



PRINTABLE LESSON

Yanni the Yak

A lesson in why loud doesn't mean heard



One complete lesson from The Sing Me a Fable Lesson Book

Ages 4 to 8 . Printable . 26 lessons in the full book

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YELLING · AND THE CALM VOICE THAT ANSWERS IT

Yanni the Yak

Fable Y from Sing Me a Fable – a lesson in why loud doesn't mean heard

AGE	LENGTH	SUBJECT	GROUP
4–7 (Pre-K to Year 2)	30–40 minutes	PSHE · SEL · Speaking	Whole class, then pairs

Learning objective

Children understand that shouting empties a room rather than filling it with listeners, and can practise saying something firmly without raising their voice.

You will need

The fable, read aloud

A quiet space to test both ways

Poster Y to colour

The song (optional)

Before the story

4 minutes

Ask the class to talk to their partner in their normal voice for ten seconds, then to shout the exact same sentence for ten seconds.

Ask: “Which one made your partner want to keep listening?”

Read the fable

5 minutes

Read fable Y aloud. Yanni yells across the meadow, and the hills send it back to him as an echo – but the other animals drift further away each time, until he's shouting into an empty meadow with nobody left to hear.

Talk about it

10 minutes

1. When Yanni yelled, what came back to him from the hills?
2. Was the echo the same as somebody actually listening?
3. By the end, the meadow is empty. What made everyone leave, if nobody told them to?

Question 2 is worth sitting with. An echo sounds like a response, but it's just Yanni's own noise coming back – which is exactly what shouting gets you once everyone real has stopped listening.

Main activity: A calm voice wins always

12 minutes

1. Pairs. One child has something to say – a real request or an idea.
2. **Round one:** they say it as loudly as they can.
3. Ask the listener how it felt, and whether they actually took in the words.
4. **Round two:** same sentence, said firmly but at a normal volume.
5. Ask the listener again. Compare the two.

Ask the class: “Which version made you want to answer back, and which made you want to walk away?”

Plenary

4 minutes

“Next time you really want to be heard, what could you try instead of getting louder?”



PLAY THE GAME · YANNI THE YAK

Play it together

Put the game on the board. At every choice, stop, let the class vote, then press the card they chose.



Scan to play

OPEN IT

singmeafable.com/arcade/yanni-the-yak

UNLOCK WORDS

WAITING FOR

CHOICES

6, about 2 minutes of play

Level 1 · A Megaphone in Meadow



Morning Megaphone

- A Roar in her face and blow the petals off.
- B Take a breath and say good morning softly. ✓



Making a Case

- A Wiggle free and whisper at his eye level. ✓
- B Holler louder and shake the whole tree.

Level 2 · Why Hills Empty



The Echoing Peak

- A Shout even louder at the empty hills.
- B Sit down and see what the shouting cost. ✓



The Silent Forest

- A Sit still, hoof to your lips, and speak warmly. ✓
- B Leap up and boom at the top of your lungs.



The last level, and what to ask

The tick marks the choice that earns the stars. Keep this page to yourself while the class votes.

Level 3 · A Calm Voice Wins Always



The Soft Approach

A Splash the water and demand they cross to you.

B Sit at the edge and speak quietly across. ✓



The Meadow Gathering

A Whisper the ending and keep the fire lit. ✓

B Roar the ending at the top of your voice.

Ask at every choice

Before pressing: “Which card would you press, and why?”

After it plays out: “What changed because of that choice? What would the other card have done?”

How it joins the lesson

The main activity, **A calm voice wins always**, takes the same lesson off the screen and into the room. Play the game first, so the class has already watched both kinds of choice play out before they make one themselves.

Every choice plays out and nothing is timed, so a wrong vote is something to talk about, not a failure. Stars at the end of each level show how many right choices the class made.



Loud, or heard?

Six moments. Sort what actually gets somebody to listen.

WHAT YANNI DOES	WHAT HAPPENS	WHY
Shouts across the whole meadow at once.	Everyone startles and moves further off.	Loud reads as danger, not information.
Walks over and speaks at a normal volume.	The listener stays and answers.	Nobody needs to brace themselves first.
Yells the same thing three times, each louder.	The meadow gets quieter, not the message clearer.	Volume was never the problem.
Waits for a pause, then says it once, firmly.	He's heard the first time.	Firm and loud are not the same thing.

The word to hold onto is **firm**. This lesson isn't asking children to be quiet or passive — it's separating volume from strength, which children (and plenty of adults) tend to confuse.

The echo is the whole fable

By the end, Yanni is shouting into an empty meadow and the hills give him back his own voice. That image does more work than any explanation — make sure the class actually pictures it before moving to the activity.

Watch for this

Some children yell because it's genuinely the only way they've found to be heard at home or in a busy classroom. Be careful this doesn't become blame — ask what makes it hard to be heard quietly, rather than assuming the child simply hasn't tried.

Adapting for your class

Age 4 · Pre-K. The opening loud-versus-normal demonstration only. Skip the paired activity and the table — the felt difference is enough at this age.

Ages 5–7 · K to Year 2. Run it as written. Most children genuinely don't expect round two to work better, which is what makes the comparison land.

Ages 7–8 · Year 3. Ask them to think of a moment they raised their voice and consider what a firm, quiet version of the same thing would have sounded like.

Mixed ages: pair an older and younger child for round two, so the younger one hears a firm, calm model directly.

What children take away

- **Loud and heard are different things.** One drives people away; the other draws them in.
- **An echo is not an answer.** It only sounds like one.
- **Firm doesn't require volume.** Saying something clearly once beats shouting it three times.

If you have more time

- **Colour the poster.** Ask how far away the other animals are standing, and why.
- **Sing it.** The fable's song with on-screen words runs about 90 seconds.
- **Play it.** The browser game lets the child choose, twice a level, whether the yak roars or speaks softly, and each choice plays out in the meadow.