

LESSON PLAN

Level : Pre-intermediate

Time : 45 minutes

Aims of the lesson : – to test expressing opinions
– to test group discussion

Teaching aids : students' books, blackboard

Preparation : The teacher chooses the text containing letters with some problems suitable for giving advice.

Procedure :

1. The teacher explains what a problem page is and checks if the students know the words 'die' and 'punishment'.

The students try to explain an idiom 'To get a problem off your chest', which means to tell someone about your problem, and so feel better.

Time : 5 minutes

2. The students are asked to match a heading with a letter and a reply in their students' books. The teacher asks various students to read out the letters and replies, and asks the class if they agree with the advice. (see App. G1, G2)

Time : 10 minutes

3. The class is divided into groups of four or five students. They read the letters written to Daisy's problem page. They work together in a group to decide what advice to give each person. The sample answer to the letter 'Not fair' is:

Sharon should help more in the house. She's 14 and old enough to help her parents. She could get a Saturday job.

The teacher goes round and assesses the groups' discussion.

Time : 20 minutes.

4. Then one representative of each group presents their ideas to the whole class.

Time: 10 minutes.

APPENDIX G1

The Indy is a newspaper for the 'young and independent', and it has a problem page. Match a heading to a letter and to an answer from Daisy.

Do you agree with the advice?

PROBLEM PAGE



ASK DAISY

If you have a problem that you want to get off your chest, write to Daisy at:

The Indy
40 City Road
London EC1Y 2DB

Never been kissed

I LIVE on a farm, and I have started thinking about animal rights. Now I am a vegetarian. My problem is that my parents are furious. My Mum doesn't cook anything different for me, so every night all I eat is vegetables and bread and cheese. I don't think this is fair. Why can't she cook me something tasty?
Michelle, 17

Food for thought

MY PARENTS went away on holiday recently, so I decided to dye my hair. I am blonde and I dyed my hair black. Now it looks awful and I don't know what to do.

A couple of days ago my parents came home, and when my Mum saw my hair, she went completely mad. Now, as a punishment, she says I can't dye it back. What should I do?
Lucy, 16

To dye, or not to dye?

I'M 16 and I have never been out with a girl. I've never even kissed one. My friends have all had lots of girlfriends, but girls don't seem to be interested in me. Now I tell everyone that I have a girlfriend in France, but I don't think they believe me. What should I do?
Richard, 16

I think you should dye your hair back to its original colour. Tell your mother first that this is what you're going to do if you want to, but I'm sure she'll be pleased to see her 'old' daughter again.

People of your age, especially boys, often tell stories about their experiences. I'm sure some of your friends are telling stories too! You shouldn't tell lies, because that will make you feel more worried, and people will learn the truth sooner or later.

Don't worry about not having a girlfriend. Your time will come.

I think you're being a little selfish. You chose to stop eating meat, not your parents. Your mother is probably a very busy woman. I think you should cook for yourself. Baked potatoes are very easy!

APPENDIX G2

Speaking and writing

- 1 Work in pairs.
Look at some other letters written to Daisy's problem page. What should the people do?

NOT FAIR

I get £1.50 a week pocket money, but most of my friends get much more. When I ask my Mum and Dad for more, they say I can have more if I help in the house, but I don't see why I should. Mum's at home all day, and it's *her* job to look after the house, not mine. What do you think?
Sharon, 14

WEIGHTY PROBLEM

Girls don't find me attractive, and I think the reason is that I'm fat. Ever since I was about seven, I've been on the chubby side, but it didn't worry me until now. I'm quite intelligent and have lots of friends but not the type I'd like. What should I do?
Peter, 14

BULLIES AT SCHOOL

Please help me, because I'm in terrible trouble. There are bullies at my school who hit me and kick me, and they say I have to give them money or they will really hurt me. I'm frightened of them. I haven't got any money to give them. Please tell me what to do.
Jeremy, 14

ROSES ARE RED . . .

I am in love with a girl who is very attractive. A friend introduced us. She doesn't know how I feel. I have her address and telephone number, but I don't know what to do. Should I call her? I could send her some roses or chocolates, but I can't decide which is better. If I send something, what should I write on the card?
Andrew, 15

PROBLEMS WITH LESSONS

I'm very worried because the lessons at school are too difficult for me. I don't understand them, but the others in the class know what the teachers are talking about. Who should I talk to? We have exams soon, and I know I'm going to fail them. My parents will be furious, because they think I'm doing OK. Please help.
Suzie, 17

MY FRIENDS STEAL

Some of my friends steal things from shops after school. Usually it's sweets, but some of them steal bigger things too, and sell them or just give them away. They keep telling me to go with them, and call me names because I don't want to. They say I'm a coward. I don't want to steal, but I don't want to look stupid, either. What should I do?
Simon, 13

- 2 Choose one of the letters, and, with a partner, write a letter in reply. Try to express sympathy with the problem and give some explanation as well as practical advice.