

Materials

- Photos that represent personal milestones from birth to present
- Student Activity Sheet: *My Life chart* [one A3 copy per student]

Before you get started

- Some students may have experienced in the past, or are currently living through, a traumatic event. Teachers should be aware that this activity might be a trigger for them. It is recommended that the teacher only use these activities once they have an understanding of each student's family life and current situation.
- Teachers should know and understand the [protective interrupting](#) technique and what, why, when and how it is needed and used before facilitating this activity.

Learning activities

Whole Class

This activity is aimed at providing physical examples of how different people grow and develop at different rates and in different ways.

1. Invite students to arrange themselves in a line according to the month of their birthday. Indicate which end of the line is January and which is December. (An alternative if space does not allow would be to have students raise their hand or stand as the months of the year are called out).
 - Challenge the students to arrange themselves accurately within 2 minutes. Make the activity more challenging by instructing the task is to be done in complete silence, similar to the [silent card shuffle](#) teaching strategy.
 - Teachers may need to provide each student with their birthdate/birth day/month on a card to show and compare with each other.
 - Check and evaluate the students' success at arranging themselves in the correct order.
 - Encourage students to arrange themselves in correct date order, for each month.
2. Review and discuss the results. Invite students to:
 - Share any observations they may have made about the people standing close to them (e.g. height does not necessarily equate with age).
 - Indicate the year that they were born.
3. Discuss the results and talk about how everybody is approximately the same age but there is a lot of variation amongst the group in regard to physical traits, personalities and experiences.

Independent or Small Group

Explain that by identifying our personal milestones we get a sense of achievement and a stronger self of who we are or *self-awareness*.

Encourage students to bring in photos of themselves from home (as a newborn, baby at 8 months, toddler, etc.) to add value to this activity. These images will assist students in recalling visually (and promoting feelings and memory) of their life before 'now'.

1. Present each student with an electronic or hardcopy of the Student Activity Sheet: *My Life chart*.
2. Ask students to think about the different elements (i.e. picture, approximate height and weight, favourite foods, toys, friends, pets, etc.) and what they can remember or recall for each over time. Some elements may need to be completed at home as a discussion between parents and students as the students may not recall the early years of their life.
3. Have students draw a picture for each element or bring photos from home (printed or digital) to add. Allow the students to write and illustrate in each box.
4. Provide them the opportunity to reflect and record the reasons they valued or enjoyed the elements they identified as favourites.
5. Ask:
 - *What things have not changed over your lifetime?*
 - *How did/would you feel when the number of people in your family changed? Why?*
 - *How did you feel when you got a new pet/moved house/changed schools/changed friends/moved interstate/arrived in Australia etc.?*
 - *How did you feel when a family pet died?*
 - *What are your thoughts about this comment, "Change will definitely happen"?*
 - *Is change a good thing or a bad thing?*
 - *Does thinking positively about a change affect how we feel about that change?*

3-2-1 Reflection

Examine student work samples as a class.

- Discuss memories and how easy or challenging it was to recall and decide what to include in the chart.
- Students reflect and discuss what and how personal achievements and challenges have impacted and influenced their lives (e.g. parents proud of student for getting a merit award, parents' divorce means student moves house and school).
- Ask students to make observations about similarities and differences between students' chart.