

Materials

- Butcher's paper

Before you get started

- Resilience and emotional wellbeing are important concepts to teach in the early childhood years. This is when younger students may need support to identify their own personal strengths. See the Guide: [Resilience and life skills](#) for further information.
- Identifying and describing their own strengths and achievements and those of others, understanding change, managing challenges and the transition and change in identity, form the basis of persistence and ultimately resilience and emotional wellbeing.

Learning activities

Whole Class

This activity addresses students' emotional wellbeing by providing a safe environment for them to explore their strengths and challenges.

1. Discuss with students what strengths and challenges people have.
2. Ask students to suggest ability and character strengths that they possess, e.g. I am a good listener, I am good at spelling, I am good at sport, I am a good friend, I care about my family, I help my little brother with... etc.
 - List the strengths on butcher's paper or on an electronic device.
 - Discuss and list challenges in the same way.
 - Provide appropriate examples from your own personal experience, modelling the ability to recognise strengths and challenges as well as opportunities to grow, develop and change.
3. Ask:
 - *Does everyone have strengths?*
 - *Does everyone have challenges?*
 - *Do our strengths/challenges change as we get older?*
 - *What can help us identify our strengths?* (e.g. asking other people, thinking about what we are good at; thinking about when we feel proud)
 - *What can help us identify our challenges?* (e.g. asking other people, thinking about what we are not so good at; thinking about when we feel sad, disappointed, frustrated)
 - *How does knowing what our strengths make us feel?* (e.g. proud, happy)
 - *How does knowing our challenges sometimes make us feel?* (e.g. sad, disappointed, frustrated)

Independent or Small Group

Students are provided with the opportunity to identify their personal areas of growth and how these can be developed to strengthen their personal identity.

1. Display the butcher's paper with the list of strengths from the previous activity. Students individually record at least ten strengths that they can attribute to themselves.
 - Alternatively, provide students with coloured dots or pens/textas to place a 'mark' beside the strengths that they consider they have. This is a great visual representation for all as to where the overall strengths of the class are and does not individually identify students.
2. Have students now individually identify five personal challenges, e.g. something that they had to be brave about; something that made them sad; something they would like to get better at, i.e. personal challenges. Provide examples of each type of challenge.
3. Provide students some reflection time to identify their challenges and how they can address them. Ask:
 - *Does everyone make mistakes? Even adults?*
 - *Do bad feelings about our challenges last forever?*
 - *Can other people help us with our challenges?*
 - *Who might these people be?*
 - *How can positive thinking help us when we are facing a challenge?*

3-2-1 Reflection

1. Invite students to share their list of strengths.
 - Encourage them to provide examples demonstrating that they have that strength by adding 'because' and expanding the strength statement. For example, "I am a good friend because I listen to my friend when he is feeling sad".
2. Invite students, who feel comfortable, to share challenges they have experienced.
 - Encourage them to provide examples and expand the statement to demonstrate that they understand how the challenge can become an area of growth. For example, "I was challenged when my dog died but I talked to Mum and Dad about how I felt and I don't feel as sad now".
3. Discuss the following questions:
 - *What makes something a challenge?*
 - *Can you remember a time when something was too difficult to do, or to cope with, but is now a strength that you have?*
 - *What did you do to turn a challenge into a strength?*