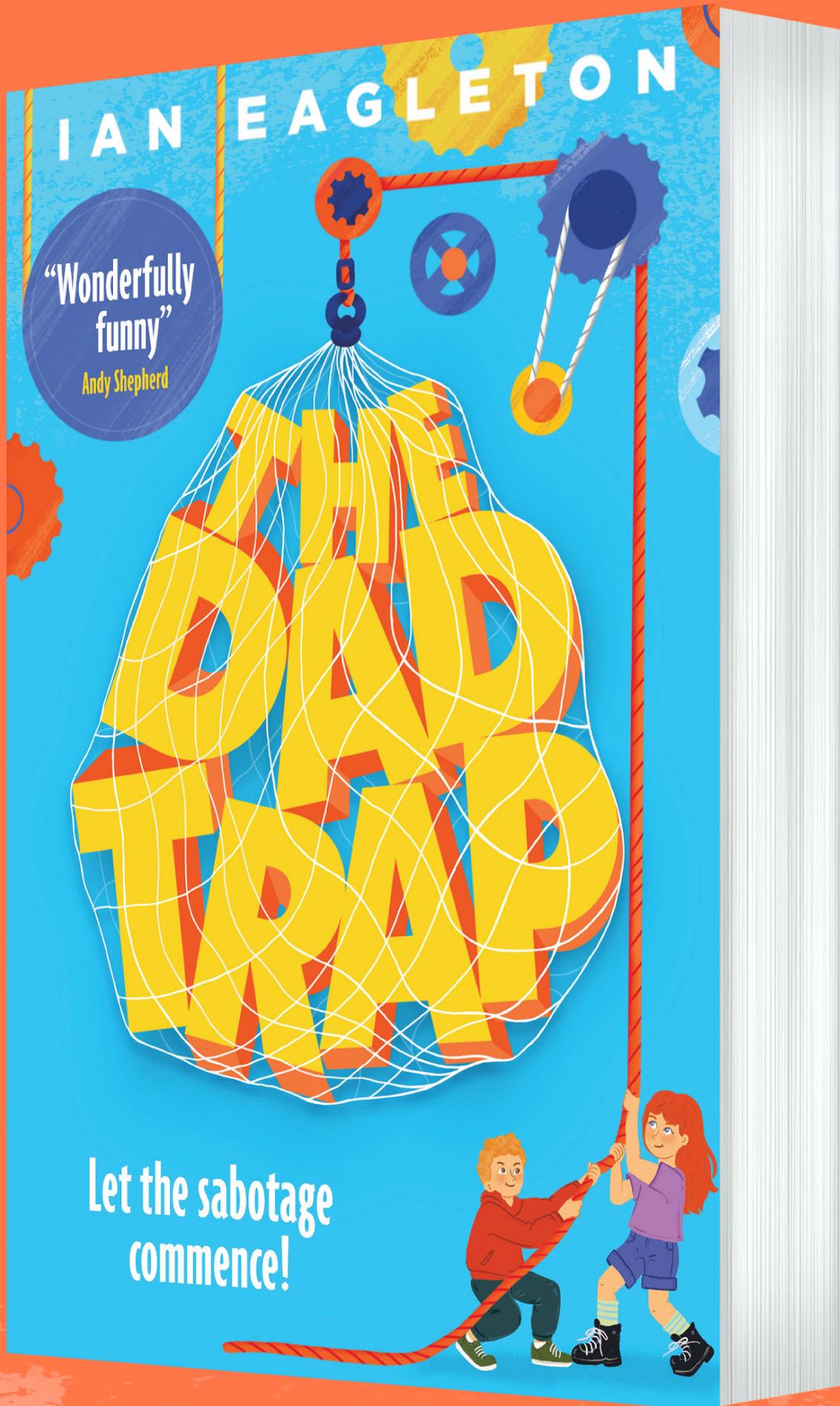


# *The Dad Trap* Lesson Plans



 SCHOLASTIC

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# LESSON PLAN 1 (Year 5)

## Objectives

- To infer characters' feelings and motives from dialogue and action
- To explore how first impressions are formed
- To understand how new the children might feel when joining a class

## Outcomes

The children will:

- Identify how William and Florence feel when they first meet
- Explain how misunderstandings arise
- Write a short character reflection

## Resources

- *The Dad Trap* by Ian Eagleton
- Resource Sheet 1: What You Say vs What You Think!

## Lead-in (Whole class)

Read aloud the moment where Florence demands William move his things and he blurts out "BOUDICA!" and laughs (page 6) Discuss with the children why this happened. What is it about William that means he sometimes just blurts things out? How might those around him respond (they may laugh, poke fun at him, remind him of it later etc.)

# Task

Ask the children to create a 'freeze frame' of that moment, imagining a photograph is being taken. The children should discuss in pairs but when 'Freeze' is said by the teacher, they should be silent. One child should be William, and the other Florence.

Encourage the children to think about:

- Their body posture - how are they sat/positioned, what are they doing with their arms/legs?
- Their facial expression - what are they trying to show with their faces? Discuss emotions/reactions.
- The distance between them - they are in class sat side by side - how close are they? Is one moving away or towards the other - why?

As the children go into freeze framing, the teacher should walk around and narrate key points from the ideas of the pairs, for example:

"I can see crossed arms here... leaning away here... eyes down..." This allows the children to explicitly see physical clues just like William does later when he becomes a "detective" of people's emotions.

# Extension

The children should complete *Resource Sheet 1: What You Say vs What You Think!*, writing down in the speech/thought bubbles what William and Florence say in the book and then what they are actually thinking.

Ask the children to identify what the characters say in the book and ask them to think about what their 'inner voice' might be thinking. Ask the children: Does Florence really hate William... or is she protecting herself? Why might William talk so much when he's nervous? Allow the children some space here to share their own inner voice and why they might do certain things/ behave in certain ways. Note: this is an opportunity to share in a safe space. No child should feel they have to share and anyone that does should feel supported.

Complete the activity with the children identifying what could have been said or done to clear up the misunderstanding. For example, William could have explained his thought process to Florence so she understood why he shouted out.

# Resource Sheet 1: What You Say vs What You Think!

Identify and write down what the characters say in the book in one speech bubble and what they might be thinking in the other thought bubble. Remember what they say may not be what they are thinking!



**What William says:**

Two empty speech bubbles for writing what William says.

**What William thinks:**

Two empty thought bubbles for writing what William thinks.



**What Florence says:**

Two empty speech bubbles for writing what Florence says.

**What William thinks:**

Two empty thought bubbles for writing what William thinks.



# LESSON PLAN 2 (Year 5)

## Objectives

- To analyse how power and popularity work in friendships
- To recognise bullying and social exclusion
- To use evidence from a text

## Outcomes

The children will:

- Explain how Millie uses power
- Identify how Florence and William respond to bullying
- Write a short advice paragraph

## Resources

- *The Dad Trap* by Ian Eagleton (Chapter 4)
- Resource Sheet 2: Advice Frame

## Lead-in (Whole class)

Read Chapter 4 - Click or Clique? This is where Millie tries to recruit Florence into her group and mocks William for his behaviour. What thoughts do the children have about this? Have they experienced anything similar? How did they respond? From these questions, allow the children to discuss instances in school when they may have experienced similar things.

# Task

Conscience Alley is a strategy that encourages the presentation of two points of view. This strategy is successfully implemented after the reading of a text or after undertaking a topic that has several viewpoints (in this case, whether Millie is being kind or hurtful).

The children need to form two lines facing each other. They take a few steps back from the opposite line so an 'alley' can be formed. Each student line is given a point of view they must justify and give examples for. So, in this case, on one side should be those who are whispering why Millie is kind, and on the other, why Millie is bullying.

One child is then selected to walk down the middle of the alley. As they walk past each person, they must stop and listen to each point of view, which is whispered (as if it is the person's conscience speaking to them). The children in the lines must state their point of view and give an example or reason for their thinking. It is important that each child is heard so the child walking down the alley can hear what each person says. The child walking through the 'alley' then needs to decide as to what they think they should do at the end of it.

Scan the QR code below to watch a useful video demonstrating what a conscience alley is and how to get the most out of it:



From this, discuss what the children actually think - is Millie being a good friend? Why/why not? Does Millie have any 'power' in the situation - over who and when? Why might Florence refuse to join her?

# Extension

Using *Resource Sheet 2: Advice Frame*, the children should write some advice to William or Florence about how they should deal with the situation Millie put them in. What advice would they give them? Get the children to think about the following question in particular: What should you do when someone tries to control or embarrass you?

Within their advice, get the children to think about:

- How they might respond in the moment it happens
- Who they might go to for help - what could an adult do to help?
- What would make William or Florence feel safe?
- Is there somewhere in school or at home they feel is a safe space to go?

Link the advice to three key areas:

- **Peer pressure** - feeling like they have to behave in a certain way because of their group
- **Emotional safety** - what feelings arise and how to recognise this to find someone or a safe space
- **Respecting yourself** - not being afraid of standing up for yourself when you feel you are not being respected by others



# LESSON PLAN 1 (Year 6)

## Objectives

- To explore how sensory overload and anxiety affect behaviour
- To use text evidence to understand emotional responses
- To develop empathy

## Outcomes

The children will:

- Identify triggers for William's distress
- Explain why he reacts impulsively
- Suggest supportive strategies

## Resources

- *The Dad Trap* by Ian Eagleton (Chapter 5)
- Resource Sheet 1: Body, Thoughts and Actions
- Resource Sheet 2: Body Map

## Lead-in (Whole class)

Read chapter 5 where William deliberately knocks the table to force the water pot to spill over Florence's artwork. After reading the art-room scene where William becomes jealous of Florence's painting and deliberately knocks the table, causing the water to spill over her work, pause and explain that this is a moment where William's emotions take control of his behaviour. On the board draw three columns with the headings Body, Thoughts and Actions. Ask the children to be "emotion detectives", emphasising that this is not to judge William but to understand what happened inside him before the spill.

# Task

Using *Resource Sheet 1: Body, Thoughts and Actions* allow the children to first identify the *Body* clues from the text – for example; William’s tight jaw, hot face, shaky, fizzy feelings and sense of being unable to breathe – record these in the ‘Body’ column. Then move to the *Thoughts* column, drawing out William’s inner story: that Florence’s painting is better, that art is the one thing he feels good at, and that he cannot let her take this away from him. These thoughts are shown to fuel the emotional storm building inside him.

Only then are the *Actions* added: standing up, bumping the table, and spilling the water. Explain this using the fight-or-flight response: when emotions get too big, the thinking brain switches off and the body reacts to protect itself. Discuss what supports in school might be used to help, such as time out, a Book Nook or the Sensory Room could have helped William calm his body before things went wrong, helping them see that behaviour grows out of feelings rather than simply being “good” or “bad”.

# Extension

The children should complete *Resource Sheet 2: Body Map*, colouring where William feels emotions (heart racing, hot face, shaky hands) and link this to types of behaviour. Ask them to draw a line from the internal part of the body and label this with; ‘When this happens, I might...’. Allow the children to express what they might do in a situation like that e.g. shout, throw something etc.

Link these responses to three key areas:

- **Anger** - discuss with the children about how it’s okay to be angry but how we deal with our response is crucial to the result of our actions.
- **Anxiety** - ask, can anxiety make us behave differently? How? Discuss what behaviour changes when someone is anxious.
- **Self-control** - what does this look/feel like? What things can we do to feel in control of our emotions again. Rename this self-regulation so the children can see that it is not about keeping our feelings in but more about allowing them out in a more positive way.in control of our emotions again.

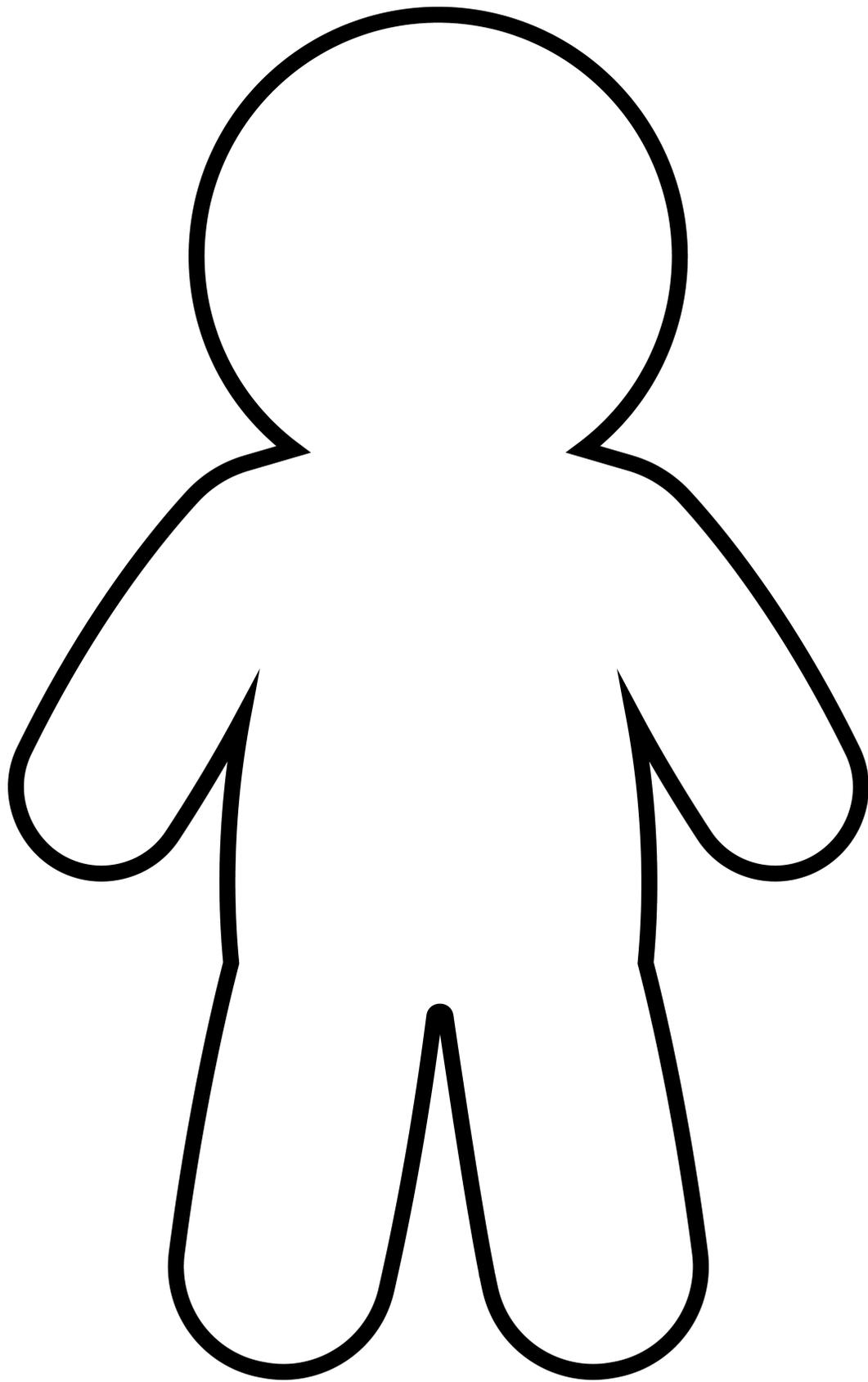
# Resource Sheet 1: Body, Thoughts and Actions

Look at the clues from the text for each column – for example; William’s tight jaw, hot face, shaky, fizzy feelings and sense of being unable to breathe – record these in the Body column. Then move to the Thoughts column, drawing out William’s inner story: that Florence’s painting is better, that art is the one thing he feels good at, and that he cannot let her take this away from him. These thoughts are shown to fuel the emotional storm building inside him.

<b>Body</b>	<b>Thoughts</b>	<b>Actions</b>
<b>Tight Jaw</b>	<b>I’m angry</b>	<b>Bumping the table</b>

## Resource Sheet 2: Body Map

Colour in the areas of William's body that he is physically feeling the effects of his emotions. As you do this, draw a line from the area and label it. For example; heart racing. Add under the label the action 'when this happens, I might...', and complete the sentence.



# LESSON PLAN 2 (Year 6)

## Objectives

- To understand how we repair relationships after mistakes
- To analyse how characters respond to conflict
- To write a meaningful apology

## Outcomes

The children will:

- Explain why Florence is hurt
- Identify what makes a sincere apology
- Write a letter from William

## Resources

- Extract from *The Dad Trap* where Florence's painting is ruined and she says "Whatever... I don't care"
- Resource Sheet 1: Whatever, I Don't Care... (But I Do Really)
- Resource Sheet 2: Sorry Not Sorry

## Lead-in (Whole class)

When the class reaches Florence's line, "*Whatever... I don't care,*" after her painting has been ruined, pause reading and allow the significance of that moment to sit in the room. Recap everything that has just happened: Florence's beautiful work has been destroyed, she is wet, embarrassed and surrounded by other children watching her. Then ask, "Do people always say what they really feel?" This signals that Florence's words may not match her inner experience.



Invite the children to suggest what Florence might actually be feeling underneath her flat, dismissive response. As children offer ideas such as embarrassment, hurt and disappointment, the teacher draws attention to how her body language in the text — clenched fists, rigid posture, stormy expression — does not match the words “I don’t care”. This helps the children see that emotions can be communicated through tone, posture and behaviour as well as speech.

## Task

Using the lead in for this activity, guide the children using *Resource Sheet 1: Whatever, I Don’t Care... (But I Do Really)*, to look closely at Florence’s response after her painting is ruined and to explore the difference between what she says and what she may actually feel. The children begin by writing down Florence’s exact words from the text, “Whatever... I don’t care.” They are then asked to think carefully about how those words sound. Rather than focusing on whether the words are right or wrong, the children need to decide whether they come across as confident, careless, angry, calm, upset, or as someone pretending not to care. This helps the children recognise that tone and meaning are not always the same.

Next, the children move beyond Florence’s words to consider her hidden feelings. Using a list of possible emotions such as embarrassed, hurt, disappointed, lonely, worried or jealous, the children choose the feelings that best match what they think Florence is experiencing inside. They then write one of these feelings into a sentence beginning, “Florence might really be feeling...”. This encourages children to practice emotional inference and to connect Florence’s behaviour to her inner world rather than judging her on the surface.

Then direct the children to think about why Florence might hide these real feelings. The children should complete the sentence “Florence hides her real feelings because...” using ideas such as not wanting people to see her upset, feeling proud, being afraid of being laughed at, not trusting others yet, or wanting to look strong. This stage helps the children understand emotional masking and how people protect themselves when they feel vulnerable.

Finally, the children should imagine what Florence might have said if she had felt safe enough to be honest. They write an alternative line that shows her true feelings, such as admitting she is upset or disappointed. This helps the children reflect on how communication changes when someone feels secure, and it reinforces the idea that behind defensive or dismissive words there is often a much more sensitive emotional truth.

## Extension

When introducing this, remind pupils of the moment when Florence's painting is ruined and how she tries to hide her hurt by saying, "Whatever... I don't care." Apologies are not just about saying sorry, but about repairing trust and helping someone feel understood. Using *Resource Sheet 2: Sorry Not Sorry*, model the difference between a weak and a strong apology. Discuss a weak example, "Sorry if you were upset," as an apology that avoids responsibility and sounds as if the problem belongs to the other person. In contrast, a strong example clearly names what happened, why it happened and the impact it had: "I knocked your painting over because I was jealous. I hurt you. I will try to stop and breathe next time." This shows a real apology takes ownership, shows empathy and offers a way to change. Using Resource Sheet 2, ask the children to write their letter of apology to Florence as if they are William. It should include:

- What he did
- Why it was wrong
- How he will try to fix it

# Resource sheet 1: Whatever...I Don't Care (But I Do Really)

## The Words Florence Said

Write Florence's words from the story:

“ \_\_\_\_\_ ”

How do these words sound? Tick all you think might apply:

- confident
- careless
- angry
- pretending
- calm
- upset

## The Hidden Feelings

Circle up to three words that Florence might really be feeling:

**embarrassed   hurt   angry   sad   disappointed**

**lonely   worried   jealous   shocked**

Florence might really be feeling \_\_\_\_\_,  
because \_\_\_\_\_.

### **Why would she hide it?**

Florence hides her real feelings because \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

If Florence told the truth, she might say \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.



# Curriculum Links for *The Dad Trap*

## UKS2 English – the children should be taught to:

### Reading comprehension:

- Maintain positive attitudes to reading and understanding of what they read
- Discuss and evaluate how authors use language, including figurative language, considering the impact on the reader
- Distinguish between statements of fact and fiction
- Retrieve, record and present information from non-fiction
- Participate in discussions about books that are read to them and those they can read for themselves, building on their own and others' ideas and challenging views courteously
- Provide reasoned justifications for their views

### Writing - composition:

- Plan their writing
- Draft and write
- Evaluate and edit
- Proof-read
- Perform their own compositions, using appropriate intonation, volume, and movement so that meaning is clear

### Writing – vocabulary, grammar and punctuation:

- Develop understanding of the concepts
- Indicate grammatical and other features
- Use and understand grammatical terminology

## KS2 PSHE (from the PSHE Association Programme of Study)

- H17. to recognise that feelings can change over time and range in intensity
- H18. about everyday things that affect feelings and the importance of expressing feelings
- H19. a varied vocabulary to use when talking about feelings; about how to express feelings in different ways;
- H20. strategies to respond to feelings, including intense or conflicting feelings; how to manage and respond to feelings appropriately and proportionately in different situations
- R8. to recognise other shared characteristics of healthy family life, including commitment, care, spending time together; being there for each other in times of difficulty
- R9. how to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice
- R21. about discrimination: what it means and how to challenge it
- R31. to recognise the importance of self-respect and how this can affect their thoughts and feelings about themselves; that everyone, including them, should expect to be treated politely and with respect by others (including when online and/or anonymous) in school and in wider society; strategies to improve or support courteous, respectful relationships
- R32. about respecting the differences and similarities between people and recognising what they have in common with others e.g. physically, in personality or background

- R33. to listen and respond respectfully to a wide range of people, including those whose traditions, beliefs and lifestyle are different to their own
- L7. to value the different contributions that people and groups make to the community
- L8. about diversity: what it means; the benefits of living in a diverse community; about valuing diversity within communities
- L9. about stereotypes; how they can negatively influence behaviours and attitudes towards others; strategies for challenging stereotypes
- L10. about prejudice; how to recognise behaviours/actions which discriminate against others; ways of responding to it if witnessed or experienced