

Key Stages 2 - 3

Talk It Up

**Discussion points and activities for 10 to 13
year old students.**

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Rationale

Discussions give children a voice within the classroom and teach them how to formulate ideas and be able to express themselves concisely and cohesively.

Opportunities for children to speak and listen within a group are both important for the self esteem of the individual and the building of rapport between students. Through enjoyable and lively discussions students will learn more about their peers, about interacting within a group and forming respect for others. As such, these exercises are an invaluable resource for developing healthy dynamics between students and a positive, supportive atmosphere within the classroom.

The discussion topics also provide an opportunity to develop thinking skills such as objectivity, an understanding of perspective, a consolidation of personal values and creative thinking. These skills are applicable to all aspects of the curriculum and encourage students to think independently and to explore ideas and concepts beyond the classroom.

The discussion topics in "Talk It Up!" are laid out in four sections dealing with scenarios, discussions, debates and role plays. It is not necessary to follow the activities in this order. The topics can all be done in isolation or in any order. This makes them suitable for a weekly oral language programme, for one-off lessons, relief teachers or end of term activities.

Guidelines for class discussions and debates are included, as well as suggestions and outlines for specific group roles.

These activities are a springboard for the achievement of a wide range of outcomes within the classroom. Students will be satisfying the speaking and listening components of the English curriculum as well as covering important concepts within the PSHE curricula.

Teachers' Notes

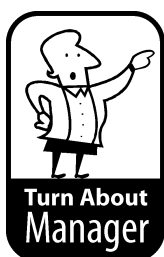
► Structuring Discussions:

The activities in the book assume that children will conduct the bulk of their discussions in small groups. Some children take longer to formulate their own ideas and are intimidated by speaking in front of the whole class. Other children are content to sit back and listen (or do something else!) and not take a viewpoint, whilst others continually dominate.

For these reasons the following guidelines are suggested:

- Before the initial session, take some time to formulate discussion guidelines with the students to use as boundaries for behaviour within the group. Display these guidelines somewhere in the classroom. Alternatively you may like to display the provided discussion guidelines on page 8.
- Read the task cards or scenarios aloud to the whole class first to generate some initial ideas.
- Children then break into pre-determined groups to discuss the issue further.
- Appoint three children within each group a job. Alternate these jobs each session. The job of each group member is briefly revised before the groups break up so that responsibilities are fresh in the students' minds.
- Display the role descriptions and discussion guidelines in the class so that they are within eyesight of the groups.

► Group roles:



The Turn About Manager

The Turn About Manager is the group facilitator. They are responsible for starting the discussion, making sure that everybody has had a turn of speaking, that all opinions are valued and that no one person is dominating the conversation.



The Off Track Manager

The Off Track Manager is responsible for making sure that the conversation doesn't veer away from the topic and become an unrelated chat. The Off Track Manager's duty is to monitor the discussion and politely interrupt and return the group to the topic at hand if it goes off track.



The Scribe (reporter)

This person is responsible for recording the main ideas of the discussion and reporting back to the class. In the case of debates and role plays, the scribe will allocate who will speak first, second, etc. or in which role.

Scenario

1



The Accident

John lives on a farm with his father. All the other kids on farms nearby have learnt how to drive in the paddocks, but John, even though he is 15, hasn't been allowed. His father keeps telling him it's still dangerous whether he's on the road or not. John's older brother, Toby and sister, Ella, both have their licences. They keep telling their dad to give John some experience but he won't listen. Ella has secretly taken her brother out a few times in the paddock to show him how to change gears because she knows John is so keen to learn.

John is at home with his brother Toby one Saturday night. His dad is at a BBQ, his sister is in town and Toby is about to go to a party at a friend's place on a nearby farm. Toby needs a lift. He is going to have a few drinks and stay over at the party and Ella needs the car for work the next day. John suggests that he can drive Toby. He explains that Ella has given him enough practice and that there is only one road to cross - the rest of the time he can just drive across the two farms, crossing through the tractor gates. Toby is unsure but John is insistent and he finally agrees. On the way back from dropping Toby off, John crosses the farm and gets to the main road. He sees a car coming quite fast, but it isn't really close. He is sure he can make it. He moves out, hitting the accelerator hard and stalls the car. The driver of the other car suddenly sees him. She is travelling 10 km over the speed limit. There is no way she can stop in time.

John is taken to hospital along with the driver of the other car. He is in a critical condition. He will survive but may suffer some long-term effects as the result of his injuries ...



- **Who is most to blame for this accident?**
John, Ella, Toby, his dad or the other driver?
- **Discuss this situation in your group.**
Rank everybody involved from 1-5 with 1 being the most responsible and 5 the least.

Scenario

3



Fair and Square

You are organising a raffle to be run through your local sporting club. The first prize is a new car, the second prize is £1000 cash and the third prize is a bottle of wine.

When it comes time to draw the raffle you do so with another club member, which is the official policy. You draw the first, second and third prize and lay the tickets out on the table. You are devastated by what you see.

The first prize of a new car has gone to the Taylors, a nice, hard working family of five who help out a lot with the club. Whilst they are not particularly wealthy you happen to know that they won a car a few months ago in another raffle. It was a huge surprise and everyone has been talking about it. You can't believe their luck in winning two cars within a year.

The second prize has gone to Marcus Simpson, a wealthy local business man who has caused you no end of trouble. He is not a member of the club. You are surprised he even bought a ticket as he has continually complained to the council about use of the club premises after hours and people parking on the verge near his house. He has threatened on numerous occasions to have the club shut down.

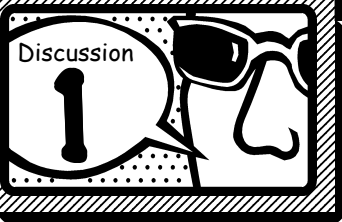
The third prize goes to a single mother and her three boys. You know that they are really struggling for money. The mother is a student and they rely on getting two buses to make it to the club for practice.

The other club member with you suggests swapping the prizes ...



In your groups discuss:

- What would you do? Would you agree to swap the prizes?
- If you do agree, what prizes do you give to who?



Freedoms

What decisions should you be allowed to make for yourself at the age you are now?

- Think carefully through all of the points and come to a consensus in your group as to what decisions you are ready for. Put the following list of freedoms on the "yes, now" or the "not yet" column. Present your answers to the class. Give reasons and examples for each of your answers.

- Decide what clothes to wear on the weekend.
- Decide what time you get home at night.
- Decide what time you go to bed.
- Decide which school or secondary school you go to.
- Decide whether you go to school or not.
- Decide what you want to eat.
- Decide how the family income should be spent.
- Decide how you should be punished if you've done something wrong.
- Decide whether you do your homework/assignments or not.
- Decide who you will be friends with.
- Choose what you want to do without adult supervision.
- Decide what you want to do with your hair.
- Decide what music you listen to.
- Decide how long you spend on the internet/Play station/Nintendo?
- Decide whether you have ear/body piercings.
- Decide whether you go to girl/boy parties.

- On a separate piece of paper draw up a table like the one below and record the decisions of the group. The decisions should be based on the group majority.

Yes, Now	Not Yet

Discussion

4

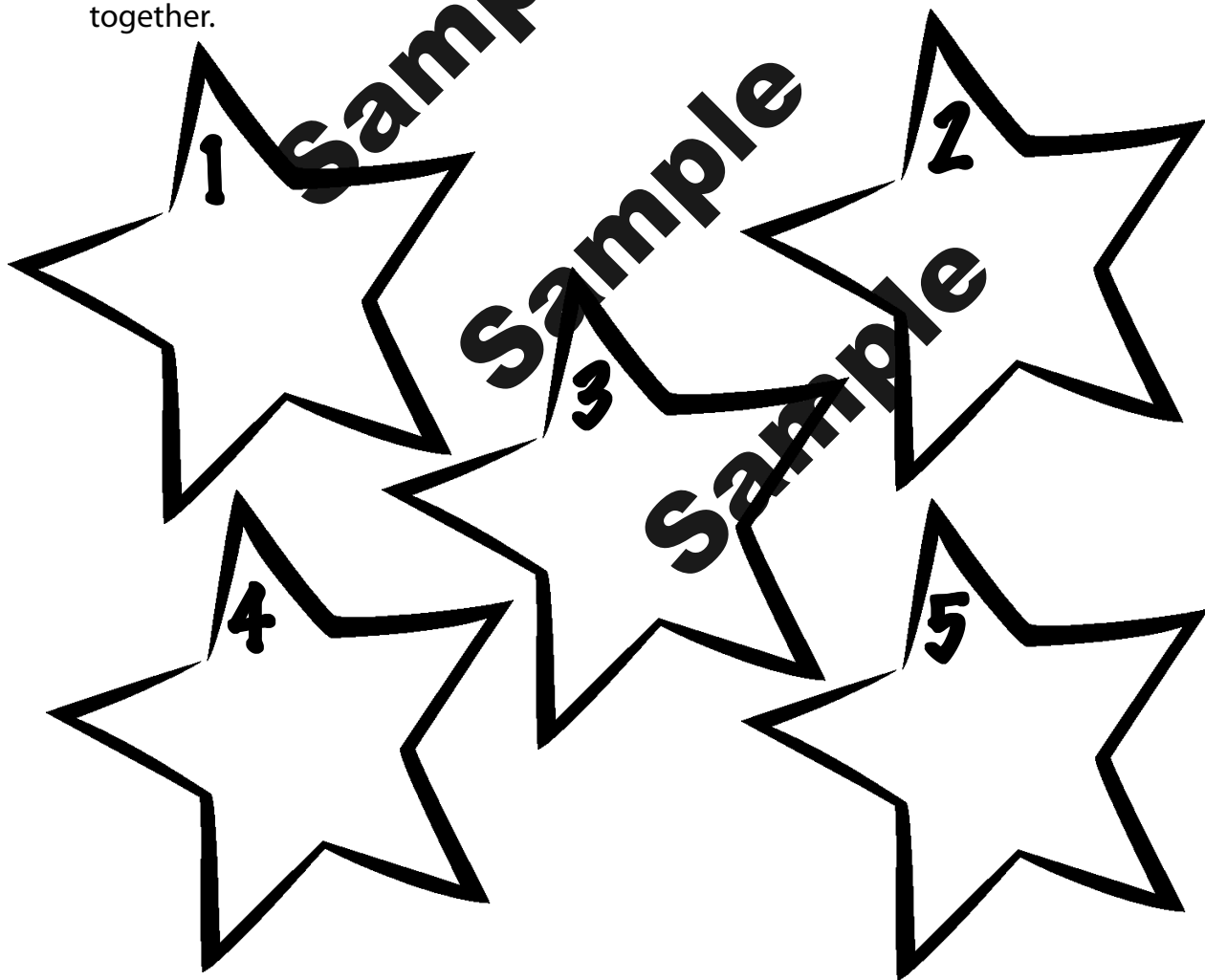


Celebrity Day

You have been given the enviable job of being able to choose five famous people from any time in history to come to your school. During this time you will have the opportunity to talk to them and let them teach you anything they know. Who do you choose?

- ▶ You can choose a famous musician, a scientist, inventor, actor, or sports star – anybody you think would be really interesting. Consider the needs and wishes of your class members and the other members of the school and who they would most like to meet.

As this is a hypothetical situation you can choose people from history (even dead ones!) or people who are alive today. Your group must come to a decision together.



- ▶ Come up with two questions you would most like to ask each of your chosen people. Share your wish list of five famous people with the class.