

CALM Kids

Children **A**ttending and **L**istening **M**ore



Introduction

Background

These materials were produced by the City and County of Swansea for non-commercial purposes to help develop the attention and listening skills of all pupils aged 4 to 8 years, including those who may have ADD (attention deficit disorder) or ADHD (attention deficit disorder with hyperactivity).

They were developed by a team of specialist teachers and educational psychologists with the assistance of a range of resources which the group members had developed themselves in their work with children, and other resources available in print or on the Internet, which were adapted and combined to produce these materials*.

These were then piloted with a range of Infant and Primary schools in the City and County of Swansea who gave detailed feedback on the activities and those which were rated most useful and enjoyable by the teachers and children were then included in this booklet.

We hope this free resource will be of use to teachers, teaching assistants, parents and anyone who works with young children.

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*Where we have directly included material from other sources we have made reasonable endeavours to contact the authors concerned and gain their permission. However, where this has not been possible (e.g. in the case of some internet resources where the author of the materials is not published or not known to the website) we sufficiently acknowledge the works of the unnamed author. Please see References section for sources.

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Meditation

Activity 1:

Getting ready

Start in a circle using the right size chairs that allow children to place their feet on the floor.

Have ready a cut out picture or drawing of a key large enough for all to see.

If children are not used to circle time or you want to concentrate on one or two pupils then start in a small group.

Aims of session

- To learn the difference in bodies that are busy and relaxed.
- To learn what the word relaxed means.

Introduction activity

Introduce the activity as a game called ***“busy bodies/calm bodies.”***

Ask the children to start the game by showing good sitting and demonstrate by sitting with feet on the floor, back against the chair back, hands open resting on laps and shoulders down.

Use good role models to point out children sitting relaxed and still using lots of praise and encouragement.

Game

“Point to your head, eyes, nose, ears, mouth, shoulders, arms hands, body, legs, feet.”

*“Show me a busy head(nod/shake), **stop!**, show me busy eyes(roll/blink) **stop!**, show me a busy nose **stop!**, show me busy ears(some children can make them move!) **stop!**, show me busy shoulders etc.*

*Now we are going to do busy bodies again and then when I say **“freeze”** keep as still as you can. Keep stiff and still until I say **“relax”** then melt your body until it feels soft.*

Play the game again. You may decide to ask one of the children to name the busy body part or say “freeze” or “relax”.

Meditation

Activity 1 (continued):

Finish

Put the key in the centre of the circle.

“You have been such clever children that I’m going to take you on a mind journey. Before we go you will need this key.

I want you to look carefully at the key and try to remember what it looks like. Look at the shape, size and colour. Look at the curved bits and straight bits. Close your eyes and have calm bodies. Try and remember what the key looks like. Take a picture in your mind. Open your eyes and look again if you have forgotten.

Got it? Good. Now I’ll start.

Close your eyes and listen.

Take a deep breathe in and out.

Make pictures in your mind as I tell the story.

I want you to think of a big field of grass. (Pause). The grass is short and you are walking over it with your bare feet. (Pause). The sun is shining and there is a warm breeze gently blowing. You can feel the warm soft grass under your feet. (Pause). In front of you is a gate with a lock. (Pause). You have the key in your hand. Walk towards the gate, feeling the warm soft grass. (Pause). Think of the key and use it to open the gate and go through. On the other side of the gate is a peaceful, quiet, calm place. (Pause). It may be a place you have visited or somewhere in your house. (Pause) Look around and feel relaxed.

Open your eyes.”

Go around the circle and ask where their peaceful, quiet, calm place was.

Allow children to pass and accept all answers without comment, even the odd ones!

Meditation

Activity 2

Getting ready

Start in a circle using the right size chairs that allow children to place their feet on the floor.

Aim

To raise awareness of the role of breathing in relaxation

Introduction Activity

Do the game called “**busy bodies/calm bodies.**”

Game

“Show me good sitting and a relaxed body.”

Use good role models to point out body parts and posture.

“Now we are going to do a game called “busy breathing/calm breathing”.

- *Breathe in and out quickly 3 times. Now breathe normally and relax.*
- *Breathe in and try to breathe in as much air as you can*
- *Breathe out and get rid of as much air as you can.*

(Children will normally use their arms and shoulders to emphasise the breathing).

- *This time see who can breathe in and out without moving their shoulders or arms.*

Use good role models to demonstrate.

- *Place your hands on your tummy and feel your breath going in and out. Keep shoulders down.*

Finish

Now we will finish with a game to see who can make the butterfly move.

Put the post it on your tummy and when you are ready breathe in and out to make it move. Who can make it move the slowest?

Meditation

Activity 3

Getting ready

You can use a large parachute or PE mats.

Aim

To practice the exercises learnt in Meditation 1 and 2

Introduction Activity

Remember we did the game busy bodies/ calm bodies and busy breathing / calm breathing? Today we are going to do them again but lying down.

- *Lie on your back with arms by your side and hands open.*
- *Put your legs in the air and arms and make your muscles hard and bodies busy.*
- *Freeze! Relax! Melt into the mat/parachute and feel your body become soft.*
- *Do it again.*

Use good role models for good relaxation.

Game

Lie on the floor and place a bean bag on the children's tummy. Children practice making the bean bag go up and down as fast as they can, then breathing as slowly as they can.

Choose two children to go around and choose who is making the bean bag move slowest. Give lots of encouragement and praise.

Finish

Teacher joins the children lying on the floor for a story.

Now we are going to finish with a story.

Remember to do your soft, calm bodies and slow, calm tummy breathing.

"Close your eyes and pretend that you are on a cloud (pause). The mat/parachute is your cloud. Think what your body would feel like to be in the sky floating on your cloud (pause). Think how calm, quiet and peaceful it would be in the sky. Think of a place you would like to go to on your cloud (pause). Think about what it would feel like to move to that place slowly on your cloud. Ready, here we go floating to your special place. Now we are there. Open your eyes and very slowly sit up."

You can go around and ask children to say where they went or they can draw their place later.

Thank the children for listening well and relaxing.

Meditation

Activity 4

Getting ready

Sit on carpet in circle or on chairs in circle. Have a small plastic bag ready.
Relaxing music for end.

Introductory Activity

Today we're going to look at something invisible. Do you know what invisible means? That's right something we can't see but is there. What is all around us but we can't see it? (Air).

See if you can catch the air (children try to catch air). I've got something that will catch air for us (plastic bag). Watch! (drag open bag through the air and tie up). What's inside?

Now when we breathe in we breathe in fresh air (show e.g.) and when we breathe out (show e.g.) we breathe out used air we don't need.

Today we are going to learn how to use the air to help us to feel calm and relaxed.

Game

Get yourself comfortable, remember to have calm, relaxed soft bodies We are going to listen to our breathing. When we breathe in count in your head 1,2. When we breathe out count 3,4 like this (count out loud). Now close your eyes and count your breathing in your mind. Breathe in and say 1,2 out 3,4.

Do this for a few minutes to regulate breathing.

Finish

Put a piece of relaxing music on and ask children to carry on breathing and counting.
At the end of the piece of music praise the children for good listening or sitting

Meditation

Activity 5

Getting ready

Have a selection of fluffy animal toys, pictures of animals or puppets. Sit on a carpet or chairs in circle with relaxing music for end.

Aim of Session

To use visualisation to relax.

Introductory

Do the busy bodies/calm bodies game

Main Activity

We're going to have a story today, about a girl called Emma who loved animals like these (point to toys/pictures). She liked real ones and toy ones. The trouble was that her body was always very busy and every time she went near a real animal she would frighten them. She had busy hands, busy feet and a busy body. Make yourself comfortable and listen to the story.

One day Emma found a tortoise in her garden. He moved very slowly.

"Hello" said the girl, "I wish you could be my pet?" The tortoise was magic and could talk. "You are very busy" he said. You would have to slow down if you wanted me to be your pet. Emma started crying, "I don't know how to calm down" she cried.

The tortoise told her to sit down and close her eyes and he would help. Even when she sat down her body was busy. "Now" said the tortoise "Pretend you are an ice cream and you are sitting in the sun. Your body is starting to melt. All your muscles in your body are getting soft and relaxed. Breathe in and count 1,2 out 3,4 and use the warm air to melt your muscles and body.

Emma began to feel soft and relaxed and kept her body still and as she sat relaxed and counting her breathe the tortoise crawled onto her lap and snuggled into his shell.

Slowly the little girl opened her eyes and the tortoise popped his head out and said "Now I will be your pet". Emma was very happy.

Finish

Let's see if we can practice the soft body and continuing breathing like Emma. Remember the story. We can listen to the music while we imagine the sun melting and relaxing our muscles. Think of your breathing in the warm air. Put on music and encourage relaxation and breathing with lots of praise.

(In the summer time you may like to give class an ice cream as a treat to link into the visualisation).

Visual Cues

Activity 1

Visually display the rules of good listening/sitting/learning etc.

The pupils can give ideas and actively make their own symbols to reflect their ideas and rules themselves. These rules could go to parents in a home-school liaison book in order for them to know about rules, also to reinforce and reward when pupils are adhering to the rules.

These rules can probably be best understood through role play, so another adult will be needed. It is only when children have recognised the behaviour in others that they will recognise it in themselves and be able to change it.

Role Play

While the teacher speaks, the other adult could:

- look out of the window (not looking at the speaker)
- fidget, twiddle pencils (not sitting still)
- answer incorrectly (not listening to words)

Encourage the children to say what is wrong, e.g. 'not looking', 'not thinking'. Give clear feedback, praise good behaviour and correct in a neutral voice.

Prompt Cards

Devise prompt cards with visual instructions (pictures, symbols, photos or simple phrases) which can be displayed clearly or carried around so the children know what is expected of them. These cards could show:

- good listening
 - how to (Appendix - examples A and B)
- good sitting
 - how to (Appendix - examples C, D and E overleaf)
 - how not to (examples F and G overleaf)
- good learning
 - how to (Appendix - examples H and I overleaf)
 - how not to (Appendix - examples J and K overleaf)
- good asking
 - how to (Appendix - example L overleaf)
 - how not to (Appendix - examples M and N overleaf)

The cards can be returned to a special box at the end of the appropriate period and a new one selected.

N.B. Genuine problems with posture, balance, body-awareness and focus will make it very difficult for some children to sit still. These children will need to be well-supported and may benefit from sensory-seeker aids such as Mov'n'Sit cushions or holding an unobtrusive object like BluTak or a koosh ball while they listen. See 'Helping Children Hang On To Your Every Word' in reference section for more information.

Visual Cues

Activity 2

Visual timetable/planner

Devise a daily schedule, listing daily tasks and activities (this can be done with words/symbols) e.g:

Daily Routine

Wake up	Get dressed	Breakfast	Get bag	Go to school	Etc.	Etc.	
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Times of day

Morning:	Wake up	Get out of bed	Breakfast	Etc.
Afternoon	Lunch	Play	Homework	Etc.
Evening	Dinner	Reading	Bath	Pyjamas

Times of day

Monday	A Picture/symbol here of a special event for each day, e.g. going shopping with mother/father/carers.
Tuesday	Remember PE kit
Wednesday	Visit grandmother/father
Thursday	Etc
Friday	Etc
Saturday	Etc
Sunday	Etc

Language

Activity 1

Give a reason for listening/attending before instructions so that the child will be able to carry out a particular activity afterwards:

- 'Listen so you will be able to make your own box afterwards'.
- 'The story is about a young boy who went on a very long journey. Listen well so that you can re-tell the story afterwards.'
- 'Listen carefully to the next story/poem. After I have finished I would like you to tell me what you think about it.'
- 'I want you to listen carefully because we are going to sort these shapes into groups. I will show you first and then you will do it on your own.'
- Read out words from different classifications for children to recall. Say to the children 'Listen carefully so you remember all the words I say', read each set then ask e.g. 'what colours did I say': red, green, orange, blue etc. Use the list with target words at the end of each one. Then try saying the list in the opposite order so the target words are said first and have to be remembered for a longer period.

Activity 2

Introduce new vocabulary and names beforehand

e.g. 'This story is about a boy called Sam and a dog called Barney. What's the boy's name? What do we call the dog?' Pictures/flash cards of characters can be used.

Activity 3

Give a synopsis of what is to come

e.g. This is about what happened to a little girl in the last war, and how she came to get lost'.

Language

Activity 4

Ask children to repeat what they think they have heard as soon as possible after the instruction.

Questions to ask might be:

- 'What have you got to do? (describe the task)
 - 'What have you got to do first (describe the sequence)
 - 'Why do you have to do this? (describe the purpose)
 - 'How will you know when you have finished (describe the expected result)
- Give children picture cues to help them repeat what they think they have heard.
 - Choose a child to act as the teacher and the rest of the group then have to repeat the instructions (the teacher remind them if they forget something).
 - Progressively increase the length of instructions given: e.g. 'Julie, please get your bag', to 'Julie, please get your bag and close the window'. The child is also asked to repeat the instructions.
 - Ask a child to do a number of activities in sequence, with each one becoming harder, and ask the child to recite the instruction themselves. The number of instructions can be slowly increased.
 - Let the children know you are going to say a list of things (numbers, colours etc.) and then ask them to recite what you've said. Make the exercise more difficult by asking them to wait some minutes before they answer.

Activity 5

Listen for a cue word or particular sound in a word

Children put a counter in a pot when they hear the cue word or sound in a story.

Language

Activity 6

Complete a sentence

e.g. 'I put my shoes on and Accept any reply that makes sense.

- In a group/pairs, make up a story. Each child adds one sentence in turn (a sort of verbal 'Consequences'). Use this to create funny and enjoyable stories.
- Incorporate cloze-tasks into story-reading. When you read stories, recite rhymes or sing songs, include "obvious" sentence completion routines, e.g. 'Little Jack Horner sat in a ...' (corner); 'Baa baa black sheep, have you any...' (wool).
- Complete the sentence game

Say one word to continue the sentence.

You're out if:

- You say a word that doesn't make sense grammatically.
- You pause more than 3 seconds.
- You say more than one word.

If you think the person before you completed the sentence, say "Stop." But, if it's not a complete sentence, you're out.

Activity 7

'Story Chain'

In a group/pairs, make up a story. Each child adds one sentence in turn (a sort of verbal 'Consequences').

Activity 8

Discriminate between real words/nonsense words

In a list or in a passage.

Activity 9

Same/not the same

The child says 'same'/'not the same' for pairs of words (real and nonsense) spoken to him, e.g. man/nan, pit/bit, pot/top, noss/noss, gatt/datt.

Language

Activity 10

Adjust classic and familiar rhymes, stories and books.

Replace crucial details to note whether pupils are paying attention, e.g. The princess kissed the frog and the frog changed into an ... alligator; Rapunzel tangled in her very longlegs; Cinderella and her nasty ... stepbrothers; Baa Baa Black sheep have you anyfins?; Sounds, e.g. Hey (B)iddle (B)iddle the cat and the fiddle, the cow jump over the moon...

Activity 11

Create comical phrases, sentences, stories and rhymes.

In a group/pairs, make up a story. Each child adds one sentence in turn (a sort of verbal 'Consequences').

- The sillier the better e.g. 'The fat rat ate the cat...'. Pupils should be asked to indicate similar sounding phrases, words, rhymes.
- Ask pupils whether they could notice intentional errors in sentences, e.g. 'We went to school for our holiday'.
- In pairs pupils could create and write their own original silly phrases and sentences. Pupils could enter a competition to identify the most silly sentence!
- Pupils could be asked to create rhymes about the different things they see out on school trips, e.g. 'In the park there is a lark, singing in the dark'.
- Visit the local library to collect books with good examples of comical and silly rhymes.
- Make up new rhymes based on familiar ones, e.g. Twinkle, twinkle, little star orfirefly?. Pupils can make up their own original rhymes.
- Create silly sentences with words beginning with the same sound, e.g. Silly summer in Swansea, seven swans in the sea.
- Use verses such as "Twinkle, twinkle, little bat.... " (Alice in Wonderland) to prompt children to think what else could twinkle e.g. a christmas tree light, a snowflake etc. and make up their own versions.
- Practise tongue twisters with the children, trying to say them as quickly as they can: e.g. "Fuzzy Wuzzy was a bear, Fuzzy Wuzzy had no hair, Fuzzy Wuzzy wasn't very fuzzy, was he?", " Each Easter Eddie eats eighty Easter eggs"
- Make "silly sound" songs with the children for them to sing by changing e.g. the beginning sound of each word to the same sound, e.g.: "Hickory, Dickory Dock..." becomes "(B)ickory, (B)ickory, (B)ock..."

Language

Activity 11

Create comical phrases, sentences, stories and rhymes.

(Continued)

- such as “Jabberwocky” from Alice in Wonderland by Lewis Carroll. Ask your child to make up a poem using real and pretend words. Give them a start by making up the first line of a poem and make it as “silly” as possible! For example “When the snake saw a lake he called it a slake.”
- Play a game of making up “silly” words by changing the letter at the start of a word. See how many “silly” words you and your child can make up and then ask your child to tell you whether or not the words you have made up are real words or not. In the simplest form of this game, you can create several words by changing the first sound (e.g., can, ran, fan, man) and then asking your child whether or not it is a real word. To make the game harder, say a word to your child and ask them to change the first sound to a different one. For example, say “my word is ‘cat’ and the new sound is /r/” (say the sound, not the word). What is the new word?” (‘rat’).

Activity 12

"Simon says" (or make up your own simple listening games)

- "Simon Says" (play this with a group of children). If you say “Simon says stand up” the children must stand up straight away. If you say “Sit down” (without “Simon says”), the children must ignore your instruction or lose a point.
- Play and create different versions of "Simon Says":
 - For extending instructions, e.g. you could say bring me the rhyme book and 3 crayons, gradually extending the instructions.
 - Create an original Simon Says game from different countries, e.g. Wales/Spain/Africa/America. Simon says pretend to make a Welsh cake/Simon says roar like a lion/Simon says dance the Flamenco/Simon says put on your cowboy hat!
 - Play a Simon Says game where the pupils could learn something new from their class mates, e.g. Simon says, those children who have a cat as a pet, put both hands up!
 - Adjust Simon Says games to teach parts of the human body, number, sounds.
 - Simon Says games where the instructions ends with a particular word, e.g. please/thank you etc. The pupils only follow the instruction when it ends in a selected word. Or the instructions could be whispered or in a loud voice; or said slowly or fast.

Language

Activity 13

Memory Games

- You can create your own memory game to suit your child's interests. Make two sets of cards with pictures, words or a combination of both a combination of word and picture cards. Shuffle the cards and put them face down in rows on a table or on the floor. The first player picks a card and turns it over, then picks up another card to try and match the first one. If the cards match, the player keeps the cards and has another go. If there isn't a match, the player puts the cards back face down in the same place and the next player has a go. The game continues until all the cards have been matched, and the player who has the most cards wins.

Variations:

- Make up matching cards with letters of the alphabet, starting with a few letters and then build up.
- Use card pairs where one card has the Capital letter and the other has the lower case version.
- Make matching pairs of cards using words from your child's favourite story book.
- Make pairs of cards with a shape (e.g. square, rectangle, triangle, circle, diamond) drawn on one card and the name of the shape on the other. For children who are unable to read, draw the shape on both cards and match them.
- To make a more challenging version, save lids from food containers and put stickers (e.g. animals, cartoon characters etc.) words, stamps or coins on one side of the lid.
- Make cards with number bonds (e.g. '3+5', '8') , opposites ('big'/'small'), definitions of words, facts or any other set of questions and answers.

Activity 14

Chinese Whispers

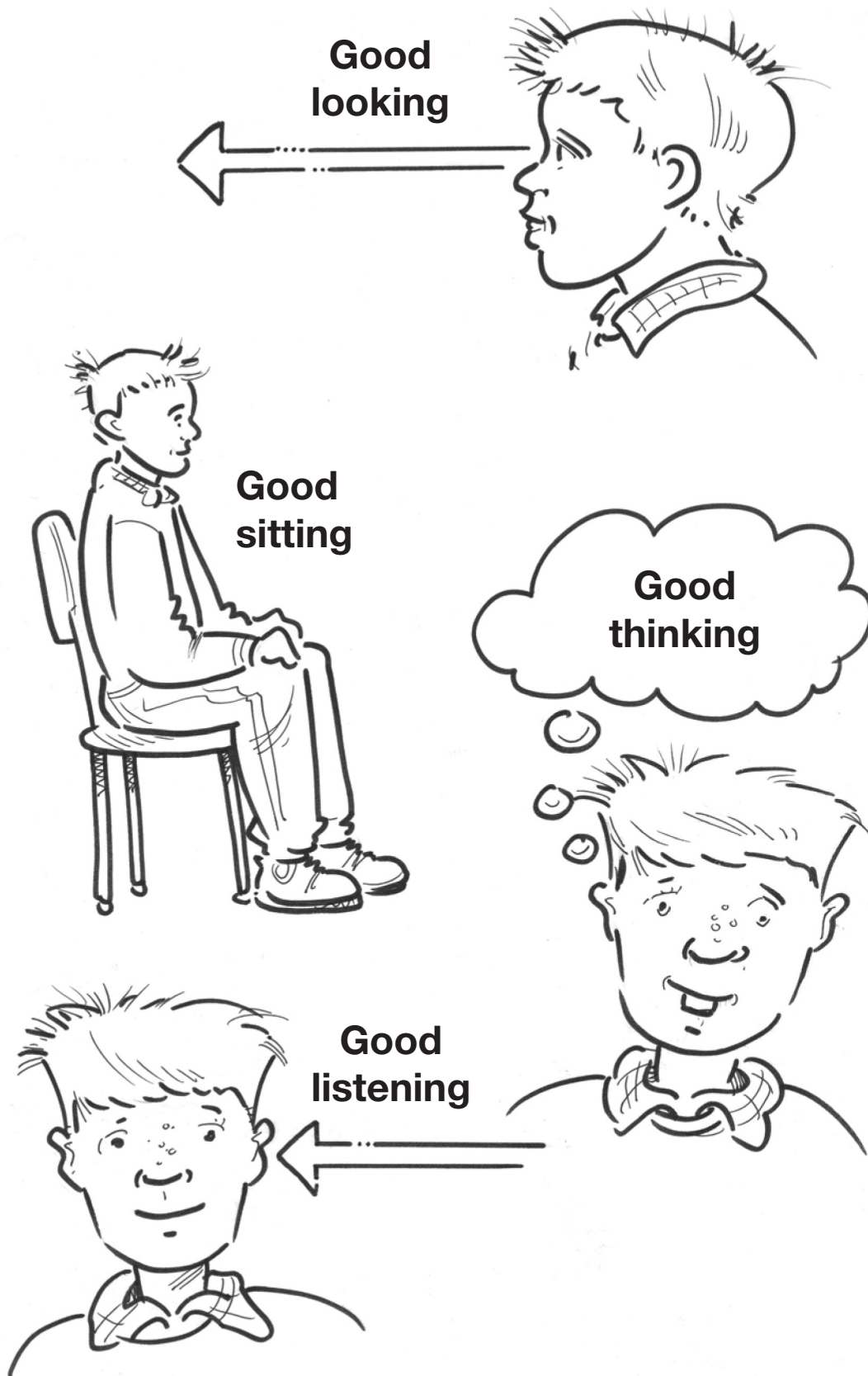
The object of the game is to see how a sentence or short story changes as it passes round a group of speakers. Players sit in a circle and the first player thinks of a message and whispers it to the next player. The second player whispers it to the third player and so on round the circle until it returns to the first player. The player says what the message has become, and how it started.

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Appendix

Example A: **Good listening** - how to



Appendix

Example B: **Good listening** - how to

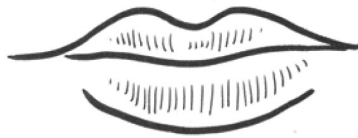
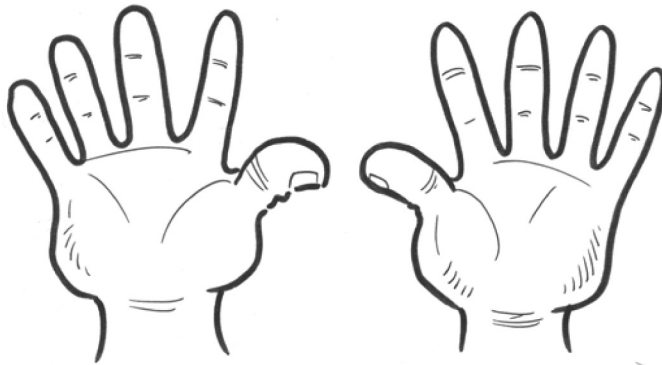
Eyes looking



Ears listening



Lips closed



Hands still



Brain on!

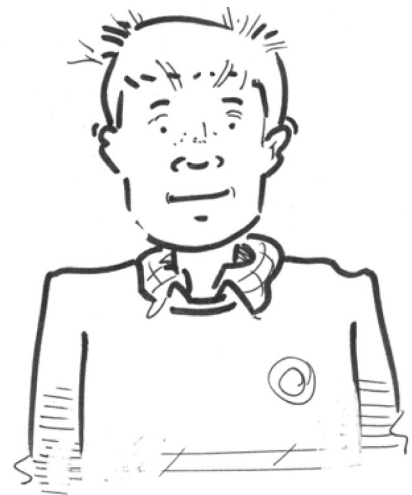
Appendix

Example C: Good sitting - how to

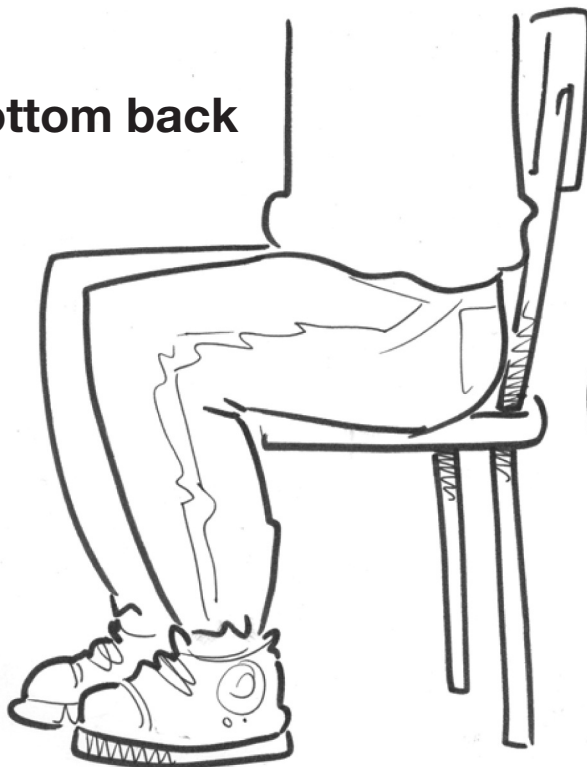
Feet flat



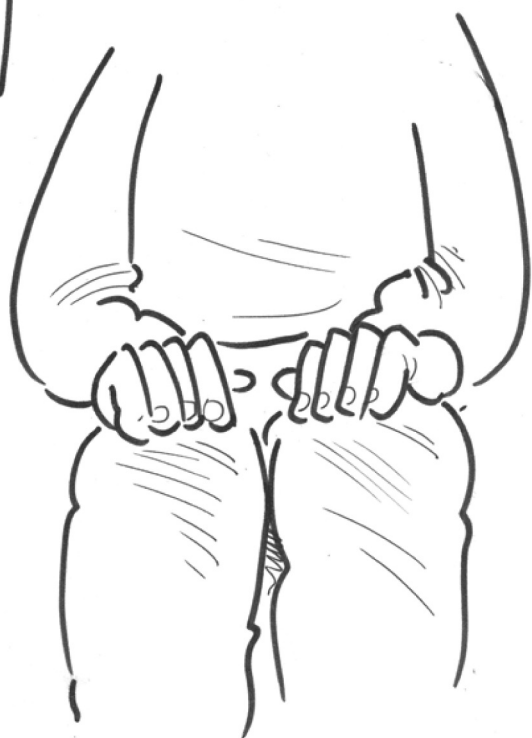
Head middle



Bottom back

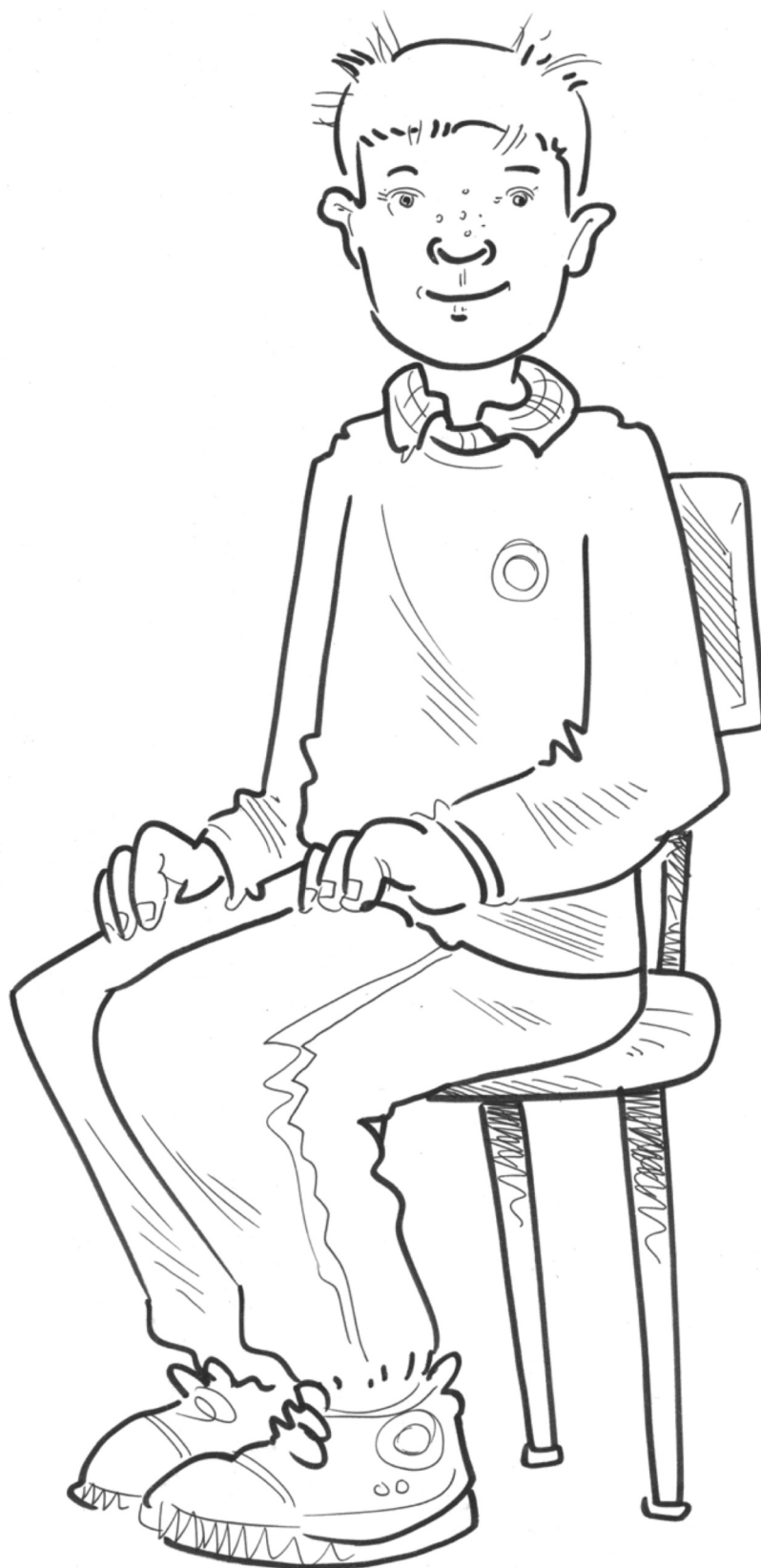


Hands down



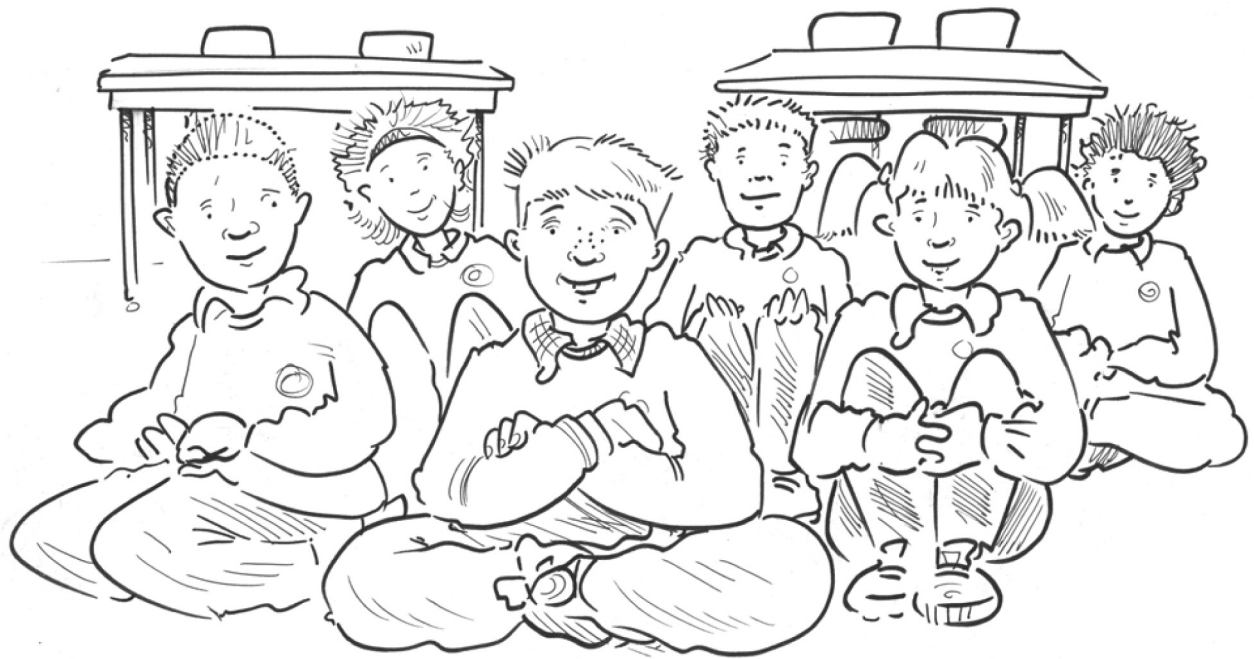
Appendix

Example D: Good sitting - how to



Appendix

Example E: Good sitting - how to



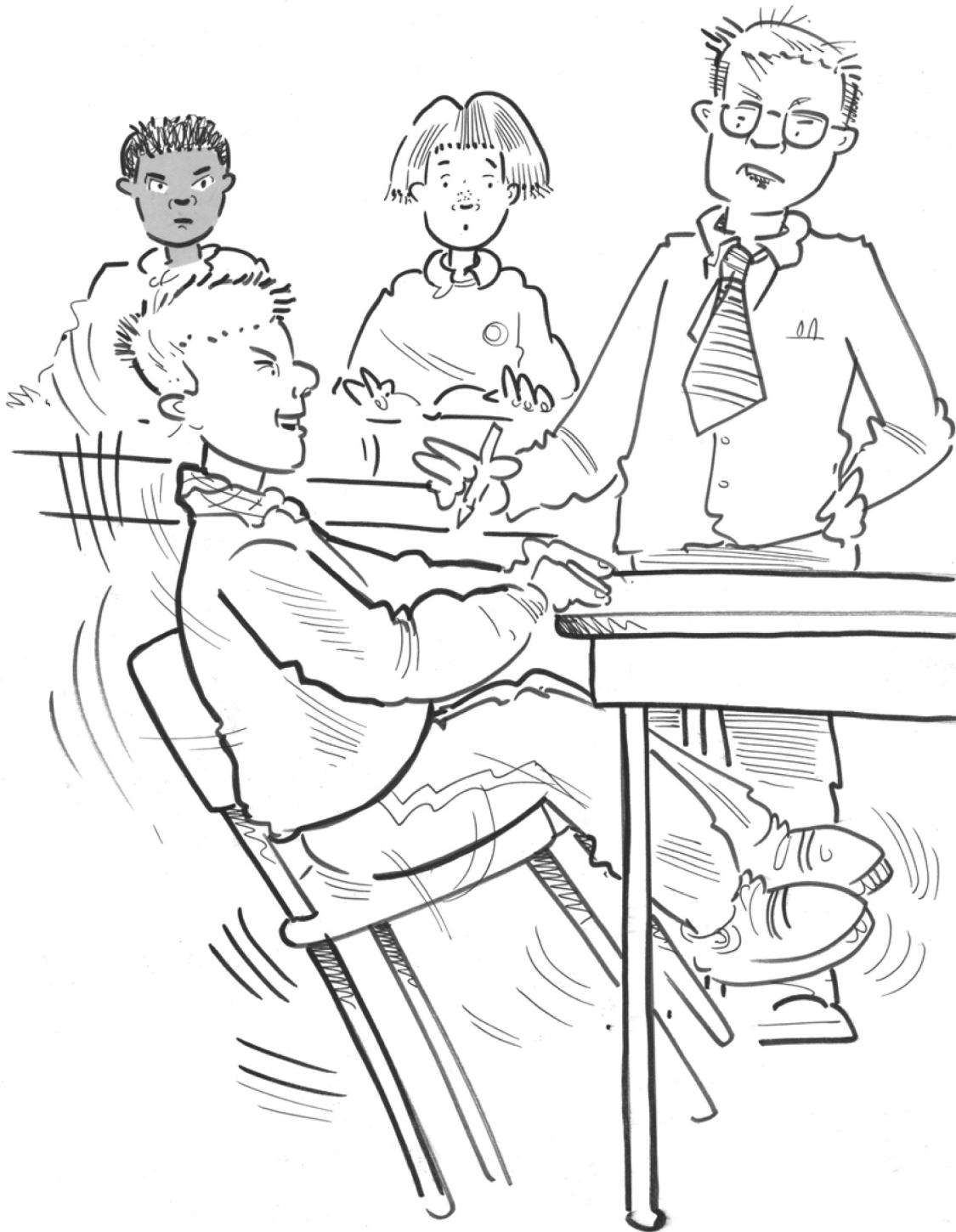
Appendix

Example F: Good sitting - how not to!



Appendix

Example G: Good sitting - how not to!



Appendix

Example H: Good learning – how to



Appendix

Example I: Good learning - how to!



Appendix

Example J: **Good learning - how not to!**



Appendix

Example K: Good learning - how not to!



Appendix

Example L: Good asking - how to!



Appendix

Example M: Good asking - how not to!



Appendix

Example N: Good asking - how not to!

