

LESSON 4

How news affects feelings (PSHE education)

Learning objective

To discuss news stories and how they can make people feel

Learning outcomes

- Suggest emotions that people might experience because of news stories
- Explain why people can have different reactions to news stories
- Evaluate actions people can take if the news causes challenging feelings

Curriculum links

PSHE education - Health and wellbeing

- everyday things that affect feelings and the importance of expressing feelings
- strategies to respond to feelings, including intense or conflicting feelings; how to manage and respond to feelings appropriately and proportionately in different situations

PSHE education - Media literacy and digital resilience

- recognise ways in which the internet and social media can be used both positively and negatively.

See 'NewsWise and your curriculum' for a more detailed breakdown of how this lesson links to your national curriculum objectives.



This lesson focuses on the NewsWise value: **fair**.

Journalist training school context

Journalists understand that their reporting can sometimes make people feel strong emotions. They need to know ways to report difficult topics sensitively and respectfully.

Core knowledge/skills

- The news can affect how people feel. Sometimes people may find themselves feeling sad, uncomfortable, worried, frightened or excited.
- It is important to know how news stories may make people feel when you are reporting news. You can make sure to signpost helpful resources and support if necessary.
- If news makes somebody feel sad, uncomfortable, worried or frightened, there are different strategies they can use to manage the way they feel. For example, children may speak to a trusted adult at home or at school to support them.

Before teaching this lesson, refer to guidance on **creating a safe learning environment for PSHE education**, including establishing agreed ground rules for discussion.

Starter/baseline assessment [10 mins]

Remind the class of the ground rules for PSHE. Ask pupils to jot down any emotions people might experience from news stories, individually to begin with (eg in their exercise books) so you can get a sense of their starting points. Then, allow time for feedback and create a class list (a free word cloud generator could be used). Share the learning objective and outcomes.

Learning activities

Activity 1 [10 mins]

Explain that all news stories explored in this lesson are based on real news events that took place some time ago. Display the news headlines on slides 5-7 and ask small groups to discuss which of the emotions listed best describes how someone might feel on reading that story. Groups could record their choice on mini-white boards, before holding this up for others to see. Discuss:

- Is it always easy to pick just one word for each headline? Why / why not? (eg people might experience more than one emotion from a particular story, different people might have different reactions)

- How could someone feel if they were seeing this kind of headline a lot in the news, instead of just once? (*Emphasise that the news can affect how people feel over a longer period of time, as well as having a more immediate impact*)

Activity 2 [15 mins]

Explain that because everybody is different, people's reactions and feelings towards a news story won't always be the same. Assign each group a character from slide 8 and give them a copy of **News stories**. Groups should discuss how the stories might make their character feel, recording their ideas on the sheet. Take some ideas and ask groups to explain their choices. Use **News stories teacher guide** to highlight key differences in how the characters might react.

Support: Pupils can use the 'Emotions bank' on the **News stories** activity sheet.

Challenge: Assign groups two characters and have them compare their reactions to the stories.

Activity 3 [10 mins]

1. Tell the class to think about the character of Nav, who would have experienced some more challenging emotions - especially from the story about the storm. Place six actions around the room on A3 paper (either on the floor or walls) and ask pupils to move round the room silently, reading the actions. Then, they should mark the three actions they think would be most useful for Nav (eg with a tally mark or sticker). Actions around the room could include:

- *taking a break from the news*
- *asking a friend for advice*
- *getting help from an adult at home*
- *trying to find a story or news story that makes them feel more positive*
- *telling others about the story (note, this is likely to be unhelpful, as others may also find it a difficult story)*
- *reading the story over and over again (note, this is likely to be unhelpful, as it will make the challenging feelings worse)*

2. As a class, discuss which actions got the highest number of tally marks (making sure pupils haven't picked anything that would be unhelpful). Ask why those actions might be helpful for Nav? (*eg. adults, or friends, might take Nav's mind off it, or have advice to make her feel less worried*). Ask the class if there are any other strategies they can think of that would help Nav.

Plenary and signposting [10 mins]

1. Look back to the class emotions list from the start of the lesson - do pupils have new ideas to add? Adding these in a different colour and photographing the final list or word cloud could help capture progress.
2. As a private reflection, ask pupils to write down one challenging feeling from the list, and an action they could take if they experience this from the news. Emphasise that if the actions shared today aren't working or they experience strong emotions from the news, they can speak to an adult at home or at school.
3. Finally, explain that news organisations can do things to look after people's wellbeing too! Ask if pupils have any ideas on what a responsible news organisation could do to help their readers if they report news that might be difficult? (See 'Extension opportunities' below for ideas.)

Questions for assessment

- *Do you think the news can affect people's feelings and emotions? Why / why not?*
- *Can you name some emotions people might experience from the news?*
- *Does everyone react the same to a news story? Why / why not?*
- *What could someone do if they experience strong emotions from the news?*

Extension opportunities

Create a class code of conduct that everyone will follow during their NewsWise reporting, to make sure they are being respectful to their readers' feelings (this could be displayed on a working wall). Pupils could come up with their own ideas, or they could evaluate example commitments in order of importance (eg. try not to create really big emotions in the reader - like exaggerating something to sound more scary; tell the reader where they can get help or what they can do if they are upset by the story; include some positive messages or news if possible; take time at the end to think about how the report and images might affect the reader).

Resources

- **Lesson slides: How news affects feelings**
- **News stories worksheets**
- **A3 paper x6 (to write strategies on and display around the room)**