

## Adulthood

Oscar Wilde once said “Youth is wasted on the young”.

You could begin your assembly by reflecting on the pressures of adulthood. Run through the daily demands on your life. Go through your commitments, explain your responsibilities and outline the consequences of not fulfilling your responsibilities. Explain what it means to be responsible for a house or a car - the bills that need to be paid, the repairs that need to be made etc.

Make the point that being an adult does mean that you are free to make your own decisions, but the decisions aren't always pleasant ones and often they determine your future so they have to be taken very seriously - perhaps give an example of the time you made a wrong decision.

Next you could turn your attention to the security that childhood offers. Basic needs are catered for, decisions are made on behalf of the children, there is always someone there to give comfort and advice should it be needed. You could discuss how, as children get older, they will gain greater responsibilities and independence, make the point that it is a gradual process learning how to handle all of the responsibilities and powers that will eventually become theirs.

Reflect on what the quote from Oscar Wilde means - explain that older people often hanker after their youth (perhaps give an example) whereas young people cannot wait to be rid of it (there are many examples of youths mimicking adults / trying to do adult things, to drawn upon!)

Finally you could reflect on the fact that nobody knows what lies in store for them in their life - for some life is cruelly cut short. Life is therefore too short and too unpredictable to spend it wishing for something else. You could reflect on the cliché that ‘the grass is greener on the other side of the fence.’

## **Advertising**

Begin by reflecting on the purpose and the abundance of advertising. Make it clear that advertisements are designed to persuade people to buy products. It would be useful to show several examples, perhaps from newspapers and magazines and also from television and radio.

Having seen / heard the examples you could ask the children to identify the tricks that the advertisers have used to persuade people to buy their product

- \* talk about strap lines (catchy phrases, i.e. A Mars a day helps you work rest and play - I'm sure the children could give more examples),
- \* describe weasel words (you might, could win a million pounds)
- \* consider the implied benefits that it is suggested the product will give you, i.e. you'll jump higher if you use NIKE trainers - specific examples of each would be useful.

An amusing monologue might consist of giving an unlikely product the full advertising treatment - a cucumber perhaps! The advertisers can make anything sound wonderful.

Explain that in this world when one is constantly bombarded by the advertising hype that it is important to maintain a reasoned and critical eye; when in doubt encourage the children to compare the price of products and to be sceptical about whether a product will do what it is implied it will do.

## **A Mind of Your Own**

You could begin the assembly by asking a child to perform various tasks. Each time the next task should be more ridiculous than the one before. Ask the child how far they are prepared to go. Explain how it is important to be dutiful and respectful of others but that there are times when it is important to be assertive and to express your own point of view, even if it differs with everybody else's. Discuss and perhaps demonstrate what is meant by submissive, assertive and aggressive behaviour.

Ask the children whether they've done something that they didn't want to do or which they thought was wrong because they didn't want to 'lose face' with their group, reflect on what to lose face means. You might relate this to children being involved in drinking, smoking, taking controlled drugs. A monologue in which you succumb to the pressure of others would be particularly effective.

Brainstorm ways of resisting the pressure of others.

You could talk about the fact that because we live in a democracy we are allowed to have a mind of our own - explain that elections are designed to give everybody an opportunity to express their own point of view.

Discuss what is meant by the phrase 'being in two minds'.

Next you could talk about people who have stood up for what they believe in, even in the face of adversity - appropriate people might include Martin Luther King, Mahatma Gandhi, Emily Pankhurst or Nelson Mandela. Explain that we all face pressures in our life but it is important to resist those which we know to be wrong.

## Anger

Explain that anger is a perfectly normal and human emotion but that it is important to keep our anger under control. Brainstorm different sources of anger. You could talk about the different ways in which anger is manifested - a dramatic presentation would be very effective (look at how the voice changes, the way our expression and posture changes).

Consider next the forms anger can take if it goes unchecked; i.e. sarcasm, insults, physical violence. Establish the dangers and risks associated with losing self-control

Reflect on how people can deal with their anger and maintain their self-control by walking away from a situation or counting to ten, for example.

Biblical reference : Matthew 5 21 - 26

## Apathy

You could demonstrate apathy by initially being very apathetic to the assembly. A nice contrast would be to re run the assembly but this time enthusiastically. Explain what it would be like if a Teacher displayed an apathetic attitude towards their work. A clear definition of apathy on an OHP would be a useful reference point so children are always clear about what apathy means.

You might reflect on why many people in this country are currently apathetic to religion, to politics, to the local community and the people who live in it, to their environment.

Ask the children whether they are apathetic to their school life; do they do the bare minimum? Discuss the dangers of apathy - opportunities that could be missed as a result of apathy.

Make the point that dealing with apathetic people can be a very frustrating experience whereas enthusiastic people can be exciting.

You might choose to relate the story of somebody who has been very successful in their career - a sporting star, a musician, an artist, a business person - and make the point that success is never achieved through apathy.