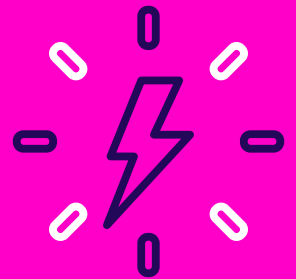


Schools Connect

Mental health and well-being: staying healthy and resilient

Good Health and Well-being (UN Global Goal 3)



In partnership with:



What you will find here

This resource aims to promote positive mental health and well-being among teachers and pupils and their broader school communities.

Teachers and pupils will learn practical ideas about:

- how to develop positive health and well-being for yourself
- how to encourage others to decide and act in favour of promoting health and well-being for all
- how to include health promoting behaviours in your daily routines.

Teachers will need to be sensitive to any distress or trauma that children may be carrying with them, and plan for support in case any of the activities or reflections trigger any adverse reactions, especially if your pupils are working at a distance.

While these resources were developed as a response to the Covid 19 pandemic, the activities are open-ended, and so provide a flexible resource to support children and young people's mental health.

We recommend that you start with the foundation activities, which will help create the environment for the other six steps.

These well-being activities are brought to you in collaboration with the Jigsaw PSHE curriculum.

We all need to look after our mental health in the same way as our physical health. We need to work to maintain it; mental health is about having a positive mental outlook with the ability to take control over life's challenges.

In addition to the existing concern over mental health and well-being globally, the Covid-19 pandemic has made the situation worse for a lot of people. More than half of adults and over two thirds of young people in the UK said their mental health had got worse during the first period of lockdown restrictions, according to a survey by the mental health charity MIND².

The pandemic has had a major impact on children; from missing out on school, routines and friendship groups, to fear of the virus and losing loved ones. These activities are designed to help teachers with this and are linked to the United Nations Global Goal 3: Good Health and Well-being.

Overview

There is growing concern about the effect of modern life on mental health and well-being and in particular, on children and young people. 'In recent years, there has been increasing acknowledgement of the important role mental health plays in achieving global development goals, as illustrated by the inclusion of mental health in the Sustainable Development Goals. Depression is one of the leading causes of disability. Suicide is the second leading cause of death among 15–29-year-olds. People with severe mental health conditions die prematurely – as much as two decades early – due to preventable physical conditions. Despite progress in some countries, people with mental health conditions often experience severe human rights violations, discrimination, and stigma.'¹

Well-being is about being healthy and happy. Mental health is often linked to mental illness and disorders and can be seen as a subject people prefer to avoid discussing or drawing attention to.



'Although the challenges faced are unparalleled, natural resilience is showing through – something that will be essential to ensuring societies can function and people recover from the impacts of the pandemic. It is possible the experience of Covid-19 could bring us together and make us kinder to one another.'³



¹ World Health Organization (2021). Mental Health (Homepage). https://www.who.int/health-topics/mental-health#tab=tab_1

² MIND (2020). The Mental Health Emergency https://www.mind.org.uk/media-a/5929/the-mental-health-emergency_a4_final.pdf

³ United for Global Mental Health (2020). The impact of COVID-19 on global mental health: A brief. <https://unitedgmh.org/sites/default/files/2020-09/The%2BImpact%2Bof%2BCovid-19%2BOn%2BGlobal%2BMental%2BHealth%2BReport.pdf>

Age range and special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

These lesson activities are sufficiently open-ended to be carried out by 7-14-year-olds and SEND pupils. There is a glossary of terms in Appendix I. As well as considering how best to adapt these materials to suit the needs and abilities of each learner, we encourage teachers to think about how to apply learning to best effect in the context of their community and the national curriculum of their country.

Learning objectives and curriculum alignment

This unit is designed to support the development of both knowledge and skills. Teachers should consider the core knowledge and vocabulary within each lesson as the starting point, then apply this to activities to develop and embed pupils' understanding.

We recommend that each teacher identifies opportunities within their school's curriculum where they can best teach the knowledge and skills in this unit. This could be in science, maths, history, personal, social and health education, English/literacy, citizenship or other subjects. You should see the unit as part of the curriculum, not an add-on.

Learning objectives are included at the start of each lesson.

Time and resources

There are two foundation activities of 15 and 30 minutes followed by six lessons which have been designed to take from 20–40 minutes each to deliver. Each lesson ends with a reflection activity to enable young people to develop their reflection skills, which are important to mental health. You will need to allow extra time if you are delivering the unit in conjunction with partner schools.

Teacher well-being

Each activity includes suggested uses or adaptations of the resources for teachers, as it is important that teachers develop their own skills and support systems to ensure positive mental health and well-being.

Creating an open and safe space for well-being

This resource includes approaches for both group and whole class discussion activities. It is important to create an open and safe space for well-being so that positive relationships between pupils can flourish. Key features of creating open and safe spaces for well-being include: agreement for ground rules, open questioning by the teacher, and appreciation of multiple perspectives, both in terms of pupils' experiences and their interpretation of the activities. Teachers are encouraged to revisit and review ground rules with pupils after each session.

Blobtree image reflection

Many of the lessons include short reflection activities using captivating 'Blob' images. Blobs are simple. They deal with deep issues using the primary languages we learn from infancy – feelings and body language. This is why they are used with people from four years of age all the way through to the elderly. The Blobs are neither male nor female, young nor old, ancient nor modern. They are outside of culture. Blobs are the best of us and the worst of us. They don't tell us what we ought to do, or what we mustn't do, they merely show us how a variety of people feel or think.

Global examples

All lessons include further links to global examples relating to mental health and well-being. These range from social projects, conceptual vocabulary and places of interest, providing a rich diversity of cultural capital.

Planning the unit and collaborating

This unit has been designed for delivery:

- independently, in your own classroom
- with a partner school online, sharing work in a non-time-dependent way.

There is a wide range of opportunities for partner schools to work together on this unit, including through the sharing of created materials, online communication and even live virtual meetings.

When working with a partner on any lesson in this project, you need to take into consideration the difference in your schools' timetables, hours and holidays, as well as restrictions that may be in

place due to Covid-19. Different school communities and countries may have very different attitudes to issues surrounding mental health and well-being, as well as different experiences of the pandemic. Teachers should be open to suggestions from their partner school

colleagues as to which issues might be sensitive and how best to handle them. Activities from the learning unit can be adapted or developed according to pupil and community needs and sensitivities.



Unit overview

Foundation activity 1: Creating an open and safe space for well-being

Create an open and safe space where everyone feels comfortable to take part and establish a set of ground rules for inclusive participation.

Foundation activity 2: Create your own medicine wheel

Explore a model for mental health and well-being and develop a series of actions for our own mental health and well-being.

Five Ways to Well-being

Step 1: Connecting

Think about how you connect with people and nature and what the benefits are.

Step 4: Be active

A set of games for well-being.

Step 2: Take notice for well-being

One of the five ways to well-being is 'Take notice'. What does this mean?

Step 5: Give

The last of the five ways to well-being is 'Give'. What does this mean?

Step 3: Keep learning

One of the five ways to well-being is 'Keep learning'. But what does this mean?

Step 6: Reviewing the Five Ways to Well-being

These activities allow pupils to think back over their learning from the Five Ways to Well-being.



Learning materials created for this unit

The learning materials are based on the Five Ways to Well-being, which are ‘a set of evidence-based public mental health messages aimed at improving the mental health and well-being of the whole population. They were developed by the NEF (New Economics Foundation) as the result of a commission by Foresight, the UK government’s futures think-tank, as part of the Foresight Project on Mental Capital and Well-being.’ They have been adopted by a number of public health campaigns and support many of the aims of United Nations Global Goal 3: Good Health and Well-being.

Foundation activity 1: Creating an open and safe space for well-being

It is important to create an open and safe space where everyone feels comfortable to take part and establish a set of ground rules for inclusive participation. This will encourage positive and supportive relationships between pupils.

Foundation activity 2: Create your own medicine wheel

This activity explores a model for mental health and well-being and develops a series of actions for our own mental health and well-being. It seeks to ensure a balance between thinking, feeling, doing and believing.

Step 1: Connecting – Five Ways to Well-being

Thinking about how you connect with people and nature and what the benefits are. Building these connections will support and enrich you every day.

Step 2: Take notice for well-being

‘Take Notice’. What does this mean? It is about being in the moment and finding space for calm and reflection.

Step 3: Keep learning

‘Keep Learning’. But what does this mean? This activity explores different interests and ways to enjoy learning, and the idea that we keep learning throughout our lives.

Step 4: Be active

A set of games for well-being. This step looks at the importance of discovering a physical activity you enjoy and one that suits your level of mobility and fitness.

Step 5: Give

‘Give’. What does this mean? This step examines the importance of giving to others in different ways and how this reinforces our sense of connection.

Step 6: Reviewing the Five Ways to Well-being

These activities allow pupils to think back over their learning from the Five Ways to Well-being to encourage them to embed them in everyday activities to develop habits for positive mental health

Teacher's planning template


This can be used individually, in collaboration with colleagues in your school or with teachers teaching the same unit in another country.

Question	Notes	Your thoughts
<p>1. What do you want pupils to learn?</p>	<p>Read through the materials for the whole unit and consider what is most important for your pupils to learn. Use the learning objectives listed at the start of each lesson to help you do this.</p> <p>What outcomes do you want for your pupils?</p> <p>Consider the core skills developed by each lesson. What are the priorities in your context?</p> <p>Think about how this unit fits with your national curriculum. How do the learning objectives meet the requirements of your national curriculum or guidelines?</p>	
<p>2. What would be the best way for them to learn this?</p>	<p>Given the learning objectives you have identified, decide whether you are going to deliver all or a selection of the lessons. Take into account the time and resources you have available.</p> <p>How do you need to tailor the learning activities in each lesson to meet your pupils' needs?</p> <p>How will you use the suggested reflection activities?</p> <p>How do the knowledge and skills in this unit link to previous learning?</p> <p>What is the best way for pupils to learn about mental health and well-being in their community, country and internationally?</p> <p>How could this unit be used as an opportunity to develop core skills?</p> <p>What is the best way for them to approach working collaboratively?</p>	
<p>3. How will you know what they have learned?</p>	<p>Given the learning objectives you have decided on, think about assessment.</p> <p>How will you find out what your pupils already know about mental health and well-being before beginning this unit?</p> <p>Consider what sort of evidence you would need to see that pupils have learned the knowledge, skills and attributes you would like them to learn.</p>	

Question	Notes	Your thoughts
<p>4. What resources do you need?</p>	<p>Given the learning activities you are planning, think about the resources you will need.</p> <p>Who could you engage in the unit so that pupils learn more about mental health and well-being in their own and other contexts?</p> <p>What additional materials would be beneficial to your pupils' learning in this unit?</p> <p>Where do you need to do the activities? Are all the required resources available?</p>	
<p>5. What did pupils learn during the unit?</p>	<p>During and after the unit, think about what pupils have learned.</p> <p>To what extent did pupils achieve the learning objectives for each lesson?</p> <p>What other outcomes were achieved? What else did pupils learn?</p> <p>Were pupils confused about anything?</p> <p>Which parts of the unit needed more time or attention than expected?</p>	
<p>6. What other reflections do you have about the unit?</p>	<p>During and after the unit, think about what went well and what you could have done differently.</p> <p>Which learning experiences were particularly valuable?</p> <p>Were the learning activities appropriate? What worked well?</p> <p>What would you do differently next time?</p>	

Foundation activities

Foundation activity 1: Creating an open and safe space for well-being

 **Time:** 15 minutes

Pupils will:

- create an open and safe space where everyone feels comfortable to take part
- establish a set of ground rules for inclusive participation.

Notes on core skills

Pupils will use critical thinking and problem solving to create class ground rules. They may also use communication and collaboration.

Teacher background information

This lesson lays the foundation for creating a safe and open space for well-being with talking and listening in your classroom. It is important to use ground rules to establish the classroom as an open and safe space for every session and for teachers to be aware of support channels if required by pupils. As the lessons progress, pupils should be encouraged to take more ownership of refining and developing their own class ground rules. Pupils should understand that ground rules are not always straightforward, depending on the needs of an individual pupil or the context of the discussion. Spending time thinking critically about ground rules should help pupils move from a superficial to a deeper understanding of their importance and complexity. If your class already has a 'space' for class talking and listening such as Philosophy for Children (P4C) or Circle Time, use this as an opportunity to compare and contrast any existing ground rules with the added dimension of well-being.

Differentiation for SEND

Introduce fewer statements to rank initially and explain key vocabulary where necessary. Adapt language accordingly.

Tasks

1. Introduce the idea of an 'open and safe space for well-being'. Explain that ground rules are important for creating such a space in the classroom. Be clear that confidentiality is not possible if the teacher feels that someone is at risk of harm.

2. Ask pupils to work in pairs to rank the suggested list of ground rules in order of importance for creating an 'open and safe space for well-being'. Pupils can cut up the statements and rank, or number the boxes. Encourage them to add in further ground rules if they think any are missing (in the blank boxes).

Use questions to prompt further discussion as the pupils complete the ranking activity.

Questions might include:

- Should every personal experience be shared in class?
- Are there some ideas or opinions that should never be shared in class?
- Are there some types of humour that would not be appropriate?
- Does everyone need to show the same body language?
- Do we always know when we are being sensitive or not?
- Is there such a thing as a confidential space in school?

Listen to others	Take turns to speak
Show positive body language	Respect each other's privacy
Keep shared experiences in the classroom (not 'gossip')	Develop positive relationships
Be sensitive to others	Encourage positive participation
Build on each other's ideas	Share own ideas and opinions
Respect each other's right to hold their beliefs and opinions	Have the right to pass

3. Create a class poster or display board of the class ground rules. Explain to pupils that they will refer to, revisit, review and refine ground rules during every lesson.

Blobtree reflection

A circle can be a good grouping for creating an open and safe space for well-being, simply because pupils can see each other, and it gives a sense of equality and inclusion. This might not always be possible in much larger groups, but the circle can also work as a metaphor for a sense of togetherness and community. Show pupils the picture and guide their reflection using questioning:

Which blob do you feel like most in class talking and listening opportunities?

Which blob do you want to be like most in class talking and listening opportunities?



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Ideas for collaborating with your partner school

Share a photo of the poster or display of ground rules with your partner school. What are the similarities and differences?

Global exemplars

Philosophy for/with Children (P4/wC) is an innovative educational approach dedicated to promoting critical, creative and caring thinking skills in children and teens through philosophical inquiry in the form of collaborative dialogues and reflections. There are many examples across the world where P4C has been used as an approach to bridge communities. [Philosophy for Children in the Borderlands \(wordpress.com\)](http://www.philosophyforchildren.org) is a global example of a project working in the Mexico and US borderlands.

Teacher well-being tips

Discuss how you can make your staff room or other staff communal areas an open and safe space for well-being. Consider how the ground rules might vary for staff meetings and break times.

Foundation activity 2: Creating your own medicine wheel

L Time: 30 minutes

Pupils will:

- explore a model for mental health and well-being
- develop a series of actions for their own mental health and well-being.

Notes on core skills

Pupils will need to use creativity and communication to develop their own medicine wheel. They may also use creative collaboration.

Teacher background information

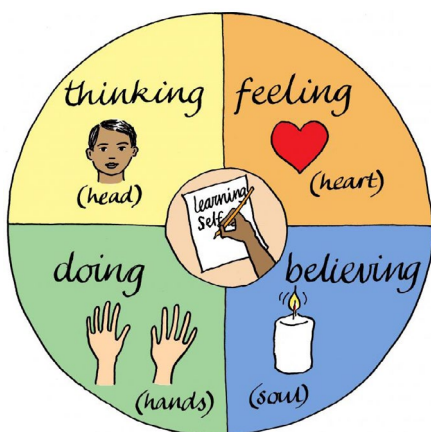
Well-being is about being healthy and happy. We all need to look after our mental health in the same way as our physical health. We need to work to maintain it; mental health is about having a positive mental outlook with the ability to take control over life's challenges. This starts with understanding your thoughts, feelings and beliefs.

Differentiation for SEND

Show some exemplar medicine wheels already completed or cut the circle into quarters and spend time on each one individually then 'stick' it back together to make the metaphorical side of the task more concrete.

The medicine wheel also has links to the Five Ways to Well-being, developed by the New Economics Foundation (NEF).

- Connect
- Be active
- Take notice
- Keep learning
- Give



The medicine wheel. © British Council

Lesson 1



Activity: Connect

Pupils will:

- understand the importance of connecting with people and nature
- think about how we connect with people and nature and what the benefits are
- verbalise when they feel connected and when they may not.

Notes on core skills

Pupils will collaborate and build on each other's ideas. They will also have the chance to communicate and to think creatively.

Differentiation for SEND

Use language or activities that your pupils recognise. For example, you may want to draw or visualise 'connections' as your pupils talk about them to help them understand the concepts. energetic, pupils can jump or hop for 'agree' and that they belong.



Myself-Others-Environment. © British Council

Tasks

The first of the five ways to well-being is 'Connect'.

1. Ask your pupils what this means to them.

2. Display a copy or version of this diagram as you talk about 'connecting'. Or you could create the diagram using rope/string and get your pupils to choose the symbols of myself, others and environment.

3. Play the game, *Stand up, sit down!*

Sitting on the floor or on chairs (while socially distancing as applicable), pupils respond to the statements below. Statements can be read out by the teacher or a pupil. If they 'agree', they stand; if they 'disagree' they sit down. If they are feeling energetic, pupils can jump or hop for 'agree' and kneel down for 'disagree'.

- You have the letter A in your name
- You are wearing socks
- You like bananas (or another kind of food)
- You enjoy reading books
- You have a favourite song
- You enjoy watching films
- You like playing sports
- You have a hobby



The NEF says:

'Connect with the people around you. With family, friends, colleagues and neighbours. At home, work, school or in your local community. Think of these as the cornerstones of your life and invest time in developing them. Building these connections will support and enrich you every day.'



- You like being quiet (or noisy)
- You like playing computer games
- You enjoy being by yourself
- You like to look at the natural world

Ask pupils to come up with more ideas to extend the game further. Ask if they noticed if other pupils had things they liked or enjoyed in common with themselves. Ask them to give examples of this. Discuss how having things in common with others in school can help everyone to feel welcome and that they belong.

4. Think about connecting.

When you think about connecting, it may be with friends and family. It is also important to think about how we connect to people in our wider community, both local and global. In addition, it is very important to connect to nature and for us to feel a part of the natural world. This is very good for our mental health and well-being, and links to the 'feeling/soul' part of the medicine wheel. In many modern societies, people see themselves as separate from other people and from nature and the environment. It is important for our own well-being and for the survival of the planet that we see all three as interdependent, as is shown in the diagram above.

Discuss these questions with pupils:

- Who do you connect with on a regular basis? How do you do this? What are the benefits?
- How do you connect with people in your wider community, both locally and globally? What are some of the challenges? What are the benefits?
- How do you connect with nature and the environment? How easy is it for you? How does this make you feel?
- When you don't feel connected, what do you do to connect again?

Blobtree reflection

Show pupils the picture and guide their reflection using questioning:

Which blob shows how you feel connected to someone?

Which blob shows how you would like to be connected to someone?

Discuss the feelings shown by the blobs you have chosen.



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Ground rules for creating an open and safe space for well-being

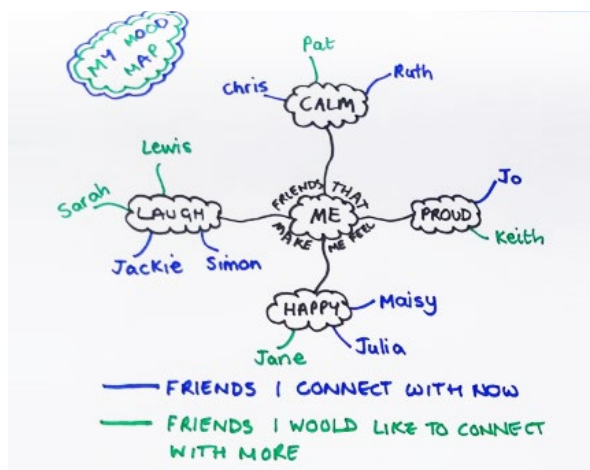
Revisit and review the ground rules from the introductory session. Which ground rules were most important with each of the activities? Are there any new ground rules to add?

Ideas for collaborating with your partner school

Create a mood map to show the people and places you connect with regularly. Be creative and use colours or symbols to show the people and places that support you and where you would like to see a stronger connection. places you connect with regularly. Be creative and use colours or symbols to show the people and places that support you and where you would like to see a stronger connection.

Share these with your partner school. What is similar about the mood maps? What ideas have your partners given you that you will add to your mood map?

Share what has been learned from the Stand up, sit down! game.



An example of a mood map

Global exemplars

Friendship Benches in Zimbabwe:
friendshipbenchzimbabwe.org

Teacher well-being tips

Look at the 'Myself – Others – Environment' diagram. How does it speak to you? How far do you see the different parts as interconnected?

- Who do you connect with on a regular basis? (Think about colleagues/friends/family)
- How do you do this? What are the benefits as well as the challenges when you are a busy teacher?
- How do you connect with people in your wider community, both locally and globally? What are some of the challenges? What are the benefits?

- How do you connect with nature and the environment? How easy is it for you? How does this make you feel?
- What tips can you share with colleagues? What would make it easier to make some of these connections more regularly?

Lesson 2

L Activity: Take notice

Time: 40 minutes

Pupils will:

- understand the importance of making space for calmness and meditation
- think about how taking notice – of yourself and the world around you – is important for your well-being
- work together with classmates and partners to develop a greater understanding of peace, both personal and global.

Notes on core skills

Pupils will be creative and imaginative and will have the opportunity to develop their communication and collaboration skills.

Teacher background information

A mandala is a geometric configuration of symbols which is used to represent things such as the universe, or wholeness and life. The word mandala, which means circle, comes from Sanskrit which is considered to be the oldest language in the world. Mandalas are often used to focus attention or as an aid to meditation. Circles are found in many spiritual traditions such as Buddhism, Hinduism, Sikh Dharma and Jainism, and also in Christianity, Islam and Judaism, as well as in the traditions of indigenous peoples such as Native Americans and Aborigines.

Finding a quiet space at some time in the day for peace and calmness is important for our mental and spiritual health. It is difficult sometimes when you are at home with family, in school or having a busy day. This activity encourages you to find a small place in the house or classroom or in the school grounds, which you can design to encourage calmness and reflection.

Introduction

'Take notice' is one of the five ways to well-being. Ask pupils what this means to them.



The NEF says:

'Be curious. Catch sight of the beautiful. Remark on the unusual. Notice the changing seasons. Savour the moment, whether you are walking to work, eating lunch or talking to friends. Be aware of the world around you and what you are feeling. Reflecting on your experiences will help you appreciate what matters to you.'



Task: make a peace mandala

For this activity, you will need some resources:

- A selection of natural objects, such as leaves, flowers, sticks, sand or pebbles, water.
- A flat tray or surface.
- A quiet corner in your house/the classroom, school or grounds where you can sit comfortably.
- Creativity and some personal space for calmness.



Examples of mandalas. Taken from <http://maisarahmustafa.blogspot.com/2010/11/font-face-font-family-timesfont-face.html>

- 1. Working** on your own or in small groups, agree where would be a good place; it does not have to be big. Decide where you will sit comfortably.
- 2. Clearing** – remove rubbish or obstacles to make a flat surface or use a tray. Take your time and think of clearing away any worries or fears while you do it.
- 3. Collect** objects that you like and individually/as a group, choose a special one to go in the centre.
- 4. Focus** on the detail. To help really focus so you notice the detail, for instance in a flower or a leaf, roll a piece of paper into a tube and look at the object through the tube and try drawing what you see; just that tiny part you can see through the tube. Or make your hand into a tube by slightly opening up a clenched fist and focus on an object through that.
- 5. Make** a mandala. Circles exist everywhere around us; in flowers, in seashells, in fruits, in snowflakes. They can be used to help calmness and meditation and are lovely to make. Working on your own or together, build your mandala from the centre outwards and use repeating patterns.
- 6. Now** practise some peaceful meditation. Sit comfortably and focus your eyes on the centre of your mandala – feel your breathing slow down. Breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth. Move your eyes outwards and leave any worries outside the circle. Let your eyes return to the centre and close them. When thoughts bubble up, focus your eyes again on the centre, breathing slowly and gently, in through your nose and out through your mouth. Try to do this every day. Refresh your mandala or create another when you need to.
- 7. Visualise** your peace mandala. Visualising is a powerful way of allowing you to use your imagination and help you to relax. Use your memory to create an image in your mind of your peace mandala, so you can visualise it when you are not at the place where your peace mandala is. Drawing and describing your peace mandala can be helpful memory strategies, as is playing a game where a partner takes one object away and you have to guess which one is missing. When visualising your peace mandala remember to allow yourself to be still and focus on your breathing for a minute before you try to visualise.

8. Reflect on your peaceful meditation. How did you find making the mandala? Was it meditative, quieting, peaceful or calming? How can you use the mandala next time you are feeling upset or overwhelmed? Why is peace important?

Other things you could make and add to your peace place might include wind chimes, dream catchers, a small dish of water with floating petals, or painted pebble patterns. But the most important thing is to practice some peaceful meditation for at least a few minutes every day!

Differentiation for SEND

This activity is suitable for learners of different needs. However, you may want to consider the safety of the objects you use, or provide a scaffold of a circle, or ensure that the space can be accessed by pupils with limited mobility.

Additional/optional task

Peace begins in our homes, families and communities, and learning to solve conflicts in peaceful ways is one of the biggest global challenges. World Peace Gardens have been made in cities throughout the world to encourage communities and countries to work peacefully together. Do some local research of peace gardens. You could use this website for [International Peace Gardens](http://InternationalPeaceGardens.com). Many of these may be far from your school but possibly there are some peace gardens not listed here that are closer.

Now design a peace garden for your community. What would it have in it? How could you make it peaceful? Think about all the senses and how you could include them to make the peace garden a sensory experience.

Blobtree reflection

Show pupils the picture and guide their reflection using questioning:

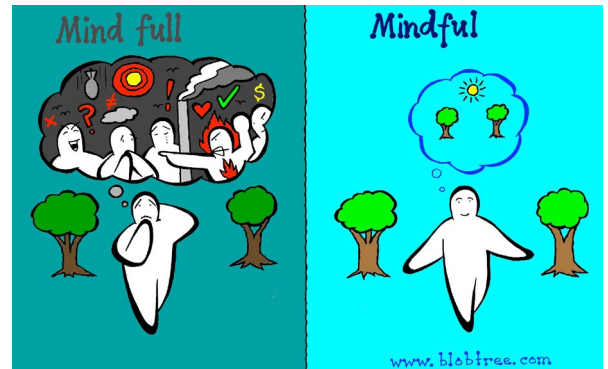
Look closely at the facial expressions of the two blob images.

Describe the emotions you can see on the two faces. Why are they showing those emotions?

How might the blobs be feeling?

Remember, emotions are easier to see on a person's face, whereas feelings are harder to see and describe and are more personal. Children often confuse feelings and emotions and use them interchangeably. Some emotions can be cultural

and are not always translatable. [The Positive Lexicography](http://ThePositiveLexicography.com) is an evolving index of 'untranslatable' words related to well-being from across the world's languages. Ground rules for creating open and safe space for well-being



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Revisit and review the ground rules from the introduction session. Which ground rules were most important with each of the activities? Are there any new ground rules to add?

Ground rules for creating open and safe space for well-being

Revisit and review the ground rules from the introduction session. Which ground rules were most important with each of the activities? Are there any new ground rules to add?

Ideas for collaborating with your partner school

Share photos of your mandalas or your peace garden designs with your partner school. Explain some of the items you included on your mandalas. Are there ideas you will now include in your mandala based on what your partner's ones look like? Can you incorporate something meaningful or representative from your partner's culture?

Share examples of local peace gardens with your partner school. Co-design a peace garden with your partner. Consider what is peaceful and relaxing for them. Does this differ for you? What details have each of you focused on?

Teacher well-being tips

Join in with pupils as they create their mandalas. Share the process with colleagues and encourage them to create their own as well. Maybe you could dedicate some time during a staff meeting to create mandalas or have mandala images in the staffroom.

Lesson 3



Activity: Keep learning

Time: 40 minutes

Pupils will:

- understand that we keep learning throughout our lives
- explore different perspectives and interests in the class.

Notes on core skills

Pupils will be creative and imaginative. They will have the opportunity to develop their communication and collaboration skills.

Teacher background information

This activity explores different interests and ways to enjoy learning, and the idea that we keep learning throughout our lives.

Differentiation for SEND

You may decide to work on one collaborative sharing of all the learning ideas. Or if your pupils struggle with concepts or visualisation, provide pictures to represent different things they might like to learn as a way to scaffold their thinking and contributions.

Tasks

The fourth of the five ways to well-being is: 'Keep learning'.

1. Ask your pupils what this means.



The NEF says:

'Try something new. Rediscover an old interest. Sign up for that course. Take on a different responsibility at work. Fix a bike. Learn to play an instrument or how to cook your favourite food. Set a challenge you will enjoy achieving. Learning new things will make you more confident as well as being fun.'



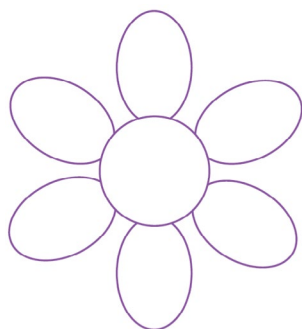
2. Ask your pupils to create some learning lists:

- Make a class list of some of the things you learned before you came to school.
- Make a class list of some of the things you have learned in the last six months.
- Make a list of five things you **think** you will learn in the next six months.
- Make a list of five things you **would like** to learn in the next six months.

3. Creative responses to learning goals

- Show pupils the flower template. Ask them what a flower template has to do with our learning goals.

- Draw out that plants grow from tiny seeds, so we can imagine that our learning goals are seeds that we can plant now and watch them grow into the future.



- Invite pupils to think carefully about their own learning goals and draw or write these on the petals of their flower. In the centre of the flower they can draw a picture of themselves when they have achieved one of their learning goals. Encourage pupils to be creative and illustrate one of the five things they would like to learn, showing the steps they will need to take to reach their learning goal(s).
- Alternatively, pupils could use a rainbow with the learning goals at the end of the rainbow or write them on stepping stones across a river or show them on a pathway over a hill or through a woodland.

4. Ask pupils to listen to the following:

Imagine you were transported to a place where you could learn something you've always wanted to learn, but it would only take one day. It can be anything at all, even something that would normally take many years to learn.

Ask pupils to share what it is they would like to learn, giving an explanation and reasons why. Another fun way of doing this is to get pupils to write theirs on a piece of paper and see if others can guess what they chose.

5. Imagine if... what would it be? Pose the following scenarios to pupils. Encourage them to come up with their own 'imagine if' scenarios.

- Imagine if you could learn any instrument, what would it be?
- Imagine if you could learn any sport, what would it be?

- Imagine if you could learn to drive any vehicle, what would it be?
- Imagine if you could learn to cook any meal, what would it be?
- Imagine if you could learn to play any game, what would it be?
- Imagine if you could learn to grow any vegetable or fruit, what would it be?
- Imagine if you could learn any language, what would it be?

6. Ask pupils to reflect on the greatest learning of all.

In one word, what is the greatest thing that everyone can learn in your class... in your family... in your country... in the whole world?

Blobtree reflection

Show pupils the picture and guide their reflection using questioning:

Does learning take you out of your comfort zone?

When do you like being in your comfort zone with your learning?

When do you like leaving your comfort zone with your learning?



© Pip Wilson and Ian Long www.blobtree.com

Partner school linking activity

Share your tasks with your partner school. Are the pupils interested in learning some of the same things? What can you learn about each other from sharing your learning goals?

Look at your learning lists. Can your partner class teach your class something that they want to learn? Pledge to share some of the things you have learned with your partner school in four weeks' time.

Design a class poster to share your response to Task 3 with your partner school. Display your poster and theirs on the wall of your classroom. Is there anything on their list you would like to add to your list?

Ground rules for creating an open and safe space for well being

Revisit and review the ground rules from the introductory session. Which ground rules were most important with each of the activities? Are there any new ground rules to add?

Teacher well-being tips

Spend time as a staff body thinking about new skills or activities colleagues are learning now or would like to learn. Create a board in the staffroom to share photos of learning in action! Think of a new skill the whole staff team could try. This could be something creative or maybe cooking-based, depending on staff interests.

Lesson 4



Activity: Be active

Time: 40 minutes

Pupils will:

- understand there are lots of ways to be active
- develop new skills and link mental well-being to being active
- be able to identify which types of 'Be active' activities suit them best.

Tasks

Another step of the five ways to well-being is 'Be active'.

1. Ask pupils what this means.



The NEF says:

'Go for a walk or run. Step outside. Cycle. Play a game. Garden. Dance. Exercising makes you feel good. Most importantly, discover a physical activity you enjoy and one that suits your level of mobility and fitness.'



2. Invite pupils to sit quietly with their eyes closed;

still and tall. Breathing in through the nose and out through the mouth. Encourage them to think carefully about how each part of their body feels; start with physical sensations in the head and face and slowly move through the body. Then ask them to think carefully about the emotions they can feel. This does not require a discussion.

3. Spend time playing a few of the games below.

Refocus pupils on the physical sensations in their bodies and then how they feel emotionally. What has changed?

Here are some possible questions for a wider discussion following the activities:

- How did they feel during the activity (excited, happy, nervous etc.)?
- If they felt nervous, what helped them overcome that?
- Why were they excited/happy etc.?
- How do they feel now (energised, happier, more focused etc.)?

Get pupils to think creatively about how they can be active themselves and as part of a group. Explain that in the next few days, you are all going to play some games that are going to get them moving. Their challenge will be to think of new

games for their friends or class and to lead others in those activities.

4. Explain that physical activity is extremely important for a healthy mind. Thinking about some of the games they have played, why might that be? Explain that when we are physically active, the body releases hormones which help lift our mood and help us to see things more positively. Ensure that pupils are aware of where to go for support if they find that this is not the case for them, or if they have other questions.

5. Ask your pupils how being active helps their emotional health and well-being.

6. Balancing act: this can be played individually. Mark out a line with a skipping rope or some string. Along one side, place various items at different distances away from the line. These could be a cushion, pen, book, coat – items that belong to the pupil taking part. The pupil taking part needs to stand on the line and balance by standing on one leg, putting their arms in the air at right angles. Explain they are against the clock!

Explain that they need to jump along the line holding the pose, then pick up each item and move it to the other side – making sure their feet do not leave the line.

They must be careful – if they lose their balance or drop anything, they go back to the start.

Take it in turns with others in your class (remember to replace the items along the line with items that belong to the pupil taking part) and see who can do it the quickest.

Following this activity, ask your pupils:

- What else are they balancing in life?
- What people around them may be balancing?
- What are the difficulties they encounter and how do they keep balance?

You could record this discussion on a series of flip-chart pages, to put up as a display to remind your pupils of ways they can keep a good balance and maintain good emotional health and well-being.

Extra ideas for energisers in the middle of the day/ to break up online sessions

Shapeshifting

Choose one person to be the leader. Get your class to stand up (if pupils have limited mobility, they can stay seated).

The leader shapeshifts into a move that everyone in the class has to copy, like a star jump, putting your hands on your head, running on the spot or a dance move.

Try to come up with as many different ones as you can!

After ten shapeshifts, a new leader starts shapeshifting.

Keep going for ten minutes!

Dancing moves (teacher to lead this the first time)

Make sure everyone in your class has enough room around them to keep enough distance. Start playing some music or put the radio on.

Take two sideways steps to the right and tap the toes of your left foot on the ground in time with the music. Then do the same to the left.

Now add some arm moves. As you step each way, wave your arms side to side above your head.

Finally, after your two steps in each direction, do a special dance move. Try a star jump, dabbing, flossing or swivelling your hips like you have a hula hoop. It can be anything – make the most of your agility. See if you can keep dancing for ten minutes.

This game can be done in short bursts and is suitable as a mid-session break or energiser. If you make it a part of your routine, you can also work with your pupils to put together a shared playlist.

What’s the item?

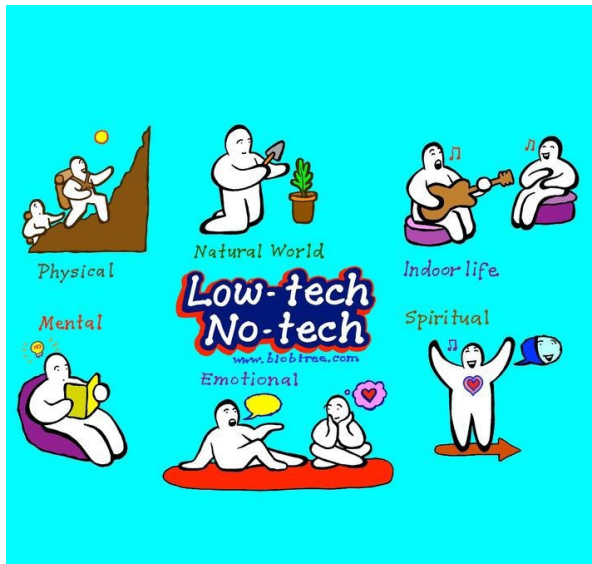
Provide your class with an item (such as a stick, ball, box, or scarf). Standing in a circle, each person takes a turn to imagine what it is/what its function could be and to demonstrate it by acting it out/moving. For example, ‘It’s not a stick, it’s a balancing pole for a tightrope walker’; ‘It’s not a box, it’s a swimming pool’.

Blobtree reflection

This Blob image gives examples of ways pupils can be ‘active’ in other ways, without necessarily being physically active or using digital technology. Show pupils the picture and guide their reflection using questioning:

Which Blob images show how you like to be active?

Which Blob images show how you would like to be active more?



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Ground rules for creating an open and safe space for well-being

Revisit and review the ground rules from the introduction session. Which ground rules were most important with each of the activities? Are there any new ground rules to add?

Ideas for collaborating with partner schools

In groups, design an activity for your partner school that will help them be active. Make sure your instructions are clear - maybe you need to take some photos to show what you mean?

Completing the challenge set by your partner school: send some photos and comments about what you enjoyed about their challenge to your partner school.

Global exemplars

Explore some of the physical activities carried out by different schools in India during [Fit India School Week](#) in February 2020. Which activities would you like to try in your school? What would a fitness logo look like for your school, town or country?

The Fit India Movement was launched by the Government of India in August 2019. It is a movement to take the nation on a path of fitness and wellness. It provides a unique and exciting opportunity to work towards a healthier India. As part of the movement, individuals and organisations can undertake various efforts for their own health and well-being as well as for the health and well-being of fellow Indians.

Teacher well-being

Is it possible for you to go on a staff meeting walk instead of sitting in the staffroom? Or to play some of the games listed here as a way of connecting with each other and doing something a little different and having a bit of fun?

Create a well-being jar; you’ll need a jar and pieces of paper. Write an individual promise to yourself or the team, or a task on each piece of paper. For example, you could write down quotes that might inspire others, things you could do as a team to keep you motivated and energised, or challenges you are setting yourself for the coming year. Each week, a few of the papers are pulled out of the jar and posted on the noticeboard.

Lesson 5

L **Activity:** Give

Time: 45 minutes with an additional 15 minutes for creative responses.

Pupils will:

- understand the importance of gratitude and being altruistic
- think about kindness and how your happiness can be increased when you show empathy with others.

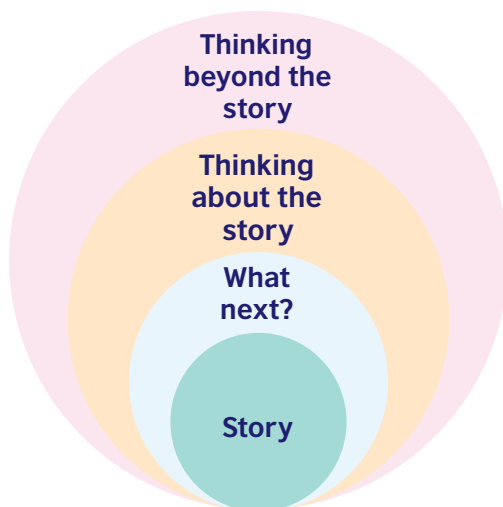
Notes on core skills

Pupils will be creative and imaginative. They will have the opportunity to develop their communication and collaboration skills.

Teacher background information

This lesson involves watching a three storytelling films based on an Arabic story called *A Tale of Two Villages* told by Alia Alzougbi, and reflecting on it through questioning. It tells the story of two quarrelling communities which reconnect and become happy together again. There is a clever twist at the end of the story which shows the importance of seeing each other's perspective. At the end of each storytelling film there are a structure of three questions:

- 1) **What next?** A question that seeks inference and prediction.
- 2) **Thinking about the story** – a question that seeks to challenge an assumption.
- 3) **Thinking beyond the story** – a question that is conceptual and contestable.



Transcripts of the videos will be provided

This can be a useful visual structure for working with any story, either with the story as a whole or broken down into key parts as with this story.

Differentiation for SEND

Adapt the language or use fewer questions at the end of each film according to the level and interests of the pupils. Show examples and explain any metaphorical aspects of creative tasks like gratitude trees or patchworks before pupils start to create so they have a clear idea of what they are contributing to.

Task 1: Storytelling and discussion

The last of the five ways to well-being is 'Give'.

1. Ask your pupils: 'What does this mean?'



The NEF says:

'Do something nice for a friend, or a stranger. Thank someone. Smile. Volunteer your time. Join a community group. Look out, as well as in. Seeing yourself, and your happiness, linked to the wider community can be incredibly rewarding and creates connections with the people around you.'



2. Storytelling films and discussion

Show pupils the three films and ask them to discuss the questions in pairs and feedback to the whole class as appropriate. Encourage pupils to seek out other perspectives even if they all agree with each other on the questions.

[A Tale of Two Villages Part 1](#)

What next? Where do you think the man on the horse was going?

Thinking about the story: Is that true? Is it really our fate as human beings to forget?

Thinking beyond the story: If you are together a lot, with friends and family, then does that mean you are less connected when you are apart?

[A Tale of Two Villages Part 2](#)

What next? Will the villagers ever stop quarrelling?

Thinking about the story: Do the villagers think they are lying to each other?

Thinking beyond the story: Is quarrelling always bad?

[A Tale of Two Villages Part 3](#)

What next? What do you think will happen when the villagers forget again?

Thinking about the story: Were the villagers laughing at the man's clothes, or at themselves?

Thinking beyond the story: Does it matter how far we are from the people we know well?

3. Creative responses to gratitude and kindness

- Explain to pupils that happiness and altruism are linked; doing good is important for being happy, and happiness helps to spark kindness, empathy and generosity. Explain that giving to others releases endorphins, activating the parts of our brains linked to trust, pleasure and connection with others. Empathy and showing gratitude for acts of kindness towards oneself and others are very good for our mental health and well-being and link to all parts of the medicine wheel.
- Ask pupils to write down **responses** of things they are grateful for and something they can show kindness for in their community. Consider different examples of gratitude and kindness, from personal, family, school to the local and global community.

Gratitude tree

Pupils each design a leaf with their response and display all the leaves on a class gratitude tree.

Gratitude book

Pupils make a tiny book (made by folding an A4 piece of paper lots of times) and record responses on a daily basis or make a class gratitude book.

Gratitude patchwork

Pupils write responses on squares of paper and then bring them together and display them in the form of a gratitude quilt to show interdependence and connection.

Extra ideas – Random Acts of Kindness Week (RAK)

1. Agree a 'RAK week' where everyone tries to do one RAK each day for a week anonymously. Each pupil could be allocated another pupil they have to do a RAK for anonymously. Encourage pupils to decide on RAKs that focus on time, space, concern and kindness rather than material things.

Blobtree reflection

Show pupils the picture and guide their reflection using questioning:

Which blobs show the ways you show kindness?

Which blobs show the ways you would like to show kindness?

Which blobs show ways someone else has shown you kindness?



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Ground rules for creating an open and safe space for well-being

Revisit and review the ground rules from the introduction session. Which ground rules were most important with each of the activities? Are there any new ground rules to add?

Ideas for collaborating with your partner school

Share copies of gratitude trees or other gratitude activities and reflect on the similarities and differences between partner schools. Pupils could also create a storyboard of the key parts of the story to share.

Global examples

Explore the [South African philosophy](#) of Ubuntu which means 'togetherness' and how all our actions have an impact on others and on society.

Explore the [Sanskrit and Pali](#) word of Mudita from Buddhism which means finding joy in the happiness of others.

Teacher well-being tips

Contribute to the gratitude activity with your class. Have a discussion about gratitude at the start of a staff meeting, leading to you and your colleagues creating a staff tree.

Lesson 6

Activity: Five ways to well-being

Pupils will:

- understand the importance of linking all the 'Five Ways to Well-being'
- think about how they can build actions for positive mental health and well-being into their daily life
- learn from their actions and share them with others.

Notes on core skills

There are opportunities here for creativity in the development of pupils' own set of postcards and the well-being guide, as well as creative collaboration. The activity on tracking a character from a story will involve critical and collaborative thinking.

Teacher background information

Think back over your learning from Steps 1–5: Connecting, Take notice, Keep learning, Be active, and Give. The Five Ways to Well-being are based on lots of research and practice and are supposed to be linked together to develop habits for positive mental health and well-being.

Differentiation for SEND

This activity is creative and flexible enough to allow your pupils to access it at their own pace. Spend time looking at and talking about the postcards before they start to make their own. Pupils could make a collaborative set of postcards.

Tasks:

1. Create postcards

Look at the postcards of the ‘Five Ways to Well-being’ developed by New Economics Foundation.¹⁵

Use the ideas from the ‘Five ways’ to develop your own set of postcards. Make postcards that record what you have done for each step, or what you would like to do with your partner school using pictures, text, or any sort of expression. Look back at the Medicine Wheel and see if you are balancing the four areas (head, hands, heart and soul).

2. Review a story

Choose a familiar story, such as a fairy tale or traditional tale. Ask pupils to use their



© New Economics Foundation

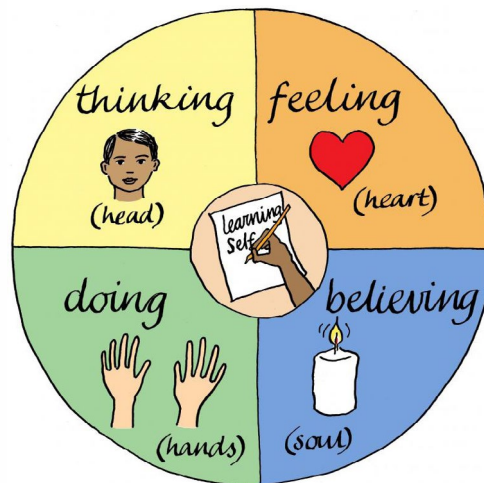
understanding of well-being to track a character from this story.

Can the character see their ‘happily ever after’ all the way through the story? How does the character feel at different points? What can the character do to help themselves feel happier in different situations?

Explain that there are ups and downs in everyone’s life. It is important to recognise these patterns in our lives and to work on helping ourselves to feel as good as possible, as often as possible.

3. Create a well-being guide

Explain that sometimes we all need a little help when times get difficult, this might be a small ‘pick-me-up’ or it might mean help from an adult we trust.



The Medicine wheel. © British Council

This activity will help pupils to consider actions they can take to improve their well-being, through creating a well-being guide.

Show pupils some of the [Action for Happiness Monthly Action Calendars](#) including the Calendar for Families.

Which of these ideas would you put on your well-being guide?

Ask pupils to choose four or five examples, perhaps using some of the work they’ve done so far to help them. For example, play a physical game with my friends; think of three things which make me feel grateful.

Pupils may like to keep a well-being diary to note how the activities make them feel and which ones they find easier than others. They can share their ideas with friends and family.

Develop your own class well-being calendar and share the activities.

Partner school linking activities

Create a calendar to share with your partner school, using images and ideas from all the steps. Schools could create 'Well-being Clock Stops' – scheduled check-ins with their partner school, to share their favourite activity of the week. The following week, they could exchange ideas about what went well and how to make the session even better.

Teacher well-being tips

Look back at the 'Teacher well-being tips' from the previous lessons. Which ones did you do yourself? Which did you find the most useful? Did you design your own medicine wheel? Did you share learning with colleagues? Did you share with colleagues beyond your school? With friends or

family? What did you find most useful? What is most helpful for you to ensure you develop and maintain habits for positive mental health and well-being?



Image by aalmeidah from Pixabay

Appendix I

Glossary

Altruism – acting out of concern for the well-being and happiness of others.

Empathy – the ability to understand and share the feelings of another.

Gratitude – the quality of being thankful; readiness to show appreciation for and to return kindness.

Interdependence – in this instance, the idea that humans are connected and depend and impact on other people.

Mandala – from the ancient Indian Sanskrit and represents wholeness and life. You can find them in many traditions such as Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Native American traditions, Judaism, and more. Mandalas are circles.

Schools Connect

Schools Connect offers a range of free downloadable classroom resources available to all teachers across the world. These resources, based on the United Nations Global Goals for Sustainable Development, have been designed to adapt to any curriculum. They offer creative and engaging ideas to bring knowledge and core skills to life in the classroom and inspire students to take action on global issues. Find out about our global learning resources designed to address topics which are high on the agenda for governments around the world here: <https://www.britishcouncil.org/school-resources>

Schools Connect offers free online professional development around core skills and international collaboration, helping teachers and school leaders to prepare young people for life and work in a globalised economy. The programme also supports partnerships between schools around the world with schools in the UK to share knowledge, skills and experience with other teachers.

More details on how to find a school partner can be found here: <https://www.britishcouncil.org/school-resources>

This resource was developed through the Connecting Classrooms through Global Learning programme, which ran between 2018–2022 and was co-funded by the British Council from our grant-in-aid, and the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) using UK aid.

Find a partner school or browse more resources at www.britishcouncil.org/school-resources

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