

Emotions and Relationships

SPHE STRANDS:

**Myself – Personal safety –
Safety issues –
Making decisions**

**Myself and Others –
Relating to others**

**Myself and the Wider World
– Media education**

Chatting

Invite the children to think of as many strong feelings as they possibly can and write them on the whiteboard – try to be more explicit than happy or sad, etc.

- E.g. furious, heartbroken, delighted, terrified, etc.
- Talk about emojis and the feelings they might represent – show some examples on the whiteboard.

Now read the following story and discuss the feelings therein:

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Mixed-up Feelings

John was playing football in the yard with the other children when Shane accidentally kicked him in the testicles. John fell on the ground in a lot of pain. Mark felt really sorry for him and went over to ask him if he was alright. Harry couldn't help laughing. This was making John and his friends furious and Saoirse was anxious in case a row broke out. Shane was really sorry and kept apologising.

Now ask the following questions:

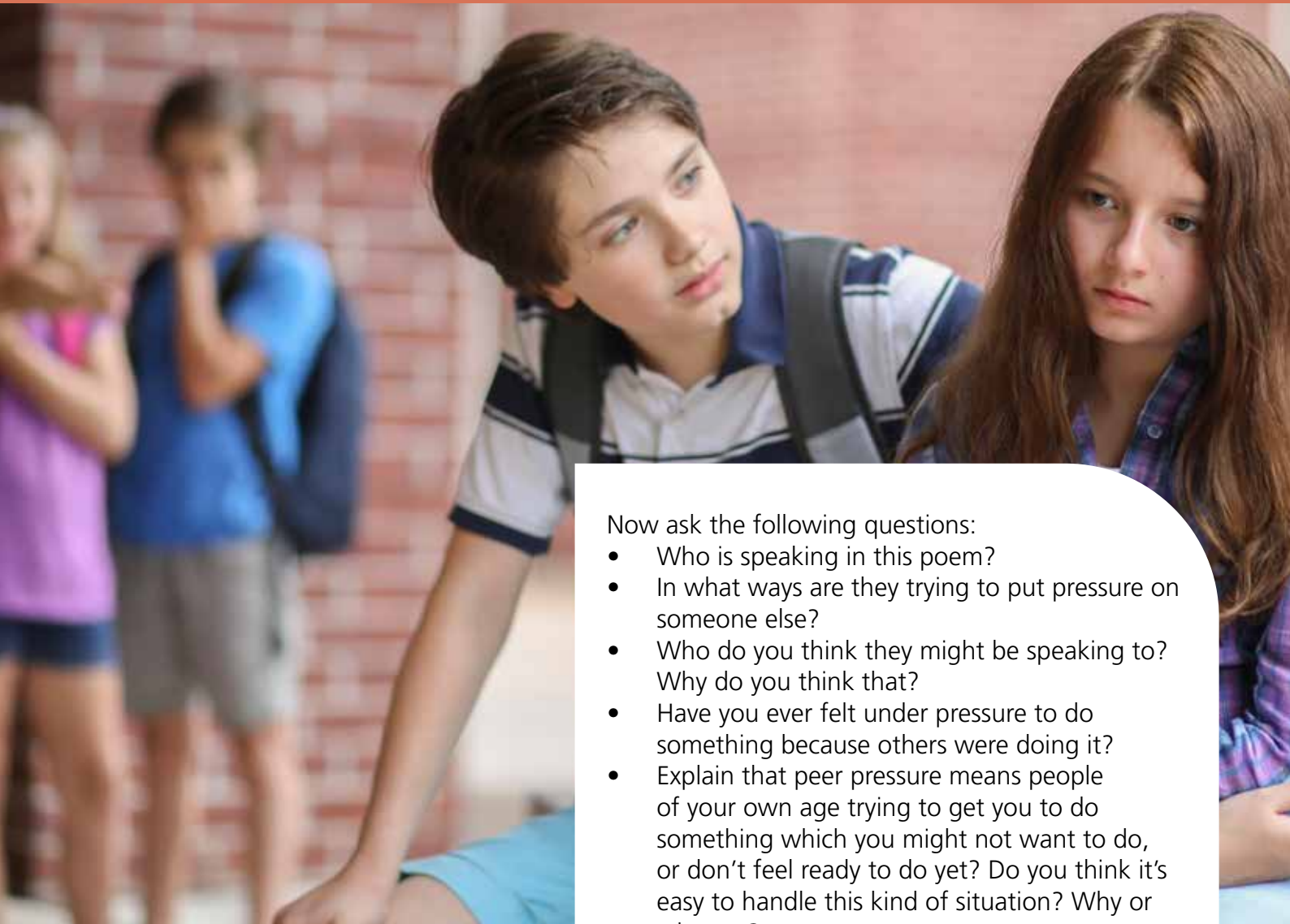
- How many feelings/emotions can you identify in this short story?
- Did everyone feel the same?
- Why do you think people feel differently about the same thing?
- Are any of the feelings good/bad? Why or why not?
- It's important to be aware that what other people are feeling is not necessarily the same as you. It's good to be aware of others' feelings and then you can be more understanding towards them.

Poem: Peer Pressure

We're mitching off school
Join us if you're cool.
Will you not have a drink?
You're a nerd, I think.
Just try a quick smoke –
Sure it's only a joke.
You'll never get caught,
Are you in our gang or not?
Are you going to kiss Aoife?
Sure no one will see you.
You're boring and scared,
Go on do it, I dare!

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Now ask the following questions:

- Who is speaking in this poem?
- In what ways are they trying to put pressure on someone else?
- Who do you think they might be speaking to? Why do you think that?
- Have you ever felt under pressure to do something because others were doing it?
- Explain that peer pressure means people of your own age trying to get you to do something which you might not want to do, or don't feel ready to do yet? Do you think it's easy to handle this kind of situation? Why or why not?

Brainstorm Solutions

Invite the children to brainstorm ways to handle peer-pressure:

- Say no – in a pleasant way, not argumentatively. Be assertive.
- Go along with it – talk about consequences of this.
- Say you might do it the next time, and get yourself out of the situation so you have time to talk to a trusted adult about it.
- Get angry and run away – consequence may be ridicule and loss of friendship.

Role-play

Invite a group of children to come up and role-play a situation where a group of twelve year olds are trying to get another child to smoke. Choose a child who can be pleasantly assertive to stand up to the group in a pleasant way.

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Poster

Ask the children, either at home or in school, to make a poster encouraging assertiveness with a slogan such as 'Don't be afraid to say NO.'

Reflection

Invite the children to sit with their feet on the floor and to close their eyes. You may put on some quiet, reflective music if you wish. Then read the following slowly:

We all have feelings. A lot of the time we feel happy and peaceful. Sometimes we are surprised or astonished. At other times we are furious. And when something very sad happens we are really upset. It's hard to handle strong emotions sometimes. And it's always good to discuss them with a trusted adult, and not just keep them to ourselves.

Sometimes, because of fear of being made fun of or looking silly, we feel under pressure to do things we don't want to do. God wants us to love ourselves as well as loving others. Sometimes loving ourselves means having the courage to say 'no' when we don't want to do something. We need to be true to ourselves. Ask God to help you to be strong in a respectful, pleasant way and to remember to respect other people's feelings as well as your own. Amen.