



CHILD'S PLAY

Level: Upper intermediate (B2)

Age: Teenagers / Adults

Time: 45 minutes

Language summary: Expressions related to children; language of comparison; language of speculation

Image work: Looking at an image from different perspectives; using an image as a stimulus for discussion

PROCEDURE:

1 Ask students to discuss this question in pairs then discuss the possible responses as a class. The aim is to illustrate that our definitions of childhood are subjective and depend on the context. You may wish to focus on areas like the age someone can vote, get married, join the army, or other markers of adulthood.

2 *Child's play = something which is very easy to do or a trivial matter.* The content of the worksheet is, in fact, very serious so the expression is being used to highlight this.

3 Accept a variety of answers here and allow the discussion to develop naturally. Depending on the context you may receive different responses to how long compulsory education should last. In the UK (if you want a point of comparison) it is 16 but many believe it should be 18. Children start school at 5.

4 Key:

It takes a village to raise a child = the community is just as important in children's development as the individual parents and family

Out of the mouths of babes = children often speak the truth more directly than adults

Spare the rod and spoil the child = if you do not discipline children (the saying implies with physical force) they will become spoiled (you may wish to focus in on the language here – rod: stick that a child might be beaten with)

Like a child in a sweet shop = someone enjoying a particular activity with great happiness

5 This is a very positive and happy image – almost idyllic. It is full of hope and joy and a positive sense of future potential. Allow students to discuss the positive nature of the photo. Ask them to discuss whether all children are fortunate enough to start their lives like the child in the photo. What other images of birth and childhood might they have in their minds?

6 Be prepared to accept different answers here. If you wish to gather some facts before class you could visit the following website which has up-to-date information on child labour:

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/events/2016/06/10/Child-Labor-Evidence-Action>

The answers your students should give will link back to question 1 on how childhood is defined.

7 The correct answer is 69 million. This may be surprising for some of your students and it is worth drawing out their responses and discussing them. The reasons are to do with regional poverty and lack of resources. In many contexts, education remains a luxury. They are also connected to child labour. It is worth spending some time asking your students how they feel their own access to education will benefit them in the future (better jobs, enhanced prospects, etc).

8 Depending on the level of your class and how well they work in groups, you can either a) assign all bullet points to all groups and then ask them to choose one to present to the class or b) assign specific bullet points to specific groups, followed by a presentation. Allow students time to discuss the implications of these facts and then to think of solutions. Support them with language and help in doing a short presentation. You could assign a five-minute limit for each presentation and then encourage other students to ask questions. Some extra resources on each bullet point might be:

- Access for disabled people is a major issue globally. See this site: <http://disabled-accessfriendly.com/>.
- The gender divide in access to education is a major issue globally. See this site from the United Nations: <http://www.ungei.org/>.
- See above resources under question 6 for child labour.
- You might want to use the example of the US and the growing Spanish speaking population here.



CHILD'S PLAY

- 1 At what age do you think a child becomes an adult? Discuss this with your partner. What are the reasons you chose this age? What defines a child and an adult?
- 2 What do you think the expression *child's play* means?
- 3 With a different partner, discuss when you think children should start school. How long should compulsory education last? Why?
- 4 Look at the other expressions connected to children with your partner. What do they mean? Do you have similar expressions in your language?
 - *It takes a village to raise a child*
 - *Out of the mouths of babes*
 - *Spare the rod and spoil the child*
 - *Like a child in a sweetshop*
- 5 The picture shows a mother with her new born baby and her daughter. Describe the picture to a different partner. How do you think they all feel? What are their hopes for the future?
- 6 In some countries children have to work from a very early age. Can you think of any examples? What do you think about this?
- 7 How many children worldwide do not have access to education? Do you know the reasons why?
 - 2 million
 - 7 million
 - 45 million
 - 69 million
- 8 According to the Global Campaign for Education, these are the key reasons children do not go to school:
 - A third of all children out of school have a disability.
 - 60% of all children out of school are girls.
 - Nearly 250 million children have to work to help their families.
 - Half of the world's out-of-school children live in communities where the language used in school is different from that used at home.

In groups of three, discuss the above statistics. What issues do they raise? Think of solutions which would ensure all children have access to education. Choose one of the above to present to the rest of the class.