

# **MALTA Theme: Developing a Growth Mindset**

Developing a growth mindset is essential to not only manage challenges successfully but to also turn them into opportunities for growth and development (Seligman, Parks & Steen, 2004; Peterson, Ruch, Beerman, Park, & Seligman, 2007). The school context and its curriculum can offer the right environment to facilitate positive adaptation to challenges (Masten, 2001). A growth mindset in this curriculum gives importance to cognitive processes such as optimistic thinking, positive self talk and the disputation of negative thoughts as well as emotional processes including the awareness, expression and regulation of positive emotions. The activities within this theme can be said to be framed within the field of Positive Psychology which aims in valuing positive subjective experience towards the past, present and future and in building positive qualities to prevent and deal effectively with psychological problems (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

## **Sub-theme 1: Positive and Optimistic Thinking when facing Challenges**

The first sub-theme within the theme 'Developing a Growth Mindset' focuses on the development of positive and optimistic thinking, particularly during setbacks, and is divided into three sets of activities. Through the activities found in this sub-theme, children are provided with opportunities to engage in optimistic thinking, to reflect on some of their unhelpful thoughts and to then challenge these. All these are emotional skills that help children overcome challenges with a positive attitude (Seligman, 2002; Noble & McGrath, 2008). The first set of activities introduces positive and negative thinking. While younger children may be taught the skill by referring to upside and downside thoughts, older children are then introduced to explanatory styles. Helping children attribute bad events to external, unstable and specific causes is one way of helping them become more positive (Buchanan & Seligman, 1995). In the second set, skills are more focused on seeing how thoughts, feelings and actions are related to each other, and in the later years how an adversity (a bad event) can be followed by beliefs (e.g. nobody loves me) which have consequences (the feelings and actions that come about from thinking this way). In the last set, children develop ways of challenging these negative beliefs by for example, listing the counter-evidence against a negative thought, asking friends what they would do so as to develop alternative ways of thinking and listing the best, worst and most realistic case scenarios among others. In the end, children can also rearrange their Adversity, Beliefs, Consequences (ABC) flowcharts to add Disputation (disputing the negative beliefs e.g. Mummy and daddy love me) and Energization (writing down the feeling after changing the belief) (Seligman, 2006).

## Set of Activities 1: Positive and Negative Thinking

## Set of Activities 2: It's good to think positive!

## Set of Activities 3: Challenging Negative Thoughts

# Set 1: Positive and Negative Thinking

## Learning Goals

By the end of this unit, children will be able to:

### Early Years (3-5 years)

- Walk like optimistic and pessimistic characters
- Walk like optimistic and pessimistic characters and talk like them
- Act like optimistic and pessimistic characters going through their day and encountering challenges along the way

### Early Primary (6-8 years)

- Act like and talk like optimistic and pessimistic characters going through their day and encountering challenges along the way
- Act out examples of upside thoughts and downside thoughts about a setback
- Give examples of upside and downside thoughts
- Give examples of optimistic thinking (Not Me/ Not Always/ Not Everything) and pessimistic thinking (Me/ Always/ Everything)

### Late Primary (9-11 years)

- Recognize the differences between an optimistic (Not Me/ Not Always/ Not Everything) and a pessimistic (Me/ Always/ Everything) explanatory style
- Act out an optimistic and a pessimistic explanatory style
- Give examples of an optimistic and a pessimistic explanatory style to a setback

## Tips for Teachers

1. Children learn positive thinking from the adults around them. So it is important to start off with modelling a positive attitude.
2. Students can set up a scrapbook or display file of their best pieces of work. Alternatively, a part of the classroom could be reserved to display the best pieces of work from some of the students for every week.
3. If you have some free time at the end of the day, encourage the children to share what they think the best thing about that day was. It could also be the best thing about this week, what they are looking forward to the most tomorrow and so on.

- Write a letter to a friend explaining how one would go about using optimistic thinking for a setback
- Write a 'help wanted' advert and then answer it helping the person to use optimistic thinking for a setback

## Activity 1: Walk like a...

### *Learning Goal*

Children will walk like optimistic and pessimistic characters.

### *Learning Outcome. By the end of this study unit, I will be able to:*

Walk like optimistic and pessimistic characters.

### *Age Group*

Early Years

### *Level*

Basic

### *Materials needed*

Puppets, happy music, sad music.

### *Activity Steps*

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.
2. Read this story to the children using hand or finger puppets:

**Sam the squirrel and Helen the hedgehog lived in the forest. When they turn 3 years old, it was custom for all the animals of the forest to climb up Sunset Mountain. Sunset Mountain was the biggest mountain in the forest. Climbing Sunset Mountain was hard work. This year it was Sam's turn to climb Sunset Mountain. He packed his bag and went off. He climbed, and he climbed. But in the middle of the way up, Sam got very tired. "I can't do this", said Sam, "I'm no good for anything!". So he turned back. The next day Sam tried climbing up the mountain again. But in the middle of the way up, Sam got very tired again. "I can't do this", said Sam, "I'm no good for anything!". So he turned back. The next day he asked Helen to go with him. But in the middle of the way up, Sam got very tired again. "I can't do this", said Sam, "I'm no good for anything!". Sam was going to turn back when he heard Helen's voice. "You can do it Sam!", she said. Sam was very tired. Sam was very hungry. Sam was very cold. But he climbed, and he climbed. "I can do it", said Sam with every step. Finally, after a lot of hard work, Helen and Sam reached the top of Sunset Mountain. Sam felt glad he didn't give up and very proud of getting to the very top! Helen and Sam celebrated Sam's**

**birthday on top of the mountain watching the sunset. And for doing such a good job, Helen gave Sam a badge for climbing the mountain to the very top!**

3. First, help the children to process the story by asking them:

- Did you like the story?
- Was it easy or hard climbing Sunset Mountain?
- What did Sam say when he climbed the mountain on his own?
- What did Sam say to help him get to the top?

4. Then relate the story to the children's own experiences:

- What things do you find easy to do?
- What things do you find hard to do?
- When there is something hard to do, is it better to look at the bad bits or the good bits?

5. Put on some music. Tell the children that you will be practicing different ways to walk. Encourage the children to practice to change their walks first. Show the walks to the children if they cannot understand. These are some of the different changes children can give to their walks:

- Change the size (small, high, low, narrow...)
- Change the time (slower or faster)
- Change the direction

6. Now put on some happy music. Tell the children that you are going to walk like Mr Sunny, a person who always looks at the sunny side of life. (You can allow the children to act like Mrs Sunny if they wish). Coach the children with questions: "Am I walking high or low? Light or heavy? Big or small? Am I smiling?" Children can then try it out for themselves.

7. Do the same exercise with sad music and walk like Mr Grumpy, (or Mrs Grumpy) a person who always looks at the down side of life. Then ask the children to copy you. They can also add new dimensions to their walks.

8. Ask the children:

- Was it best to walk as Mr Sunny or Mr Grumpy? Why?

9. Children can draw a picture of Mr Sunny and Mr Grumpy at the end of the activity.

## ***Take Home Activity***

When reading stories, ask the children about the characters' thinking patterns. Discuss who is looking at the good parts and who is looking at the bad parts and why.

## **Activity 2: Talk the Walk**

### ***Learning Goal***

The children will walk like optimistic and pessimistic characters and talk like them.

### ***Learning Outcome. By the end of this unit, I will be able to:***

Walk like optimistic and pessimistic characters and talk like them.

### ***Age Group***

Early Years

### ***Level***

Intermediate

### ***Materials needed***

Puppets, sad music, happy music.

### ***Activity Steps***

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness Activity.
2. Read the story in Activity 1 using hand or finger puppets.
3. First, help the children to process the story by asking them:
  - Did you like the story?
  - Was it easy or hard climbing Sunset Mountain?
  - What did Sam say when he climbed the mountain on his own?
  - Who helped Sam?
  - What did Sam say to help him get to the top?
4. Then relate the story to the children's own experiences:

- What things do you find easy to do?
- What things do you find hard to do?
- When there is something hard to do, sometimes we look at the bad bits like Sam did. We might say “I can’t do it”. What other things might we say?
- When there is something hard to do, sometimes we look at the good bits like Sam did in the end. We might say “I can do it!” What other things might we say?
- Do you think it’s better to look at the bad bits or at the good bits?

5. Put on some music. Tell the children that you will be practicing different ways to walk. Encourage the children to practice to change their walks first. Show the walks to the children if they cannot understand. These are some of the different changes children can give to their walks:

- Change the size (small, high, low, narrow...)
- Change the time (slower or faster)
- Change the direction

6. Now put on some happy music. Ask the children to walk like Mr Sunny, a person who always looks at the sunny side of life. (You can allow the children to act like Mrs Sunny if they wish) While they are walking ask the children, ‘What would Mr Sunny say?’ If kids find this difficult, show them. You could say “It’s a beautiful day today!” or “I’m in a good mood today!”

7. Do the same exercise with sad music and choose a child to walk like Mr Grumpy (or Mrs Grumpy), a person who always looks at the down side of life. If kids find this difficult, show them. You could say “This is a horrible day!” or “I’m a big loser”.

8. Ask the children:

- Was it better to walk as Mr Sunny or Mr Grumpy? Why?
- Which walk helped you feel better?

9. Children can draw a picture of Mr Sunny and Mr Grumpy at the end of the activity.

### ***Take Home Activity***

Together with their parents, children can discuss a challenge or a setback. What downside thinking can make them feel upset? What upside thinking can help them feel better?

## Activity 3: What would you do?

### *Learning Goal*

Children will act like optimistic and pessimistic characters going through their day and encountering challenges along the way.

### *Learning Outcome. By the end of this unit, I will be able to:*

Act like optimistic and pessimistic characters going through their day and encountering challenges along the way.

### *Age Group*

Early Years

### *Level*

Advanced

### *Materials needed*

Puppets.

### *Activity Steps*

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.
2. Read the story in Activity 1 to the children using hand or finger puppets.
3. First, help the children to process the story by asking them:
  - Was it easy or hard climbing Sunset Mountain?
  - What did Sam say when he climbed the mountain on his own?
  - Who helped Sam?
  - What did Sam say to help him get to the top?
  - What did Helen and Sam see on top of the mountain?
4. Then relate the story to the children's own experiences:
  - What things do you find easy to do?
  - What things do you find hard to do?



- When there is something hard to do, sometimes we look at the bad bits like Sam did. We might say “I can’t do it”. What other things might we say?
- When there is something hard to do, sometimes we look at the good bits like Sam did in the end. We might say “I can do it!” What other things might we say?
- Do you think it’s better to look at the bad bits or at the good bits? Why?

5. Put on some happy music. Tell the children that they are going to act like Mr Sunny, a person who always looks at the sunny side of life. (You can allow the children to act like Mrs Sunny if they wish). Start narrating Mr Sunny’s day and children need to act it out **in character**. You might say “You get up and make breakfast”. Then include challenges that Mr Sunny experiences during his day. You might say “Mr Sunny drops his eggs on the floor”. Again children need to react to these challenges **in character**. For example, acting as Mr Sunny, the child would just clean the eggs from the floor and continue with his day.

7. Do the same exercise with sad music. Tell the children they are going to act like Mr Grumpy (or Mrs Grumpy), a person who always looks at the down side of life.

8. Ask the children:

- How did you feel acting like Mr Sunny?
- How did Mr Sunny react to problems?
- How did you feel acting like Mr Grumpy?
- How did Mr Grumpy react to problems?
- Was it better to act like Mr Sunny or Mr Grumpy? Why?

9. Children can draw a picture of Mr Sunny and Mr Grumpy at the end of the activity.

### ***Take Home Activity***

Children can ask their parents about a bad thing that happened to them and interview them on how they handled the bad time. Were they like Mr Sunny or Mr Grumpy? What did they say? What helped them feel better?

## Activity 4: What would you do and say?

### *Learning Goal*

Children will act like and talk like optimistic and pessimistic characters going through their day and encountering challenges along the way.

### *Learning Outcome. By the end of this unit, I will be able to:*

Act like and talk like optimistic and pessimistic characters going through their day and encountering challenges along the way.

### *Age Group*

Early Primary

### *Level*

Basic

### *Materials needed*

Puppets, happy music, sad music.

### *Activity Steps*

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.
2. Read the following story to the children using hand or finger puppets:

**Sam the squirrel and Helen the hedgehog lived in the forest. When the sun came out in the forest, the animals liked to play a special game. Every animal had to collect nuts from the forest. The animal who collected the most nuts would win! Sam was very excited about this game. He was a squirrel. And everyone knows that squirrels are supposed to be very good at collecting nuts. Sam *really* wanted to win. “Oh I’d really like to win Helen! It would be really embarrassing if a squirrel doesn’t win a nut collecting competition!”, said Sam. All the animals lined up behind the line. On your marks. Get set. GO! Sam and Helen ran off quickly to collect their nuts. They ran all around the forest and collected as many nuts as they could. At the end of the game Sam rested and counted the nuts he had collected. “One, two, three, four, five!”, counted Sam. Sam was very excited that he collected five whole nuts. When he went to give the nuts to the judge, he couldn’t believe his eyes! Mika the mole had collected ten nuts! That was much more than Sam had collected. “Oh no!”, thought Sam, “This is**

**HORRIBLE! I'm a squirrel who can't even collect nuts! I'm a big LOSER! I NEVER win any games! Competitions are STUPID!"**

Then Sam saw Helen. "Hey Sam!", said Helen, "I only collected two nuts today! I didn't win but it's OK because this game was a bit hard. Other animals found it hard too. Harry and Daisy collected two nuts just like me. Sam, you collected five nuts! Well done!" Sam didn't know how Helen did it. She was such a happy hedgehog. Even when she lost she looked at the good bits of the problem. "Maybe I didn't win Helen", said Sam, "but I did collect five nuts and that's pretty good! I'm also a very young squirrel Helen. Maybe when I grow up I will be a better nut collector." Sam still felt upset that he didn't win. But it felt good to look at the good bits. At the end of the day, Helen and Sam went to Mika's party and ate all the nuts they had collected. And Sam was glad he collected just five nuts. Because his tummy wasn't big enough to hold anymore!

3. First, help the children to process the story by asking them:

- What was Sam's problem? What did Sam's head tell him about the problem?
- **Upside thinking** is when you focus on the good bits. **Downside thinking** is when you focus on the bad bits. Was Sam using upside thinking or downside thinking? Was Helen using upside thinking or downside thinking?

4. Then relate the story to the children's own experiences:

- Sam lost a very important competition. What other things can happen that might upset us?
- How might children think about these things? Help the children to identify whether what they're saying helps them focus on the good bits (upside thinking) or the bad bits (downside thinking).
- Do you think it's better to use upside thinking or downside thinking?

5. Put on some happy music. Tell the children that they are going to act like Mr Sunny, a person who always looks at the sunny side of life. (You can allow the children to act like Mrs Sunny if they wish). Start narrating Mr Sunny's day and children need to act it out **in character**. You might say "You get up and make breakfast". Then include challenges that Mr Sunny experiences during his day. You might say "Mr Sunny drops his eggs on the floor". Then ask, "What would Mr Sunny say when he drops the eggs on the floor?" If children find this difficult, give prompts. Mr Sunny could say "Oops! That's OK, I'll clean them up and cook some more."

7. Do the same exercise with sad music. Tell the children they are going to act like Mr Grumpy (or Mrs Grumpy), a person who always looks at the down side of life.

8. Ask the children:

- How did you feel acting like Mr Sunny?
- How did Mr Sunny react to problems?
- How did you feel acting like Mr Grumpy?
- How did Mr Grumpy react to problems?
- Was it better to act like Mr Sunny or Mr Grumpy? Why?

### ***Take Home Activity***

Help children focus on the good things by asking them ‘What is the best thing about today?’, ‘What is the best thing about this weekend?’, ‘What is the best thing about this family?’ and so on.

## **Activity 5: Upside Downside**

### ***Learning Goal***

- To act out examples of upside thoughts and one downside thoughts to a setback.
- To write down one upside thought and one downside thought to a setback.

### ***Learning Outcome. By the end of this unit, I will be able to:***

- Act out examples of upside thoughts and downside thoughts about a setback.
- Write one upside thought and one downside thought to a setback.

### ***Age Group***

Early Primary

### ***Level***

Intermediate

### ***Materials needed***

Puppets, ‘Mr Sunny and Mr Grumpy’s Picnic’ handout.

## Activity Steps

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.
2. Read the story in Activity 4 to the children using hand or finger puppets.
3. First, help the children to process the story by asking them:
  - What was Sam's problem? What did Sam's head tell him about the problem?
  - **Upside thinking** is when you focus on the good bits. **Downside thinking** is when you focus on the bad bits. Was Sam using upside thinking or downside thinking? Was Helen using upside thinking or downside thinking?
  - Did Sam change his thinking in the end?
4. Then relate the story to the children's own experiences:
  - Sam lost a very important competition. What other things can happen that might upset us?
  - How might children think about these things? Help the children to identify whether what they're saying helps them focus on the good bits (upside thinking) or the bad bits (downside thinking).
  - Do you think it's better to use upside thinking or downside thinking?
  - How can we look at the good bits in some of the setbacks that you mentioned?
5. Introduce Mr Sunny and Mr Grumpy. You could use puppets. Tell the children that Mr Sunny always looks at the bright side of life. Mr Grumpy looks at the bad bits. Tell the kids to imagine that Mr Sunny and Mr Grumpy have planned a picnic and prepared all the food. As soon as they're going out with their friends, it starts to rain and they can no longer do the picnic outside. Using the puppet act out what Mr Sunny would say and do. Allow the children to put on the puppet and act out what Mr Sunny would say. Do the same with Mr Grumpy.
6. Hand out the worksheet to the children. Children can work in pairs to develop one downside thought and one upside thought for Mr Sunny and Mr Grumpy. Following the activity, ask the children:
  - Which thought would you choose? Why?
  - Is it better to think in an upside or a downside way?

### *Take Home Activity*

Children can apply the worksheet to a setback of their own. Encourage them to listen to what their head is telling them. Is it telling them to focus on the good bits or on the bad bits? Help them turn around a downside thought into an upside thought by looking at the good bits of a problem.

## Activity 6: 3 ways to think Positive

### *Learning Goal*

To role play examples of upside and downside thinking using 3 factors (Me/ Always/ Everything).

### *Learning Outcome. By the end of this unit, I will be able to:*

Act out upside and downside thinking using 3 factors (Me/ Always/ Everything).

### *Age Group*

Early Primary

### *Level*

Advanced

### *Materials needed*

Puppets, 'Mr Sunny and Mr Grumpy's thinking' handout.

### *Activity Steps*

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.
2. Read the story in Activity 4 to the children using hand or finger puppets.
3. First, help the children to process the story by asking them:
  - What was Sam's problem? What did Sam's head tell him about the problem?
  - **Upside thinking** is when you focus on the good bits. **Downside thinking** is when you focus on the bad bits. Was Sam using upside thinking or downside thinking? Was Helen using upside thinking or downside thinking?

- How did Sam change his thinking in the end?

4. Then relate the story to the children's own experiences:

- Sam lost a very important competition. What other things can happen that might upset us?
- How might children think about these things? Help the children to identify whether what they're saying helps them focus on the good bits (upside thinking) or the bad bits (downside thinking).
- How can we look at the good bits in some of the setbacks that you mentioned?
- Do you think it's better to use upside thinking or downside thinking? Why?

5. Introduce Mr Sunny and Mr Grumpy. You could use puppets. Tell the children that Mr Sunny always looks at the bright side of life. Mr Grumpy looks at the bad bits. Tell the kids to imagine that Mr Sunny and Mr Grumpy have planned a picnic and prepared all the food. As soon as they're going out with their friends, it starts to rain and they can no longer do the picnic outside. Give the handout to the children explaining Mr Sunny and Mr Grumpy's thinking. Using the puppet act out what Mr Sunny would say and do in the handout using the 3 factors. Allow the children to put on the puppet and act out what Mr Sunny would say. Do the same with Mr Grumpy.

6. Now following the handout ask the children to choose a setback and practice what Mr Sunny and Mr Grumpy would say. If children find this difficult, suggest setbacks (e.g. getting lost in a supermarket or not getting the presents I wanted for my birthday) and give examples.

### ***Take Home Activity***

Repeat this exercise with children at home. Ask them to choose a challenge they have went through or suggest a bad thing that can happen to. Help them process the challenge with these three points. Help them develop their upside thinking by discussing that setbacks do not happen to only them, that it will not always be like this (bad times pass), and it does not affect other areas of their life.

## Activity 7: Explanatory Styles

### *Learning Goal*

- To act out an optimistic (Not Me/ Not Always/ Not Everything) and a pessimistic (Me/ Always/ Everything) explanatory style.
- To give examples of an optimistic and a pessimistic explanatory style to a setback.

### *Learning Outcome. By the end of this unit, I will be able to:*

- Act out an optimistic (Not Me/ Not Always/ Not Everything) and a pessimistic (Me/ Always/ Everything) explanatory style.
- Give examples of an optimistic and a pessimistic explanatory style to a setback.

### *Age Group*

Late Primary

### *Level*

Basic

### *Materials needed*

'Mr Sunny and Mr Grumpy's thinking' handout.

### *Activity Steps*

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.
2. Introduce Mr Sunny and Mr Grumpy. You could use puppets. Tell the children that Mr Sunny always looks at the bright side of life. Mr Grumpy looks at the bad bits. Tell the kids to imagine that Mr Sunny and Mr Grumpy have planned a picnic and prepared all the food. As soon as they're going out with their friends, it starts to rain and they can no longer do the picnic outside. Give the handout to the children explaining Mr Sunny and Mr Grumpy's thinking. Using the puppet act out what Mr Sunny would say and do in the handout using the 3 factors. Allow the children to put on the puppet and act out what Mr Sunny would say. Do the same with Mr Grumpy.



3. Split the children into groups of three. Tell them to choose one situation from the ones below. In a group they need to come up with the things Mr Sunny would say and the things Mr Grumpy would say using the 3 factors in the handout.

- You studied very hard for a Maths test but you get a very low mark.
- You really wanted to start Art lessons this year but your dad said that you can't go because it's too expensive.
- You heard from someone that your best friend has been calling you mean names behind your back.
- Your family is moving and you have to start going to a new school.

4. Following the activity the children can present their work to the rest of the class.

### *Take Home Activity*

Discuss cartoon characters' or TV show characters' thoughts. Are they thinking like an optimist or a pessimist? How can they improve their thinking to be more positive?

## Activity 8: Penfriend Problems

### *Learning Goal*

- To recognize and understand the differences between an optimistic (Not Me/ Not Always/ Not Everything) and a pessimistic (Me/ Always/ Everything) explanatory style.
- To write a letter to a friend explaining how one would go about using optimistic thinking for a setback.

### *Learning Outcome. By the end of this unit, I will be able to:*

- Recognize and understand the differences between an optimistic (Not Me/ Not Always/ Not Everything) and a pessimistic (Me/ Always/ Everything) explanatory style.
- Write a letter to a friend explaining how one would go about using optimistic thinking for a setback.

### *Age Group*

Late Primary

## ***Level***

Intermediate

## ***Materials needed***

‘Pessimistic and Optimistic Explanatory Styles’ handout, ‘Penfriend Problems’ handout.

## ***Activity Steps***

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.
2. Go through the ‘Pessimistic and Optimistic Explanatory Styles’ handout with the children.
3. Start a discussion on Pessimistic and Optimistic Thinking. Use the following questions to guide you:
  - Are you usually a pessimistic thinker or an optimistic thinker?
  - Everyone goes through setbacks. What setbacks can happen to us?
  - Think of a setback you have gone through. Did you think like a pessimist or an optimist?
  - Why is it good to think like an optimist?
4. Cut out the penfriend letters from the ‘Penfriend Problems’ handouts. Give one to each child. The children need to write a letter to their penfriend, helping him or her use optimistic thinking. The children may work in groups if they wish.

## ***Take Home Activity***

Children can keep a journal of their thoughts and beliefs when they experience a setback. In this way they can keep track of their thoughts and see if they are thinking like an optimist or a pessimist.

## **Activity 9: Agony Aunt**

### ***Learning Goal***

- To recognize and understand the differences between an optimistic (Not Me/ Not Always/ Not Everything) and a pessimistic (Me/ Always/ Everything) explanatory style.
- To write a ‘help wanted’ advert and then answer it helping the person to use optimistic thinking for a setback.

### ***Learning Outcome. By the end of this unit, I will be able to:***

- Recognize and understand the differences between an optimistic (Not Me/ Not Always/ Not Everything) and a pessimistic (Me/ Always/ Everything) explanatory style.
- Write a 'help wanted' advert and then answer it helping the person to use optimistic thinking for a setback.

### ***Age Group***

Late Primary

### ***Level***

Advanced

### ***Materials needed***

'Pessimistic and Optimistic Explanatory Styles' handout, coloured A4 papers.

### ***Activity Steps***

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.
2. Go through the handout with the children.
3. Start a discussion on Pessimistic and Optimistic Thinking. Use the following questions to guide you:
  - Are you usually a pessimistic thinker or an optimistic thinker?
  - Everyone goes through setbacks. What setbacks can happen to us?
  - Think of a setback you have gone through. Did you think like a pessimist or an optimist?
  - Why is it good to think like an optimist?
4. Ask the children if they know what an agony aunt is. Tell the children they need to write a 'help wanted' advert on a newspaper of someone who is going through a difficulty and is thinking like a pessimist. Then they have to imagine they are an agony aunt and write a letter to help the person change his or her thinking. The students can write on the blank A4 papers and decorate it in any way they wish. The children may work in groups if they wish.

### ***Take Home Activity***

Children can keep a journal of their thoughts and beliefs when they experience a setback. In this way they can keep track of their thoughts and see if they are thinking like an optimist or a

pessimist. They can then go a step further- How does the thought make them feel? How can they arrange the thought to a more positive one?

## Set 2: It's good to think positive!

### Learning Goals

By the end of this unit, children will be able to:

#### Early Years (3-5 years)

- Role play optimistic and pessimistic characters' thoughts and feelings
- Role play optimistic and pessimistic characters' thoughts, feelings and actions
- Change a pessimistic character's negative thoughts into positive thoughts and act them out

#### Early Primary (6-8 years)

- Act out different challenges by role playing the character's thoughts, feelings and actions
- Draw a comic strip of a character's thoughts, feelings and actions during a setback
- Act out the Adversity, Beliefs, Consequences (ABC) Model of a character going through a challenge
- Fill in the missing parts of a basic ABC flowchart

#### Late Primary (9-11 years)

- Fill in the missing parts of an ABC flowchart
- Work in groups to perform a play showing Adversity, Beliefs and Consequences
- Create an ABC flowchart

### Tips for Teachers

1. Try to include optimistic thinking in your everyday school routine. You can do this by taking a 5 minute break to sing a feel-good song or by helping children look back at their day by listing what they liked most about it or what they did well.

2. When setbacks occur in the classroom and children get upset, try to help them focus on what their head is telling them. Try to help them turn a downside thought into a positive one.

3. When reading stories or watching DVDs, help children think about the ABC of one of the characters. They can also create an ABC flowchart as an activity after the story or DVD.

## Activity 1: Thoughts and Feelings

### *Learning Goal*

To role play optimistic and pessimistic characters' thoughts and feelings.

### *Learning Outcome. By the end of this study unit, I will be able to:*

Role play optimistic and pessimistic characters' thoughts and feelings.

### *Age Group*

Early Years

### *Level*

Basic

### *Materials needed*

Puppets, happy music, sad music, small ball with a smiley face drawn on it.

### *Activity Steps*

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.
2. Read this story to the children using hand or finger puppets:

Sam the squirrel and Helen the hedgehog lived in the forest. It was Winter in the forest and all the land was covered in snow. Sam's mummy, daddy and baby sister were all sick with the flu and couldn't go out outside. They were running out of food to eat. Sam's daddy told Sam that *he* was the only one who could collect some nuts for the family to eat. And the only nuts that were left were on the tallest tree in the forest. Sam had to go out into the snow, climb up to the very top of the tree, get the nuts and come back home. "What if I can't do it?", thought Sam. "What if I get lost in the forest?" Thinking of the bad things that could happen were making Sam very scared of going into the forest. Sam didn't want to go. But then Sam went to his quiet place to think some more. Sam remembered the time when he climbed Sunset Mountain with Helen. "If I climbed the biggest mountain in the forest, I think I can climb the tallest tree!", thought Sam. This made Sam feel better. He still felt scared but now he wanted to go into the forest and climb the tree to feed his family. Sam packed his bag, said goodbye to his family and went off. It was hard work. He climbed, and he climbed. But finally he reached the top and collected all the nuts on the tree. Sam felt happy that he climbed the tallest tree, and even happier that he helped his family feel better.

3. First, help the children to process the story by asking them:

- Did you like the story?
- What was Sam feeling in the story?
- What was making him feel this way?

4. Then relate the story to the children's own experiences:

- At first Sam looked at the bad bits of the problem. He said, "What if I get lost in the forest?" What might children say when they're thinking like this? How might children feel when they think like this?
- Then Sam looked at the good bits of the problem. He said, "If I climbed the biggest mountain in the forest, I think I can climb the tallest tree!" What might children say when they're thinking like this? How might children feel when they think like this?

5. Remind the children about the previous activity where they took the role of Mr Sunny and Mr Grumpy. Put on some sad music and tell the children to get in the character of Mr Grumpy. Remind them about the character if they forget. Start going about Mr Grumpy's day and start narrating a challenge that Mr Grumpy encounters. You might say "Mr Grumpy wakes up and gets out of his bed. Then he realizes he's going to be late for school!" Ask the children "What might Mr Grumpy think?" Now stop the music and hear some of the children's suggestions. Put on the music again. Ask the children "What might Mr Grumpy feel?" Stop the music again and listen to the children's suggestions.

6. Repeat the same exercise for Mr Sunny.

7. Conclude the activity with a small exercise. Tell the children that upside thinking can help us feel happy and good about ourselves. Let's practice by thinking about the good things. While the children are sitting in a circle, start by throwing the smiley ball and asking the child to say one good thing about their day. You can change it up by asking them to mention a good thing about their school, their week, the season you are in and so on.

8. After the activity, ask the children:

- How are you feeling after looking at the good bits?

9. Children can draw a picture of how they're feeling after the activity.

### ***Take Home Activity***

Together with their parents, children can think of a bad situation they have gone through or are going through at the moment. What is one good thing about the bad situation? Through this exercise, children can learn to find the silver lining in a bad situation. Ask them: How do you feel now that you've looked at the good bits of the problem?

## **Activity 2: Thoughts, Feelings & Actions**

### ***Learning Goal***

To role play optimistic and pessimistic characters' thoughts, feelings and actions.

### ***Learning Outcome. By the end of this unit, I will be able to:***

Role play optimistic and pessimistic characters' thoughts, feelings and actions.

### ***Age Group***

Early Years

### ***Level***

Intermediate

### ***Materials needed***

Puppets, happy music, sad music.

### ***Activity Steps***

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.
2. Read the story in Activity 1 to the children using hand or finger puppets.
3. First, help the children to process the story by asking them:
  - Did you like the story?
  - What was Sam feeling in the story?
  - What was making him feel this way?
  - What did Sam do in the end?



4. Then relate the story to the children's own experiences:

- At first Sam looked at the bad bits of the problem. He said, "What if I get lost in the forest?" What might children say when they're thinking like this? How might children feel when they think like this?
- Then Sam looked at the good bits of the problem. He said, "If I climbed the biggest mountain in the forest, I think I can climb the tallest tree!" What might children say when they're thinking like this? How might children feel when they think like this?

5. Remind the children about the previous activity where they took the role of Mr Sunny and Mr Grumpy. Put on some sad music and tell the children to get in the character of Mr Grumpy. Remind them about the character if they forget. Start going about Mr Grumpy's day and start narrating a challenge that Mr Grumpy encounters. You might say "Mr Grumpy wakes up and gets out of his bed. Then he realizes he's going to be late for school!" Ask the children "What might Mr Grumpy think?" Now stop the music and hear some of the children's suggestions. Put on the music again. Ask the children "What might Mr Grumpy feel?" Stop the music again and listen to the children's suggestions. Put on the music again. Ask the children "What might Mr Grumpy do now?" Look at what they do in character and ask them about it.

6. Repeat the same exercise for Mr Sunny.

7. Conclude the activity with a small exercise. Tell the children that upside thinking can help us feel happy and good about ourselves. Let's practice by thinking about the good things. While the children are sitting in a circle, start by throwing the smiley ball and asking the child to say one good thing about their day. You can change it up by asking them to mention a good thing about their school, their week, the season you are in and so on.

8. After the activity, ask the children:

- How are you feeling after looking at the good bits?

9. Children can draw a picture of how they're feeling after the activity.

### ***Take Home Activity***

Children and their parents can play a game called 'What worked well today'. Everyone lists a positive thing that worked well that day. How did you contribute to that good thing happening?

## Activity 3: Helping Mr Grumpy

### *Learning Goal*

- To role play a pessimistic character's thoughts, feelings and actions.
- To change a pessimistic character's negative thoughts into positive thoughts and act them out.

### *Learning Outcome. By the end of this unit, I will be able to:*

- Role play a pessimistic character's thoughts, feelings and actions.
- Change a pessimistic character's negative thoughts into positive thoughts and act them out.

### *Age Group*

Early Years

### *Level*

Advanced

### *Materials needed*

Puppets

### *Activity Steps*

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness Activity.
2. Read the story in Activity 1 using hand or finger puppets.
3. First, help the children to process the story by asking them:
  - Did you like the story?
  - What was Sam feeling in the story?
  - What was making him feel this way?
  - What did Sam do in the end?
  - What helped him climb the tree?
4. Then relate the story to the children's own experiences:

- At first Sam looked at the bad bits of the problem. He said, “What if I get lost in the forest?” What might children say when they’re thinking like this? How might children feel when they think like this?
- Then Sam looked at the good bits of the problem. He said, “If I climbed the biggest mountain in the forest, I think I can climb the tallest tree!” What might children say when they’re thinking like this? How might children feel when they think like this?

5. Remind the children about the previous activity where they took the role of Mr Sunny and Mr Grumpy. Put on some sad music and tell the children to get in the character of Mr Grumpy. Remind them about the character if they forget. Start going about Mr Grumpy’s day and start narrating a challenge that Mr Grumpy encounters. You might say “Mr Grumpy wakes up and gets out of his bed. Then he realizes he’s going to be late for school!” Ask the children “What might Mr Grumpy think?” Now stop the music and hear some of the children’s suggestions. Put on the music again. Ask the children “What might Mr Grumpy feel?” Stop the music again and listen to the children’s suggestions. Put on the music again. Ask the children “What might Mr Grumpy do now?” Look at what they do in character and ask them about it.

6. Now tell the children that Mr Grumpy is going to try to change his grumpiness just like Sam did in the story. Repeat the same exercise and help the children change Mr Grumpy’s thinking about the setback. For example, he might say “I’m always early on other days. It’s just this one time that I’m going to be late.” If children find this difficult, provide the thought and then they can act out the feeling and the action.

7. Conclude the activity with a small exercise. Tell the children that upside thinking can help us feel happy and good about ourselves. Let’s practice by thinking about the good things. While the children are sitting in a circle, start by throwing the smiley ball and asking the child to say one good thing about their day. You can change it up by asking them to mention a good thing about their school, their week, the season you are in and so on.

8. After the activity, ask the children:

- How are you feeling after looking at the good bits?

9. Children can draw a picture of how they’re feeling after the activity.

### ***Take Home Activity***

Children could speak about their day with their parents. Children can be encouraged to spot any downside thinking they had during the day. What upside thinking can they think of to fight their downside thinking?

## Activity 4: Role Play

### *Learning Goal*

To act out different challenges by role playing the character's thoughts, feelings and actions.

### *Learning Outcome. By the end of this unit, I will be able to:*

Act out different challenges by role playing the character's thoughts, feelings and actions.

### *Age Group*

Early Primary

### *Level*

Basic

### *Materials needed*

Puppets, role play cards.

### *Activity Steps*

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.
2. Read the following story to the children using hand or finger puppets:

**Sam the squirrel and Helen the hedgehog lived in the forest. When the sun came out in the forest, the animals liked to play a special game. Every animal had to collect nuts from the forest. The animal who collected the most nuts would win! Last time Sam *really* wanted to win. But he didn't win. He had collected just five nuts. "Oh no!", went Sam's head, "This is HORRIBLE! I'm a squirrel who can't even collect nuts! I'm a big LOSER! I NEVER win any games! Competitions are STUPID!" Sam didn't want to play again because he was afraid of losing again. Sam's head kept telling him: "I don't want to play today! Last time I lost. I know I will lose again. I am the only squirrel who can't collect nuts. I never win anything. Everything about this day is ruined!" Sam's downside thinking was making him feel very upset. He felt like the only squirrel who couldn't collect nuts. Sam sat on a rock, crossed his arms, looked down at the ground and didn't want to play with the other animals.**

**Sam knew that if he told someone about his feelings he would feel better. So Sam decided to explain to Helen how he was feeling. Helen helped Sam see the good bits about playing again. At first it was really difficult for Sam to look at the good bits but he kept trying.**

**“Well”, said Sam, “I love nuts. They’re my favourite food. And I get to eat them after the game is over. And I get to play with you and Mika. I think even if I don’t win, I think I might just have some fun.” Sam still wanted to be good at collecting nuts. But By thinking of all the good things about playing, he started to feel a little bit better. Suddenly playing the game did not seem so bad after all. Sam decided to get up and play. In the end Sam didn’t win but he had collected seven nuts- and that’s more than he collected last time. He also got a great idea for a new game! Upside thinking made him feel better and it helped him think of ways he could deal with a bad time.**

4. First, help the children to process the story by asking them:

- What was Sam feeling in this story?
- What was making him feel this way?
- What was Sam’s head telling him?
- What helped Sam feel better?

5. Then relate the story to the children’s own experiences:

- Can you mention some thoughts we can have? Can you mention some feelings we can have?
- Give me an example of an upside thought during a setback. How would this thought make you feel?
- Give me an example of a downside thought during a setback. How would this make you feel?

6. Put the role play cards face down in the centre. One of the students picks a card and acts out the scenario on the card. Coach the children by asking “What would you think? What would you feel? What would you do?” The other children need to guess what kind of thinking the character is using and what they are feeling. The children may also try to think of ways to change the thinking to make it more positive.

### ***Take Home Activity***

Parents can continue this activity with their children at home but this time the consequences can be included win the activity. Try to encourage children to see what actions that might result from their thinking and feelings. For instance, if children forget to take their crayons to school, using downside thinking can cause them to feel embarrassed or ashamed which might make them cry and perhaps not tell anyone about what happened. On the other hand, if they use upside thinking, children may feel encouraged to tell their teacher about it and to ask their

friends for a pencil. In this way, children can see the difference even in the consequences that follow.

## Activity 5: Comic Strip

### *Learning Goal*

To draw a comic strip showing the thoughts → feelings → actions sequence.

### *Learning Outcome. By the end of this unit, I will be able to:*

Draw a comic strip of a character's thoughts, feelings and actions following a setback.

### *Age Group*

Early Primary

### *Level*

Intermediate

### *Materials needed*

Puppets, pencil colours, crayons, markers.

### *Activity Steps*

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.
2. Read the story in Activity 4 to the children using hand or finger puppets.
3. First, help the children to process the story by asking them:
  - What was Sam feeling in this story?
  - What was making him feel this way?
  - What was Sam's head telling him?
  - What did Sam do when he thought and felt this way?
  - What helped Sam feel better?
4. Then relate the story to the children's own experiences:

- Can you mention some thoughts we can have? Can you mention some feelings we can have?
- Write the thoughts → feelings → actions sequence on the board and ask the children what were Sam's thoughts feelings and actions in the story.
- Give some examples of upside or downside thinking that we can use during a setback. How can these thoughts make us feel? What consequences can follow? Write the children's ideas following the sequence so that children can see the relationship between the 3.

5. Ask the children to think of a setback and to draw a comic strip of the thoughts, feelings and actions in that scenario. The children can then present their comic strip to the rest of the class. They may also act it out if they wish.

### *Take Home Activity*

The children can ask their parents about a setback they have experienced and together they can make a comic strip or a thoughts → feelings → actions flowchart for the setback that their parents have experienced. Later they can draw one for a setback the children have experienced themselves.

## Activity 6: Fill in the Flowchart

### *Learning Goal*

To fill in the missing parts of an ABC flowchart.

### *Learning Outcome. By the end of this unit, I will be able to:*

Fill in the missing actions, belief or consequences in an ABC flowchart.

### *Age Group*

Early Primary

### *Level*

Advanced

## ***Materials needed***

Puppets, 'ABC' handout.

## ***Activity Steps***

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.
2. Read the story in Activity 4 to the children using hand or finger puppets.
3. First, help the children to process the story by asking them:
  - What was Sam feeling in this story?
  - What was making him feel this way?
  - What was Sam's head telling him?
  - What did Sam do when he thought and felt this way?
  - What helped Sam feel better?
4. Then relate the story to the children's own experiences:
  - Write the words Adversity, Beliefs and Consequences on the board. Explain to the children that during a setback, our thinking affects what we feel and what we do. In this story, what was Sam's setback? What did his head tell him? What did he do because of this thinking?
  - Let's think of something that might upset us. What kind of downside thinking might someone use in this situation? How would this make us feel? What would we do? Now think of some upside thoughts. How would upside thoughts help us feel? What would we do?
5. Ask the children to work in pairs and fill in the missing blanks in the ABC handout.

## ***Take Home Activity***

Children can create an ABC flowchart for their own setback. Ask them to describe the setback and what happened. Now try to think about what your head is telling you. How does this make you feel? What did you do because of these thoughts and feelings? What can you do differently?



## Activity 7: Easy as ABC

### *Learning Goal*

To fill in an ABC flowchart.

### *Learning Outcome. By the end of this unit, I will be able to:*

Fill in an ABC flowchart.

### *Age Group*

Late Primary

### *Level*

Basic

### *Materials needed*

‘Easy as ABC’ handout, ‘ABC Flowchart’ handout.

### *Activity Steps*

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.
2. Start the discussion by asking the children what they remember about the previous activity on Upside and Downside thinking.
3. Explain the ABC model using the ABC handout and the examples provided. Make sure the children understand the difference between thoughts, feelings and actions. Emphasize that what we think when we go through a bad situation actually affects how we feel. If we can identify the thought, we can change how we feel.
4. Help the children to fill in the consequences for Sue and Jenny’s thoughts.
5. Explain the flowchart to the children. Split them in groups and ask them to work with each other to fill it in. Children can either choose a setback of their own or choose from the ones below:
  - You are in class and you just realized you forgot your pencil box.
  - You go to a new supermarket with your parents and you get lost.
  - You wanted to sing in the school play but your friend gets chosen instead of you.

- You really wanted a bike for your birthday but instead got a toy car.
- You took part in a race during Sports day but during the race you fell and hurt your knee. Everyone saw you fall and you had to stop playing.

### ***Take Home Activity***

Children can continue creating ABC flowcharts for other setbacks they experience. Parents can help them focus on changing downside thinking to make it more positive.

## **Activity 8: ABC Play**

### ***Learning Goal***

To perform a skit showing the Adversity, Beliefs, Consequences (ABC) model.

### ***Learning Outcome. By the end of this unit, I will be able to:***

Perform a skit of an Adversity, and act out the Beliefs and the Consequences.

### ***Age Group***

Late Primary

### ***Level***

Intermediate

### ***Materials needed***

'Easy as ABC' handout

### ***Activity Steps***

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.
2. Start the discussion by asking the children what they remember about the previous activity on Pessimistic and Optimistic Explanatory Styles.
3. Explain the ABC model using the ABC handout and the examples provided. Make sure the children understand the difference between thoughts, feelings and actions. Emphasize that what we think when we go through a bad situation actually affects how we feel. If we can identify the thought, we can change how we feel.

4. Help the children to fill in the consequences for Sue and Jenny's thoughts.
3. Split the children into groups of four or five. Ask them to write and perform a small play that shows the three components of the ABC model: a setback, the character's thoughts and the consequences for those thoughts. The other children watching the play can then discuss which was the adversity, the belief and the consequences.

### ***Take Home Activity***

Children can create an ABC flowchart of a setback they have experienced. The chart can then be discussed with their parents.

## **Activity 9: ABC flowchart**

### ***Learning Goal***

To fill in create my own Adversity, Beliefs, Consequences (ABC) model.

### ***Learning Outcome. By the end of this unit, I will be able to:***

Create an ABC flowchart.

### ***Age Group***

Late Primary

### ***Level***

Advanced

### ***Materials needed***

'Easy as ABC' handout

### ***Activity Steps***

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.
2. Start the discussion by asking the children what they remember about the previous activity on Pessimistic and Optimistic Explanatory Styles.

3. Explain the ABC model using the ABC handout and the examples provided. Make sure the children understand the difference between thoughts, feelings and actions. Emphasize that what we think when we go through a bad situation actually affects how we feel. If we can identify the thought, we can change how we feel.

4. Help the children to fill in the consequences for Sue and Jenny's thoughts.

5. Ask the children to follow the model in the handout and create an ABC flowchart of their own. Ask them to choose one setback and write two different beliefs, one showing positive and the other showing negative thinking. Then they can write the consequences arising from each thought. If children find it difficult to choose their own setback, give examples and prompt them.

### ***Take Home Activity***

Children can be given another handout and repeat this exercise at home with their parents. Choose a setback that the parents have gone through, the children have experienced, or else a challenge that can happen to children.

# Set 3: Challenging Negative Thoughts

## Learning Goals

**By the end of this unit, children will be able to:**

### Early Years (3-5 years)

- Take up the role of an object and give one reason why it is important
- Mention one good thing they like about themselves
- Practice talking back to their negative thoughts

### Early Primary (6-8 years)

- List all the other things in my life that remain the same during a setback
- List all the counter-evidence against a negative belief
- List the best, worst and most realistic case scenario for a downside thought

### Late Primary (9-11 years)

- Ask 'what would a friend do?' as an alternative way of dealing with a setback
- Identify and list all the possible causes for an event (Not me/ Not always/ Not everything)
- Add Disputation and Energization to their ABC charts

## Tips for Teachers

1. As a classroom activity, children can come up with a class slogan that they can remember when they go through a setback. Remind children of the slogan when their negative self-talk is getting them down.
2. Encourage children to write thank you notes to friends and family members as a way of appreciating others.
3. Model positive self-talk by giving children positive comments about their behaviour and efforts in the classroom.

## Activity 1: You can't take me!

### *Learning Goal*

To take up the role of an object and give one reason why it is important.

### *Learning Outcome. By the end of this study unit, I will be able to:*

Take up the role of an object and give one reason why it is important.

### *Age Group*

Early Years

### *Level*

Basic

### *Materials needed*

Puppets, music.

### *Activity Steps*

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.
2. Read this story to the children using hand or finger puppets:

**Sam the squirrel and Helen the hedgehog loved playing games with their friends in the forest. One time they played Apples & Oranges. The animals split into teams: one team needed to collect apples and the other team needed to collect oranges. They needed to collect as many apples and oranges as they could. Mika the mole and Freddie the frog were team captains. But when Mika and Freddie started choosing their team mates, Sam ended up being one of the last animals to be chosen! Because they didn't choose him in the beginning, Sam thought Mika and Freddie hated him. "Everyone hates me", thought Sam. Sam felt very upset and started to cry. He sat in the corner, crossed his arms and didn't want to play. Whenever Sam felt upset, he liked talking to Helen about it. Helen helped Sam by showing him some photos of him with his friends. Sam looked at the photos. They were all photos of him playing with his friends. There were photos of him playing hide and seek with Mika and Freddie. There was a photo of when Mika and Freddie invited him to go on a picnic with them for Freddie's birthday. There were photos of when Sam won the tree climbing competition and everyone cheered for him. Sam slowly started to think that maybe not everyone hated him. He knew that Mika and Freddie picked him for other things. Just because they didn't**

**pick him for Apples & Oranges didn't mean everyone hated Sam. Sam felt a bit better when he realized that not everyone hated him and that Mika and Freddie still like Sam as a friend. Then Sam got up and ran fast to play Apples & Oranges with his Helen and his friends.**

3. First, help the children to process the story by asking them:

- Did you like the story?
- What was Sam feeling?
- What was making him feel this way?
- What was Sam saying to himself in his head?

4. Then relate the story to the children's own experiences:

- Just because our head tells us something does it mean that it's true?
- When our head tells us that we're no good or that we're horrible, how might we feel?
- What can we do when our head makes us feel upset? (talk to a grown-up, do something that makes us feel better...)

5. Now play 'No you can't take me!' Split the class in groups and start with the first group while the others watch. Tell the children to act like an object in the room. Assign the objects yourself if children find this difficult. Then pretend that you want to throw away some junk from the classroom. Begin by saying "My, look at all this useless junk! I've got to get rid of it!" Then go up to a student and say "I think I don't need a trash can (or the object the child is). I'm going to throw this away!" The child responds by saying "No you can't take me!" and then gives one reason why the object is important: "If you take me there will be trash all around." The objective of the game is to enhance confidence and critical thinking, needed to challenge negative thinking.

### ***Take Home Activity***

Parents and children can get together. Each one will say one good thing they like about themselves. The activity can be extended to saying one good thing you like about the others. At the end of the activity, children can draw what they like about themselves (e.g. myself helping others) or else what they like about someone else (e.g. brother playing with me).

## Activity 2: One good think I like about myself

### *Learning Goal*

- To take up the role of an object and give one reason why it is important.
- To mention one good thing they like about themselves.

### *Learning Outcome. By the end of this unit, I will be able to:*

- Give one reason why something is important.
- Mention one good thing I like about myself.

### *Age Group*

Early Years

### *Level*

Intermediate

### *Materials needed*

Puppets, music.

### *Activity Steps*

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.
2. Read the story in Activity 1 to the children using hand or finger puppets.
3. First, help the children to process the story by asking them:
  - What was Sam feeling?
  - What was making him feel this way?
  - What was Sam saying to himself in his head?
  - Were the thoughts Sam was thinking true?
4. Then relate the story to the children's own experiences:
  - Just because our head tells us something does it mean that it's true?
  - Sam's head told him he was stupid. What are some things that your head tells you that aren't true?



- What can we do when our head tells us to focus on the bad bits? (We can tell an adult, sing a song, try to do something else to distract ourselves, think of happy memories, think about the good bits instead...)

5. Now play 'No you can't take me!' Split the class in groups and start with the first group while the others watch. Tell the children to act like an object in the room. Assign the objects yourself if children find this difficult. Then pretend that you want to throw away some junk from the classroom. Begin by saying "My, look at all this useless junk! I've got to get rid of it!" Then go up to a student and say "I think I don't need a trash can (or the object the child is). I'm going to throw this away!" The child responds by saying "No you can't take me!" and then gives one reason why the object is important: "If you take me there will be trash all around." The objective of the game is to enhance confidence and critical thinking, needed to challenge negative thinking.

6. Conclude by asking children to mention one good thing they like about themselves.

7. Children can make a drawing of what they like about themselves.

### ***Take Home Activity***

Children can interview parents about their downside thoughts. Children can ask their parents about what they think when a setback happens. If parents usually think in an upside way, they can give ideas to children on how to think positively when setbacks occur. If parents, on the other hand, usually think in a downside way, they can still work with the children to try and think of more positive ways of thinking during setbacks. Following the interview, children can draw one or both parents during a challenge. In a speech bubble, the parents or the children may write the upside thought they can use to help them overcome the setback.

## **Activity 3: Talking back to the brain**

### ***Learning Goal***

- To take up the role of an object and give reasons why it is important
- To practice talking back to negative thoughts

### ***Learning Outcome. By the end of this unit, I will be able to:***

- Give reasons why an object is important
- Talk back to some negative thoughts I might have

## ***Age Group***

Early Years

## ***Level***

Advanced

## ***Materials needed***

Puppets, music.

## ***Activity Steps***

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness Activity.
2. Read the story in Activity 1 using hand or finger puppets.
3. First, help the children to process the story by asking them:
  - What was Sam feeling?
  - What was making him feel this way?
  - What was Sam saying to himself in his head?
  - Were the thoughts Sam was thinking true? Why not?
4. Then relate the story to the children's own experiences:
  - Just because our head tells us something does it mean that it's true?
  - Sam's head told him he was stupid. What are some things that our head tells us that may not be true?
  - What can we do when our head tells us to focus on the bad bits? (We can tell an adult, sing a song, try to do something else to distract ourselves, think of happy memories, think about the good bits instead...)
5. Now play 'No you can't take me!' Split the class in groups and start with the first group while the others watch. Tell the children to act like an object in the room. Assign the objects yourself if children find this difficult. Then pretend that you want to throw away some junk from the classroom. Begin by saying "My, look at all this useless junk! I've got to get rid of it!" Then go up to a student and say "I think I don't need a trash can (or the object the child is). I'm going to throw this away!" The child responds by saying "No you can't take me!" and then gives one reason why the object is important: "If you take me there will be trash all around." The

objective of the game is to enhance confidence and critical thinking, needed to challenge negative thinking.

6. Sit the children in a circle. Tell them you're going to practice talking back to the brain. Ask them to think of some things that children may think that aren't true (e.g. "Nobody loves me"). What can we say back to the brain? (e.g. "It's not true. My mummy and daddy love me a lot and they take care of me really well. My sister loves me too because she always wants to play with me."). See what things children come up with that goes against the negative thought.

7. Children can make a drawing of what they like about themselves.

### ***Take Home Activity***

Children can interview parents about their downside thoughts. Children can ask their parents about what they think when a setback happens. If parents usually think in an upside way, they can give ideas to children on how to think positively when setbacks occur. If parents, on the other hand, usually think in a downside way, they can still work with the children to try and think of more positive ways of thinking during setbacks. Then the parents can ask children what would be an upside thought that would help them get through a bad time. If children cannot think of their own, they can make up one with their parents. Examples include "you can do it!", "I'm a good friend" and so on. The children can then draw a picture of themselves. The parent can write the upside thought they can use near the picture.

## **Activity 4: Not everything**

### ***Learning Goal***

To list all the other things things in life that remain the same during a setback.

### ***Learning Outcome. By the end of this unit, I will be able to:***

List the other good bits in my life when something bad happens.

### ***Age Group***

Early Primary

### ***Level***

Basic

## *Materials needed*

Puppets.

## *Activity Steps*

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.
2. Read the following story to the children using hand or finger puppets:

**Sam the squirrel and Helen the hedgehog loved playing games with their friends in the forest. Last time that Sam was playing he thought of a new game that everyone could play. The animals had to collect all the apples that fall from the trees. Those animals that can put the most apples in the baskets win! All the animals liked the new game that Sam invented and wanted to play it. Since apples were a bit too heavy to carry for some animals, everyone had to work in teams. There were two teams: Mika the mole's team and Freddie the frog's team. But when Mika and Freddie started choosing their team mates, Sam ended up being one of the last animals to be chosen! As soon as this happened, Sam's head started telling him things that made him feel bad: "Mika and Freddie hate me!", it said, "They don't want me on their teams. Everyone in the forest must think I'm stupid. No one is ever going to want me on their team again." Sam felt hurt and started to cry.**

**Sam knew that if he told someone about his feelings he would feel better. So Sam decided to explain to Helen what his head was saying and how it made him feel. Helen helped Sam by telling him that not everything our head tells us is true. Just because Mika and Freddie didn't pick Sam for this game, didn't mean they were not his friends. And just because Sam got picked last didn't mean that he was stupid. Sam tried to talk back to his head. Sam remembered how Mika and Freddie pick him for tree climbing since he was a squirrel. Sam also remembered how he had invented this game and that everybody liked it. Sam still wanted to be good at collecting nuts and apples. But he got to know he was very good at other things. "Everybody's good at something", said Sam, "Mika and Freddie don't really hate me. We're actually really good friends." Helen also helped Sam talk back to his head by adding another thing! Helen told Sam how he was a really good friend because he had always been a good friend to her. Then Sam and Helen ran after each other to catch as many apples as they could!**

3. First, help the children to process the story by asking them:
  - What was Sam feeling?
  - What was making him feel this way?
  - What was Sam saying to himself in his head?

- Were the thoughts Sam was thinking true? Why not?
- What did Sam do to help feel better?

4. Then relate the story to the children's own experiences:

- Just because our head tells us something does it mean that it's true?
- Sam's head told him he was stupid. What are some things that your head tells you that aren't true?
- What can we do when our head tells us to focus on the bad bits? (We can tell an adult, sing a song, try to do something else to distract ourselves, think of happy memories, think about the good bits instead...)
- So when your head tells you these things, how can you talk back to it?

5. To start the activity have the children mention all the persons, things and activities in their life (mum, dad, brother, sister, pets, school, friends, ballet, football, riding my bike, going out with my family and so on). Ask the children to think of a setback. Then help children tick all those areas that remain the same if this setback happens.

6. Children can do it with a setback they have gone through. Tell them to list the setback on the top of the page and then list all the areas in their life that remain the same even though the setback happened. This activity is done to show children that one setback in life doesn't mean that everything else is ruined.

### ***Take Home Activity***

Help children to continue challenging their negative self-talk by encouraging them to find alternative causes to setbacks. Help them to list all the evidence they can think of to prove that the setback does not happen to only them (Not Me), that it was not always like this (Not always), and that it does not affect everything else in their lives (Not everything).

## **Activity 5: Detective Work**

### ***Learning Goal***

To list all the counter-evidence to dispute a downside thought.

### ***Learning Outcome. By the end of this unit, I will be able to:***

List all the counter-evidence that proves my downside thought isn't true.

## ***Age Group***

Early Primary

## ***Level***

Intermediate

## ***Materials needed***

Puppets, coloured papers, markers, decorations.

## ***Activity Steps***

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.
2. Read the story in Activity 4 to the children using hand or finger puppets.
3. First, help the children to process the story by asking them:
  - What was Sam feeling?
  - What was making him feel this way?
  - What was Sam saying to himself in his head?
  - Were the thoughts Sam was thinking true? Why not?
  - What did Sam do to help feel better?
4. Then relate the story to the children's own experiences:
  - Just because our head tells us something does it mean that it's true?
  - Sam's head told him he was stupid. What are some things that your head tells you that aren't true?
  - What can we do when our head tells us to focus on the bad bits? (We can tell an adult, sing a song, try to do something else to distract ourselves, think of happy memories, think about the good bits instead...)
  - So when your head tells you these things, how can you talk back to it?
5. Ask the children 'How does a detective solve a mystery?' The answer is 'by searching for evidence'. Tell the children that one way of talking back to the brain is by looking for evidence of how our downside thoughts aren't true. Ask the children to write a downside thought that makes them feel upset at the top of the paper. It could be "I'm stupid", "I'm a bad friend" or "I'm not good at anything". Then children list all the evidence they can think of that goes

against this belief. They can ask their teachers and friends to think of other ways the belief is not true.

6. To conclude the activity, ask the children:

- How do you feel now that you have listed all the evidence against the belief?
- Do you still think the belief is true?

### ***Take Home Activity***

Encourage the children to look for alternatives when thinking about a problem. Ask “is there another way of looking at this?”, “What would a friend think?”, and “What would a friend do?”. From these questions, children can get an idea of other ways of thinking about a problem to develop more flexible thinking. Children can interview family members on what they would do to deal with a particular challenge. They can then draw what a family member or a friend would do to deal with one of the problems they have experienced.

## **Activity 6: Best, Worst & Most Realistic Case Scenarios**

### ***Learning Goal***

To list the best, worst and most realistic case scenario for a downside thought.

### ***Learning Outcome. By the end of this unit, I will be able to:***

List the most realistic case scenario when thinking about something.

### ***Age Group***

Early Primary

### ***Level***

Advanced

### ***Materials needed***

Puppets, ‘Best, Worst, & Most Realistic Case Scenarios’ handout.

## ***Activity Steps***

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.
2. Read the story in Activity 4 to the children using hand or finger puppets.
3. First, help the children to process the story by asking them:
  - What was Sam feeling?
  - What was making him feel this way?
  - What was Sam saying to himself in his head?
  - Were the thoughts Sam was thinking true? Why not?
  - What did Sam do to help feel better?
4. Then relate the story to the children's own experiences:
  - Just because our head tells us something does it mean that it's true?
  - Sam's head told him he was stupid. What are some things that your head tells you that aren't true?
  - What can we do when our head tells us to focus on the bad bits? (We can tell an adult, sing a song, try to do something else to distract ourselves, think of happy memories, think about the good bits instead...)
  - So when your head tells you these things, how can you talk back to it?
5. Tell the children that one unhelpful way of thinking is when we think about the worst thing that could happen. Ask the children to think of times when they believed the worst possible thing was going to happen. Did the worst thing really happen in the end? How did thinking of the worst thing that could happen make them feel?
6. Give the handout to the children and work out the first example with them to help them understand the best, worst and most realistic case scenarios. Children can write down the best, worst and most realistic case scenarios for every setback. Children can work in groups if they wish, and may present their scenarios to the rest of the class at the end.

## ***Take Home Activity***

Parents can repeat this activity in the form of a game. Discuss together some problems and challenges that children and adults can go through and write down a list. Cut these out in strips and place into a bowl. Someone picks out and reads the problem out loud. The person then acts



out a best, worst, or most realistic case scenario. The other players need to guess what type of case scenario the actor is thinking of.

## Activity 7: What would a friend do?

### *Learning Goal*

To ask friends what they would think and do when a setback happens.

### *Learning Outcome. By the end of this unit, I will be able to:*

Ask ‘what would a friend do?’ and list what they would do during a setback.

### *Age Group*

Late Primary

### *Level*

Basic

### *Materials needed*

‘Helpful & Unhelpful Thinking’ handout.

### *Activity Steps*

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.
2. Look at the ‘Helpful & Unhelpful Thinking’ handout. Go through each point and encourage children to come up with some examples of setbacks and how we might think in a helpful or unhelpful way in these setbacks. Ask the children to think of examples of how *they* think in helpful and unhelpful ways.
3. Tell the children that one way of helping us feel better is by thinking in different ways.
4. Ask the children to think of a setback and write what happened at the top of a paper. Next write down what you think about that problem. Write down what you did. Next children can go round the class and ask their friends what *they* would think, say and do. In this way, children can realize there’s more than one possibility of going about or thinking about a problem.
5. Ask the children: what did you learn from today’s activity?

### ***Take Home Activity***

Children can take some examples of their own thinking and change them into more helpful thoughts. Parents can also contribute to this by writing down their own thoughts. By following the points on the handout, parents and children can work together to change their unhelpful thinking into helpful thinking.

## **Activity 8: Generating Alternatives**

### ***Learning Goal***

To identify and list alternative ways of thinking (not me/ not always/ not everything)

### ***Learning Outcome. By the end of this unit, I will be able to:***

Identify and list down alternative ways of thinking (not me/ not always/ not everything).

### ***Age Group***

Late Primary

### ***Level***

Intermediate

### ***Materials needed***

‘Helpful and Unhelpful Thinking’ handout, coloured papers.

### ***Activity Steps***

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.
2. Look at the ‘Helpful & Unhelpful Thinking’ handout. Go through each point and encourage children to come up with some examples of setbacks and how we might think in a helpful or unhelpful way in these setbacks. Ask the children to think of examples of how *they* think in helpful and unhelpful ways.
3. Ask someone to read out loud Emma’s situation:

*Hi. I’m Emma. Recently, my family and I moved house. I had to change my scouts group as well! It must be because I did something wrong. I’m really worried that I won’t know anyone in my*

*new group. I'm sure no one will like me and no one will ever want to play with me. I know I will never manage to make friends. I'm so unhappy that I don't even want to be a scout anymore. I wish I never moved.*

4. Ask the children:

- Is Emma thinking in a helpful or in an unhelpful way? What makes you think this?
- How is Emma thinking in an unhelpful way? Help children find the thoughts that show Emma is thinking in a Me/ Always/ Everything way.
- How can Emma change her thinking? Help children change Emma's thinking by generating alternative causes by thinking of the nonpersonal (Not Me), the changeable (Not Always) and the specific (Not Everything) causes.

5. Discuss with the children other setbacks that we can experience. Ask the children to choose one and to work in groups to list the different causes for the setback they have chosen by writing down Not Me/ Not Always/ Not Everything thoughts. Children can present their work to the rest of the class.

### ***Take Home Activity***

Children can continue practicing the activity at home with their parents by choosing a setback that they or their family members have experienced.

## **Activity 9: ABCDE**

### ***Learning Goal***

To add two other columns to their ABC flowchart: Disputation & Energization.

### ***Learning Outcome. By the end of this unit, I will be able to:***

Add Disputation and Energization to my ABC flowchart.

### ***Age Group***

Late Primary

### ***Level***

Advanced

## ***Materials needed***

'Helpful and Unhelpful Thinking' handout.

## ***Activity Steps***

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.
2. Look at the 'Helpful & Unhelpful Thinking' handout. Go through each point and encourage children to come up with some examples of setbacks and how we might think in a helpful or unhelpful way in these setbacks. Ask the children to think of examples of how *they* think in helpful and unhelpful ways.
3. Ask the children what they remember from the last activity about the ABC model. Remind the children about the difference between beliefs and consequences. Tell the children to create an ABC flowchart or to use the one they may have created in the previous activity.
4. Next explain the other two columns that should be added to their flowchart- Disputation and Energization. Under 'Disputation' children should try to prove their beliefs aren't true by giving evidence and by generating alternatives. Under 'Energization' children should write how they feel now about the setback and what they would do now they have changed their thinking.

## ***Take Home Activity***

Since the concept of the ABCDE model may be difficult for children to understand, it is important that children continue creating other ABC and ABCDE flowcharts at home.

## **Sub-theme 2: Using emotions to promote growth and wellbeing including Hope, Happiness and Humour.**

This sub-theme gives children the opportunity to become aware of, identify and regulate positive emotions. Positive emotions such as hope, happiness and humour broaden awareness, build children's personal and social resources and buffer against psychological problems (Fredrickson, 2001). In the first set of activities, children will take part in activities that promote hope. Although the belief that things will get better can be considered to be an emotion, activities are also focused on hope as a cognitive process in which persons actively pursue their goals. The activities are built on hope as a process by which individuals engage in *pathways thinking* i.e. the ability to set goals and develop routes to reach them, and *agency thinking*, the motivation and belief that one can reach these goals (Snyder, 1994). In the set of activities that are focused on the emotion of happiness, children will be supported to further explore this emotion and what makes *them* happy. Children will also be taught how they can turn a bad mood into a good mood and explore ways of how they can do this. In the last set on humour, children will get a chance to laugh but also to use humour in positive ways.

**Set of Activities 1: Using hope to promote growth and wellbeing.**

**Set of Activities 2: Using happiness to promote growth and wellbeing.**

**Set of Activities 3: Using humour to promote growth and wellbeing.**

# Set 1: Using HOPE to promote growth and wellbeing

## Learning Goals

By the end of this unit, children will be able to:

### Early Years (3-5 years)

- Role play growing from a tiny seed into a tree
- Paint or handprint a symbol of hope
- Paint or handprint a 'before and after' picture as a symbol of hope

### Early Primary (6-8 years):

- Perform a play about a character's attempts to reach a goal
- Break down a large goal into smaller sub-goals
- Identify a different way of achieving a goal

### Late Primary (9-11 years):

- Discuss, list and present ways of remaining hopeful during a challenge
- Make a personal goal and write about how they will achieve it
- Reflect on their future and set goals

## Tips for Teachers

1. When children feel discouraged about their goals, help them break them down into smaller steps.
2. Give opportunities for children to reach a specific goal or learning objective in different ways.
3. Come up with a symbol that the class can remember to remain hopeful during bad times. It could be a rainbow, a sunflower or a resilient animal that perseveres during bad times.

## Activity 1: From a Seed to a Tree

### *Learning Goal*

Children will role play growing from a tiny seed into a tree.

### *Learning Outcome. By the end of this study unit, I will be able to:*

Role play growing from a tiny seed into a tree.

### *Age Group*

Early Years

### *Level*

Basic

### *Materials needed*

Puppets, music.

### *Activity Steps*

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.
2. Read the following story to the children using hand or finger puppets:

Helen the hedgehog lived in the forest. She lived in a very beautiful part of the forest full of tall and short trees. However, one day a big fire started burning the trees of this forest. Helen could not put it out and so she ran away leaving everything behind. She had to go to live in another side of the forest far far away. Everything was different on this side of the forest. It always rained. There were no other hedgehogs and Helen felt very lonely. She was very scared because she didn't know what was going to happen. She felt everything was going to come to an end. One day Helen sat on a tiny mushroom feeling very sad. As she was crying, a squirrel passed. His name was Sam. Sam wanted to help the hedgehog. "I know this is a different place", said Sam, "but I hope things will get better for you even if you don't know how", said Sam. Helen never heard about this word *hope* before. But she understood Sam. She too could believe things could get better. Hoping that things will get better already made her feel better. She tried to think of the good things that could happen instead of the bad ones. Thinking of the good things helped Helen try to make it better. "I know!", said Helen, "I can build myself a new house so that this place feels more like home."

Sam helped Helen build her new house. They started building the house with leaves, but after a whole day working, “Wwwhooooossh!!”, the wind swept away all of the leaves! Helen felt very disappointed but she didn’t give up. She hoped she could build a stronger house. So Helen and Sam built a new house with rocks. But after a whole day working, “Bboooooomm!!”, a big hippo hit against the rocks and they wobbled and fell! Helen felt very disappointed but she didn’t give up. She hoped she could build a stronger house. So Helen built her house with twigs. Helen waited, hoping that this time the house will not break up. She waited for the wind. She waited for the big hippo to pass. But the house stayed where it was. “Yes!” said Helen to herself. “Using twigs worked! It’s a good thing we didn’t give up. We did it Sam!” After three days of rain, Helen opened the window of her new house and looked up into the sky. The sky was filled with different colours. She had never seen something so beautiful before. “Sam could you tell me what that is in the sky?” “Why it’s a rainbow!”, said Sam, “it comes out after it rains!” “Wow”, said Helen, “this place is beginning to feel a lot more like a new home”.

3. First help the children process the story by asking them:

- Did you like the story?
- How did Helen feel in the new place?
- What made things better?
- What did Helen see in the sky?

4. Then relate the story to the children’s own experiences:

- Has anyone ever seen a rainbow?
- Why do you think rainbows make us feel good and hopeful? (Rain is over and the sun has come out)
- Helen felt very scared because she didn’t know what was going to happen in the new place. Did anyone ever feel like Helen? Did you hope things get better after a while?

5. Put on some music and explain the following activity called ‘A Tree Grows’. Narrate the following story slowly while the children act it out:

Everyone find your own personal space on the floor and make yourself as small as possible. You are a tiny seed, crammed very tight in your pod. You are buried under the cold ground. It is winter, and you are asleep. Under the ground it’s very dark.

Now it is spring. The earth around you is growing a little warmer, and you start to feel more awake. Water starts to seep through the soil. It feels good. The earth feels warmer, and you’re getting food out of the soil.

It is time to come out of your seed pod. You feel strong. Using all your strength, you push up against your seed pod and break through, like a bird breaks out of the egg. You start to



grow upwards into the warm earth. Finally, with one great push, you emerge from the soil and see, for the first time, the SUN!

The sun's energy makes you feel stronger and stronger. You stretch upwards and outwards until you are a healthy seedling. The rain gives you more energy.

Now let's move ahead a few years. You have grown into a strong young sapling--a tree about the size of a young person. You have beautiful green leaves that soak up the sun and make you strong. But you want to grow taller. You want to be a tree. So you summon all your energy and you push out and up. As the years go by you become a strong, handsome tree. You stand proud in the sun and enjoy your own strength and beauty.

6. Ask the children the following questions:

- How did you feel as a tiny seed? Was anyone afraid?
- How did it feel growing out of your pod?
- What was it like when you first saw the sun?
- How did it feel to become a big strong tree?

(Adapted from [www.childdrama.com](http://www.childdrama.com))

### **Take Home Activity**

At home children can discuss with their families symbols that help them remember that things get better, such as rainbows, sunflowers, springtime, a swan and so on, and draw a picture of their favourite one.

## **Activity 2: Helen and the Rainbow**

### **Learning Goal**

- Children will role play growing from a tiny seed into a tree.
- Children will paint or handprint a symbol of hope.

### **Learning Outcome. By the end of this study unit, I will be able to:**

- Role play growing from a tiny seed into a tree.
- Paint or handprint a symbol of hope.

### **Age Group**

Early Years

## *Level*

Intermediate

## *Materials needed*

Puppets, music, A3 charts.

## *Activity Steps*

1. Read the story in Activity 1 to the children using hand or finger puppets.
2. First help the children to process the story by asking them:
  - How do you think Helen felt when she moved to the other side of the forest? Why?
  - What did Sam tell Helen?
  - How do you think Helen felt when the houses fell down?
  - What did Helen do when the house fell down?
3. Then relate the story to the children's own experiences:
  - Helen felt very scared because she didn't know what was going to happen in the new place. Did anyone ever feel like Helen? Did things get better after a while?
  - Helen's houses kept falling but she didn't give up hope. What could happen if we give up?
  - What did you learn from the story?
4. Carry out the activity 'A Tree Grows' (explained in Activity 1).
5. As a class paint or handprint a symbol of hope, such as a rainbow, springtime or a sunflower.



### ***Take Home Activity***

At home children may draw 'before' and 'after' pictures of good things happening after a bad time. Examples may include, a caterpillar turns into a butterfly, an ugly duckling turns into a swan, sunshine comes after a storm, or a seed turns into a plant. Children may be encouraged to come up with their own examples. They may even choose times that they have gone through themselves.

## **Activity 3: Before and After**

### ***Learning Goal***

- Children will role play growing from a tiny seed into a tree.
- Children will paint or handprint a 'before and after' picture as a symbol of hope.

### ***Learning Outcome. By the end of this study unit, I will be able to:***

- Role play growing from a tiny seed into a tree.
- Paint or handprint a 'before and after' picture as a symbol of hope.

### ***Age Group***

Early Years

### ***Level***

Advanced

### ***Materials needed***

Puppets, handout

### ***Activity Steps***

1. Read the story in Activity 1 to the children using hand or finger puppets.
2. First help the children to process the story by asking them:
  - Sam tells Helen to have hope. What does having hope mean?

- What did Helen do when the house fell down?
- Can you imagine what might have happened had Helen given up?
- What helped Helen to continue to build new houses?

3. Then relate the story to the children's own experiences:

- Helen felt very scared because she didn't know what was going to happen in the new place. Did anyone ever feel like Helen? Did things get better after a while?
- Helen's houses kept falling but she didn't give up hope. Why is this important?
- Imagine you had the same thing that happened to Helen happen to you. Would you have built another house or would you have given up?

4. Carry out the activity 'A Tree Grows' (explained in Activity 1).

5. As a class paint or handprint a 'before and after' picture as a symbol of hope, such as a seed growing into a flower/tree, a rainstorm turning into a sunny day with a rainbow, an ugly duckling growing into a swan, and so on.

### **Take Home Activity**

Children may develop a realistic goal for themselves with the help of their family. They may then come up with a list of how to help them achieve that goal. The focus should be on children achieving their goals; so goals should be small and workable at first. Examples may include saving up money to buy a toy, completing a craft project, or finishing a book.

## **Activity 4: Helping Helen**

### **Learning Goal**

Children will perform a play about a character's attempts to reach a goal.

### **Learning Outcome. By the end of this study unit, I will be able to:**

Perform a play about a character's attempts to reach a goal.

### **Age Group**

Early Primary

## Level

Basic

## Materials needed

Puppets.

## Activity Steps

1. Read the following story to the children using hand or finger puppets:

Helen the hedgehog lived in the forest. She lived in a very beautiful part of the forest full of tall and short trees. It was always sunny in this side of the forest. There were plenty of other hedgehogs that she could play with. However, one day a big fire started burning the trees of this forest. Helen could not put it out and so she ran away leaving everything behind. She had to go to live in another side of the forest far far away. Everything was different on this side of the forest. It always rained. There were no other hedgehogs and Helen felt very lonely. She was very scared because she didn't know what was going to happen. She felt everything was going to come to an end.

One day Helen sat on a tiny mushroom feeling very sad. As she was crying, a squirrel passed. His name was Sam. Sam wanted to help the hedgehog. "I know this is a different place", said Sam, "but I hope things will get better for you even if you don't know how", said Sam. Helen never heard about this word *hope* before. But she too could believe things could get better. Hoping that things will get better already made her feel better. She tried to think of the good things that could happen instead of the bad ones. Thinking of the good things helped Helen try to make it better. "I know!", said Helen, "I can build myself a new house so that this place feels more like home." But Helen didn't know how she was going to build a house. Helen thought long and hard and came up with a list that would help her reach her goal: "Number 1: Choose where the new house will be. Number 2: Collect some leaves to build it with. Number 3: Collect some mud so that the leaves can stick together. Number 4: Put them together to make a house!"

Helen began to slowly cross off things off the list. She found a nice place to build her new house. "Number 1: Choose where the new house will be. Check!", said Helen happily. Then Helen and Sam collected some leaves. "Number 2: Collect some leaves. Check!" Next Helen and Sam collected some mud. "Number 3: Collect some mud. Check!" Sam helped Helen build her new house. They started building the house with leaves, but after a whole day working, "Wwwhooooosh!!", the wind swept away all of the leaves! "Oh no", said Helen, "my house fell down after all this work!" Helen felt very disappointed but she didn't give up. She hoped she could build a stronger house. "That's OK I can try something else", said Helen. So Helen and Sam built a new house with rocks. But after a whole day working, "Bboooooom!!", a big hippo hit against the rocks and they wobbled and fell! "Oh no", thought Helen, "my house fell down again after all this work". Helen felt very disappointed but she

didn't give up. She hoped she could build a stronger house. "That's OK I can try something else", said Helen. So Helen built her house with twigs. Helen waited, hoping that this time the house will not break up. She waited for the wind. She waited for the big hippo to pass. But the house stayed where it was. "Yes!" said Helen to herself. "Using twigs worked! It's a good thing we didn't give up. We did it Sam!" After three days of rain, Helen opened the window of her new house and looked up into the sky. The sky was filled with different colours. She had never seen something so beautiful before. "Sam could you tell me what that is in the sky?" "Why it's a rainbow!", said Sam, "it comes out after it rains!" "Wow", said Helen, "this place is beginning to feel a lot more like a new home".

2. First help the children to process the story by asking them:

- What is the story about?
- After hearing the story, can you tell me what *hope* means?
- What did Helen do to help things get better?

3. Then relate the story to the children's own experiences:

- Do you remember a bad day or a bad time you had? What happened?
- Did things get better after the bad time?
- Did you ever want something and worked really hard for it?

4. Tell the children that Helen and her new friends have made some goals this week. But they need your help. Helen the hedgehog wants to plan a party to invite her friends over to her new house. But she doesn't know where to begin! After discussing which goals Helen can set and how she can reach them, children can then act out a play. Assign characters to a group of children and then ask the children to role play how Helen is going to reach her goals. Other stories to choose from are: George the Giraffe wants to help his mummy take care of his baby sister, Harry the Hippo wants to make a new friend, And Molly the Mouse wants to save pocket money to buy a toy. Children may also use puppets to act out the play.

### **Take Home Activity**

Children can interview their parents on a bad time they have gone through. Children can ask their parents about how they felt and if they thought things were going to get better. Some questions the children may ask are: What did you think? What did you do? What did you say to yourself to help you not to give up?

## Activity 5: Helen the Hedgehog makes a To-do list

### *Learning Goal*

Children will break down a large goal into smaller sub-goals.

### *Learning Outcome. By the end of this study unit, I will be able to:*

Break down a large goal into smaller sub-goals.

### *Age Group*

Early Primary

### *Level*

Intermediate

### *Materials needed*

Puppets, 'To Do List' handout.

### *Activity Steps*

1. Read the story in Activity 4 to the children using hand or finger puppets.
2. First help the children to process the story by asking them:
  - After hearing the story, can you tell me what *hope* means?
  - Can you imagine what would have happened if Helen gave up after the first house they built fell?
  - What helped Helen achieve her goal?
3. Then relate the story to the children's own experiences:
  - Do you remember a bad time you had? Did you believe things were going to get better?
  - Did things get better after a while?
  - Did you ever want something and really worked hard for it?
  - Does anyone have important goals they want to achieve like Helen did? What do you need to do to achieve those goals?
4. Tell the children that Helen and her new friends have made some goals this week. But they need your help. Helen the hedgehog wants to plan a party to invite her friends over to her new house. George the Giraffe wants to help his mummy take care of his baby sister. Harry the

Hippo wants to make sandwiches. And Molly the Mouse wants to clean her room as it's very messy. But they don't know where to begin! Write the options on the board for the children to see. Children then decide which character they want to help and fill in the to do list with small goals. Tell the children that it's OK if we ask for help or learn a new skill in order to achieve a goal.

### ***Take Home Activity***

With the help of their parents, children may choose a goal of their own. The goal should be realistic and small for now. Children should be encouraged to make a to do list just like they did with the character. They may then set about achieving that goal by completing the things on the list one by one.

## **Activity 6: Helen the Hedgehog deals with the Setbacks**

### ***Learning Goal***

Children will identify a different way of achieving a goal.

### ***Learning Outcome. By the end of this study unit, I will be able to:***

Identify a different way of achieving a goal.

### ***Age Group***

Early Primary

### ***Level***

Advanced

### ***Materials needed***

Puppets, 'Dealing with Setbacks' handout.

### ***Activity Steps***

1. Read the story in Activity 4 to the children using hand or finger puppets.
2. First help the children to process the story by asking them:



- After hearing the story, can you tell me what *hope* means?
- Can you imagine what would have happened if Helen gave up after the first house they built fell?
- What helped Helen achieve her goal?

3. Then relate the story to the children's own experiences:

- Do you remember a bad time you had? Did you believe things were going to get better?
- Did things get better after a while?
- Did you ever want something and really worked hard for it?
- Does anyone have important goals they want to achieve like Helen did? What do you need to do to achieve those goals?
- What will you do to achieve them?

4. Explain the task to the children. Helen and his friends really wanted some things to happen and they worked hard for them. But sometimes things don't work out. Could you imagine what the animals might be feeling? Could you then help them by writing a thought or a belief that might help them remain hopeful and suggesting a Plan B for them to try out?

### *Take Home Activity*

Children can ask their parents about a time when something they planned did not work out. It could be something they worked hard for but didn't get, for example. Children can ask parents: How did you feel when something you really wanted didn't happen? What did you think to help you remain hopeful? Parents can also ask their children if they had ever wanted something but it didn't work out. The parents and children can come up with a Plan B that might help them achieve the same goal. If the goal doesn't work out, they can also discuss other goals they could work for.

## Activity 7: Keeping Hopeful during Challenges

### *Learning Goal*

Children will discuss, list and present ways of remaining hopeful during a challenge.

### *Learning Outcome. By the end of this study unit, I will be able to:*

Discuss, list and present ways of remaining hopeful during a challenge.

## ***Age Group***

Late Primary

## ***Level***

Basic

## ***Materials needed***

‘Tips to Keep Hopeful’ handout, ‘Scenarios’ handout (cut out).

## ***Activity Steps***

1. Review the ‘Tips to Keep Hopeful’ handout with the children and use the questions on the handout to start a discussion on hope.
2. Next split the class into groups and give each group a scenario to discuss from the ‘Scenarios’ handout. Children need to answer the following questions:
  - What thinking can help you remain hopeful?
  - What goal can you set to help things get better?
  - How would you go about achieving the goal?
  - Try to make a Plan B if the first goal doesn’t work out.
3. When the children are ready, they can present their answers to the class and discuss the scenarios.

## ***Take Home Activity***

Together with their parents, children can identify a bad time they have gone through. What thoughts would have helped them remain hopeful? What goal could they set for themselves to try and make things get better? How could they go about achieving the goal?

# **Activity 8: My Goal**

## ***Learning Goal***

Children will make a personal goal and write about how they will achieve it.

***Learning Outcome. By the end of this study unit, I will be able to:***

Make a personal goal and write about how I will achieve it.

***Age Group***

Late Primary

***Level***

Intermediate

***Materials needed***

‘Tips to Keep Hopeful’ handout, ‘My Goal’ handouts

***Activity Steps***

1. Review the ‘Tips to Keep Hopeful’ handout with the children and use the questions on the handout to start a discussion on hope.
2. Next give each child a ‘My Goal’ handout with an example. Explain it to the children and see if they have any questions.
3. Children fill in a blank handout with their own personal goal.

***Take Home Activity***

Children should go about achieving the goal they planned for themselves.

## Activity 9: My Future

***Learning Goal***

Children will envisage where they will imagine themselves to be in five years’ time and reflect on this.

***Learning Outcome. By the end of this study unit, I will be able to:***

Reflect on my future and set goals.

## ***Age Group***

Late Primary

## ***Level***

Advanced

## ***Materials needed***

‘Tips to Keep Hopeful’ handout, soft music.

## ***Activity Steps***

1. Review the ‘Tips to Keep Hopeful’ handout with the children and use the questions on the handout to start a discussion on hope.
2. Next turn on the music and tell the children to go to a safe place in the room where they feel comfortable. Tell them to close their eyes. Tell the children to imagine where they will be in five years’ time. Where are they? What are they doing? What are they wearing? Is someone with them or are they alone? How are they feeling? [Be aware that some children might be experiencing a bad time and imagine a sad or terrible future]
3. After the exercise tell the children to take out a blank piece of paper and write the answers to the following questions to help them reflect on what they have just imagined:
  - Describe how you imagined yourself in five years’ time. You may draw the image instead.
  - (If children draw a bad future, try to set them to reflect that there could also be an alternative – maybe with help also from peers).
  - What is different about that person from you today?
  - Do you think you can become the person you imagined? Why or why not?
  - What can you do today that will help you get to that image of yourself?
4. When the children are ready with their answers they may share them and discuss them with the group.

## ***Take Home Activity***

To help children think further about their future, they can be encouraged to look at their assets and strengths to see if the goals they set are realistic and appropriate. To help them reflect further, they can use the following questions to think about their goals: What positive qualities

do you have? (e.g. I'm kind, I'm a good friend). What can you do? (e.g. I can write well, I can sing). Now try to make realistic goals. Try to make different goals so that you can have different options if things don't work out.

## Set 2: Using HAPPINESS to promote Growth and Wellbeing

### Learning Goals

By the end of this unit, children will be able to:

#### Early Years (3-5 years):

- Sing a song and talk about happiness
- Speak about a time when they felt happy
- Draw, paint or make a collage of an activity or a person that makes them feel happy and then talk about it

#### Early Primary (6-8 years):

- Recognize that bad feelings can be turned into good feelings by doing something that makes us happy
- Role play activities that might help change a bad mood into a good mood
- Identify an activity they like doing to cheer themselves up
- Apply the 'flipping the feeling' strategy to change bad feelings into good feelings

#### Late Primary (9-11 years):

- Discuss happiness and their experience of it
- Identify a person, place, object or event that makes them happy and make a collage about it
- Identify 3 things that make them happy and say what they did to contribute to these happiness
- Apply the 'flipping the feeling' strategy to change bad feelings into good feelings

### Tips for Teachers

1. Take five minutes to let the children sing and dance to songs that are happy and joyous.

2. Leave a camera in class and use it to capture special moments that show children at their happiest times. It might be a student's birthday or a competition they have won. Children can then make a class scrapbook of the times they felt happy at school.

3. Organize a 'Make Someone Smile' day. Encourage children to share their happiness with someone else by doing, saying or writing something nice to another student. Examples can include showing interest in and listening to another child's concerns, telling a person something positive about themselves, making a present, playing with them or writing a special note.

4. One way of incorporating this topic into an English lesson is by having the students learn as many different words used for happiness as possible. They can be encouraged to use these when describing their feelings and in their creative writing.

5. When students feel down or are having a bad day, organize a walk or a hunt where they can look for something that makes them feel better. It could be a toy, a reading book, or a friend they may talk to.

## Activity 1: Helen the Hedgehog Feels Happy

### *Learning Goal*

Children will sing a song and talk about their experience of happiness.

### *Learning Outcome. By the end of this study unit, I will be able to:*

Sing a song and talk about my experience of happiness.

### *Age Group*

Early Years

### *Level*

Basic

### *Materials needed*

Puppets, Song- 'If You're Happy and You Know it'.

### *Activity Steps*

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.
2. Read this story to the children using hand or finger puppets:

Helen the hedgehog and Sam the squirrel lived in the forest. Helen and Sam were very good friends. One day Helen rolled down a hill and bumped into a rock. She broke some of her spikes. For a long time, Helen couldn't play outside with her friends until her broken spikes grew back. She had to stay where her mummy could see her and this made Helen very angry. "It's not fair! Why do I have to stay here when all the other hedgehogs are playing out in the forest?! I'm feeling very angry!", said Helen grumpily to Sam. Sam could see Helen was feeling angry. When she felt angry her spikes stood up tall and she could hurt other animals if she wasn't careful. Sam knew that when Helen felt angry she needed to go to a quiet place to calm down. "I'm sorry that you can't join the others to play Helen", said Sam. "But what about if you go to your quiet place to deal with the angry feelings?" Helen didn't want to hurt anyone with her angry feelings so she decided to go to her quiet place for a time-out.

In her quiet place, Helen could calm down and think more clearly. "I really would like to go outside to play with my friends", thought Helen, "but I can still find something fun to do here instead". Helen loved exploring. "Hhhmm", thought Helen, "maybe exploring can help me feel better." "Sam, would you like to go exploring with me?", asked Helen. "Oh! That's a brilliant idea!", said Sam. So Helen and Sam went exploring nearby. They dug their heads

under the soil. They scurried under the trees. They searched through the grass. Helen found many exciting things: two colourful bird feathers, different kinds of leaves she hadn't seen before, an interesting animal track and a spider web! By the end of the day, Helen's bad mood had turned into a good mood. "Look, Sam!", said Helen excitedly, "my spikes are becoming flat! I'm feeling happy again!" From that day on, Helen realized that SHE could turn a bad mood into a good mood and that she had a good friend that could help her do it.

3. First, help the children to process the story by asking them:

- Did you like the story?
- How did Helen feel when she could not join her friends?
- What did she do to change her bad mood?
- Who helped her to change her mood?

4. Then relate the story to the children's own experiences:

- What happens when we feel happy? (we smile more, we have more energy, we laugh, we would want to play with our friends)
- Where do you feel happiness in your body?
- What colour do you imagine the happy feeling to be?
- Can you mention a time when you felt happy?

5. Children can then sing and dance to 'If You're Happy and You Know It'. They may also add in their own lyrics at the end (e.g. If you're happy and you know it jump with joy (hey hey)/ turn around (ol-eh)/ nod your head (nod nod)/ slap your knees (slap slap)...

### **If You're Happy and You Know It**

**If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands (clap clap)**

**If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands (clap clap)**

**If you're happy and you know it, then your face will surely show it**

**If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands. (clap clap)**

**If you're happy and you know it, stomp your feet (stomp stomp)**

**If you're happy and you know it, stomp your feet (stomp stomp)**

**If you're happy and you know it, then your face will surely show it**

**If you're happy and you know it, stomp your feet. (stomp stomp)**

**If you're happy and you know it, shout "Hurray!" (hoo-ray!)**

**If you're happy and you know it, shout "Hurray!" (hoo-ray!)**



If you're happy and you know it, then your face will surely show it  
If you're happy and you know it, shout "Hurray!" (hoo-ray!)

If you're happy and you know it, do all three (clap-clap, stomp-stomp, hoo-ray!)  
If you're happy and you know it, do all three (clap-clap, stomp-stomp, hoo-ray!)  
If you're happy and you know it, then your face will surely show it  
If you're happy and you know it, do all three. (clap-clap, stomp-stomp, hoo-ray!)

6. Ask the children:

- How do you feel after the song?
- How does singing make you feel?
- What other things make you feel happy?
- What persons make you feel happy?

### ***Take Home Activity***

Children can discuss with their parents how different animals show they are happy. For example, dogs wag their tails, cats purr, elephants flap their ears, birds sing. Children may even develop a picture book made from magazine cut-outs, photos or drawings of the different ways animals show they are happy. Animals show they are happy in different ways and so do people.

## **Activity 2: Helen the Hedgehog Lowers her Spikes**

### ***Learning Goal***

Children will speak about a time when they felt happy.

### ***Learning Outcome. By the end of this unit, I will be able to:***

Speak about a time when I felt happy.

### ***Age Group***

Early Years

### ***Level***

Intermediate

## ***Materials needed***

Puppets, children's photo of a happy time

## ***Activity Steps***

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.

2. Read the story in Activity 1 to the children using hand or finger puppets.

3. First, help the children to process the story by asking them:

- Did you like the story?
- How did Helen feel when she could not join her friends?
- What was happening in her body?
- What did she do to change her bad mood?
- Who helped her to change her mood?
- How could her friends know when Helen was feeling happy again?

4. Then relate the story to the children's own experiences:

- When Helen couldn't go play with her friends, she felt angry. What other bad feelings can we feel?
- When you have bad feelings, how do you usually deal with them? Do you tell someone about them? Do you go to a quiet place like Helen?
- Helen went exploring with Sam to cheer herself up. What cheers you up when you're in a bad mood?
- Everybody shows happiness in different ways. When Helen feels happy, her spikes go flat. Some children laugh, some children play, some children jump and clap. How do you show that you're happy?

5. Children can then talk about the photo they brought with them: what they are doing in the photo, why they like it and other things that make them happy.

## ***Take Home Activity***

Children can flip through some photo albums with their parents and talk about the happy times and the happy feelings in the photos. In this way, children can be supported in identifying those activities that make them happy and become more aware of what happiness feels and looks like.

## Activity 3: Helen the Hedgehog Goes Exploring

### *Learning Goal*

Children will draw, paint or make a collage of an activity or a person that makes them happy and talk about it.

### *Learning Outcome. By the end of this unit, I will be able to:*

Draw, paint or make a collage of an activity or a person that makes me happy and talk about it.

### *Age Group*

Early Years

### *Level*

Advanced

### *Materials needed*

Puppets, A3 charts or papers, paints, magazine cuttings, crayons, decorations.

### *Activity Steps*

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness Activity.

2. Read the story in Activity 1 using hand or finger puppets.

3. First, help the children to process the story by asking them:

- How did Helen feel when she could not join her friends?
- Why did Helen feel angry when she couldn't play with her friends?
- What did she do to change her bad mood?
- What might have happened if Helen didn't go to her quiet place? Can you imagine how her day would have been like?

4. Then relate the story to the children's own experiences:

- When Helen couldn't go play with her friends, she felt angry. What other things can make you feel bad?
- How could thinking only of the bad make us feel?

- When you have bad feelings, how do you usually deal with them? Do you tell someone about them? Do you go to a quiet place like Helen?
- Helen became happy by doing something she really liked. And she asked a friend to help her change her mood. Can you think of something that makes you feel happy, just like Helen did? Can you think of someone special that can help you change a bad mood into a good mood?

5. Children can then draw or paint a picture or make a collage of this activity or person that makes them feel happy. They can then share this with the rest of the class and say why they feel happy doing this activity or being with this person.

### ***Take Home Activity***

Children may choose something from home that makes them feel happy. They can talk about the happy feelings this object generates and why it does so with family members, who may also choose an object of their own. These objects can also be presented in class during circle time and a chart entitled “I can change a bad mood into a good mood by...” may be set up.

## **Activity 4: Helen the Hedgehog Changes her Mood**

### ***Learning Goal***

Children will recognize that bad feelings can be turned into good feelings.

### ***Learning Outcome. By the end of this unit, I will be able to:***

Recognize that a bad feeling can be changed into a good feeling by doing something that makes me happy.

### ***Age Group***

Early Primary

### ***Level***

Basic

### ***Materials needed***

Puppets, Song- ‘Shake My Sillies Out’ (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6MUxZPC1TEU>)

## Activity Steps

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.
2. Read the following story to the children using hand or finger puppets:

Helen the hedgehog and Sam the squirrel lived in the forest. Helen and Sam were very good friends. One day Helen rolled down a hill and bumped into a rock. She broke some of her spikes. For a long time, Helen couldn't play outside with her friends until her broken spikes grew back. She had to stay where her mummy could see her and this made Helen very angry. "It's not fair! Why do I have to stay here when all the other hedgehogs are playing out in the forest? These things always happen to me!", said Helen grumpily to Sam. Whenever Helen's angry feelings got out of control, Sam always told her that she could be the boss of her feelings. She could do something about them. Sam knew that when Helen felt angry she needed to go to a quiet place to calm down. "I'm sorry that you can't join the others to play Helen", said Sam, "but what about if you go to your quiet place to deal with the angry feelings?" Helen didn't want to hurt anyone with her angry feelings so she decided to go to her quiet place for a time-out.

After a few minutes, Helen already started thinking more clearly. "I really would like to go outside to play with my friends", thought Helen, "and I really feel disappointed that I cannot go. But I can still find something fun to do on my own." Helen loved exploring. "Hhhmm", thought Helen, "maybe exploring can help me feel better." "Sam, would you like to go exploring with me?", asked Helen. "Oh! That's a brilliant idea!", said Sam. So Helen and Sam went exploring nearby. They dug their heads under the soil. They scurried under the trees. They searched through the grass. They explored every place they could think of and by the end of the day Helen had found two colourful bird feathers, different kinds of leaves she hadn't seen before, an interesting animal track and a spider web! During their exploring time, Helen noticed her spikes becoming flat again. "Look, Sam!", said Helen excitedly, "my spikes are becoming flat again! I'm feeling better!" Helen realized that she could be the boss of her feelings. "I'm glad I didn't stay grumpy all day. Choosing something fun to do made me feel a whole lot better!", said Helen. Exploring was something Helen loved to do and it made her feel happy again.

That evening Sam the squirrel wasn't feeling so good. When he was exploring with Helen, he lost the lucky pebble his mummy had given him when he was born. Sam decided to tell Helen about it. Helen listened and wanted to cheer Sam up, just like he helped her feel better. "Here", said Helen gently, "you can have the bird feather I found in the forest today. It won't be the same as the lucky pebble but it's special because I gave it to you." Sam felt so happy and grateful that he had a friend like Helen. Doing something nice for a friend helped Helen feel happy too. "I did a good job at being the boss of my feelings today", thought Helen as she lay on her bed feeling sleepy, "I cannot wait to see where I'm going to explore tomorrow!"

3. First, help the children to process the story by asking them:

- What was your favourite part of the story? Why?
- Sam always tells Helen that she could be the boss of her feelings. What does he mean by this? How was Helen the boss of her feelings?
- How did Helen's thinking change when she went to think in her quiet place?
- What did exploring help Helen to do?
- What might have happened if Helen didn't deal with her bad feelings? Can you imagine how her day would have been like?

4. Then relate the story to the children's own experiences:

- When Helen couldn't go play with her friends, she felt angry. What other things can make you feel bad?
- When you have bad feelings, how do you usually deal with them? Do you tell someone about them? Do you go to a quiet place like Helen?
- Do you remember a time where you were the boss of your feelings? What happened? What did you do?

5. Tell the children that just like Helen, we can change a bad feeling into a good feeling.

6. Ask the children to stand and sing 'Shake My Sillies Out':

### **Shake My Sillies Out**

**I gotta Shake, Shake, Shake, my sillies out!**

**Shake, Shake, Shake my sillies out**

**Shake, Shake, Shake my sillies out**

**And wiggle my waggles away**

### **Other verses:**

**Clap, Clap, Clap my crazies out!**

**Jump, Jump, Jump my jiggles out!**

**Yawn, Yawn, Yawn my sleepies out!**

**Stretch, Stretch, Stretch my stretchies out!**

Ask the children if anyone felt sad, worried or angry before the song. Tell the children that it's normal and OK to have these feelings. Now, ask the children to put their hands up if they feel

happier after the song. Why do we feel happier? (doing something fun makes us feel better, singing together makes us feel happy).

*Adapted from Bounce Back! (McGrath & Noble, 2011)*

### ***Take Home Activity***

Children can explore with their parents different ways of changing a bad mood into a good mood. Different family members may discuss what they prefer doing if they are in a bad mood and they want to cheer themselves up. Following some exploration of ideas, children can start a scrapbook filled with ways of changing a bad mood into a good mood using photos, drawings, magazine cut-outs and even contributions from family and friends.

## **Activity 5: Helen the Hedgehog Uses her Thinking**

### ***Learning Goal***

- Children will role play activities that might help change a bad mood into a good mood.
- Children will identify one activity they like doing to cheer themselves up.

### ***Learning Outcome. By the end of this unit, I will be able to:***

- Role play activities that might help change a bad mood into a good mood.
- Identify one activity I like doing to cheer myself up.

### ***Age Group***

Early Primary

### ***Level***

Intermediate

### ***Materials needed***

Puppets, Miming Cards.

### ***Activity Steps***

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.

2. Read the story in Activity 4 to the children using hand or finger puppets.

3. First, help the children to process the story by asking them:

- Sam always tells Helen that she could be the boss of her feelings. What does he mean by this? How was Helen the boss of her feelings?
- Let's look at Helen's thinking when she was feeling very upset: "It's not fair! Why do I have to stay here when all the other hedgehogs are playing out in the forest? These things always happen to me!" How does this thinking make Helen feel? Why?
- How did Helen's thinking change when she went to think in her quiet place? How did this thinking make her feel then?
- What did exploring help Helen to do?
- What might have happened if Helen didn't deal with her bad feelings? Can you imagine how her day would have been like?

4. Then relate the story to the children's own experiences:

- Helen had to stay at home until she felt better. Sometimes when bad things happen we might think that **everything** is bad or that these bad things **always** happen to us. Can you think of a bad thing that happened? Explore with the children other good things that remained there in their lives even when this bad thing happened.
- When you have bad feelings, how do you usually deal with them? Do you tell someone about them? Do you go to a quiet place like Helen?
- Do you remember a time where you were the boss of your feelings? What happened? What did you do?

5. Tell the children that Helen changed her bad feelings into good feelings by doing things that made her happy: she went exploring. She also did something nice for a friend. There are many things we can do that make us happy.

6. Play charades using the Miming Cards found in the resource pack. Choose a student to mime the action that can create happiness and the other children need to guess what that action is. After the activity is over, ask the children:

- Can you think of any more activities that can make us feel happy?
- What makes *you* happy?



### ***Take Home Activity***

Together with their parents, children may choose a photo of their happiest time. They may stick the photo on a coloured paper and write a sentence beginning with “The happiest I ever felt was when...” The photos may be brought to class and hung on the wall.

## **Activity 6: Helen the Hedgehog Chooses to be Happy**

### ***Learning Goal***

Children will apply the ‘flipping the feeling’ strategy to change bad feelings into good feelings.

### ***Learning Outcome. By the end of this unit, I will be able to:***

Apply the ‘flipping the feeling’ strategy to change bad feelings into good feelings.

### ***Age Group***

Early Primary

### ***Level***

Advanced

### ***Materials needed***

Puppets, ‘Flipping the Feeling’ handout.

### ***Activity Steps***

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.
2. Read the story in Activity 4 to the children using hand or finger puppets.
3. First, help the children to process the story by asking them:
  - Sam always tells Helen that she could be the boss of her feelings. What does he mean by this? How was Helen the boss of her feelings?

- Let's look at Helen's thinking when she was feeling very upset: "It's not fair! Why do I have to stay here when all the other hedgehogs are playing out in the forest? These things always happen to me!" How does this thinking make Helen feel? Why?
- How did Helen's thinking change when she went to think in her quiet place? How did this thinking make her feel then?
- What did exploring help Helen to do?
- What might have happened if Helen didn't deal with her bad feelings? Can you imagine how her day would have been like?

4. Then relate the story to the children's own experiences:

- Helen had to stay at home until she felt better. Sometimes when bad things happen we might think that **everything** is bad or that these bad things **always** happen to us. Can you think of a bad thing that happened? Explore with the children other good things that remained there in their lives even when this bad thing happened.
- When bad things happen how do you think about them? Do you look more at the good things or at the bad things?
- Do you remember a time where you were the boss of your feelings? What happened? What did you do?
- What things make you feel happy and cheer you up when you're in a bad mood? Is there a special person that can help you change your mood?
- Have you ever given something special for a friend like Helen did? How did you feel afterwards?
- At the end of the day Helen felt proud of herself for being the boss of her feelings. Mention something that **you** did today or this week that you feel good about.

5. Tell the children that everyone has different feelings and this is normal and OK. Everyone has bad feelings but we can choose to deal with these bad feelings and become happier. Of course not all bad feelings go away as quickly as Helen's did but we can still do something to sort the feelings out and cheer ourselves up.

6. Explain the 'Flipping the Feeling' handout found in the resource pack to the children and ask them to complete it with a partner or on their own. The children may share some of their ideas with the rest of the class if they wish.

### ***Take Home Activity***

The children may be given an extra blank handout to teach the ‘flipping the feeling’ strategy to an adult family member. The children will have fun teaching the strategy to their family. Afterwards, the children and the family member/s may even try the fun activity and see how they feel.

## **Activity 7: Celebrating Life**

### ***Learning Goal***

- Children will discuss happiness and their experience of it.
- Children will identify a person, place, object or event that makes them happy and make a collage about it.

### ***Learning Outcome. By the end of this unit, I will be able to:***

- Discuss happiness and my experience of it.
- Identify a person, a place, an object or event that makes me happy and make a collage about it.

### ***Age Group***

Late Primary

### ***Level***

Basic

### ***Materials needed***

‘Fact or Fiction strips’, hat or bowl, colourful charts, magazine cut-outs, photos, drawings, decorations, scissors, glue.

### ***Activity Steps***

1. A few days before the activity, ask the children to choose a photo or draw a picture of a person, a place, an object or event that makes them happy. They can bring this to school on the day of the activity.
2. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.

3. Now start the lesson by placing the 'Fact or Fiction strips' found in the resource pack in a hat or bowl. Choose a student to pick a statement and read it aloud. Discuss the statement using the discussion points handout if needed (also found in the resource pack).

4. After the activity tell the children that one of the ways we can increase our happiness is by looking at our life and seeing what is good about it, what we are thankful for and what makes us happy. Tell the children to make a collage about the person, object, place or event that they have chosen and write why that person, object, place or event is special for them.

5. The children may then present and talk about their own collages with the rest of the class.

### ***Take Home Activity***

At the end of the day, children and their family members may share together what they are most thankful or happy about for that day. To emphasize the control they have over their own happiness, children may be further encouraged to speak about how they contributed to what makes them happy. For example, "I am happy that I got a good mark on my dictation today. I worked hard for it and made an effort to write neatly."

## **Activity 8: Three Things**

### ***Learning Goal***

- Children will discuss happiness and their experience of it.
- Children will identify 3 things that make them happy and say how they have contributed to them.

### ***Learning Outcome. By the end of this unit, I will be able to:***

- Discuss happiness and my experience of it.
- Identify 3 things that make me happy and say how I have contributed to them.

### ***Age Group***

Late Primary

### ***Level***

Intermediate

### ***Materials needed***

‘Fact or Fiction’ handout, ‘Three Things’ handout.

### **Activity Steps**

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.
2. Distribute the Fact or Fiction handout found in the resource pack and ask the children to complete it on their own. Then ask the children to form a circle and start discussing the handout. You can use the discussion points found in the resource pack as a guide.
3. Following the discussion, distribute the ‘Three Things’ handout found in the resource pack and ask children to think of three things they are happy about in their lives. They then should write how they have contributed to these things happening in their lives. For example, “I am happy about my talent. I am very good at running and have won some competitions. Running makes me happy. I have become better at running because I practice really hard, I train three times a week and I try to do my best.” Children can work in twos and discuss their ‘three things’ with their partner.

### **Take Home Activity**

Together with the help of their family, children can identify a bad time in their lives and talk about how they dealt with it. The emphasis should be on what the child did to deal with the bad time and the bad feelings, and on what he or she did to feel happy again. The aim is to empower children to know they can deal with bad situations and are able to bounce back and create happiness by the things they think and do.

## **Activity 9: My Choice**

### **Learning Goal**

- Children will discuss happiness and their experience of it.
- Apply the ‘flipping the feeling’ strategy to change bad feelings into good feelings.

### **Learning Outcome. By the end of this unit, I will be able to:**

- Discuss happiness and my experience of it.
- Apply the ‘flipping the feeling’ strategy to change bad feelings into good feelings.

## ***Age Group***

Late Primary

## ***Level***

Advanced

## ***Materials needed***

‘Fact or Fiction handout’, ‘My Choice’ handout.

## ***Activity Steps***

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.
2. Distribute the ‘Fact or Fiction’ handout found in the resource pack and ask the children to complete it on their own. Then ask the children to form a circle and start discussing the handout. You can use the discussion points in the resource pack as a guide.
3. Following the discussion, distribute the ‘My Choice’ handout found in the resource pack and explain it to the children.

## ***Take Home Activity***

Children can be given other ‘My Choice’ handouts and continue practicing the strategy with their family.

## Set 3: Using HUMOUR to promote growth and wellbeing

### Learning Goals

By the end of this unit, children will be able to:

#### Early Years (3-5 years):

- Recognize that finding the funny bits in a problem help us feel better
- Talk about what makes me laugh

#### Early Primary (6-8 years):

- Identify and list the benefits of humour
- Identify and write about what makes them laugh
- Discuss what they can do to ensure humour is helpful and not harmful

#### Late Primary (9-11 years):

- Identify and list the benefits of humour
- Talk about what makes me laugh
- Make a campaign about the do's and don'ts of humour

### Tips for Teachers

1. Instead of practising 'Thank God it's Friday' (TGIF), practice 'Be Glad it's Monday' (BGIM) as part of your school routine. Start Monday with a funny song or a funny story to help children look forward to the coming week (Cornett, 1986).
2. Set up a 'funny corner' in the class where students can bring those things that make them laugh and share these with their friends.
3. At the end of the day, encourage children to look back at and share the funny bits of the day.
4. As part of their creative writing, ask children to write a funny story. The children can then perform it in front of the class.

## Activity 1: Helen's Bad Day

### *Learning Goal*

To recognize that finding the funny bits in a problem helps us feel better.

### *Learning Outcome. By the end of this study unit, I will be able to:*

Recognize that finding the funny bits in a problem will help me feel better.

### *Age Group*

Early Years

### *Level*

Basic

### *Materials needed*

Puppets, cuttings of animal 'heads' and 'bodies, cardboard, glue.

### *Activity Steps*

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.
2. Read this story to the children using hand or finger puppets:

**Oh no! Helen the hedgehog was having a topsy-turvy day! Everything was going wrong! Helen woke up very late. Instead of grabbing toothpaste to brush her teeth with, she grabbed the shampoo! Oh dear. Then she wore her trousers on her head instead of her legs! Oh dear. Instead of taking her reading glasses to school, she took her sunglasses! Oh dear. Instead of taking her lunch to school, she took her dog's lunch instead! Oh dear. Helen was having a topsy-turvy day indeed. Helen told Sam all about her bad day. "So I woke up late, brushed my teeth with shampoo, wore my trousers on my head, wore my sunglasses in class and brought my dog's lunch to school! What else can go wrong? What a bad day!" Helen pictured herself with trousers on her head wearing sunglasses and eating her dog's food! And she began to giggle. Sam and Helen thought it wasn't really a bad day. It was a funny day! All the things that happened made them laugh. Looking at the funny bits of the day turned a topsy-turvy day into a funny day.**



3. First, help the children to process the story by asking them:

- Did you like the story?
- What were the funny bits of the story for you?
- What made Helen feel better?

4. Then relate the story to the children's own experiences:

- Do you remember something funny that happened to you?
- Have you ever looked at the funny bits in a problem?

5. Put the magazine cuttings or pictures of the animal 'heads' and animal 'bodies' in the middle of the table. Tell the children to make a collage of a pet consisting of a head and a different body. Encourage the children to try to make a funny new animal. Ask the children to name their animal at the end. Ask the children if they feel better now they're looking at the funny bits of a situation.

### ***Take Home Activity***

Explore with children what makes them laugh. What cartoons? What TV characters? What friend or family member makes them laugh? Do they have a favourite joke?

## **Activity 2: Funny Faces**

### ***Learning Goal***

To recognize that finding the funny bits in a problem helps us feel better.

### ***Learning Outcome. By the end of this unit, I will be able to:***

Recognize that finding the funny bits in a problem helps me feel better.

### ***Age Group***

Early Years

### ***Level***

Intermediate

## ***Materials needed***

Puppets, magazine cut outs of parts of faces (mouths, eyes, noses etc.)

## ***Activity Steps***

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.
2. Read the story in Activity 1 to the children using hand or finger puppets.
3. First, help the children to process the story by asking them:
  - Did you like the story?
  - Why was Helen feeling upset?
  - What was the funny bit of Helen's problem?
  - So what helped Helen feel better?
4. Then relate the story to the children's own experiences:
  - Do you remember something funny that happened to you?
  - Do you remember a setback you had (or someone you know) had where you looked at the funny bits?
  - Do you think it's better to look at the sad bits or the funny bits of a problem?
5. Put the face parts in the middle of the table. Tell the children to create a 'funny face' collage of a face made up of different parts. Ask the children if they feel better now they're looking at the funny bits of a situation.

## ***Take Home Activity***

Try to compile a collection of those things that the child finds funny. It could be a TV character, a specific joke or an activity he or she likes to do. Place these reminders in a special box and encourage the child to explore the box whenever they need to cheer up.

## **Activity 3: What makes us laugh**

### ***Learning Goal***

To talk about what makes me laugh.

***Learning Outcome. By the end of this unit, I will be able to:***

Talk about what makes me laugh.

***Age Group***

Early Years

***Level***

Advanced

***Materials needed***

Puppets, charts, markers, crayons, magazine cut-outs, jokes, pictures, photos.

***Activity Steps***

1. Before the activity, ask the children to discuss with their parents what makes them laugh. Children can bring examples of what makes them laugh e.g. a funny joke, a tongue twister, a picture of a cartoon, a funny story, a game...
2. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness Activity.
3. Read the story in Activity 1 using hand or finger puppets.
4. First, help the children to process the story by asking them:
  - Did you like the story?
  - Why was Helen feeling upset?
  - What was the funny bit of Helen's problem?
  - What helped Helen feel better? Why?
4. Then relate the story to the children's own experiences:
  - Do you remember something funny that happened to you?
  - Do you remember a setback you had (or someone you know) had where you looked at the funny bits?
  - Do you think it's better to look at the sad bits or the funny bits of a problem?
  - How can we turn bad days into funny days? (By telling funny jokes, by listening to funny stories, by watching funny cartoons, by laughing with our friends...)
5. Create a wall with everything that makes the children laugh.

### *Take Home Activity*

Children can ask family members about a time when something sad or worrying happened but they were able to find something to laugh about in this bad time.

## Activity 4: The Benefits of Humour

### *Learning Goal*

To identify and list the benefits of humour.

### *Learning Outcome. By the end of this unit, I will be able to:*

Identify and list the benefits of humour.

### *Age Group*

Early Primary

### *Level*

Basic

### *Materials needed*

Puppets

### *Activity Steps*

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.
2. Read the following story to the children using hand or finger puppets:

**Oh no! Helen the hedgehog was having a topsy-turvy day! Everything was going wrong! Helen woke up very late. Instead of grabbing toothpaste to brush her teeth with, she grabbed the shampoo! Oh dear. Then she wore her trousers on her head instead of her legs! Oh dear. Instead of taking her reading glasses to school, she took her sunglasses! Oh dear. Instead of taking her lunch to school, she took her dog's lunch instead! Oh dear. Helen was having a topsy-turvy day indeed. Helen told Sam all about her bad day. "So I woke up late, brushed my teeth with shampoo, wore my trousers on my head, wore my sunglasses in class**

and brought my dog's lunch to school! What else can go wrong? What a bad day!" Helen pictured herself with trousers on her head wearing sunglasses and eating her dog's food! And she began to giggle. Sam and Helen thought it wasn't really a bad day. It was a funny day! All the things that happened made them laugh. Looking at the funny bits of the day turned a topsy-turvy day into a funny day.

3. First, help the children to process the story by asking them:

- What was the funny bit of Helen's problem?
- What helped Helen feel better? Why?

4. Then relate the story to the children's own experiences:

- Do you remember a setback you had (or someone you know) had where you looked at the funny bits?
- Do you think it's better to look at the sad bits or the funny bits of a problem?

5. Children can look up all the benefits of laughter from the internet and create a chart showing all the benefits of humour on the human body.

### ***Take Home Activity***

Discuss with children their own sense of humour. Discuss as well the difference between humour that helps and humour that harms and help children come up with strategies to use humour that helps instead of humour that harms.

## **Activity 5: I like to laugh at...**

### ***Learning Goal***

To identify and write about what makes them laugh.

### ***Learning Outcome. By the end of this unit, I will be able to:***

Identify and write about what makes me laugh.

## ***Age Group***

Early Primary

## ***Level***

Intermediate

## ***Materials needed***

Puppets, 'I like to laugh at...' handout 1, passport photos.

## ***Activity Steps***

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.
2. Read the story in Activity 4 to the children using hand or finger puppets.
3. First, help the children to process the story by asking them:
  - What was the funny bit of Helen's problem?
  - What helped Helen feel better? Why?
4. Then relate the story to the children's own experiences:
  - Do you think it's better to look at the sad bits or the funny bits of a problem?
  - What do you find funny? Who likes funny stories? Who likes funny TV shows? Who likes cartoons? Who likes funny jokes?
  - Mention a time when you laughed the most. What happened? Why was it so funny?
  - Does laughing help you feel better?
7. Tell the children to stick their passport photo on the handout and fill it in by listing all the things that make them laugh.

## ***Take Home Activity***

Discuss the things the children listed in their handout. Now ask them how they can use that humour but in a way that helps instead of harming. List these at the bottom.

## Activity 6: Humour is Individual but Respectful

### *Learning Goal*

Children will identify and write about what makes them laugh and what they can do to ensure their humour is helpful and not harmful.

### *Learning Outcome. By the end of this unit, I will be able to:*

Identify and write about what makes me laugh and how my sense of humour can be helpful and not harmful.

### *Age Group*

Early Primary

### *Level*

Advanced

### *Materials needed*

Puppets, 'I like to laugh at...' handout 2.

### *Activity Steps*

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.
2. Read the story in Activity 4 to the children using hand or finger puppets.
3. First, help the children to process the story by asking them:
  - What was the funny bit of Helen's problem?
  - What helped Helen feel better? Why?
  - Did Sam like Helen's joke? How do you know?
  - What did Sam do to let Helen know he didn't like it?
4. Then relate the story to the children's own experiences:
  - Do you think it's better to look at the sad bits or the funny bits of a problem?

- What do you find funny? Who likes funny stories? Who likes funny TV shows? Who likes cartoons? Who likes funny jokes?
- Mention a time when you laughed the most. What happened? Why was it so funny?
- Does laughing help you feel better?
- How can we make sure that we use humour that helps?
- Why is it important to use humour that helps?

5. Tell the children to stick their passport photo on the handout and fill it in by listing all the things that make them laugh and how they can make sure their sense of humour is respectful.

### ***Take Home Activity***

Children can come up with a slogan about humour that shows people that humour needs to be used to help me and others and not to harm. Children can make a poster of this slogan and bring it to class to present it to their classmates.

## **Activity 7: Benefits of Humour**

### ***Learning Goal***

To identify and list the benefits of humour.

### ***Learning Outcome. By the end of this unit, I will be able to:***

Identify and list the benefits of humour.

### ***Age Group***

Late Primary

### ***Level***

Basic

### ***Materials needed***

Internet connection, charts, markers, decorations, glue, scissors.



### **Activity Steps**

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.
2. Start by telling a joke or asking children if they would like to tell a funny story.
3. Start a discussion on humour. Use the following questions to guide you:
  - Do you think it's better to look at the sad bits or the funny bits of a problem?
  - What do you find funny? Who likes funny stories? Who likes funny TV shows? Who likes cartoons? Who likes funny jokes?
  - Mention a time when you laughed the most. What happened? Why was it so funny?
  - Does laughing help you feel better?
  - How can we make sure that we use humour that helps?
  - Why is it important to use humour that helps?
3. Split the children in groups and ask them to look up the benefits of humour on the internet. As a group they need to create a chart on the benefits of humour and present it to the rest of the class.

### **Take Home Activity**

Children can compile a collection of all those things they find funny including funny stories, tongue twisters, riddles, jokes and so on.

## **Activity 8: Humour First Aid Kit**

### **Learning Goal**

To talk about what makes me laugh.

### **Learning Outcome. By the end of this unit, I will be able to:**

Talk about what makes me laugh.

### **Age Group**

Late Primary

## ***Level***

Intermediate

## ***Materials needed***

The things that make children laugh.

## ***Activity Steps***

1. A few days before the activity, tell the children to think about and prepare some of the things that make them laugh. They could be funny stories, jokes, tongue twisters, and so on.
2. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.
3. Start by asking one or two children to tell a joke or funny story they have collected
4. Start a discussion on humour. Use the following questions to guide you:
  - Do you think it's better to look at the sad bits or the funny bits of a problem?
  - What do you find funny? Who likes funny stories? Who likes funny TV shows? Who likes cartoons? Who likes funny jokes?
  - Mention a time when you laughed the most. What happened? Why was it so funny?
  - Does laughing help you feel better?
  - How can we make sure that we use humour that helps?
  - Why is it important to use humour that helps?
4. Ask the children to present the things that make them laugh to the rest of the class.
5. Children can put copies of these in a box. This 'humour first aid kit' can help them when they need to cheer up.

## ***Take Home Activity***

Children can make a leaflet about what children can do to make sure their humour is helpful and not harmful.

## Activity 9: The Do's and Don'ts of Humour

### *Learning Goal*

To make a campaign about the do's and don'ts of humour.

### *Learning Outcome. By the end of this unit, I will be able to:*

Make a campaign about the do's and don'ts of humour.

### *Age Group*

Late Primary

### *Level*

Advanced

### *Materials needed*

'Make a campaign about...' handout, charts, markers, glue, scissors, crayons, decorations.

### *Activity Steps*

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.
2. Ask children to tell a joke or funny story.
3. Start a discussion on humour. Use the following questions to guide you:
  - Do you think it's better to look at the sad bits or the funny bits of a problem?
  - What do you find funny? Who likes funny stories? Who likes funny TV shows? Who likes cartoons? Who likes funny jokes?
  - Mention a time when you laughed the most. What happened? Why was it so funny?
  - Does laughing help you feel better?
  - How can we make sure that we use humour that helps?
  - Why is it important to use humour that helps?
3. Get the 'Make a campaign about...' handout and cut out each campaign title. Split the class into groups and give each group a title to make a marketing campaign about. Children discuss the questions provided and come up with a market campaign to teach children about humour. At the end children present their campaigns to the rest of the class.

### ***Take Home Activity***

Children can further explore their sense of humour by creating some things that are funny such as a funny story, a joke, a difficult tongue twister, a funny character, a funny play and so on.

## References

- Buchanan, G. M., & Seligman, M. E. P. (1995). *Explanatory style*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Cornett, C. E. (1986). *Learning through humour: Laughter in the classroom. Fastback 241*.  
Retrieved from <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED276028>.
- Fredrickson, B. L. (2001). The role of positive emotions in positive psychology: The broaden and-built theory of positive emotions. *American Psychologist*, 56, 218–226.
- Masten, A.S. (2001). Ordinary magic: Resilience processes in development. *American Psychologist*, 56 (3), 227-238.
- McGrath, H., & Noble, T. (2011). *Bounce back! : years k - 2 : a wellbeing and resilience program*. Pearson: Australia, Melbourne.
- Buchanan, M. (n.d.). *A Tree Grows (Narrative Pantomime)*. Retrieved from [www.childdrama.com](http://www.childdrama.com)
- Noble, T., & McGrath, H. (2008). The positive educational practices framework: A tool for facilitating the work of educational psychologists in promoting pupil wellbeing. *Educational & Child Psychology*, 25(2), 119-134.
- Peterson, C., Ruch, W., Beerman, U., Park, N., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2007). Strengths of character, orientations to happiness, and life satisfaction. *Journal of Positive Psychology*, 2, 149-156.
- Seligman, M. E. P. (2002). Positive Psychology, Positive Prevention, and Positive Therapy. In S. R. Snyder, & S. J. Lopez (Eds.), *Handbook of Positive Psychology* (pp. 3-12). New York, NY: Oxford University Press, Inc.

Seligman, M. E., & Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2000). Positive psychology: An introduction. *American Psychologist*, 55(1), 1-14.

Seligman, M. E., Parks, A. C., & Steen, T. (2004). A balanced psychology and a full life. *Phil. Trans. R. Soc. Lond. B*, 359, 1379–1381. doi:10.1098/rstb.2004.1513

Snyder, C. R. (1994). *The Psychology of Hope: You Can Get There from Here*. New York, NY: Free Press.