# Ed Sheeran, Shape of Him

In October 2017, singer Ed Sheeran was cycling quickly down a steep hill when he came off his bike and broke his wrist, elbow and a rib. He had to cancel concerts and was told he was unable to play the guitar for four weeks. This activity introduces the first aid skill for helping someone with a broken bone, and encourages young people to consider how this kind of injury could affect their daily life, how they might feel and what might help.

**Suggested age range:** 11–16  
**Curriculum links:** PSHE

## Activity

Explain to the group that they are about to see a photograph. Their task is to identify the person and what has happened to them. If they’re not sure, tell them they can try thinking out loud.



This is a photograph that Ed Sheeran posted on Instagram in mid-October 2017, saying, “I’ve had a bit of a bicycle accident and I’m currently waiting on some medical advice, which may affect some of my upcoming shows.”

Invite learners to consider what they would have done if they had been there when Ed had his bicycle accident and suspected he had a broken bone (you can learn the first aid skill [here](http://firstaidlearningforyoungpeople.redcross.org.uk/first-aid-skills/broken-bone/)) and discuss the following:

* How can you tell if someone has broken a bone?
  + The person has pain, bruising or swelling, or they may be lying in an unnatural position.
* What should you do?
  + Keep the injury still and supported using your hand or a cushion.
  + As soon as possible call 999 or get someone else to do it.
  + Continue supporting the injury until help arrives.
  + Provide comfort and reassurance, as the person is likely to be in pain and distressed.

Ed later posted: "A visit to my doctor’s confirmed fractures in my right wrist and left elbow that will leave me unable to perform live concerts for the immediate future."

Invite learners to consider:

* Why did Ed have to cancel his concerts? (His arm is in a cast to prevent it moving and to allow the bones to heal. If he played the guitar, he could make the injury worse and cause long-term damage.)
* How might he be feeling about this? (e.g. frustrated, concerned, annoyed, upset about disappointing his fans.)

Ask young people to imagine they have the same injuries as Ed and think about activities they do every day. They can fill in the [activities grid](https://www.redcross.org.uk/-/media/documents/get-involved/ed-sheeran-shape-of-him-broken-bones-activity.docx), considering which activities they could still do with no problems, which ones might be more difficult, what they might need help with, and what they might need to find alternatives for.

Encourage them to personalise the grid, by adding activities from their own lives.

Here is an example of how they might fill in the grid:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Can still do with no problems** | **Can do carefully, although it might be difficult** | **Need help from someone (describe the help needed)** | **Can’t be done (describe consequences or alternative)** |
| **Moving around school** |  | ✔ |  |  |
| **Doing PE & games** |  |  |  | ✔ find other ways to keep fit |
| **Eating lunch** |  |  | ✔ might need someone to cut up food |  |

As a group, share ideas and discuss which activities would be the most difficult. Consider:

* Sometimes you don’t know what you can do until you try. But you don’t want to slow down recovery.
* How might you be feeling, not being able to do things you enjoy?
* How might it feel having to rely on people to help you?

What kinds of things might make you feel better? Look again at the picture. Ask learners to imagine they are friends with Ed. Bearing in mind the grid they’ve made, ask them to think about how they might help him. Invite them to identify three things that they could easily do that could make a significant difference to help him or make him feel better.

This resource was written by P. J. White of Alt62 and published in November 2017.