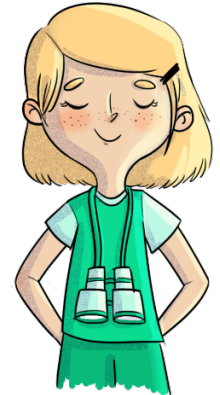


A SHAMBLES IN THE NIGHT

Learning to calm down



Target competency	Manage one’s emotions and stress effectively
Cross-curricular competency (QEP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construct their identity
General objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use various strategies to calm oneself

REVIEW OF THE PREVIOUS WORKSHOP

Remember, in the last workshop, we talked about prejudice. Do you remember the challenge I gave you? Tell me how you did it.

* The challenge was to seek out a new person at recess and get to know them better.

THE ADVENTURES OF LEO AND CHARLIE

Only the embers remain of the campfire around which Charlie, Leo and a few friends are still gathered. They can hear the distant cry of a loon across the lake.

Charlie shares her discomfort: “There are a lot of mosquitoes tonight. It's super humid.”

Leo reassures her: “Yes, but we'll be comfortable in the tent. We know how camping works. We're used to it. The tent is closed up tight. We're well organized. We'll be left in peace.”

Returning to their tent, Charlie and Leo realize that a few of the campers have played a trick on them, unzipping their tent door and making a shambles of their luggage. All the clothes are wet and plenty of mosquitoes have made the tent their home.

Charlie exclaims angrily: “I’m going to find the culprit of this bad joke right now. I'm going to make him swallow every mosquito in this tent!”

Leo urges her to take a step back: “Wait a minute, Charlie. I'm angry too. But let's take the time to think about it. You remember, Mr. Eric, the educator, told us one day that, when you feel angry or have a very strong emotion, it's sometimes better to do something else and come back to the situation once you've calmed down.”

Charlie, calming down a little, replies: “You're probably right. Besides, you often have good ideas to help me calm down. And, it's almost nighttime and I hear it's not very good to go to bed angry.”

DID YOU KNOW?





Music is known to have soothing effects. This is particularly true of soft, relaxing music, which calms our bodies and minds.

In fact, classical music is said to have a greater impact on your health. We can observe how it affects certain physiological functions, such as slowing the heartbeat, lowering blood pressure and reducing levels of the well-known stress hormone cortisol. So music has proven to be a highly interesting stress management tool (Collingwood, 2016).

What's more, there are mind and body benefits to listening to silence. In fact, noise can increase the stress hormone in our brains. Silence, on the other hand, releases tension in the body and brain, acting on blood pressure and blood circulation in the brain.

(Bernardi et al., 2006)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Invite the students to name the strategies they use to calm themselves when they feel the need, as in the story of Leo and Charlie. You can cite concrete examples of situations in which they may feel stress or strong emotions to help them identify the means they use. Make a note on the board of all the strategies named by the students, to show them that there are a multitude of ways to calm themselves down.  8
2. Explain to the students that, as part of the activity, you're going to listen mindfully to different types of music to see the effects this practice can have on their bodies and minds. You can use the information in the *Did you know?* section to explain the impact of music and silence.
3. Explain to the students that they can perform the listening exercise in different ways. Among other things, they can pay attention to the physical sensations or emotions they feel when listening to music. They can try to discover the instruments used, or pay attention to the lyrics (if any).
4. Invite the students to close their eyes if they wish and listen carefully to music of different styles. You can choose your own music or use the following links:
 - Classical music: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9E6b3swbnWg>
 - Rock music: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XNRwOtlpR10>
 - Relaxing music: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SwvjPZ3YcBg>
 - Silence 9
5. After listening to each selection, ask the students the following questions:
 - What did you feel inside (emotions/physical sensations)?
 - Did this music soothe you or not? Why?
6. Point out to the students that styles of music can have completely different effects on different people. Some music calms us, while other types energize us. All we have to do is find the music that makes us feel good! Invite the students to take a moment to listen attentively to music or silence when they feel the need.  10
7. Conclude the workshop by explaining that listening to music is one way to calm yourself, but that there are many others. Suggest they try others from the following address: <https://health.choc.org/7-stress-relief-techniques-for-kids/>  11



COMPLETION ACTIVITY

Explain to the students that this was the last day of Camp OFF-TRAIL for Leo and Charlie this year. Tell them that, even though camp is over, you encourage them to continue using the strategies they've learned to take care of themselves and feel good. Ask the students how they enjoyed the activities, what they remember, and what they learned. Use the reminder posters to help them or provide reminders as needed. The posters are available on the [OFF-TRAIL website](#), under [Workshops and tools for students](#).

ENABLING REINVESTMENT

With the students, you can explore various musical styles using playlists on music apps so they can find songs or playlists that are calming for the group. You can then use this music at certain moments in everyday classroom life, such as when returning from a transition, to promote a return to calm in the classroom, during art periods, or at other times. In this way, you not only help to create a pleasant classroom climate, but also provide an effective means of stress management.

READING SUGGESTIONS

- Verdick, E. & Lisovskis, M. (2015). *How to Take the GRRRR Out of Anger*. Free Spirit Publishing.

