

How US schoolkids launched a hotline to spread joy

Level: Intermediate – Teacher's notes

Article summary: How and why a hotline, set up by an elementary school, providing life advice from children has gone viral.

Time: 90 minutes

Skills: Reading, speaking, giving advice

Language focus: Vocabulary, speaking, writing

Materials needed: One copy of the worksheet per student

1. Warmer

- a. Working first on their own, students rank the things by writing the numbers 1–8 on the lines to show which of the things are most likely to make them feel better (1), and which are least likely to do so (8). They may add other things if they like.
- b. Then they talk with a partner or in small groups and compare their ranking order, discussing the similarities and differences.

2. Key words

- a. Students find words in the article that match the definitions and write them on the lines provided. Then they should find and highlight them in the article to read them in context.

Key:

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. <i>inspiration</i> | 6. <i>wisdom</i> |
| 2. <i>anxious</i> | 7. <i>therapy</i> |
| 3. <i>frustrated</i> | 8. <i>uplift</i> |
| 4. <i>encouragement</i> | 9. <i>administrator</i> |
| 5. <i>complicated</i> | 10. <i>facility</i> |

- b. Before reading the article carefully, students use some of the key words to fill the gaps in the sentences to ensure that they understand and know how the words are used in other contexts.

Key:

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. <i>therapy</i> | 4. <i>complicated</i> |
| 2. <i>inspiration</i> | 5. <i>encouragement</i> |
| 3. <i>facility</i> | |

3. Understanding the article

- a. Students read the statements and decide whether they are true or false according to the article, correcting any that are false.

Key:

1. *True*
2. *False. It has 141 pupils ranging from kindergarten age to the sixth grade.*
3. *True*
4. *True*
5. *False. It's funded by donations.*
6. *True*
7. *False. But they have personal experience of the isolation and not being able to go to school and see their friends due to the pandemic.*
8. *True*
9. *True*
10. *False. The author says that life is usually less complicated than we realize.*

4. Key language

- a. Students first match the word pairs, then find and highlight them in the article, before talking about the meanings of each, looking up any they don't know. Many will be familiar to students, at least in their passive vocabulary if not in their active vocabulary. Then they each decide which ones they would like to be able to integrate into their active vocabulary (at least four of the pairs) and write new sentences of their own for each.

Key:

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. <i>gone viral</i> | 5. <i>remote learning</i> |
| 2. <i>pep talk</i> | 6. <i>home schooling</i> |
| 3. <i>power through</i> | 7. <i>hotline provider</i> |
| 4. <i>life experience</i> | 8. <i>care facility</i> |

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5. Discussion

- a. Students discuss the questions related to the article and give their reasons and justifications for each answer, referring to their own experiences wherever possible.

6. In your own words

- a. Follow the steps on the worksheet and hold a feedback discussion afterwards. The advice-giving part can be done in pairs to make it more collaborative. Use this task and the sentence stems in the prompt box to review how to give tactful and helpful advice. If you are teaching a very small group, or even one-to-one, prepare some problems and challenges in advance so that they have plenty of things to give advice to.