

Description

Students explore things they are good at and identify how this relates to their enjoyment of the activity. Students discuss their feelings relating to achievement and success.

Learning focus

Identify personal strengths and abilities.

Key understandings

- Everybody is good at something.
- People are good at different activities and skills because they have different strengths.
- It is okay for people to have different strengths.
- Our strengths change over time.
- Participating in activities that we are good at and that we enjoy makes us feel happy.
- If we get to know people who are different to us, we include them in games and conversation and we see this as a good thing.

Materials

1. Equipment required for the tabloid games including large numbers to identify each station (see examples below)
2. Student Activity Sheet: *Student reflection* [one per student]

Teaching and Learning Activities

Before you get started

- The purpose of this activity is to assist students to identify their personal strengths, not to highlight their intellectual limitations. There will be a need to [establish ground rules](#) with the group so that a safe environment is encouraged.
- Gardner's Multiple Intelligence Theory suggests intelligence has specific components rather than a single general ability. Gardner opposes the idea of labelling learners to a specific intelligence, rather that each individual possesses a unique blend of all the intelligences.
- Resilience and emotional wellbeing are important concepts to teach in the early childhood years as this is when younger students may need support to identify their own personal strengths. Read the Guide: [Resilience and life skills](#) for additional information.
- Identifying and describing their own strengths and achievements and those of others form the basis of persistence, understanding change and the transition and change in identity.

My achievements and strengths

Year Learning Activity

Whole Class

Through discussion and modelling, this activity introduces students to the concept of strengths.

1. Explain that knowing your strengths is a skill to help people stay happy and positive and bounce back from setbacks. When you know your strengths you can use them to help you achieve goals.
2. Ask students to vote on the following questions with a show of hands. Tally and record results for the class:

Words: Who likes reading stories and writing words?

Logic/Maths: Who likes playing card games or adding up numbers?

Space/Vision: Who is good at remembering things they have seen?

Body movement: Who likes running and jumping?

Music: Who likes singing or dancing to music?

Nature: Who likes watching nature shows on TV or collecting insects?

People: Who likes organising games to play with your friends?

Self: Who likes setting a goal like saving up pocket money to buy something you really want?

3. Ask the students:

- *What are some ways that you can work out what your strengths are?* (listening to feedback from others; looking at what you really like doing; comparing yourself to others in this area)
- *Do you think everyone is good at something?*
- *Why do you think people are good at different activities?* (because they have different strengths)
- *Is it okay for people to have different strengths?* (yes, if we get to know people who are different to us, it's good to include them in games and conversation)
- *Does knowing what we are good at help us to cope when times are unhappy for a while?* (yes, often doing activities that involve these strengths help us to 'be in the zone' and forget about unhappy things for a while. We also learn things more quickly when we are using these skills so this gives us more meaning and purpose)

Independent or Small Group

Students begin to develop an understanding of their strengths by identifying which skills they are good at or enjoy doing.

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Year Learning Activity

1. Introduce and model the Student Activity Sheet: *Student reflection*. Students are to complete each activity and then decide whether they liked it, didn't like it or were unsure about it. They need to put the number of the station in the left hand column and then draw a picture of the activity in the box that best reflects their feelings about that activity: Like, Not sure or Don't like. Explain that this voting will help them work out their personal strengths.
2. Place students into small groups and, if possible, assign a parent helper or older student buddy to each group. Assign a group to each numbered station and have the helper explain the activity at that station.
3. Rotate groups every 10 minutes and allow several minutes at the end of each station for students to record their drawings on their reflection sheet in the 'I liked it', 'unsure' or 'I didn't like it' column.
4. Stations should be numbered and focus on Gardner's Multiple Intelligences. They could include but are not limited to the following :

Words: play a rhyming word game; listen to a story being read; tell a partner a story about when they were good at something.

Logic/Maths: make or follow patterns with beads or blocks; gather, sort and organise a collection of buttons or markers.

Space/Vision: turn a doodle into a picture; take apart a puzzle.

Body movement: complete a short obstacle course; cut along the lines or colour within the edges of a picture.

Music: use a small drum to repeat simple rhythms; play simple tunes on a xylophone; hum a simple melody back.

Nature: use a magnifying glass to study an insect, shell or flower; collect and categorise natural objects, e.g. rocks, leaves, flowers.

People: dress up in the Home Corner and think up a story that includes everyone; build a pyramid with plastic cups as a group.

Self: listen to a piece of music and describe how it made them feel; tell a partner about a time they achieved a goal.

Note: To maintain student focus, only rotate students through four stations in one session. Complete the rest of the stations at another session.

Reflection

1. When students have completed their reflection sheet, as a whole class discuss the following questions:
 - *How did you feel about the activities that you put in the 'I liked it' column?*

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- *Why did you like those activities?* (model and emphasise feeling words such as happy, enjoyment, fun, good at, and strength, to help students explain why they potentially liked those activities)
- *How can knowing your strengths help you in your learning?* (they let you know where you might find it easier to do things and look to praise yourself for a job well done, they let you know where you might turn to when you don't feel happy)
- *How did you feel about the activities that you put in the 'I didn't like it' column? Why didn't you like those activities?* (model and emphasise feeling words such as confused, OK, sad, angry, frustrated, not good at, challenging, boring and explain that these may be things that they are not so strong in)
- *How can knowing your limitations, or things that you are not so strong in, help you in your learning?* (they let you know where you might need a bit more work, practise or perseverance and where you may need to be gentle on yourself)
- *Were you surprised by any of your results?*
- *What are the top five strengths of students in this class?* (tally and graph results)
- *How can we use these strengths to help others in our family or class?*

2. Students use the [partner retell](#) strategy to tell their partner how they might use one of the strengths they identified to help someone in the family or class.

- Stress that these kind acts make the giver feel good as well as the receiver and give our lives a sense of meaning and purpose.

Related assets (links to sections within GDHR site)

Teaching Note

[Establishing a group agreement](#)

Teaching Resources

[Student reflection](#)

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