



Psychology
for Flourishing

Resources

How to Use Comic Strip Conversations*

What is a Comic Strip Conversation?

A Comic Strip Conversation is a discussion that takes place using simple drawings to develop the young person's understanding of a certain social situation in the past, present or future. The idea is that by developing the young person's understanding around a social situation, they will be able to find a way to successfully navigate similar situations.

It is a non-threatening way of talking through an event and takes some of the pressure off the young person to engage in one to one discussion.

During these conversations there is an emphasis on what people say, do and think. These are then written inside speech and/or thought bubbles.



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Symbols can be used to clarify communication with the young person and improve their understanding of what is being discussed. Colours can be used to represent feelings for example (such as red for anger, green for happy). Colour should only be used for the words. As colours mean different things to different people, the colours should be chosen by the individual.

The idea is that the Comic Strip is drawn whilst talking.

By seeing the different layers of a social interaction visually, some of the more abstract parts of the situation (such as the intentions or feelings of others) become more concrete and easier to understand.

The use of Comic Strip Conversations helps the person to communicate their perspective in any given situation and also to understand situations from the point of view of the other person. If necessary the Comic Strip can be used to correct the person's view of events.



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How To Do It

Begin by drawing the event that caused the issue; use stick figures to represent the main people involved including the young person. Symbols can be used to represent the place.

Ask 'where were you'? So you can draw the young person in the correct place.

Ask 'what happened?' Encourage the young person to draw events themselves.

Ask 'what did the other people do?' Draw in the relevant symbols and write down what was said in speech bubbles.

Ask 'what did you think?' and/or 'what do you think the other person was thinking?' Use thought bubbles to write what the young person was thinking and what they thought the other people may have been thinking.



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Talk about a more accurate perception of events if appropriate, just cross out the inaccurate thought bubbles or use post-it notes and place them over the top.

You may also be able to draw an idea to stop the situation happening again.

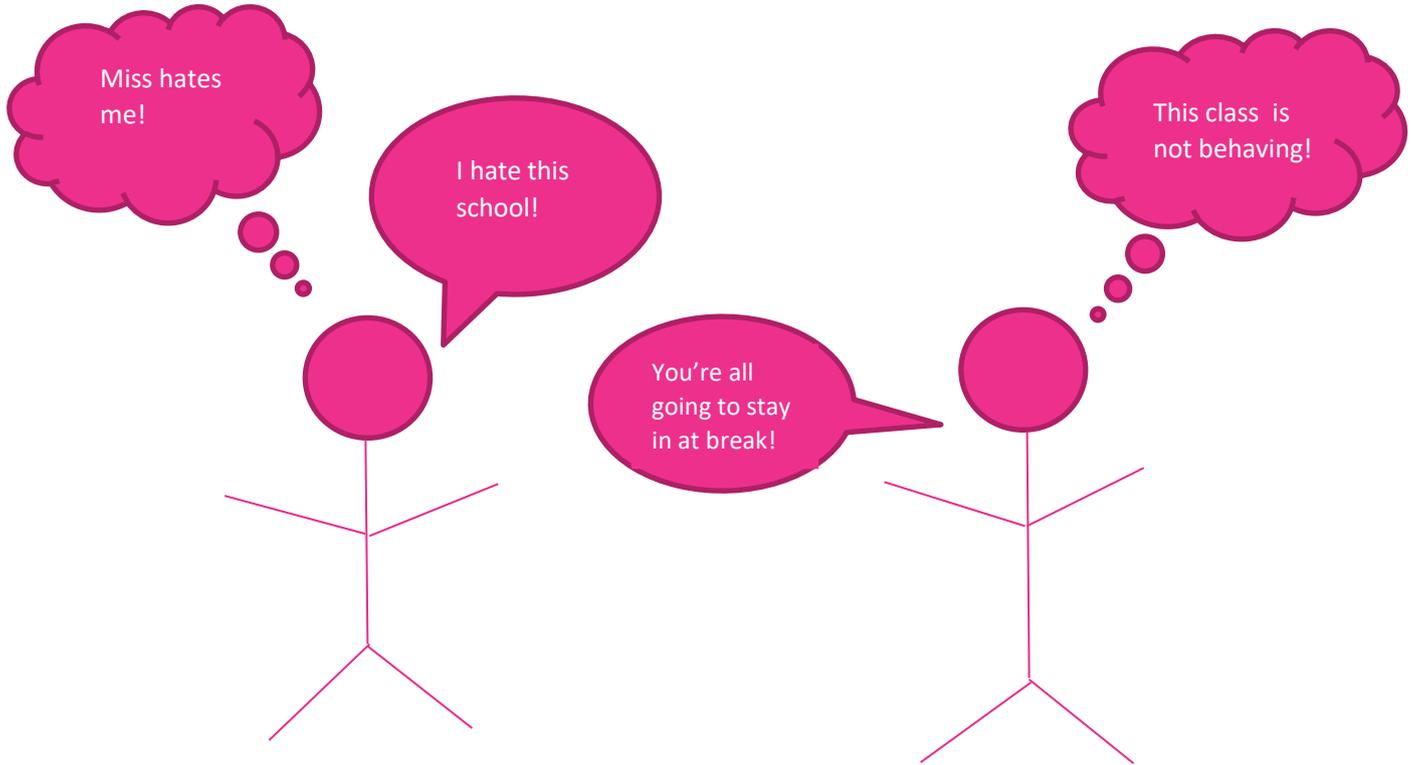
The Comic Strip can also be drawn using the young person's favourite characters instead of stick people.

Example

In the example given below, the pupil has the wrong idea about what the teacher is thinking and reacts inappropriately. This information can now be used to suggest to the pupil what the teacher what actually thinking, which in turn would hopefully to lead to a different response from the pupil when similar situations arise in the future. Different ways to respond could also be discussed with the pupil.



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(*Comic Strips Conversations were created by Carol Gray)





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