

# Making Sense of Relationships

Lesson 6:  
**Consent**

Key stage 3

**NSPCC**

In partnership with

**PSHE**  
Association



## Context

This is the sixth in a series of six lessons that focus on both empowering and supporting young people as they develop relationships. This lesson focuses on consent. It aims to equip young people with the knowledge and skills they will need to keep themselves and others safe.

While PSHE education lessons should be pacy, of course you want to meet the needs of your pupils. Since the activities take one hour to complete, this lesson is planned as a minimum one-hour lesson. But pupils can gain more from a longer in depth exploration of an activity, so long as you are comfortable leading the discussion and you feel pupils are progressing towards the objectives. If you want to do this, you might want to extend the time to two lessons.

## Note:

None of the lessons are designed to be taught in isolation. They should always form part of a planned, developmental PSHE education programme.

Consent can be a challenging topic to cover with young people, and it may raise concerns and questions for you as a teacher or for the pupils in your class. If you would like further support or information, the PSHE Association has more detailed guidance about this topic, which can be found on its website:

**[pshe-association.org.uk/curriculum-and-resources/resources/guidance-teaching-about-consent-pshe-education-key](https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/curriculum-and-resources/resources/guidance-teaching-about-consent-pshe-education-key)**

## Learning objectives

- We are learning about the meaning and importance of consent in relationships
- We are learning how to seek, give and not give consent in different situations

## Intended learning outcomes

- ✓ I can explain what consent means
- ✓ I can suggest examples of how to communicate wants and needs in a positive and healthy relationship
- ✓ I can identify the behaviours and language which might indicate consent in different situations
- ✓ I can explain that everyone has the right to freely give or not give their consent and that no one has the right to intimidate or manipulate someone into doing something they do not want to do
- ✓ I can explain that it is the legal and moral responsibility of the person seeking consent to ensure consent has been given

## Resources required

- Box or envelope for anonymous questions
- Resource 1: *Dan's words (for pupils who may need support)*
- Resource 2: *Support services handout*
- Resource 3: *Teacher support sheet*

## Climate for learning

Before teaching this lesson make sure you have read the accompanying Resource Guidance. It has guidance on establishing ground rules, the limits of confidentiality, communication and handling questions effectively.

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## Key words

Consent, abuse, rights

## Baseline activity

### Introduction 5 min

Revisit ground rules and remind pupils of the importance of keeping personal stories private. Draw attention to the anonymous question box and remind them that they can submit questions at any time, whether during or after the lesson.

Next share the learning objectives and outcomes with pupils. Explain that today the class will think about consent and what that means for relationships. They will consider communication techniques for seeking, giving and not giving consent.

### Baseline assessment activity 10 min

Ask pupils to divide an A4 page into four sections (either using a ruler or by folding) and to write the word consent in the centre of their page. They should then add ideas to the four different sections of their page around the word, using the headings:

Synonyms – what other words are related or have a similar meaning?

Examples – when might someone need to ask for consent?

Context – where have they heard the word used before?

Behaviour – how might someone know that someone is giving their consent? (*Tip: Think about what the person might say, how they might look or behave*)

As this is a baseline assessment, it should be completed individually in the first instance, with minimal input. You may choose to circulate the room and observe, looking out for key themes recurring in pupils' work as they are completing the activity. Alternatively, ask for some initial feedback after the activity has been completed and collate key ideas on the board.

Once the activity has been completed, or adequate time given, the sheet should be put aside for the rest of the lesson. Tell pupils they will return to it at the end.

## Core activities

### Understanding consent 5 min

Ask pupils to create a definition of the word consent by working with a partner and using their synonyms section of the page. Ask pupils to feedback their ideas and create a class definition of the word 'consent' to be displayed on the board.

Display this definition of consent:

**Consent is agreement which is given willingly and freely without exploitation, threat or fear, and by a person who has the capacity to give their agreement.**

Encourage pupils to engage with this definition by asking them:

- How similar is this to our class definition?
- What do the words 'willingly' and 'freely' mean in this definition?
- How can we know if consent is willingly and freely given?
- What does it mean for someone to have capacity to give their agreement?
- Why is someone unable to give consent if they are threatened or afraid?

These questions could form part of a whole class or small group discussion, or pupils could reflect on and write their own ideas and responses.

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### **Listen to your selfie      10 min**

Watch Childline's '#Listentoyourselfie: The Party'

[youtube.com/watch?v=\\_G8b7yZapkl](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_G8b7yZapkl)

This 4-minute film shows the story of a young woman who is being pressured into a more intimate relationship than she is ready for. How will she respond?

#### **NB: Refer to the teacher support sheet before discussing these questions with your class**

Explore this story through discussion and questioning. You may consider asking pupils:

- How do you think Lara (the main character) is feeling when Dan is flirting with her?
- How do you think Lara is feeling at the moment the film ends?
- What concerns does Lara have?
- What techniques does Dan use to persuade Lara?
- What signs are there that Lara wants Dan to stop?
- Why might Lara feel that she has to do what Dan is asking her to?
- Thinking back to our definition of consent, if Lara decides to go upstairs with Dan, is she giving her consent to anything? Why or why not?
- What might make Lara less likely to go upstairs with him?
- How would Dan act differently if he really cared about Lara?
- If Dan behaved in this way, how would Lara feel differently? Why might this produce a better outcome for both of them?
- What could Lara's friends do next if they were concerned about her?

If the point isn't raised through discussion, emphasise that as the seeker of consent, the legal and moral responsibility lies with Dan in this scenario. If Dan continues to have sex with her, without ensuring Lara really wants to go ahead, he is guilty of rape. The absence of no doesn't mean yes.

### **Consent conversations      15 min**

Ask pupils to script a conversation between Lara and Dan that starts from the moment at the end of the film, where she refuses to go upstairs with him. This could be completed individually or in pairs.

Pupils should consider and try to include:

- how he tries to persuade her
- how she responds and asserts herself clearly
- how he might react
- the body language of both characters
- how her friends might help or get involved

#### **For pupils who need support:**

Ask pupils to imagine how Lara might clearly state she does not want to have sex with Dan. Give pupils the statements Dan uses in the video (Resource 1) and ask them to write a clear response to each.

#### **For pupils who need a challenge:**

Encourage pupils to think through the scenario in more depth. For example, what should Lara do if Dan still won't respect her decision? Where could Lara seek immediate help? Where could she seek help in the following days or weeks? Why is it important to stick to her decision?

At the end of this activity, encourage pupils to compare their scripts either with a partner (if completed individually) or with another pair. Ask them to identify common ideas in their scripts and share these with the class. You should draw out the key learning point – Lara does not do anything she does not want or need to do. While it is valuable to rehearse assertive and clear communication from Lara's perspective, you can reinforce that it is Dan's legal and moral responsibility to recognise and respect her choices.

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## Assessment for and of learning

### Reflect learning and signpost support 5 min

Ask pupils to return to the baseline assessment activity on consent from today's lesson. They should adapt or add to it in a different coloured pen to demonstrate any changes to their opinions and progress in their understanding. While pupils are adding ideas to their baseline assessment, you can display a range of support services. These should include people in school, as well as websites or phone lines such as Childline, the NSPCC and rape crisis.

Hand out Resource 2 (Support services handout) for young people to take away with them, helping them to identify the people in school that they could speak to for help.

Ask pupils to write down any questions they have relating to today's learning, then collect them with the anonymous question box. To make sure that young people do not feel self-conscious, you can tell all members of the class that everyone has to write something – either a question or no question. These should be addressed at the start of the following lesson.

### End of unit assessment 10 min

Explain to pupils that they are now going to revisit their draw and write task from the start of the unit of work (Lesson 1: healthy relationships). Return their work to them from lesson 1's baseline assessment and, using a different coloured pen, instruct pupils to now add any ideas they have developed throughout the unit of lessons.

Encourage them to consider:

- Differences between positive, healthy relationships and negative, unhealthy relationships.
- The unique nature of online relationships.
- Gender stereotyping, sexual bullying and sharing sexual images.
- What someone should do if they are concerned about themselves or a friend.
- Language someone can use to communicate in their relationship.
- How consent is demonstrated through someone's behaviour.

## Extension activities and home learning

### Extension Activity 1:

Pupils who are confident and willing to do so could perform their scripted consent conversation to the class. You may also choose to create a set of criteria for the class members who form the audience to help them identify assertive and clear communication in the role-plays. If you know the classroom climate is secure and that the actors are confident to allow input, the pupils could participate in the role-play by pausing the action to suggest changes or improvements to the script that they believe might promote a better outcome.

### Extension Activity 2:

It is really important to balance negative portrayals of relationships with positive representations. Wherever possible, PSHE education lessons should focus on promoting positive social norms and healthy relationships behaviours. Therefore, you should encourage pupils to create an alternative consent conversation between a couple in a healthy relationship discussing when they are ready for a sexual relationship.

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### **Extension Activity 3:**

Design a storyboard for your own '#Listentoyourselfie' video clip, using the success criteria identified below. This video clip might cover any of the other key issues raised by the topics covered in the last six lessons, such as:

Healthy and unhealthy relationships

Gender stereotyping

Sexual bullying and peer pressure

Online relationships and online safety

Sexting/sending 'nudes'

Consent

### **Success criteria for storyboard**

*Your video clip should:*

- *create a realistic and tricky situation a young person might be in*
- *end at a moment where your character has to make a choice between a safe or unsafe scenario*
- *include "selfie advice" where the character's selfie represents what they are thinking about the choice they are about to make*
- *identify important messages and include positive alternatives*
- *refer to Childline and NSPCC services.*

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## Resource 1

### Dan's Words

"What's wrong? Have you been leading me on all night?"

**Response:**

"Don't you like me?"

**Response:**

"You're my special girl"

**Response:**

"You know I could have anyone, right?"

**Response:**

"Let's go upstairs then"

**Response:**

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## Resource 2

### Pupil support sheet

It's always important that people know where they can go to seek help, support and guidance about any concerns they might have, especially those concerning relationships.

For many young people, the first place they turn might be to trusted friends and family members, who can talk through a situation and suggest ideas. But it is also helpful to know there are lots of other places for you:

#### **In school**

Your form tutor:

Your head of year:

Your PSHE teacher:

The school counsellor / nurse / behaviour mentor:

The school safeguarding lead:

Organisation	Phone	Website
Childline	<b>0800 1111</b>	<b>childline.org.uk</b>
Childnet	N/A	<b>childnet.com/young-people</b>
Stonewall	<b>08000 50 20 20</b>	<b>youngstonewall.org.uk</b>
Anti-bullying Alliance	N/A	<b>anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk</b>
Rape Crisis	<b>0808 802 9999</b>	<b>rapecrisis.org.uk</b>
Victim Support	<b>0808 16 89 111</b>	<b>victimsupport.org.uk</b>





## Resource 3

### Teacher Support sheet: Consent questions



There are prompt questions for discussion following watching Childline's #Listentoyourselfie film, and it is important that key points are raised in discussion in response to this scenario.

**1. How do you think Lara (the main character) is feeling whilst Dan is flirting with her?**

*It is useful and important to recognise feelings such as happiness, curiosity, excitement, feeling flattered and enjoying attention; that these are all valid, and that even if Lara starts feeling this way, it is possible her feelings might change.*

**2. How do you think Lara is feeling at the moment the film ends?**

*Draw out that she seems nervous, unhappy, awkward, scared, intimidated, powerless and that there are clear signs of this in her body language, the way she has behaved and things she has said.*

**3. What concerns does Lara have?**

*Pupils may identify: that she isn't ready, she's drunk and doesn't know what she wants, Dan will spread rumours about her, she feels she owes Dan, she doesn't know how to tell Dan she doesn't want to, what her friends or family will think if she goes through with it.*

**4. What techniques does Dan use to persuade Lara?**

*He brings around alcohol, he compliments her, he is touching her and invading her personal space, he makes her feel guilty, he says he will get someone else, he pushes her against the sink, he won't pay attention to what she wants.*

**5. What signs are there that Lara wants Dan to stop?**

*She pushes him away and moves away from him, her facial expressions, she moves his hand off her bottom, she looks nervous, she says "my friends are here", she is sweating.*

**6. Why might Lara feel that she has to do what Dan is asking her to?**

*He has brought round alcohol, he is older than her, she is worried he won't want to hang out with her if she doesn't or that he will tell everyone she is frigid, she thinks she owes him. Ensure learners are clear that Lara is under no obligation to do what Dan wants.*

**7. Thinking back to our definition of consent, if Lara decides to go upstairs with Dan, is she giving her consent to anything? Why/why not?**

*Ensure the point is made that if someone is pressurised or coerced, then even if they say yes or do what the person asks, this does not constitute consent.*

**8. What might make Lara less likely to go upstairs with him?**

*Self-esteem, confidence, support from her friends, thinking about her own values and what she wants, a good understanding of consent and her rights in relationships, knowing what to say to be able to exit the situation.*

**9. How would Dan act differently if he really cared about Lara?**

*He would wait until she is ready and listen to what she wants.*

**10. If Dan behaved in this way, how would Lara feel differently? Why might this produce a better outcome for both of them?**

*Lara might want to move their relationship further and have a physically intimate relationship with him (although she also may not). If she didn't want to, she would still feel respected by Dan and trust would develop between them both. There could be severe consequences for Dan as the legal and moral responsibility lies with him in this scenario. If Dan continues to have sex with her, without ensuring Lara really wants to go ahead, he is guilty of rape. The absence of no does not mean yes.*

**11. What could Lara's friends do next if they were concerned about her?**

*Lara's friends could go and look for her if they realise she is missing and interrupt the conversation in the kitchen or on the stairs. They could ask Dan and his friend to leave or simply ask Lara to come back into the lounge and stay with them. They might choose to call her or their parents for advice and support. If they felt Lara or they were in immediate danger they might call the police.*

Together we can help children who've been abused to rebuild their lives. Together we can protect children at risk. And, together, we can find the best ways of preventing child abuse from ever happening.

We change the law. We visit schools across the country, helping children understand what abuse is. And, through our Childline service, we give young people a voice when no one else will listen.

But all this is only possible with your support. Every pound you raise, every petition you sign, every minute of your time, will help make sure we can fight for every childhood.

**[nspcc.org.uk](https://www.nspcc.org.uk)**

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Personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education is a school subject that supports pupils to be healthy, safe and prepared for modern life. The PSHE education curriculum covers a range of pressing issues facing children and young people today, including those relating to relationships, mental and physical health, staying safe and aware online, financial literacy and careers.

The PSHE Association is the national body for PSHE education. A charity and membership organisation, the Association works to improve PSHE education standards by supporting over 20,000 teachers and schools with advice, training and support. Find out more at **[pshe-association.org.uk](https://www.pshe-association.org.uk)**