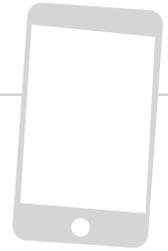


My Brother's Phone



Suggested music: 'China in Your Hand' by T'Pau

My Brother's Phone

This is the story of two brothers called Dan and Ben. Ben is 9 and Dan has just turned 13. Last month for his birthday, Dan got the best birthday present ever!

"I remember the look on his face as he opened it", Ben explained, "his eyes shone and his whole face lit up with an enormous grin, in fact I'd go as far as to say that I'd never seen him looking so happy before... and certainly not since..." (Reflection Point 1)

Dan's present was a mobile phone, but not just any mobile phone, this was **the** mobile phone to have. This was the latest smartphone, a rounded, slim and sleek, black handset that sat neatly in Dan's palm. With a flick of his thumb the screen sprang into life, responding to the lightest of touches, spilling a bright blue glow of light, which reflected off Dan's beaming face. (Reflection Point 2).

The mobile's cool appearance was only the start. It was packed with the latest gadgetry. Not only did it have a camera with video shooting and editing capability, it had games, music and Internet connectivity for downloading the latest apps direct to the phone. Completely shocked, Ben looked at his mum. Her expression was not too dissimilar from Dan's. She was clearly overwhelmed by Dan's response to her carefully chosen gift. (Reflection Point 3)

Finally, Dan spoke "Wow, this is awesome, thanks mum. This is just amazing!" "Glad you like it." said Mum.

"Like it? I love it!" exclaimed Dan flinging his long, scrawny arms around his mum's neck and hugging her.

"It's all charged up ready to go." continued mum, "I've put £25 of credit on it, so you get 300 free texts for the next three months and I've registered your IMEI number with Immobilise, just in case something happens to it."

"No worries, mum." said Dan, "I'll take really good care of it. This is the best phone ever... and this time I'll only give my closest friends my new number so I don't get anymore nasty text messages from those girls in 8K!" (Reflection Point 4)

The next day the boys leave for school. Dan is clearly excited and can't wait to tell his mates about his new phone. Ben, on the other hand, is quite quiet and dismissive. Ben's mood doesn't improve, in fact, if anything it gets worse, when he arrives in the playground to find two of his friends also had mobiles given to them over the holidays. (Reflection Point 5)

"It's not fair!" sulked Ben, "...it's ages until my birthday and I bet mum won't let me have a mobile anyway!" By now another friend had joined the group. He'd had his expensive mobile for ages.

Smiling supportively at Ben, he said, "My Brother got me my phone, he knows these other older kids who sell them cheap." Really?" enquired Ben, suddenly feeling more sociable.

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“Sure, my brother is meeting me after school today; I’ll ask him if you like?” (Reflection Point 6)

The next day Ben’s friend told him that if he could find forty quid then his brother’s mates would get him the latest phone they could. The following day as Ben was going to another friend’s house for tea, he arranged to meet up with these older boys - as he was sure he had enough money in his moneybox, which he had been saving for a computer game. Without mentioning his plans to anyone at home, Ben arrived at school the following day with his pockets weighed heavy with small change. He’d counted out exactly twenty pounds, so all he needed to do now was to make sure he didn’t lose any before the end of the day. 3.15pm took forever to come and Ben bolted out of school the minute he was able, dragging the friend he was supposed to be going round to tea with, behind him. “It won’t take long”, he was saying excitedly, “I just need to pick up my new phone.” (Reflection Point 7)

Ben simply couldn’t believe his luck when he was presented with a sleek, black smartphone, exactly like his brother’s, in exchange for forty pounds. “Wow, I bet mum paid a lot more money for Dan’s phone. She’ll be really cross if she finds out how cheap this one was. It’s even got loads of apps already on it!” Pleased with himself, Ben went round to his friend’s house for tea as planned, wondering what he was going to tell his mum about his bargain buy. (Reflection Point 8)

That night, when he arrived home, however, whatever he’d rehearsed just vanished from his head. Mum was in tears and Dan had barricaded himself in his room and was refusing to come out, in spite of dad’s unusually calm requests. Before Ben could say anything his mum rushed over and hugged him tightly saying “You’ll never believe what has happened, your poor brother, I’ve had to call the police and everything!”

The blood drained from Ben’s face. Suddenly he felt sick to his stomach; his head was spinning as he desperately tried to get a grip on reality. “Is he hurt?” Ben asked anxiously.

“No, no dear,” said his mum reassuringly, “they’ve just taken his phone, that’s all...he’s very shaken and upset.” She continued almost apologetically. “I’m only upset because it cost a lot of money and he has only had it a week! Your Father is furious, he said we should have bought something less flashy, but it was the one Dan wanted - all his friends have got them.” (Reflection Point 9)

“Never mind, in 48 hours time when the handset’s immobilised, whichever mug those boys sold that phone to will realise he’s been sold a stolen handset that no longer works!”

“It won’t stop them hacking my Facebook and email accounts though” whined Dan “I knew I should have PIN coded it!”

It was at this - the final realisation that he had ruined EVERYTHING, that Ben broke down. He had put his brother at risk, he had lost his own and his parents’ money, he’d unwittingly been dealing with criminals and all because he had wanted his brother’s phone! (Reflection Point 10)

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Assembly Story Reflection Points

1. Think about the best present you've ever had. How did it make you feel?
2. What are your first impressions of Dan's new phone?
3. How is Ben feeling? Why?
4. Why is it important to be careful who you share your mobile phone number with?
5. What do you think is the matter with Ben?
6. How do you feel about the generosity of his friend's offer? What would you do if you were Ben?
7. How do you feel about Ben's plans? What might happen next?
8. Should Ben lie about the phone? What would you tell Ben's mum?
9. What do you think about his mum's comment - that Dan wanted that particular phone because all his friends had one?
10. Who has been affected by Ben's actions in allowing his jealousy to get the better of him?

The **Reflection Points** have been designed to help you draw out key discussion points from the story. The PSHE issues that could be developed further in response to this story include:

- Managing emotions, how to find help.
- Always tell someone where you are going.
- Risk awareness and stranger danger.
- Cyberbullying.
- Stealing is wrong.
- Protect your mobiles and help prevent mobile phone crime by registering your handset at www.immobilise.com
- Vulnerability of personal information that is not password or PIN code protected – these deem the handset and applications held within it, inaccessible to others.
- If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is!
- Lying only helps in the short term and is never the right choice.
- The dangers of peer pressure.
- You don't actually need to steal the phone in person to be involved in mobile phone crime.