

OBJECTIVES

- To consider why people may want to be in a gang.
- To understand how to participate positively in a group.

RECOMMENDED TEXT

*The Gang*Allan Ahlberg
(from *Please Mrs Butler*)

WHOLE-CLASS INTRODUCTION

- Ask the children how they would define a gang. Are there any gangs in the school? Do any of the children belong to one?
- Consider the differences between a gang and a group of friends or a club (a gang implies an element of exclusion because by definition if you're not in the gang you're outside of it).
- Encourage the children to share personal experiences of being in a group of friends and talk about times when things go wrong – maybe someone becomes too bossy or someone feels left out. How do they feel about being excluded from a gang or group?
- Think about why people may want to join a gang. Do they feel safer in a tight, exclusive group, or are they perhaps curious about what they may be missing out on? Do the children think people are sometimes 'pressed ganged' into joining?
- You could talk about some famous or infamous gangs such as Robin Hood and his Merry Men, Mods and Rockers or the Bash Street Kids. Are all gangs necessarily bad or negative groups?
- Using three different voices for boy one, two and three, read the poem all the way through to the class. Then ask three volunteers to read it with appropriate expression and intonation.

GROUP/INDIVIDUAL WORK

- Ask the children – perhaps with you or an assistant scribing their ideas – to carry on the poem. What might boys two and three say next? How could they stop the negative cycle from endlessly repeating itself? What might the boys say if they were being more open and tolerant (e.g. boy two could ask what boy one wants to do in this gang and boy three could say 'great, let's invite Kim to join too')?
 - Ask the children to work in pairs to list the qualities and behaviour members of a group should show in order to participate positively, e.g. listening to each other, being thoughtful and kind, sharing, not teasing others, etc. Page 31 in the Photocopiable Resource Sheets provides a game for support.
 - What makes a good leader? In small groups with adult support, brainstorm and list the qualities the children think the leader of a group should have such as a sense of fairness, a good sense of humour, patience and good listening skills.
- Put the children into groups of three. Ask them to take turns to write something positive about each member of the group, including themselves, e.g. good fun, generous, brilliant at running. How do they think the skills and attributes of individual members could be developed into a good team if they had a task to complete? Would it be better if they all had the same strengths or if they each had something different to offer?
 - Set challenges for groups of three children that depend on good teamwork and cooperation, e.g. to make a model of a den from recycled materials, to produce a picture book for a younger child or to carry out a scientific experiment.

PLENARY

- Read the extensions to the poem the children have written showing how the negative cycle of exclusion can be broken. Do the children think their strategies would work in practice? Remind them to try out their ideas when they are next playing with friends.
- How well do the children think they work in a team? Have they worked well together during the lesson or were any of them bullied or excluded?
- Would any of the children consider forming a gang? What would their motto be and what would they do? Would the gang have a leader?
- Discuss how it feels emotionally to be excluded from a group.

VOCABULARY

gang	group	club	team
pressure	exclude	include	peers

CROSS-CURRICULAR LINKS

- **Drama:** To encourage trust and team work, play some drama games:
 - Put a funny hat, mask or wig in the centre of a circle with all the children sitting round it. Tell them that the person wearing the hat (or whichever prop you are using) automatically becomes the leader of the whole circle. That person can then tell everyone what to do, e.g. to stand up, sit down, bark, sing a song, run on the spot. Ask for a volunteer to take the prop first and to become the leader. When s/he has given three or four commands, the prop is presented to the person who was sitting to the right of them at the beginning. That person then becomes the leader and so on round the circle. Make sure everyone gets a turn.
 - In groups of about six, the children stand in a circle and pass a ball in a clockwise direction without looking at the person to whom they are passing it – they just trust that they are there.

Peer Group Pressure (2)

OBJECTIVES

- To understand that it is wrong to treat people cruelly just because they are different in some way.
- To recognise that things and people change and we should not be too quick to judge from appearance alone.

RECOMMENDED TEXT

The Ugly Duckling Hans Christian Andersen
(retold by Ian Beck)

WHOLE-CLASS INTRODUCTION

- The children may already know the story of *The Ugly Duckling* – what can they tell you about it? What does the word ‘ugly’ mean? What is a duckling?
- Look at the cover of the book with the children and consider:
 - How does the duckling feel?
 - What does the picture tell us about the story?
- Read the story with the children and discuss:
 - How was the Ugly Duckling different from the other ducklings? What can the children detect about the Ugly Duckling from the text – in what ways did he look and sound different?
 - What did the big ducks say to the Ugly Duckling and how did this make him feel?
- Think of and list some good words to describe the Ugly Duckling – look at the picture of him in the snow.
- Discuss with the children how the ducks were cruel to the Ugly Duckling – how would it feel if somebody said and did those things to them?
- What was the twist at the end of the story? Have the children understood the point about not judging others on appearance alone?

GROUP/INDIVIDUAL WORK

- Ask the children to look at the pictures and talk about how the Ugly Duckling changes over time. What in the pictures tells them that time is passing (seasonal changes, the bird growing bigger and changing in appearance, etc)? To help them identify these changes in the text, the children could mark key pages with a Post-it note. Have they picked out all the main changes?
- The children could work in small groups to make a picture book using sequencing pictures to retell the story in their own words. Page 32 of the Photocopiable Resource Sheets provides support for this activity.
- In pairs, discuss things the children can do now that they couldn’t do as babies. How have they changed in appearance and skills since they were two years old? They could role-play their ideas and go on to make a ‘then and now’ chart or picture.

- Have the children ever been surprised by judging someone or something by the way they looked and then finding out that they are completely different? For example, have they ever been frightened of someone bigger and stronger who turned out to be really gentle and kind, or thought a food looked horrible but tasted delicious when they tried it? They could present their ideas as a lift-the-flap book.
- Challenge the children to come up with a good moral for the story such as ‘You can’t judge a book by its cover’, ‘He who judges on appearance alone will end up looking silly’, ‘Beauty is in the eye of the beholder’.

PLENARY

- Discuss the differences between children – hair colour, skin, height, country of origin, number of siblings, pets, clothing, etc. Ask the children what it would be like if everyone looked exactly the same – imagine seeing a room full of identical people!
- Talk about belonging to a group – family, friends, class, school and community. What does it feel like to be excluded from such groups? How can we help newcomers to our groups feel welcome?
- Invite the children to talk about times when they have felt under pressure to be like everyone else – to wear only ‘cool’ trainers or like the same games and hobbies, for example.
- Establish that it is wrong and foolish to judge others on appearance alone and that people should not be excluded because they are different in some way.

VOCABULARY

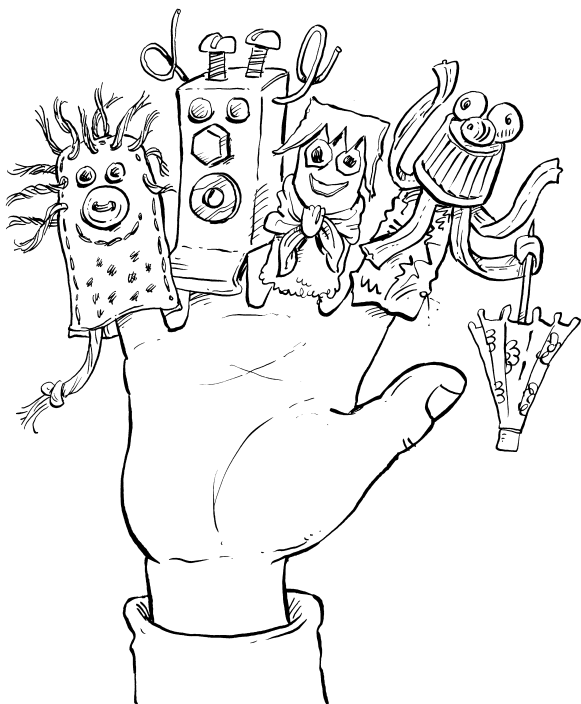
same	ugly	unhappy	sad
grow	group	different	beautiful
lonely	change	belonging	judge

CROSS-CURRICULAR LINKS

- **Numeracy:** To reinforce the concept of differences in appearance being ‘normal’, conduct a simple class survey to investigate eye colour or height. Present the findings as a pictogram or bar chart.
- **Science:** To support the work you may have done on changes connected to *The Ugly Duckling*, investigate the seasons. What seasonal changes do the children know about already – leaves falling, buds forming, temperature changes, etc?
- **History:** Make a timeline with the class for the Ugly Duckling spanning one year. Mark in the seasons. This idea can be extended so that the children make their own personal timelines marking key events in their lives so far – first birthday, birth of a sibling, first day at school, learning to ride a bike, etc.

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

- As a class, make a picture list of things the children can do to help a new child to settle into their school. Talk about and list the qualities needed to be a 'buddy' to a new child.
- Make a 'Welcome' picture booklet as a class, including all the things a new child will need to know about the school – playtimes, lunchtimes, names and pictures of staff, where to go for help, etc.
- The children should take turns at playing the role of the Ugly Duckling (see page 32). The other children then take turns to ask how 'he' feels and why. You should model this for the children first.
- Alternatively, you could put on a puppet show (use finger puppets or soft toys) about a character who is excluded from a group in some way. Maybe he/she looks a bit odd or speaks a different language. How, if at all, is the situation resolved in the end?



- Invite the children to make up a new comic strip featuring a helpful or hilarious gang of children.
- Help the children to adapt the Allan Ahlberg poem (see page 31) into a short playscript. In small groups, they can direct their own performances suggesting ways of being more democratic and positive.
- Ask the children to consider why certain people may be excluded from groups (age difference, gender, religion, disability, etc) and to discuss whether or not this is fair. Page 33 in the Photocopiable Resource Sheets provides support.
- Ask the children to design a playground that would include everyone. Page 48 in the Photocopiable Resource Sheets provides support for this activity.

CIRCLE TIME

- Play the 'Name Game'. 'My name is ... I like ... (person sitting next to them) because ...'.
- Play 'Huggy Bears'. The children find a space in the room and you call out a number. The children have to huddle in groups of that number.
- Each child should say one thing about themselves that is the same as everyone else in the class and one thing that makes them different. For example, they might say, 'I am in Class 2 but I was born in Greece'.
- Talk about what the children consider 'ugly' to be. Why do we call people and places ugly? Are there buildings and areas of their local community the children consider to be ugly, e.g. derelict buildings, high rise apartments, walls daubed with graffiti, etc? What is the most attractive place in the locality?

HOME ACTIVITIES

- The children could ask parents or carers about when they were babies and how they have changed over the years – their physical appearance, temperament, the practical things they can now do and so on. They may be able to bring in photos from home to make a display reinforcing the idea of people changing as they get older.
- Ask parents or carers to tell the children a story about a time in their own lives when they felt excluded from their peers – perhaps when they were sent to a new school or when their friends ganged up on them because they were small. The children can then retell their family stories to the rest of the class.
- Parents and carers can also work with the children to brainstorm and list some useful strategies for dealing with peer group pressure. These can then be returned to school and collated into a helpful guide for the whole class.

ASSEMBLY IDEAS

- The children should take turns to stand up in pairs and say something that they each have in common. For example: 'We're the same because we're girls', 'We're the same because we come from Japan', 'We're the same because we are wearing blue', etc.
- Try the same activity but ask the pairs to say, 'We're different because ...'.
- Tell the story of *The Enormous Turnip* which illustrates that only through collective endeavour can certain tasks be achieved. It is, of course, the strength of the tiny mouse that makes all the difference, enabling the turnip to finally be hauled from the ground. Emphasise the point that we are all different, but that we can often work together to achieve a desired goal.