

THE LESSON

A monologue

By JANE CAFARELLA

Comedy – 2 minutes

HAZEL, 40+, tells her local mothers' group about what she's learned as a mother.

The other day, I was making dinner when Oliver comes in and asks, "Mum, what does imperial mean?"

And I'm thinking, I don't have time for this. I'm tired. Everyone's hungry. The place is a mess. I'm tempted to say, "Look it up in the dictionary!"

Sigh

I try to be a good Mum...to encourage intellectual curiosity. He's just turned 10 and he's smart. The night before, we'd been watching a kids' current affairs show, so naturally I assumed a political context.

I explained, clearly and concisely, the difference between imperial and metric measurements, and which countries still had imperial measurements, and why.

Then, inspired by his interest, I started on imperialism, colonialism, cultural dominance and arrogance.

I was just heading into how all this, combined with economic problems and racial prejudices, had contributed to the rise of Hitler and the Third Reich, when I began to wonder, what'd prompted the question.

"Why do you want know?" I asked.

"It said 'Imperial Leather' on the soap," he said, and wandered off to get a drink.

She rolls her eyes.

I felt like a drink, too.

Beat. Wryly.

You learn from your kids – all the time.

Upbeat.

So, the first lesson for today is... don't assume your kids' lives are as complicated as yours.

And the second lesson? Tell them to look it up in the dictionary!

219 spoken words

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