

## **GIVE US SUNSHINE**

**Give us sunshine** is a fifteen minute ‘radio’ play for Key stage 3 pupils. It has been written by Andy Merriman.

It is envisaged that the performance of the play will not only involve the participating pupils, but will elicit discussion from the whole class.

The sound effects can either be performed by the pupils mimicking the sounds or by obtaining the real objects. These effects (F/X) may also provide added examples of energy.

For teaching purposes, it is also possible for the pupils to continue the story – either by writing and performing further scenes or by way of narrative and discussion.

Users should feel free to adapt this script in any way they see fit, for example to bring in local issues, local humour, etc.

### **STORYLINE**

Following a campaign by pupils, some parents and governors, Clyde School is planning to install solar panels on their main building. The green lobby are naturally jubilant when the school agrees to this plan but there is a negative implication. This major building work will disrupt the junior science club meetings and will mean the end of the school’s menagerie, looked after by members of the junior science club.

Worse still, there is nowhere else in the school for the animals and insects to be rehoused. They will have to be given away – maybe some will have to be destroyed, if homes cannot be found for them.

A number of vociferous pupils have fought for the harnessing of renewable energy in the guise of solar panels, but they are now faced with a difficult dilemma.

There is a further complication when a local news journalist becomes interested in this project and brings in a television crew to interview staff and pupils. A live broadcast on local news is planned.

Because of their involvement in the campaign for solar energy, form 8P have been chosen as a representative class and a number of the pupils have agreed to be interviewed.

### **PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS:**

**JADE ROWE**, is a popular pupil, into sports, music keen and all things green. She has been very involved behind the scenes in the campaign to install solar panels, but although she has very strong opinions, she is somewhat unconfident when it comes to public speaking. She is naturally horrified when she discovers the fate of the school’s ‘zoo’ and feels responsible. Some of her friends turn against her because of her actions.

**LAYLA** is **JADE**’s best friend. She is also a keen environmentalist but is willing to make compromises where necessary. She remains loyal to **JADE** throughout, but towards the end of the play she does something which severely tests the girls’ friendship. We see that **LAYLA**’s motives are honourable – even if her tactics are underhand.

**SARAH SPAULDING** is **JADE**’s main adversary. She is very confident, outgoing and self obsessed. She is very rude about **JADE**’s ‘green’ attitudes.

### **OTHER CHARACTERS**

<b>MR HARRISON</b>	-	Head Teacher
<b>MRS PHILPOTT</b>	-	Form 8P Teacher
<b>LIZ</b>	-	Television journalist.

**PETE** - Cameraman  
**MRS ROWE** - **JADE's** mother

**JUNIOR SCIENCE CLUB MEMBERS:**

**JORDAN**

**DANIEL**

**NASREEN**

**GIVE US SUNSHINE**

**SCENE ONE:**

INTERIOR SCHOOL HALL. DAY. ASSEMBLY.

FADE UP:

BACKGROUND ATMOSPHERE. WHISPERING. COUGHING ETC.

HEAD (MR HARRISON) . . . So the rumour going around that, due to financial cuts and a lack of text books, we will be studying 'A Tale of One City' and 'The Merry Wife of Windsor' is simply not true.'

EMBARRASSED LAUGHTER FROM PUPILS.

HEAD Right, I just have a few announcements to make. I'd like to remind the school that mobile phones must be switched off during school hours.

F/X MOBILE PHONE RINGING

HEAD Ah. . . yes . . . and that includes me.

LAUGHTER FROM PUPILS.

HEAD (SLIGHTLY ANNOYED) I told you not to ring me at work. Must go. Yes, love you too. Bye.

F/X MOBILE TURNED OFF.

HEAD Sorry about that. Now, where was I? Oh, yes, on a more serious matter.

JADE (QUIETLY) Here we go.

LAYLA At least it's not another joke.

HEAD I'm afraid a chewing gum wrapper was found in the playground yesterday. Everyone is well aware that chewing gum is not allowed on the premises and we also have a very strict code about litter at Clyde School. I don't want this to happen again. Is that understood?

MURMURS FROM ASSEMBLED PUPILS.

LAYLA (BACKGROUND) Yeah, we'd better stick to the chewing gum rule.

JADE (GIGGLING) Sshhh

HEAD Now, some better news: first of all, well done to Martha Jones in 8P for breaking the school record – probably the world record - for merit awards and for her idea of a sunrise homework club.

GENERAL DISAPPROVAL.

HEAD I'm sure the staff will be delighted with this suggestion. No doubt they will have a few comments of their own on this matter. But the main news this morning is that due to hard work from our determined green lobby and class 8P in particular, the governing body has decided to install solar panels on the main school building.

JADE (EXCITED) Yes!

LAYLA We did it. Cool! Well done, Jade, that was all your hard work.

HEAD Although it is an expensive business, we hope that, in the long run, it will also save us money which we can put into other areas. (PAUSE) Yes, Martha, I'm sure you've got some ideas, but not now . . . you can talk to your form teacher later on. Oh, you also need to be aware that this has already stirred up some media interest. We are expecting a local news reporter and television crew to visit the school and interview some of our pupils later this week.

BUZZ OF EXCITEMENT FROM PUPILS

FADE DOWN

## SCENE TWO

INT. JUNIOR SCIENCE CLUB MEETING ROOM AND 'ZOO'. LATER THAT MORNING.

FADE UP.

F/X SMALL ANIMAL NOISES.

JORDAN Cor . . it's a bit cold in here. The animals could catch flu.

DANIEL Jordan, animals can't catch flu. Only humans.

JORDAN So, how come my sister got it then?

THEY BOTH LAUGH

JORDAN Well, Those rats don't look too well. I reckon they've definitely got flu. They do look a bit pale.

DANIEL They're meant to be pale – they're white rats, you idiot.

JORDAN Well, I'm cold. Can't we turn that radiator up?

NASREEN (CALLING, DISTANT) Here, has anyone seen the rabbit food? Bugs is hungry.

JORDAN (CALLING) Yes, it's over there. Under the table.

NASREEN (CALLING, DISTANT) That's not rabbit food. That's the packaging for the new hamster cage.

JORDAN (TO DANIEL) Oh. Well that's what I gave Bugs yesterday and he didn't seem to notice the difference.

DANIEL Probably not.

JORDAN That packaging is probably just as tasty – and I bet it's cheaper.

DANIEL And it's one way of getting rid of litter.

THEY BOTH LAUGH

JORDAN I'll just give the gerbils a drink.

DANIEL Well, make sure it's water!

JORDAN Yeah, like I was going to waste my Lucozade on them. Actually, they look like they could use a bit more original energy.

DANIEL (PANICKING) Oh no. Look! Jordan! Nasreen! Come here. Quick!  
Posh isn't moving. I think she's dead!

JORDAN She can't be. She was all right yesterday.

DANIEL Well, you see if she moves.

JORDAN You idiot. That's a leaf. Posh is in the corner. (PAUSE) Funny things . . . stick insects.

DANIEL Yeah.

JORDAN I like them. They're no trouble.

DANIEL Can't really see the point of them.

JORDAN Well . . . everything's got a right to exist.

DANIEL What. . . even your sister?

JORDAN Mmmm. . . that's true.

FADE DOWN.

### SCENE THREE

INT. SCHOOL CANTEEN. LUNCHTIME.

FADE UP

BACKGROUND: PUPILS EATING DRINKING AND CHATTING  
JADE AND LAYLA ARE HAVING LUNCH.  
F/X CUTLERY AND CANS THROUGHOUT.

JADE Give me another chip, Layla.

LAYLA Get your own.

JADE Can't afford them.

LAYLA Anyway, they make you fat.

JADE So how come they don't make you fat?

LAYLA They do. But they make me happy as well.

JADE Potatoes are useful, you know.

LAYLA (RESIGNED) Oh no . . . now what's coming. . . .

JADE            Apart from chips, did you know you can also make a clock out of a potato?

LAYLA           Whatever you say, Jade.

JADE            It's true. Attach a King Edward to a couple of electrodes and the acid will activate them. Attach some hands and you have a working timepiece.

LAYLA           So if you said you had an eye on the clock – you really would have an eye on the clock.

JADE            Very funny.

SARAH           (COMING ON) Move up!

F/X CHAIRS MOVING ACROSS FLOOR

SARAH (COMING ON)    So, I suppose this a celebration lunch. You must be pleased about the new solar panels.

JADE            Of course. We all should be, Sarah.

SARAH           Oh should we? Some of us have got better things to worry about. (CALLING OUT) Hi Michael! (TO JADE AND LAYLA) He's really nice, isn't he? Don't you think he looks like Craig David?

LAYLA (IGNORING)    What do you want, Sarah?

SARAH           Just wanted a chat. About the . . . (THEN SARCASTIC) Oh, look Jade, you're wearing a new badge today. No, don't tell me, let me try and work it out.

LAYLA           We haven't got that much time.

SARAH (IGNORING)    Let's have a look. Ahh . . . a mobile phone in a red circle with line going across it. What could that possibly mean?

JADE            It means that mobile phones can be dangerous if you use them too much.

SARAH           Of course. Just talking to people on the phone can fry your brains. Duh!

LAYLA           Well, you fry my brain – just by being near me.

SARAH (IGNORING)    Oh, yes. I remembered why I sat down. I wouldn't get too excited about the solar panels 'cos you're in for a bit of a shock.

LAYLA            Oh go away, Sarah, we're not interested in what you have to say.

SARAH (GETTING UP)    Oh well, fine just wait and see. But if I were you – and I'm very glad I'm not - I suggest you talk to Mrs Philpott. You might find it . . .well . . . upsetting.

FADE DOWN.

#### SCENE FOUR:

INT. 8P CLASSROOM. LATE AFTERNOON.

FADE UP.

JADE (COMING ON, BREATHELESS)    Miss, Miss!

LAYLA (BREATHLESS) Thank Goodness, you're still here.

JADE We really need to talk to you, Mrs Philpott.

MRS PHILPOTT Oh, hello, girls. Look, I'm in a bit of a hurry – netball, you know.

LAYLA We just need a couple of minutes, please. .

MRS PHILPOTT Are you sure it can't wait?

JADE Please!

MRS PHILPOTT All right but could you help me? Layla, would you close those windows?

LAYLA Okay.

MRS PHILPOTT And, Jade, would you mind picking up some of that paper off the floor? It's no wonder the Rain Forests are disappearing when they have to share the planet with class 8P. Now what was it you wanted?

F/X UNDER DIALOGUE AS THE THREE TIDY UP.

JADE Sarah told us that we ought to talk to you about the solar panels – she said we were in for 'a shock'.

MRS PHILPOTT Oh did she? Yes, well I was going to warn the class – but I haven't had time yet. There's going to be an awful lot of building work to be done when the panels are installed and I'm afraid our junior science club won't be able to meet on the top floor.

LAYLA Can't we go somewhere else?

MRS PHILPOTT. We'll have to see. Space will be at a premium. (PAUSE) Oh, I must just water the plants.

JADE But we can't just stop meeting.

MRS PHILPOTT Don't worry, Jade, I expect we can sort something out.

F/X WATERING PLANTS UNDER DIALOGUE

LAYLA It can't be the end of the science club.

MRS PHILPOTT No, but it will mean that we're going to have to . . .

JADE . . . Oh no! The zoo!

MRS PHILPOTT Yes. I'm afraid there really is nowhere for the animals and insects to go.

JADE But we can't just . . .

MRS PHILPOTT (FIRMLY) . . . Jade, the staff have already discussed this – at great length. There's nothing we can do.

JADE What will happen to them?

MRS PHILPOTT I'm sure we'll find homes for them – well most of them, anyway.

JADE But we should have been told. The School Council should have been involved.

MRS PHILPOTT (SLIGHTLY IRRITATED) Look, I'm sorry, Jade, but there's nothing we can do about it. Now, look, I really must go.

JADE It's a nightmare. What are we going to do?

LAYLA Jade, come on. We'll think of something.

MRS PHILPOTT I have to go. I can't be late for practice again.

JADE I really don't believe this.

LAYLA Don't worry.

MRS PHILPOTT (VERY IRRITATED) Come on girls. Hurry, please.

LAYLA Miss, just one more thing?

MRS PHILPOTT (CROSS) Yes, what is it, Layla?

LAYLA Hadn't you better turn off the lights?

MRS PHILPOTT Oh . . .yes . . . right.

FADE DOWN

### SCENE FIVE:

INT. DINING ROOM. THE FOLLOWING DAY.

FADE UP

SOME BACKGROUND CHATTER.  
F/X CUTLERY ETC

DANIEL Jordan, have you seen this picture?

JORDAN Oh yeah! It's great! I think I saw something about it on Newsround.

DANIEL It's that solar energy car. It won the race - across Australia. It doesn't use any petrol. It's got an electric battery powered by solar panels.

JORDAN And it looks really cool.

DANIEL Now why couldn't the school have bought that as an example of (EMPHASISING) 'harnessing renewable energy resources'.

JORDAN Dunno. Probably wouldn't have fitted on the roof.

THEY BOTH LAUGH

NASREEN (COMING ON, CROSS) Does anyone know where Jade is?

DANIEL I think she went home early. She was a bit upset.

NASREEN I'm not surprised. Our zoo's being closed and it's all her fault.

LAYLA That's not fair – there are lots of people keen on the solar panels.

NASREEN Yeah, but she is Miss Greenpeace, isn't she? (GOING OFF) Wait till I see her. Emma's not too pleased either. Or Mehfuz.

SARAH (COMING ON) Hello Nasreen. . .oh goodbye Nasreen. Everybody's in a terrible mood today. What is going on?

LAYLA You know perfectly well what's up.

SARAH Your friend, Jade, has caused quite a mess, hasn't she? That's the trouble when you're so biased in your views.

LAYLA She is not biased.

SARAH She's so obsessed about the environment, I bet she doesn't even use lead in her pencils.

LAYLA Anyway, what's it to do with you?

SARAH I'm going to be on television.

LAYLA What?

SARAH That journalist is coming tomorrow and I've volunteered to be interviewed. Mrs Philpott agreed. She knows that I won't let the school down.

LAYLA You! You couldn't care less about the environment.

SARAH Not true. I do my bit. I only use aerosol cans when I have to, I never use products that have been tested on animals and . . .

JORDAN (INTERRUPTING) . . . And we definitely know you've got your own 'wind' farm.

DANIEL Good one, man!

THEY LAUGH

SARAH Anyway, I suppose it's also important for the viewing public to . . .view . . the . . . well. . .the prettier pupils. It's good for school morale.

JORDAN (TO DANIEL) She thinks she's Ginger Spice.

DANIEL I don't believe this.

LAYLA And neither do I. Wait until Jade hears about this.

FADE DOWN

### SCENE SIX:

INT. JADE'S HOUSE LATER THAT NIGHT.

FADE UP

MRS ROWE (CALLING) Jade, Jade. It's Layla on the phone. She wants to talk to you.

F/X DISTANT DOOR OPENING.

JADE (CALLING DISTANT) Tell her I'm okay.

MRS ROWE (CALLING) Please talk to her – it’s the third time she’s called.

JADE (SHOUTING DISTANT) No!

MRS ROWE (ON PHONE) It’s no use, Layla. I’ll tell her what you said. Bye.

F/X PHONE DOWN

MRS ROWE (CLIMBING STAIRS) Ohhh . . .that girl!

F/X FOOTSTEPS ON STAIRS AND OPENING OF DOOR.  
AS THE DOOR OPENS, WE HEAR HAIRDRYER ON FULL POWER.

MRS ROWE (LOUD) For someone who’s so concerned with conserving energy, you don’t half spend a lot of time wasting electricity.

JADE (LOUD) Well I have to dry my hair.

MRS ROWE (LOUD) What’s wrong with a towel?

JADE (LOUD) It takes too long and my hair doesn’t go how I want it.

MRS ROWE (LOUD) Oh . . .right. Pollution is okay if it makes you look good.

F/X HAIRDRYER OFF

JADE My hair dryer doesn’t emit Carbon Dioxide.

MRS ROWE Why is it you’re always telling me that if everyone turned off their tellies properly at night, a nuclear power plant could be closed? Can’t we start with your hairdryer . . .and then maybe your music?

JADE You just don’t get it mum, do you?

MRS ROWE Well, what I don’t get is why you won’t talk to Layla.

JADE There’s no point. I’ve ruined everything. There’s no hope. Especially for Nelly.

MRS ROWE Who’s Nelly?

JADE My favourite terrapin.

MRS ROWE Oh I see. (PAUSE) No, I don’t. Look, Jade, what is going on?

JADE (UPSET) Because of me - the school zoo is to be closed. The animals will have to be found new homes – at least the lucky ones. Everyone hates me. And it’s going to be on the News tomorrow. And it’s all my fault.

MRS ROWE Jade, how can it be all your fault?

JADE (MORE UPSET) I wanted the solar panels to be installed and now the animals have got to go. But I didn’t know that this would happen. Everyone must know that.

MRS ROWE (CONFUSED) What’s going to be on the news?

JADE There’s a television crew coming to school tomorrow to cover the story.

MRS ROWE Well, I have no idea what your story is yet. But if whatever it is - if it’s all your fault, then why don’t you ask to be interviewed? You can set the record straight.

JADE I can't. I'll only make it worse. And it's a live broadcast. I'd be terrified.

MRS ROWE Just pretend you're talking to me. You speak up to me enough.  
JADE It's too complicated.

MRS ROWE I wish I could do something, but I really don't understand what's going on. But if it does help, I suppose we could have Nelly.

JADE Really, mum? Thanks. That does help . . . a bit.

MRS ROWE But you'll have to look after her. Not me.

JADE It's a him, mum. He was named after the rap singer. You know . . . Nelly!

MRS ROWE (PUZZLED) No. But don't even begin to explain.

FADE DOWN

**SCENE SEVEN:**

INT. SCHOOL. THE FOLLOWING DAY.

FADE UP

BACKGROUND CHAT AND DISCUSSION AS TV CREW SET UP.

JADE You wouldn't think they would need all that equipment just for this.

LAYLA I know. Those lights are really bright. It's quite exciting, isn't it?

JADE I suppose so.

LAYLA You really should be the one being interviewed.

JADE I'm not doing it.

LAYLA I bet Sarah won't talk about what's happening to the animals.

JADE Of course she won't.

LAYLA You would.

JADE It's too scary. Okay? Anyway, it's also too late now.

LAYLA Think what's going to happen to those poor rats.

JADE Look, if you're so concerned about 'those poor rats' why don't you talk to the journalist?

LAYLA I hate rats and I'm not that bothered about the zoo. But you are.  
(RESIGNED) Still, I suppose you wanted solar panels and you'll soon be getting them.  
You can't have everything.

JADE You sound like my mum.

LAYLA Look. They're about to start.

LIZ Okay Pete, I'm ready to go.

PETE The cam's running. Five seconds.

LIZ Are you sure this mike is working okay?

PETE Yes. It's fine. Here we go.

LIZ (AS IF TO CAMERA) I'm here at Clyde school where pupil pressure has produced a victory for the environmentalists. I'm joined by ecology expert Sarah Spaulding, from class 8P. Sarah can you explain what the school is planning?

SARAH (CONFIDENT) Yes, hi everyone. And a big hello for those of you watching at home. Okay, in order to conserve energy, we've campaigned for ages to have solar panels installed at the school. The Governors have finally agreed and building work will start soon.

LIZ Great. And exactly how do the solar panels provide power?

SARAH (BECOMING LESS CONFIDENT) Well . . . um . . . it's the energy from the sun that . . . well the panels . . . er . . . become heated . . . and

LIZ And what happens when the sun goes in?

SARAH Umm . . . well I don't think you actually need that much sun. Cloudy weather works just as well. This is England after all.

LIZ And what about when it's dark?

SARAH Well, we've gone home by then.

LIZ CONTINUES INTERVIEW WITH SARAH IN BACKGROUND

JADE The 'ecology expert' doesn't have a clue.

LAYLA Jade, you've got to talk to that reporter.

JADE I can't. I'm not doing it.

LAYLA Not a very good advertisement for the green movement is she, Jade?

JADE There's nothing I can do.

LAYLA (IMPATIENT) Well, there's something I can do. Come with me.  
(THEN CALLING) Hello! Over here!

SARAH So you see – even in a power cut, you could shine torches on to the panels and then the power can be stored . . . oh for days . . . weeks probably. And if the worse came to the worse . . . well there's always car batteries . . .

LIZ (CONFUSED) . . . Yes, well thank you very much, Sarah. Well, that was . . . er . . . interesting.

LAYLA (COMING ON) Excuse me – I'm also a pupil at the school and I've got something to say. Well actually, my friend Jade here has lots to say. Haven't you Jade?

JADE Layla!

LAYLA It's up to you. You're on, Jade. Isn't that what you say in tv?

LIZ Yes, it is. Thank you. So, what do you think of the plans, Jade?

JADE (INITIALLY NERVOUS, THEN GROWING IN CONFIDENCE)

Well, I am in favour using solar power. It's just so obvious that we should make more use of renewable energy resources. But, what you don't know – and what I really want to talk about - is that

because of the building work, it means that the school zoo is going to have to close. We don't know where the animals are going to go. The teachers have said it will be all right but I'm really worried.

LIZ So, you need homes for the animals?

JADE That's not really the answer. I think it's important for the school to keep its zoo. I suppose I'll have to start another campaign.

LIZ To stop the installation of the solar panels?

JADE Oh no. We definitely need those.

LIZ So, what are you going to do?

JADE I don't know. (PAUSE) But maybe there's someone watching or listening to this that might have some ideas.

LIZ (SELF SATISFIED) Well, we do have thousands of viewers, who I'm sure would have some helpful suggestions. See what you can do out there. Thank you very much Jade.

JADE Thank you.

LIZ So, with that plea for help from pupils at Clyde School – it's back to the studio.

FADE DOWN

END