2) People in Other Times	Non-fiction: <i>The Long Journey From A to Z</i> (Phyllis Pearsall)
4c Friendship	Poems: <i>Small Quarrel</i> and <i>It is a Puzzle</i> by Allan Ahlberg
4d Bullying	Poem: <i>Me, My Friend & The Girl</i> by Adebayo Garuba
4e Challenging Stereotypes	Non-fiction/information: <i>Six Stereotypes</i>
4f Differences Between People	Non-fiction: <i>Shaheen Ali</i> (the first Pakistani female law professor in the UK)
4g Getting Help and Support	Fiction: excerpt from <i>The Worry Website</i> by Jacqueline Wilson

1A GIVING YOUR OPINION

Objective

To help children to think about topical issues and give their opinions.

PSHE/Citizenship links

1a (Opinions)

Props

(Not essential): a light bulb

Introduction

The light bulb is a great invention. It helps our lives so much. Just think what it would be like if we still had to use candles all the time, or smelly oil lamps which needed to be filled and cleaned endlessly. But light bulbs don't work by themselves – they need electricity, of course. And electricity doesn't just happen – it has to be made. But where's the best place to make it? How do we wonder, and how?

STORY: NOT IN MY BACK YARD!

“Mrs Benson! Have you heard about the wind farm?” Selina was still out of breath. She'd run across the village green to be the first into school so that she could tell her teacher the news.

“You look a bit excitable today Selina – and you're very early – it's only half past eight you know.”

“I know, I'm sorry Mrs Benson, but my next door neighbour Mr Billingham said that there's going to be a big wind farm built up on the moor behind the village.”

“Well, actually, Selina, I do know quite a lot about it – in fact I've planned for the class to have a little talk about it today after assembly.”

Selina went out into the tiny playground at the front of her school. The school was situated in a small village high up in the Yorkshire Dales, and the view across the hills was spectacular. It also meant that she could see everyone approaching from the road below, and soon there was a gaggle of juniors standing by the wall sheltering from the wind. Everyone was talking about the wind farm.

“But what is a wind farm?” said Robert.

“It's a whole load of wind turbines – giant ones – that make electricity,” said Selina.

“Oh, like huge windmills you mean?”

“That's right.”

“But why are they building one up here?”

“My mum says it's because it's very windy and no one lives up there on the moors.”

This conversation continued for some time until the bell rang and the children trudged indoors.

After assembly, Mrs Benson began to tell Selina's class a bit more about the wind farm. "You've probably heard the news that there may be something called a wind farm built on Bracken Moor up behind the village," said Mrs Benson. "Well, nothing has been decided for sure, but the moor has been chosen as the best location for a wind farm by the electricity company. But they can't just go ahead and build it until everyone has had their say at a big meeting called a planning inquiry."

"Right, well let's just make sure everyone knows what a wind farm is first. Who can explain?" Selina's friend Mel put up her hand and Mrs Benson nodded for her to speak.

"It's a big collection of tall wind turbines which make electricity."

"That's right – very good Melanie. And who can explain how a wind turbine works?"

"Oh, I know," said Tom Calvert, waving his hand excitedly.

"Go on then Tom," said Mrs Benson.

"Right, a wind turbine is just the same as a windmill – it's a tall tower with propeller blades. The wind turns them and that moves machinery inside to make electricity – each one has a generator. The electricity goes along cables from the turbines to homes and factories."

"Excellent, Tom," said the teacher. "Does anyone know any more about them?"

A few more hands went up and Mrs Benson made a list of facts on the board:

- 30 turbines proposed to be built.
- Each one 60 metres tall.
- Make enough electricity for 20,000 homes.
- Blades turn slowly.

"Now, my next question is, why does the electricity company want to build this wind farm when there are already lots of power stations in other places making electricity?"

This time Selina answered the question. "We were talking about it at home, and my dad says we need more ways to make power because people use more and more electricity nowadays – we all have loads of computers and TVs and things that have to be plugged in."

"That's true," said Mrs Benson. "But why don't they just build another coal-burning power station in a coal-mining area?"

"Coal is running out," said Robert. "And burning coal makes loads of pollution."

More hands went up.

"And wind turbines don't make air pollution, like smoke, because they don't burn anything," said Tom.

"The wind is free too, but it costs a lot to dig coal deep out of the ground," added Mrs Benson. "So it seems that the wind farm is a very good idea – it makes clean, green electricity and the wind will never run out. So why are a lot of people in the village very angry about the wind farm?"

This time, nearly every person in Selina's class put up a hand. It seemed that everyone had been talking about it at home. Mrs Benson quickly pointed at each person and made a note of the answers. All sorts of interesting things were said:

"Wind turbines are very expensive to make."

"Sometimes it's too windy up on the moors, and sometimes there's hardly any wind."

"They're really noisy – you can hear them from a kilometre away."

"They'll spoil the wild look of the moors."

"Animal habitats will be destroyed."

“They’re massive and they look really ugly.”

“People won’t be allowed to walk on the moors any longer.”

When everyone had been given an opportunity to speak, Mrs Benson told the class to jot down the list of reasons for and against the wind farm and to underline the three which they thought were the most important.

“What’s really important though, is that everyone in the village gets a chance to say what they think about the wind farm – to give their opinion. If we don’t speak up, then other people will just come along and do what they like.”

After this, Mrs Benson asked everyone in the class to vote, either for or against the wind farm. 8 children voted for the wind farm and 21 voted against it.

“Why do you think more people are against the wind farm?” asked Mrs Benson. Selina answered the question.

“It’s difficult, because I don’t like pollution and I think wind farms are a good idea really, but building one up on the moor here will spoil the area – it’s a really beautiful place.”

“I think the noise would really get on our nerves,” said Tom. “Our farm is right on the edge of the moor and it would scare the sheep and wreck the peace of the place.”

“Thank you,” said Mrs Benson. “Now, last word from the eight who voted for the wind farm – why would you choose to build it?”

Selina’s friend Gill answered this time.

“Coal and oil are going to run out one day so we need to plan ahead. We need to build wind farms somewhere so why not here – there aren’t many people, and you won’t be able to see the turbines from down here in the valley. I agree with my big sister – she says that most people round here are nimbys who don’t care that we’re polluting our planet.”

Mrs Benson explained that nimby stands for not in my back yard – and means people who always want things to be built somewhere else away from their homes. She then looked at the clock.

“My goodness – it’s nearly quarter past ten – we should have started maths. But well done everybody – it’s been a really interesting discussion.” A few minutes later, everyone was filling in a worksheet about fractions. But a lot of the class were not concentrating 100% on maths – they were thinking about giant wind turbines up on the windswept moor.

I wonder if they ever did build that wind farm?

INTERACTIVE FOLLOW UP ACTIVITIES

Questions

- 1) Why were the class so interested in talking about the wind farm?
(Because it might be built near to their village and would affect them.)
- 2) Why were most children against the wind farm?
(Because of noise pollution, spoiling the countryside.)
- 3) Why did some people support the wind farm?
(It makes electricity without pollution; fossil fuels are running out.)

Getting the message

- 1) Why is it important to have a say about issues like the wind farm?
- 2) The children in Mrs Benson's class gave their opinions through having a discussion. Here are some other ways to make your views known. Give them a score of 1, 5, or 10 with your fingers: 10 for the most important and useful, 1 for the least important or useful.
 - Writing to a newspaper
 - Going to a meeting to talk about an issue
 - Demonstrating by going on a march
 - Writing to you local MP or the prime minister
 - Emailing a website
 - Talking about it at home

Learning more

- 1) What is voting for?
- 2) What happens if people don't bother to give their opinions?

NON-INTERACTIVE FOLLOW UP

Summary of the story

- Mrs Benson's class discussed the wind farm which might be built near their village.
- They learnt that a wind farm is made up of very large turbines which make electricity.
- The class talked about the arguments for and against the wind farm.
- They found out that wind power does not cause pollution, but that it can be noisy.
- Wind farms can be expensive and can spoil the countryside for both people and wildlife.
- The class had their say and then voted.
- Mrs Benson told the class how important it was for everyone to give their opinion, or other people would decide things, possibly for the worse.

Something to think about

- 1) How can you give an opinion apart from speaking?
- 2) Why is voting important?

Reflection

The wind farm story is a good example of people having their say and helping to decide what happens in the world. It is important for you to think about issues and to come up with your own views so that you can help decide the way that things are run in the future. Try to join in discussions whenever you can.

Prayer

Lord God, thank you that we can join in discussions and share our opinions. Help us to think about important issues and also help us to listen to other people when they give their views. Help us, through talking and listening carefully, to make our world a better place. Amen.