

# DOORWAYS

**Introduction** This lesson was developed as part of TrueTube's collaboration with the Essex Homelessness Response Team and should be used in conjunction with the Interactive Resource which can be accessed via the individual films using the link below.

<https://www.truetube.co.uk/film/doorways-holly?tab=interactive>

The aim of the lesson is to help students understand that however bad life might seem at home, it is usually much worse being homeless. It is better to try and work through disagreements than to walk out on them.

**WARNING** Bear in mind that some of your students may be living in very difficult situations at home, and may even have experienced homelessness themselves. In cases of abuse, then it is – of course – right that young people should be removed from the situation. Have a word with the form teacher to make sure you're aware of any issues.

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# LESSON OVERVIEW

## Suitable for:

Keystages 3 and 4 (11 – 16 year olds)

## Lesson objective(s):

To understand the different options open to homeless young people.  
To understand the problems that a young homeless person might face.  
To learn basic conflict resolution skills.

## Key question:

How should I deal with disagreements at home?

**Time:** 1 hour.

TrueTube films (topic Society, sub topic Community):

**SOPHIE – top left video: click twice to start**

**SEBASTIAN – bottom right video: click twice to start**

TrueTube Interactive:

**DOORWAYS – bottom middle door...**

## Classroom Resources:

Internet connected whiteboard or enough PCs (or other devices) for the class.

And from the **Resources** sections from page 9:

*Resources Pack* with handouts to include:

*Student Notes on the Films*

*What Makes A House A Home?*

*Conflict Resolution for Beginners*

*Roleplay Cards*

## Keywords:

Homeless/Hidden homeless/Sofa surfing/Emergency accommodation/  
Mediation/Hostel/Supported Accommodation

# **FILM DIGEST**

## **Sophie**

Theme A: Jobs & Money Theme B: Poverty

Sophie became homeless at 18 when family life became increasingly difficult with both her parents suffering serious illnesses. Sophie describes her time on the streets and in supported housing as she slowly gets her life back together.

## **Sebastian**

Theme A: Jobs & Money Theme B: Poverty

Sebastian's father threw him out when he was just 17 so he went to the council for help. Sebastian thought that all he had to do was fill out a form to get a council flat, but in reality had to spend a difficult time in a mixed hostel and a houseshare. He shares his past experiences and future ambitions.

# LESSON PLAN

## Part 1(12 minutes):

Watch Sophie's (5.32 minutes) and Sebastian's (6.07 minutes) films and ask the students to take notes in answer to these questions using the handout:

- Why did they leave home?
- Where did they live to begin with?
- What problems did they face?
- Where did they end up living?
- What advice does each person give?

## Part 2 (8 minutes):

Refer to the **What Makes a House a Home?** handout from the **Resources** pack. Ask your students to think about the statements and indicate how far they agree with each one, discussing their choices in pairs if you wish. If they have other ideas about what makes their house a home, they can jot them down on the sheet. (**3 minutes**)

Briefly discuss their thoughts and - referring back to the films - ask the students to think about what Sebastian and Sophie lost when they left home. (**2 minutes**)

Explain the meaning of the key words (**3 minutes**):

**Homeless** Not having a permanent home. This doesn't necessarily mean living on the streets; it also includes being in temporary accommodation.

**Hidden homeless** Homeless people living out of sight in places like hostels, squats or friend's houses.

**Sofa surfing** Sleeping at a friend or family-member's house; and it often involves moving from place to place to avoid overstaying a welcome

**Squat** Living illegally in an unoccupied house.

**Hostel** A building with rooms (often shared rooms) for people to rent temporarily.

**Emergency Accommodation** – could be Temporary Accommodation supplied by a local council or a Nightstop service for young people stopping with a host night by night.

**Supported Accommodation** accommodation, often shared facilities, for young people, which also offers support to prepare for independence.

**Mediation** When someone helps two or more people (or groups of people) to work through their problems.

## Part 3 (20 minutes):

Continue the discussion about Sebastian and Sophie's films and get some feedback from the students' answers to the questions they have noted on their sheets. Discuss some of the reasons why young people might leave home or get thrown out, e.g. a parent in a new relationship, constant arguments, drifting away, abuse, drugs, alcohol, personality clashes, unresolved conflicts. (**3 minutes**)

Get your students to have a go at the Interactive Resource. How well would they do if they found themselves homeless? (**10 minutes**)

Discuss the experience with the students - what were the best decisions to make? What led to further difficulties? How well do your students feel they would do if it happened to them for real? (**3 minutes**)

Explain the role of Homelessness Prevention Worker: (Theme A: Jobs & Money Theme B: Poverty)

Homeless? Thinking about leaving home? HPW's support young people and their families to help prevent homelessness. Explain the Hub process and what help is available in North Yorkshire through Housing Solutions @ The Hub that mediation will be tried in every case where it is safe and suitable to do so and what the reality is for young people trying to find accommodation. Point out that - obviously - there are cases when it is absolutely right for young people to escape their homes e.g. if there is abuse, and there are special agencies who will deal with that, but most of the time, a young person is much better off at home, even though it might not feel like that. (**4 minutes**)

## Part 4 (12 minutes):

Read the resource ***Conflict Resolution for Beginners*** (**3 minutes**)

What's needed in some cases is mediation, but it doesn't have to come to that. Everyone can become skilled in dealing with conflict by themselves.

Now pair up your students and refer to the ***Roleplay*** Cards in their packs. In their pairs, they should each take a role and act out the situation in two ways:

- How NOT to deal with the conflict (**3 minutes**).
- How to deal with the conflict peacefully (**3 minutes**).

One of the ***Roleplay*** Cards mentions "siblings" so you might need to explain what they are!

**IMPORTANT:** Stress the fifth rule on the Roleplay Cards! Absolutely no physical contact is allowed.

***Conflict Resolution for Beginners*** advises that "I" statements are much better than "You" statements when in disagreement with someone, and that empathy is an important part of listening.

Ask your students to think about the last argument they had with a family member (or - if they live in domestic bliss - with anyone else). Then they should write about the experience, using whatever medium they feel comfortable with, e.g. prose, poem, rap, song. First, they should describe what they were thinking or feeling during the argument; and then describe what they think the other person was thinking or feeling. Stress that this is an exercise in empathy and they genuinely need to see things from the other person's point of view. (**3 minutes**)

## Part 5 - Has Learning Taken Place? (8 Minutes)

Ask one or two of your students if they would like to share their writing with the class. There will always be a few brave volunteers, but don't force anyone to reveal anything too personal to the class!

## **Extension - Suggested Further Activities**

In response to the stories your students have heard about homelessness, they could organise a fund-raising activity for one of the many homeless charities, e.g.: SASH

**Student Notes on the Films:**

	SOPHIE	SEBASTIAN
Why did they leave home?		
Where did they live to begin with?		
What problems did they face?		
Where did they end up living?		
What advice does each person give?		

## Resources

- *What Makes a House a Home?* - Starter activity
- *Conflict Resolution for Beginners* - Information
- *Roleplay Cards* - Activity in pairs



# WHAT MAKES A HOUSE A HOME?

Read the sentences below and circle a number to show how important you think each one is in making you feel at home: 1 = not very important, 5 = very important.

- |  |          |          |          |          |          |
|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| <b>1.</b> Your own bed.  | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> |
| <b>2.</b> Your own room.   | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> |
| <b>3.</b> A wardrobe for all your clothes.                                 | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> |
| <b>4.</b> A cupboard for all your stuff.                                   | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> |
| <b>5.</b> Somewhere to play loud music.                                    | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> |
| <b>6.</b> A place to be quiet by yourself.                                 | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> |
| <b>7.</b> Access to a TV whenever you want.                                | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> |
| <b>8.</b> Access to a games console whenever you want.                     | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> |
| <b>9.</b> Access to a computer whenever you want.                          | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> |
| <b>10.</b> A fast broadband connection.                                    | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> |
| <b>11.</b> Access to a fully stocked fridge and a cupboard full of crisps. | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> |
| <b>12.</b> Someone to cook your meals for you.                             | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> |
| <b>13.</b> A toilet.   | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> |
| <b>14.</b> A clean toilet.   | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> |
| <b>15.</b> A bathroom.   | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> |
| <b>16.</b> A clean bathroom.   | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> |
| <b>17.</b> A place in the bathroom to keep your toiletries.                | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> |
| <b>18.</b> Your family.  | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> |



# CONFLICT RESOLUTION FOR BEGINNERS

We all have disagreements with our families, and we all feel that, sometimes, our families are the most unreasonable people on the planet.

Unfortunately, a lot of families break apart when they don't need to because they don't know how to handle conflict.

Sometimes it feels good to be angry. You don't want to make up with your Mum or Dad because right now you hate them and never want to see them again. Ever. It's hard to calm down, think and try to sort things out. But it's worth the effort.

So here are ten tips to help you sort out those problems before they get out of hand.

## 1. Keep calm...

Blowing your top never helps. If you feel the anger rising, do whatever you need to do to cool down: breathe deeply, go for a walk, splash cold water on your face, play violent games on the X-box, or write down how you're feeling in a diary. But don't let things simmer either. If there's a problem at home that needs to be talked about, talk about it... calmly. Don't wait until things get so unbearable that you explode.

## 2. Take responsibility

Don't blame other people for how you are feeling. Be clear in your own head what it is that is bothering you and what it is that you want. Saying things like, "You never listen," or, "You never let me do what I want," or, "You wind me up all the time," is just going to make the other person get defensive, or worse - try to even the score. So instead of using "You" statements, try some "I" statements instead: "I feel... when... because...". It's the way to talk about a problem without accusing the other person of being in the wrong. They might be, but if you talk about the situation using an "I" statement you might - just might - realise that you're the one who's out of order.

## 3. Don't try be a mind reader

Don't tell other people what they are thinking, or how they are feeling: "You're only saying that because you..." or "You think that..." or "You don't get it..." Don't expect other people to read your mind either; you can't assume that they are thinking or feeling the same as you. Try your best to explain to each other how you are feeling.

## 4. Take one problem at a time

If there's a disagreement, try to deal with just that one problem. Don't start bringing up other stuff too: "This is just like you..." or "And last week you..." or "And you never..."

## **5. Play nice**

No swearing, no insults. Try to sort out the problem politely, or what starts as a discussion about the state of the bathroom can quickly turn into a slanging match. Saying, "Yeah? Well you're fat..." isn't going to help.

## **6. It's about how you say it**

You might think you're being calm and polite and saying all the right things, but somehow, it's coming out all wrong. It's not just what you say, it's also the way you say it, so avoid sarcasm, guilt trips, put-downs and making jokes at the wrong time. Use a friendly tone of voice instead of a sulky whine. And watch the body language: saying sorry with a scowl, or as you turn away, or with a dismissive wave of the hand will tell the other person that you're not sorry at all.

## **7. Listen...**

It's not all about you. It really isn't. So listen to the other person. Listening doesn't mean being quiet with your head down while the other person is talking, it's something you have to work at: look at the other person while they are speaking; nod occasionally; let your expression respond to what they say. Do not – and this is really hard – do NOT interrupt, even if the other person has said something that is wrong, rude or stupid. You'll get your turn.

## **8. ...and empathise**

This is really still part of the listening process. When the other person has finished talking, don't immediately tell them how wrong, rude or stupid they are. First of all, re-state in your own words what you think the other person is trying to communicate: "So what you're saying is that..." But again, avoid the sarcasm trap and the temptation to do an impression of the other person in a funny voice. Once they've heard their own point of view as you understand it, give them a chance to correct you... and they might even realise how wrong, rude or stupid they've been. Or you might realise that – actually – they're right. Hopefully, you'll be able to see each other's point of view and try to come to some sort of compromise.

## **9. My bad**

Be big and apologise. Sometimes it's your fault. No, be honest – sometimes it really is. So don't keep arguing – say sorry. And if someone apologises to you, or gives in and lets you have your own way don't get all smug and self righteous. It's nice to say thank you.

## **10. It's not about winning**

Don't finish an argument by raising your arms, declaring yourself the winner and shouting, "In your face, loser!" Ideally, you'll have come to some sort of compromise, but it's unlikely that every discussion will end in a high-five or a hug. But that's okay. People can't always agree on everything, and sometimes you just have to live with that.



## ROLEPLAY CARD

### The Roles

- Parent
- Son/Daughter

### The Scene

- The son/daughter keeps coming home late.
- The parent is annoyed that their rules are being ignored and worried about what their child might be doing out so late.

### The Rules

- Quickly choose who will play which role.
- If you can't decide immediately, flip a coin.
- Get into your role - really try to believe what you are doing.
- Respect the efforts of your partner - believe what they are doing as well.
- But remember - this is acting: no physical contact is allowed.



## ROLEPLAY CARD

### The Roles

- Parent
- Son/Daughter

### The Scene

- The parent has just read their son/daughter's latest school report, which shows that their grades have slumped in the last year.
- The son/daughter doesn't want to talk about it, and would rather watch TV.

### The Rules

- Quickly choose who will play which role.
- If you can't decide immediately, flip a coin.
- Get into your role - really try to believe what you are doing.
- Respect the efforts of your partner - believe what they are doing as well.
- But remember - this is acting: no physical contact is allowed!



## ROLEPLAY CARD

### The Roles

- Parent
- Son/Daughter

### The Scene

- The parent works full time and would appreciate more help around the house.
- The son/daughter feels that they do enough already and should be concentrating on their schoolwork.

### The Rules

- Quickly choose who will play which role.
- If you can't decide immediately, flip a coin.
- Get into your role - really try to believe what you are doing.
- Respect the efforts of your partner - believe what they are doing as well.
- But remember - this is acting: no physical contact is allowed.



## ROLEPLAY CARD

### The Roles

- Two siblings.

### The Scene

- One sibling wants to play their music really loud.
- The other sibling has their friends coming round and is embarrassed by their sibling's taste in music. They would prefer quiet... or better music.

### The Rules

- Quickly choose who will play which role.
- If you can't decide immediately, flip a coin.
- Get into your role - really try to believe what you are doing.
- Respect the efforts of your partner - believe what they are doing as well.
- But remember - this is acting: no physical contact is allowed!