

Being Ourselves

Here are a range of short activities to explore the theme 'Being Ourselves'.

Take a look at the ideas which are suitable for whole class and group work



Primary

What makes you, you?

Ask the children to get into small groups or pairs.

Ask each group to:

- Think of three ways they are similar to each other
- Think of three ways they are different from each other

Encourage them not to just focus on looks but on what they enjoy, what they are good at and what makes them special. Give them some examples, for instance: "Just like Miss/Mr X I love running and we are both good listeners but she/he likes playing tennis and is very funny where as I prefer singing and am very patient"

Ask the children to share their three differences and similarities, highlighting that we are all unique.

I can and I'd like to learn to...

Ask the children to all think of things that they can do well. Examples include riding a bike, being a good friend, counting to 20. Now ask the children to think of a few things that they would like to do better, improve on or learn.

Once in small groups, get the children to share their list of skills and the things they would like to improve. Invite them to discuss how they might develop some of the things on their 'things to improve list'. What might they need to do to make this happen? Is there anyone who can help by using their own skills to support or by giving encouragement?

Teacher note: You might find it useful to read Carol Dweck's book, *Mindset - Changing The Way You Think To Fulfil Your Potential* (2017)

People Bingo

Give the class cards or boards with a combination of different statements. Some examples include:

- Someone who has freckles
- Youngest child in the family
- Someone who has a cat
- Someone who likes maths

Ask the children to move around the classroom and when they find another child who meets one of their statements ask them to write their name on the card/board. After 10 minutes stop the activity and ask the children if they learnt anything new about the class. Emphasise that we don't always know everything about everyone and whilst we are all different, we also have similarities.

Secondary

In my opinion

Read out some issues for debate that are safe and not too controversial or sensitive. For example, school uniform should be abolished, the voting age should be lowered to 16, exams are causing too much stress. Ask the pupils whether they agree with the statements by holding some cards up which say agree, disagree, not sure. Encourage the pupils to say why they think that way and have a discussion about the importance of different viewpoints and how having different opinions can help us all. Talk about the range of different thoughts and feelings we can experience when we hold different views and when we don't agree with others.

Character strengths

Introduce and discuss a number of different character strengths with the class or group – examples below.

Ask the group what we mean when we say strength?

- Creativity
- Bravery
- Persistence
- Kindness
- Leadership

Discuss what we think each of the strengths mean, emphasising that many of these can grow over time.

Teacher note: You might find it useful to read up on the 24 character strengths by Christopher Peterson and Martin Seligman. tinyurl.com/24characterstrengths

Character differences

Draw up a grid, making sure there is a box for each person in the group or class. Go round the room and ask each person to share a **different** character strength that they have with the group. e.g – brave, kind, creative. Write down each person's strength until all of the boxes on the grid are filled in.

Emphasise that every person has different character strengths which make them unique and individual and we can all benefit from each other's strengths and abilities

Teacher note: You might find it useful to read the 24 character strengths by Christopher Peterson and Martin Seligman.