

Lesson five: My rights and responsibilities



Lesson aim:

Pupils know that marriage is a commitment freely entered into by both people and that no one should marry if they don't absolutely want to or are not making the decision freely for themselves.



Learning outcomes:

- I understand what marriage is and why this is something special between two people
- I have explored the reasons why some people choose not to get married
- I know that marriage should always be a choice



Resources required:

- Resource sheet: Wanted Advert
- Resource sheet: Characters (if completing the extension activity)
- Props, suitable for a pretend wedding

Key words: marriage, arranged marriage, forced marriage

Teacher notes:

Pupils will have differing views on marriage depending on their family circumstances, faith and personal values. Be aware of pupils who live in families where parents have not married, separated or divorced by talking inclusively and sensitively about the quality of a relationship, love, respect and trust. Talk equally favourably of people who are not in a romantic relationship.

Arranged marriage refers to a marriage where parents, or the wider family play an instrumental role in matching people, based on the belief that the marriage will support the growing of love and commitment to last a lifetime. The people getting married retain the right to refuse the marriage if they feel it is an unsuitable match. If the parents or wider family do not listen to their child's wishes not to marry then this becomes a forced marriage. Forced marriage exists across a range of cultures but is illegal.

For Activity one, pupils may enjoy having something symbolic to wear when they are pretending to get married, such as veil or hat, some flowers to carry or a tiara to wear.

Begin the lesson by...

Explaining to pupils that in this lesson they will be learning about the importance of loving, respectful relationships. Marriage is a commitment that some people choose to make, showing that they are committed to each other for life. Tell pupils that marriage is a legal commitment. Reassure pupils that marriage should always be a choice. Some people make the decision not to be married and this is OK. What matters is that people choose to be in a relationship and that the relationship is loving and respectful. Remind pupils of the working agreement.

Activity one: Wedding day!

Explain to pupils that two people get married to each other through a wedding. This can be a man and a woman, two women or two men. The wedding day should always feel a happy and special day, which the wedding couple can look back on with good memories.

Ask pupils to raise their hands if they have ever been to a wedding, ask some of these pupils where the wedding was held.

Suggestions answers: *Religious building such as a church or mosque, registry office or an alternative venue with a licence to marry such as a hotel, castle etc.*

Ask pupils to share what they enjoyed and remember about the wedding day.

Highlight to pupils some of the key points, emphasising that people can choose to get married in different ways. Different faiths have different traditions and customs. In this lesson, they will be focusing on the traditional Christian English marriage vow and thinking about what the vows mean.

Ask two pupils to volunteer to come to the front of the class and pretend to get married. It is very important that you do not force a child to do this if they are unwilling. They can be the same, or different gender to each other. Having symbolic clothing or props for this will help the class to get into the 'occasion'. If possible arrange your class seating to represent rows for the class to sit in like a congregation. Ask the two pupils getting married to enter the room and walk down the aisle. When they approach you, say the following:

- **Welcome** (class name) to the wedding of (pupil name) and (pupil name).

Explain that you will now read out parts of the vows. Ask the pupils to repeat them after you. Discuss as a class what each section might mean.

- **I take you to be my wife/husband.** What does it mean to be a wife or a husband? What kind of things should you do and not do?
- **For better for worse, for richer for poorer.** Would it be easier to be married if your partner was healthy and rich? Why is it important that you want to be married to someone whatever their financial or health circumstances?
- **To love and to cherish till death us do part.** What can people do to show that they love and cherish someone? How might they feel when their wife/husband dies?
- **I give you this ring as a sign of our marriage** (if you have a ring that can be used here it will add to the fun!) Why do people wear a wedding ring? Is it important to wear a wedding (not everyone does when they are married)?
- **With my body, I honour you.** It is important to know that whether you are married or not, your body always belongs to you and you do not have to do anything with it or allow anyone to touch it unless you are happy for them to.
- **All that I have I share with you.** How would you feel about sharing all your things? What things might you find hard to share?
- **I now pronounce you husband and wife/wife and wife/husband and husband.** Encourage the class to cheer and clap in celebration.

Reassure pupils that they are not married, as only certain people are legally allowed to marry them and you must be at least 16 to get married with your parent's permission or you have to wait until you are at least 18 to get married without your parent's permission.



Activity two: Wanted!



Is being in love more important than being married?

Pupils are likely to express different opinions based on their personal circumstances and aspirations for the future. Encourage pupils to respect the full range of views and affirm that the important thing is that people only get married if they want to and to someone that they want to when they feel ready.

Give each pupil an advert template. Tell pupils to create an advert for their ideal future partner. Encourage pupils to think about what they will look like, what type of job they might have, if they want their future partner to have some of the same interests as them, what size family they will have etc.



Activity three: Arranged marriage

Tell pupils that in some cultures it is common for parents or other family members to suggest a husband or wife for their child, but the people getting married can decide if they want to or not. This is called an 'Arranged Marriage'. In an arranged marriage the wedding may take place quite quickly. The basis of the marriage is that the two people have committed to grow their love for each other throughout the rest of their lives.

Ask pupils to reflect on their Wanted advert and consider if their parents/family might want to advertise for different things.



How would you feel if your parents picked your future husband or wife? Do you think your parents would pick the same person for you as you would pick for yourself? Which person would you prefer to marry? Why?

Reflect on concepts such as happiness, respect and love.



Extension:

Print out the two characters and ask pupils to consider how they would feel if they were forced, against their wishes to marry the character of the opposite gender to which they were born. Divide pupils into groups of three, and tell them to take it in turns to be:

- Two parents telling their child that they will be getting married
- One child explaining that they do not want to get married

Ask pupils how it felt to not be listened to and tell pupils that it is against the law to force someone to marry against their wishes.

Finish the lesson by:

Providing pupils with an opportunity to ask questions. Ask pupils to share some of the reasons that they feel it is important that marriage is always a choice. Reassure pupils that people have differing views on marriage depending on their family circumstances, faith and personal values. Remind pupils that marriage should always be a choice and that to force someone to marry is against the law. Signpost pupils to who they can talk to in school if they have any concerns or questions about what has been taught in the lesson.



Assessment:

Activity one: Pupils demonstrated an understanding of the serious implication of marriage including its legal framework through the discussion of roleplayed wedding vows.

Activity two: Pupils showed an understanding of the reasons why people choose to get married or to remain in a partnership without marriage.

Activity three: Pupils considered the cultural practice of arranged marriage through discussion. They considered the ways in which their future relationship choices may vary from that of their parents and wider family through the creation of an advert.

Evidence of assessment: Wanted advert.

WANTED

