



*Children in playground.*

*Michelle looking miserable as sin approaches Helen.*

**Helen** So? What did she say?

**Michelle** Who?

**Helen** Who do you think?

**Michelle** Mrs Cow Face? Well, she took me in to see Mrs Anderson. She told her I was spiteful and selfish, said I'd been picking on guess who and now I'm in detention for the rest of the week.

**Helen** The rest of the week?

**Michelle** Thanks to miss perfect over there. And they're going to phone my Mum.

**Helen** Oh no. What do you think she'll do?

**Michelle** Well, I'll probably get grounded for at least a month. That's if she doesn't kill me.

**Helen** Can't you go round to your Dad's?

**Michelle** He's not interested.

**Helen** Why don't you call him?

**Michelle** I haven't got his number. Anyway he'd just do the same. Probably worse.

**Helen** What a nightmare. What are you going to do?

**Michelle** I don't know. It's so unfair. It's always me that gets the blame.

**Helen** Mrs Cowan's definitely got it in for you.

**Michelle** *(Looking towards girls playing)* It's her fault anyway.

**Helen** Total teachers pet her. Always got the answer, hasn't she?

**Michelle** Makes me sick.

**Helen** Me too.

**Michelle** I'm going to have a word. You coming?

**Helen** OK *(Exeunt)*

**Michelle** *(Off)* Ho you! You wee sook! You going to start fighting your own battles or are you going to go running to Cow Face again?

## **Cow Face. Lesson Plan**

### **Physical and Vocal warm up.**

To be chosen from warm-up menu and games.

### **Vocal exercise**

#### **In pairs.**

Get partners to stand as far apart as the space allows and yell – “Ho you! You wee sook!”. (If weather is fine this can be done outside). Then get them to stand up close to each other, establish eye-contact and, keeping the same intensity of feeling, repeat the line in a quiet, menacing voice.

For those performing this scene the rest of the line – “You going to start fighting your own battles...” will need to be exercised in the same way.

### **Movement exercise**

#### **Occupational mime in pairs**

Using two chairs facing the same way, one behind the other, mime what Michelle might have done to Miss Perfect. E.g. Jag her with a compass – Put chewing gum in her hair – selotape a sign to her back...Encourage detailed action and reaction.

### **Improvisation exercise**

#### **Body language**

Using a real door, experiment with entrances using one performer at a time with the rest of the class watching. Without telling the audience, give the performer a simple instruction as to what has happened prior to the entrance.

e.g. Your family has won a luxury trip to Disneyworld.

Your trousers have ripped up the back.

You're late for no good reason and the class has started.

You've fallen out with your best pal who has called you the worst name you can think of.

The head-teacher has given you detention for the rest of the week.

Experiment with different locations. The teacher can assume roles as necessary.

### **Working with the script - Notes for effective staging**

Establish that Helen is waiting for Michelle

Experiment with body language and non-verbal communication for each character. Who is the most confident?

Specific placement of entrance, Mrs Anderson's office, Miss Perfect ...

### **Discussion Points**

What has Michelle done to Miss Perfect? Is this the first time she's picked on her?

Does she deserve her punishment?

Which character most closely reflects attitude of group members?

Which character will earn the audience's sympathy?

What is Michelle's home life like? Does this make a difference?