

Chapter 2: Ready to Learn

Lesson Plan: We are growing hopeful minds

Why use it?

This lesson introduces the concept of growth mindset and helps children to understand the concept of hope. It can be used at any time, but is ideal at the start of a term to help children refocus on the idea that we are all capable of learning and growing. It can be used in full, or the activities can be used on their own in small chunks of time. Some children may find the concept of growth mindset very difficult to grasp. If a child is completely disengaged from their learning, trying to get them to consider what they want to achieve in maths this term is probably not going to be very successful. For that reason, the ideas here are broad and relate to everyday life.

What next?

The intended outcome for this lesson is that children will end up identifying one or two areas in their life that they currently feel hopeful about. These may or may not be related to school. Whatever they are, it is really important to maintain momentum with them. Display the ‘seeds of hope’ made in the lesson somewhere visible in the classroom and refer to them often. This display can grow as the children do. Encourage them to keep adding shoots and leaves as they take further steps with their hopes. Keep your own record of their hopes so that you can check in with about how things are going. This could look like a simple ‘How did your football training go this week?’ or a more in-depth chat about how their reading is going. Be their cheerleader as they build on the hopes they have identified. What about those children who didn’t feel hopeful about anything or have forgotten their hopes? Keep supporting them to identify areas of hope that can be added later and keep checking in and celebrating the tiniest steps of progress. Have prepared green shoots and leaves always available by the seed display for them to add. Prompt them to do this if they have shown growth in class. Ask their parents to let you know about growth at home. Make it easy for them to watch their seeds grow and see their own progress.

Lesson Plan: We are growing hopeful minds

KS1/KS2 Whole class or small group

Time: 45 minutes (or longer if children make individual seeds). Follow up over several weeks.

Curriculum links: PSHE, art, design technology

Learning Outcomes:

- To understand that our abilities are not fixed – we can change and develop them over time.
- To understand the idea of having hope for the future.
- To apply this understanding to an area of their own lives.

Key vocabulary: Fixed mindset, growth mindset, hope, future, goals, dreams, seeds, shoots, leaves.

Resources:

- Slides for whiteboard (see plan below)
- Whiteboards and pens
- Paper strips
- Class 'Seed of Hope' - this could be any hollow spherical or cylindrical container (or even a papier-mache sphere) that can be decorated
- Or 2 egg box cups joined by a split pin to make a seed for each child
- Craft materials for decoration (pens, pva glue, tissue paper, glitter, paint, sticky gems)
- Small display board/area
- Pre-cut green shoots and leaves (card or paper)

Introduction: Show a picture of a newborn baby. *When a baby is born, what can they do? What can't they do?* We all begin our lives like this. Day by day we grow and learn new things. *What might this baby be able to do in the future?*

Main teaching:

- Show pictures of 'No Entry' and 'Dead End' road signs. *What do these signs mean?* Explain that sometimes we can feel like this about our lives and our learning. This is called a fixed mindset. If we have a fixed mindset we don't believe that we can learn new things or get better at something. We don't have hope for the future.
- Show picture of a country cross roads in springtime. Paired discussion: *If the road signs show us a fixed mindset, what does this picture show us?* Explain that each of these roads is a hopeful path to the future. The exact path will be different for all us. Paired discussion: *What is hope?* Explain that when we hope for something in the future, we want it to happen and we believe that it can happen. Give an example of something you feel hopeful about e.g. *I feel hopeful that I will improve at running. I am practicing each week and able to run further each time.* When we feel hopeful about something and believe we can get better at it, we have a growth mindset.
- *What do you feel hopeful about for the future? What do you believe you can get better at?* Explain that sometimes we call these hopes our goals or dreams. They are like little seeds that we can help to grow. Children to note down ideas on whiteboard in words or pictures. If they are finding it hard to think of things, encourage them to close their eyes use their imaginations to picture the things they would like to be able to do. It could be related to home, school, sport or other hobby.

Activity: Children to choose one or two hopes to write on strips of paper. Note down hopes for all children on separate sheet for tracking and encouragement. Paper strips to be rolled up and placed into a class 'Seed of Hope'. As they place their hopes inside, children may decorate it with gems or glitter.

Wrapping up: *How will we help our hopes grow?* Reminding ourselves often of what our hopes are, practise, help from others, perseverance.

Extension: If there is time, each child could make their own 'Seed of Hope'.

Follow up: Ideally, place seeds on a surface at the bottom of a display board. As children make progress with their hope/ goal they can add green shoots and leaves. Check in with them regularly.

Frame: How I like to learn...

Why use it?

This frame helps to begin the conversation around learning preferences. Some children will instinctively know what works best for them. For others, more support will be needed to help them consider when learning has felt good and when it has felt like a struggle. Some may find it very difficult to discuss this concept at all. In this case, begin slowly. There is no need to complete the whole frame in one go – there is a lot to think about here. Keep it accessible and keep circling back to it when opportunities arise – perhaps when you have tried a completely new learning style in a particular lesson. Also, remember to allow children to change their minds. Be open to them reconsidering learning preferences and as always, avoid putting them in that metaphorical box!

What next?

The information given in response to ‘How I feel about learning right now...’ and ‘How I would like to feel about learning...’ can be really illuminating. If children are feeling low, worried or angry about learning, this needs to be addressed as a priority. Helping them to untangle the reasons for this emotion is essential if they are to move forward.

If you are working with an individual child, you should be able to see where you can alter and improve planning to allow for these preferences, at least a few times a week. Of course, all children still need to talk, read and write, but look for opportunities to include more moving, doing or drawing if that is what they need. If you are asking a whole class or group to complete this, look for patterns. Are there ways in which you could incorporate a particular preferred style for the whole class or group? Also, remember to always remain open to children reconsidering their learning preferences and showing a fresh perspective on what currently works for them. Above all, let the children know you that you are listening. They need to understand that you probably can’t make everything exactly as they would wish, but that you want to work with them to match learning opportunities with their preferences whenever you can.

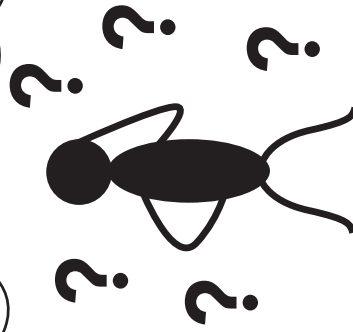
How I like to learn...

We all like to learn in different ways. Think about these ways of learning – colour the clouds that work best for you.

Reading	Watching	Doing
Listening	Talking	Moving
With other people	Writing	Drawing

My favourite way to learn is...

How I feel about learning right now...



Ways of learning I would like to try...

How I would like to feel about learning...