



## KS2 Lesson Plan: Clowning around

### Lesson summary

This lesson will be most suitable for Years 4, 5 and 6 children. The lesson examines the difficulties faced by children who need to spend time in hospital and explores how sad and stressful situations in life can be made happier and more fun.

### Lesson aims

- To help children understand what it means to be a disadvantaged child in the UK today
- To consider what and who makes us feel better when we are feeling unhappy
- To explore how the lives of disadvantaged children can be made happier by the support offered through BBC Children in Need

### Curriculum links

#### PSHE:

- To talk and write about their opinions, and explain their views, on issues that affect themselves and society.
- Using imagination to understand other people's experiences.
- To understand where individuals, families and groups can get help and support.
- To recognise the role of voluntary, community and pressure groups.

### Social and Emotional aspects of Learning (SEAL):

- Managing my feelings: managing my expression of emotions; changing uncomfortable feelings and increasing pleasant feelings.
- Empathy: understand the feelings of others; valuing and supporting others.

### You will need:

- The BBC Children in Need Pudsey bandana. These are available for £2 each and can be ordered online at [bbcshop.com/childreninneed](http://bbcshop.com/childreninneed) and on the high street at Asda and Boots.
- BBC Children in Need Appeal film on the Northern Ireland Clown Doctors which can be viewed at: [bbc.co.uk/pudsey/aboutus/whoyouvehelped.shtml](http://bbc.co.uk/pudsey/aboutus/whoyouvehelped.shtml)

### Lesson details

The lesson is divided into three parts: an introductory circle time activity; viewing a BBC Children in Need Appeal film and related discussion; and a period of reflection exploring some of the deeper issues the film raises. There is also an extension activity idea.

#### Introductory Circle time activity:

This activity involves using the Pudsey bandana or an alternative piece of cloth. Before beginning, check that the children understand the significance of the bandana – that it is a symbol of BBC Children in Need and is used as the eye patch for Pudsey Bear who is the mascot, registered trademark and logo of BBC Children in Need.

Pass the bandana round the circle. Each child tries to think of something different it can be. Ideas can be as imaginative and wacky as they like – this is, after all, a clowning around lesson! They can fold it and scrunch it as they like to make a wide range of items. Ideas might include a parachute, hat, sail, sail boat, kite, cup, sweat band, bandage, etc.

Once the ideas seem exhausted explain that there will now be a second round using the bandana. This time when children are holding the bandana they should be asked to think about something or somebody who makes them laugh. Alternatively, this could just be a general discussion with children offering their ideas.



### Viewing BBC Children in Need Appeal film

Before viewing the film, explain or remind children that BBC Children in Need supports children who are disadvantaged in some way; children who may not have some of the important things we often take for granted. Identify the main areas of disadvantage; the areas where BBC Children in Need supports children and young people:

- Children who experience a variety of illnesses or who have been badly treated or bullied by family or friends.
- Children who experience any kind of disability.
- Children who have difficulties knowing how to behave correctly in different situations.
- Children who live in poor families or neighbourhoods where crime, drug taking and gangs are dangers.

Explain that this lesson will particularly focus on children who are seriously ill or disabled; children who often need to spend long periods in hospital.

Ask the children how they think they would feel if they needed to spend a long time in hospital\*. Who and what would they miss in the outside world?

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\* It is important to be aware of and sensitive towards children in class who may fall into this category – they might wish to share their own experiences; equally they may wish not too.

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Explain that BBC Children in Need supports a variety of projects that help children with disabilities and illnesses and one of these projects is called 'Northern Ireland Clown Doctors'. This is a group of professionally trained performers who go into hospitals and clown around to help make children's stay in hospital more fun.

View the BBC Children in Need [Northern Ireland Clown Doctors](#) Appeal film. It is suggested that the film is viewed twice – once uninterrupted and then a second time when the film is stopped at various appropriate stages for children to ask and answer questions. This will lend itself well to the use of an interactive white board.

Some questions that could be asked about the film:

- Who are the Northern Ireland Clown Doctors? (professional performers who have been trained to work in hospitals)
- Why are the Northern Ireland Clown Doctors in the hospital? (to help children have some fun and enjoyment while they are in hospital)
- Why are the children in hospital? (because they are disabled, have chronic illnesses or diseases, have experienced serious accidents or are expected to have limited lives)
- How do the Northern Ireland Clown Doctors change the atmosphere in the hospital? (from quiet and stressful to being a place of mischief and laughter)
- Why is it important for the Northern Ireland Clown Doctors to know about the children before they visit them? (because they all have different needs – they are different ages and have different conditions: some need to get out of bed, some need to stay in bed and not get too excited etc)
- How have the Northern Ireland Clown Doctors made a difference to some of the children featured in the film? (examples could include helping a child realise that not everyone who comes into the room is to be feared and that some people come in to play; getting a response from a very sick child who had not reacted to anyone before)
- How has money from BBC Children in Need helped Northern Ireland Clown Doctors? (buying costumes and props and enabling the Northern Ireland Clown Doctors to visit more hospitals and therefore more children)

**Observation and reflection**

As a whole class discussion or a discussion in groups children could consider the following questions:

- What makes you laugh?
- What helps to cheer you up when you are feeling unhappy?
- Who helps to cheer you up? What is special about the people who make you feel better when you feel unhappy?

If this activity is a group activity, feedback from groups could help to establish the top 5 or top 10 lists, e.g. 10 most popular ways to make someone laugh; top 5 people to turn to when we are unhappy; 5 qualities or skills needed to cheer someone up!

**Extension activities:**

Ask groups to plan and perform a one minute 'clowning around' sketch. The aim should be to try and generate as many laughs from the audience as possible. The sketch might include jokes, silly poems or songs, impersonations and doing silly things in costumes and using props. Each performance could be awarded a point each time there is a laugh heard from the audience!