gatehouse project

Teaching resources for emotional well-being

Centre for
ADOLESCENT
HEALTH

Teaching resources for emotional well-being is part two of the *Gatehouse Project* professional development materials, available through the Centre for Adolescent Health. It is used in conjunction with part one, *Promoting emotional well-being: Team guidelines for whole school change*.

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Preface

Schools have long been used as settings for health education and health promotion, increasingly with a focus on mental health and positive emotional development. Yet schools are themselves environments that have a significant effect on the emotional well-being of those within them. Connectedness to school has been identified as protective against a range of adverse health and education outcomes for young people. The Centre for Adolescent Health's Gatehouse Project is a school-based primary prevention program designed to build the capacity of school communities to address the emotional and mental health needs of young people. It focuses both on promoting positive school environments that enhance a sense of connectedness for students, and on building individual skills and knowledge through the curriculum.

The Gatehouse Project team, established in 1995, has developed, implemented and evaluated a practical and flexible whole school strategy that can be adapted for individual school and systems contexts.

The strategy utilises a conceptual framework that emphasises the importance of a sense of positive connection with teachers, peers and learning for student well-being. It therefore locates mental health promotion within the core business of the school: connectedness to school and engagement with learning. The project has identified three priority areas for action: building a sense of **security** and trust; enhancing skills and opportunities for **communication** and social connectedness; and building a sense of **positive regard** through valued participation in school life.

The Gatehouse Project provides a whole school strategy, co-ordinated by a broadly representative Adolescent Health Team, drawn from the school community. Recognising that our health and well-being is affected not only by our own decisions and actions, but also by our interactions with others within the context in which we find ourselves, it includes both individual-focused and environment-focused components. Drawing on the Health Promoting Schools framework, the strategy seeks to support schools to make changes in social and learning environments, introduce relevant and important skills through the curriculum, and strengthen the structures and processes that promote links between schools and their communities.

Team guidelines assist schools to plan, implement and evaluate a whole school strategy to reduce risk factors and enhance protective factors that affect student health and educational outcomes. Teaching resources provide teachers with teaching and learning strategies for working with students as individuals and in classes and small groups.

Evaluation of the Gatehouse Project has demonstrated effects of health and educational significance, and experience in implementing the strategy is now extensive. These materials have been used in a range of secondary schools in Victoria and New South Wales across government, Catholic, and independent systems.

Derived from the Gatehouse Project's work with school communities, the following components are now available for broader use in schools. Each is designed to be accompanied by professional development and training.

- The *Gatehouse Project: Promoting Emotional Well-being: Team Guidelines for Whole School Change* leads school teams through a five-stage process to

examine policies, programs and practices in the school, and address identified issues within a whole school approach.

- The *Gatehouse Project: Teaching Resources for Emotional Well-being* provides curriculum materials designed to accompany the team guidelines. The *Resources* use both environment-focused and individual-focused approaches, assisting teachers to explore teaching and learning strategies that develop positive classroom climates, and assist young people in dealing with difficult feelings and situations.

- The *Gatehouse Project Adolescent Health Survey* is designed to provide schools with a profile of their social and learning environment as perceived by students.

Further details can be found on the *Gatehouse Project Website*, which also provides information on project research and development, research findings, professional development options, and links to our other publications and related projects (www.gatehouseproject.com).

Introduction

Teaching Resources for Emotional Well-being forms the second stage of the *Gatehouse Project* training materials for teachers. These resources complement the whole-school approach outlined in *Promoting Emotional Well-being: Team Guidelines for Whole School Change*, which is the first stage of the professional development materials. Whilst *Team Guidelines* addresses policies, programs and practices at the level of the whole school and its links with community, *Teaching Resources* addresses teaching and learning at the classroom level.

Teaching and learning in the classroom occurs both formally, through planned activities, and informally, through relationships, interactions and experiences. *Teaching Resources* is therefore designed to promote emotional well-being of young people both through the **context** of the classroom and the **content** of the curriculum (see figure 1).

Context
Through context, we focus on the environment of the classroom:
- highlighting the classroom and the relationships within it as a critical environment impacting on the connectedness of young people to school and thereby on their academic and health outcomes
- providing strategies for promoting connectedness through enhancing security, communication and positive regard in these classroom environments.

Content
Through content, we focus on the individual:
- recognising that individuals need opportunities to develop specific skills and understandings for managing difficult emotions in response to the everyday challenges of life
- providing activities that enhance these skills and understandings
- acknowledging the crucial health promoting role of teachers, both in formal teaching and in everyday interactions with students.

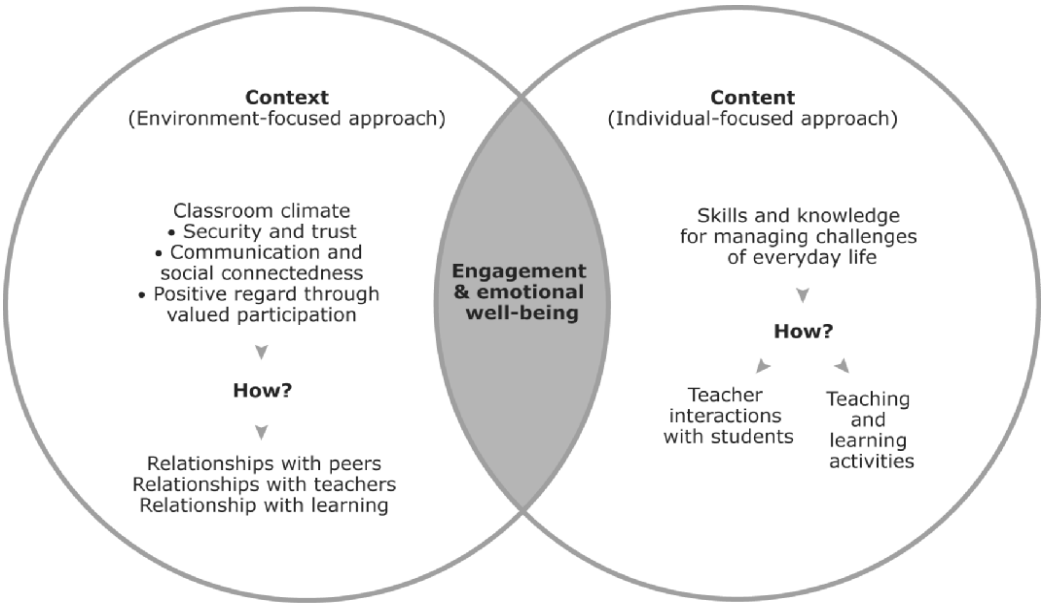


Figure 1: Framework for teaching and learning for emotional well-being in the classroom

Teaching resources for emotional well-being are in 3 parts.

PART ONE: Teaching for emotional well-being

Part one provides the essential foundations of the *Teaching Resources* from which teachers can construct their own approach to teaching for emotional well-being. It provides:

- the rationale for this work in schools, including a description of links between students' experiences in the classroom and their well-being
- the Gatehouse Project's framework for promoting engagement and emotional well-being through the context of the classroom and content aimed specifically at building student skills and knowledge
- foundation principles and practical strategies for enhancing classroom climate, working with individual students and integrating this approach into existing curriculum.

PART TWO: Teaching and learning units

Part two provides six theme-based units containing activities that can be taught as a sequential program or from which activities can be selected to complement existing programs. Each unit includes a description of purpose, key messages, student outcomes, materials required, and step-by-step outlines of activities. The units are:

1. **Classroom connections**
2. **Belonging**
3. **What if …?**
4. **Ups and downs**
5. **Trust**
6. **Expectations**

PART THREE: More about teaching and learning

Part three provides teachers with materials on a range of issues that arise when teaching for engagement and emotional well-being. As well as providing information for individual teachers, these materials can be used to stimulate discussions about professional practice between teachers in Key Learning Areas, teaching teams, induction programs for new teachers, pastoral care/student support groups or school-community working groups. It includes information on depression in adolescence, diversity in the classroom, gender, bullying and harassment, classroom organisation and group dynamics, dealing with disclosure, facilitating conversations in the classroom, using trigger resources, using class texts, using journals and personal writing and processing group activities.

PART ONE

Teaching for emotional well-being

Emotional Well-being

The Gatehouse Project team adopted the promotion of 'emotional well-being' as a project goal in 1997. We used this term to refer not only to the absence of emotional problems, but also to the capacity of individuals to deal effectively with the everyday challenges of life. This view acknowledges that we all face challenges in life, and that both our individual reactions, and the social context in which we live will have a major influence on the ultimate effects on us.

Individual reactions that enable us to move forward are promoted by understanding the relationship between thinking and feeling, as well as by acquiring strategies that help us to deal with difficult situations and feelings. Emotional well-being is not simply a matter of individuals managing their emotions, however it is also influenced by environmental factors. School based research from the Gatehouse Project and elsewhere, shows a marked association between a young person's perception of a secure and supportive social environment and emotional well-being (Glover et al. 1998; Resnick et al. 1997 & Rutter et al. 1979). To promote emotional well-being, schools need to develop such environments, and within them, teach skills and knowledge for dealing with difficult situations and emotions.

Why teach for emotional well-being?

A young person's sense of social connectedness can have a direct impact on emotional well-being and health (Glover et al. 1998). Resnick and associates (1997) have found that a sense of belonging, to both family and school, is a major protective factor against health risk behaviours in young people. They also found that what matters most for young adolescents is a school environment in which they feel they are treated fairly, are close to others, and are part of the school. If the time spent within the school environment is associated with a sense of security, feelings of belonging, and being positively regarded, both educational and health outcomes are likely to be enhanced (Glover et al. 1998). It follows that the role of the teacher is crucial in providing a key point of connectedness to school.

Schools are environments where health and well-being needs of students can be located within the core business of teaching and learning. Adolescence is a time when young people are learning about themselves: who they are, and where they fit within their environments. The journey of discovery can be complex. Part of the complexity is the diversity of background and experiences young people bring to the school, and indeed, to the classroom.

This diversity encompasses cultural and family backgrounds, gender, sexuality, geographic location, socio-economic background, cognitive ability and life experiences. In addition, these experiences are set against the backdrop of a rapidly changing world. Young people today are more likely to experience many changing connections to others throughout their lives in jobs, relationships and places of residence. In this context, the International Commission on Education for the 21st Century has identified four pillars as the foundations of education:

- learning to know
- learning to do
- learning to be
- learning to live together.

(Jacques Delors 1996, *Learning: The treasure within*, UNESCO)

While ‘learning to know’ and ‘learning to do’ have been long recognised as core business of schools, increasingly ‘learning to be’ and ‘learning to live together’ are recognised as core business, as they are vital to the health and well-being of young people and their ability to engage with learning.

Learning to be and learning to live together

Adolescence is a stage in life for which there is no one typical experience. However, there are some experiences that are commonly shared as young people move from childhood towards adulthood. These experiences take place in a variety of social and cultural contexts, and can create challenges for young people who have the potential for both positive and negative outcomes. Questions such as, ‘Where do I fit in?’ and ‘Where am I going?’ are common in this period in which there are many choices and first time experiences. Common concerns include:

- new situations
- new and different relationships with parents/guardians, siblings, teachers and friends
- appearance
- sexuality
- money
- our expectations of self and others
- others’ expectations of us
- managing school work
- managing demands of part time employment.

How these experiences occur, are perceived and dealt with by the young person and others. The context in which they occur, will impact on the emotional well-being of the young person. For some young people, this process will result in considerable emotional distress, including anger, anxiety and unhappiness. Teachers are often well positioned to assist students to negotiate the choices, and to understand and respond to everyday challenges in helpful ways.

Gatehouse Project Teaching Resources

These teaching resources provide teachers in the classroom with strategies to help students develop and refine an understanding of common challenges and stresses experienced by most adolescents. While exploring a range of emotional reactions to these, the materials aim to extend young people's repertoire of cognitive and social skills for dealing with these challenges. The resources aim to enhance recognised protective factors for health and emotional well-being.

Risk and protective factors: A focus on prevention

A primary feature of the Gatehouse Project intervention strategy is to focus on prevention. Having worked through the *Team guidelines for whole school change*, which focus on the whole school and school community partnerships, including reviewing school policies, programs and practices, the school is then in a position to recognise and identify local risk and protective factors that are associated with depressive symptoms, modifiable and common to many health problems and behaviours. The next stage of the operational framework is to focus on the classroom environment, and to implement and apply strategies to reduce risk factors and increase protective factors for emotional well-being, as demonstrated below:

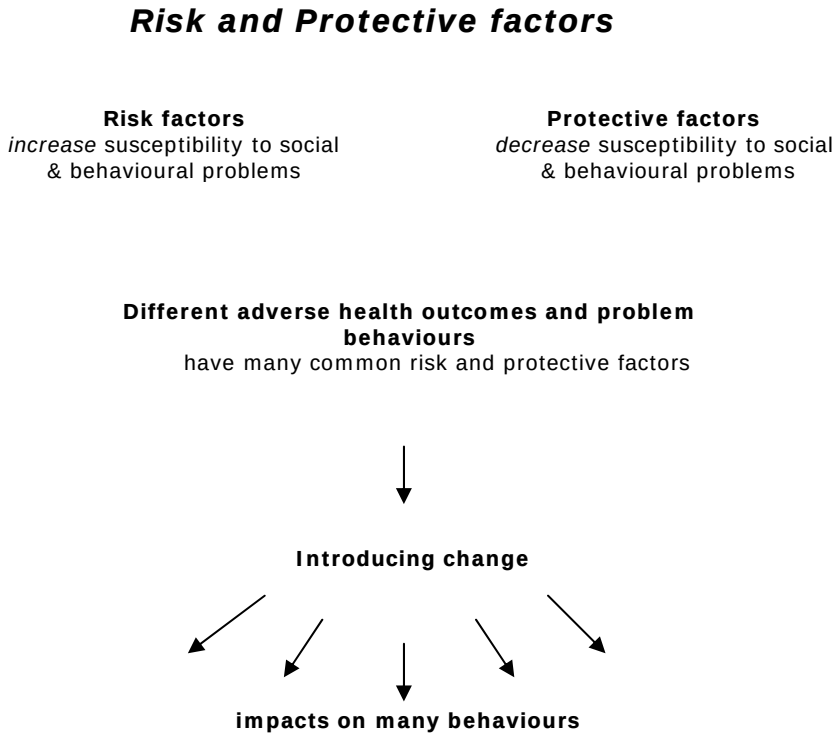


Figure 2: Risk and protective factors

Risk Factors

Risk factors in the classroom environment include bullying, victimisation, disengagement, exclusion, isolation, low literacy and numeracy.

Protective factors

Teaching resources for emotional well-being is based on these protective factors:

- a sense of security, communication and positive regard in relation to peers, teachers and learning
- individual skills and knowledge for managing challenges of everyday life.

Teaching and learning for emotional well-being: Context and content

In these resources, classroom strategies for reducing risk factors and enhancing protective factors for emotional well-being are based on a broad conceptualisation of curriculum, as explained by Grundy:

We better understand what the curriculum of schooling is if we perceive it to be not an artefact … which is, in turn transferred to students, but that … which is produced through the interaction between … teacher, students, subject matter and milieu (Grundy 1994, p.10).

The role of the teacher

These teaching resources recognise the vital importance of teacher-student relationships and what students report about what makes 'good teaching' (Slade 2001). The message from students is that it's not only the content of teaching and learning that is important, but how content is taught and the context within which it is taught that are equally important factors in promoting emotional well-being and an environment conducive to learning and health (Butler et al. 1999, p.13). In the school environment teachers are key adults in guiding the emotional well-being of young adolescents. The *Resources* identify three strategies to implement:

- ***Strategy 1 Foster relationships and classroom climate that promote security, communication and positive regard***
  This recognises that the environment itself and relationships within it either support or undermine emotional well-being.

- ***Strategy 2 Teaching and learning activities***
  Through the curriculum we can specifically teach about emotional well-being, and help young people to develop skills that will better equip them to handle the difficult life events and associated feelings that might affect their well-being. Students are introduced to the concepts of exploring, understanding, and applying.

- ***Strategy 3 Interactions with students***
  In interactions with individual students the teacher reinforces strategies 1 and 2 and guides students through their responses to particular situations.

Figure 1, the *Framework for teaching and learning for emotional well-being in the classroom* demonstrates the connections between these strategies.

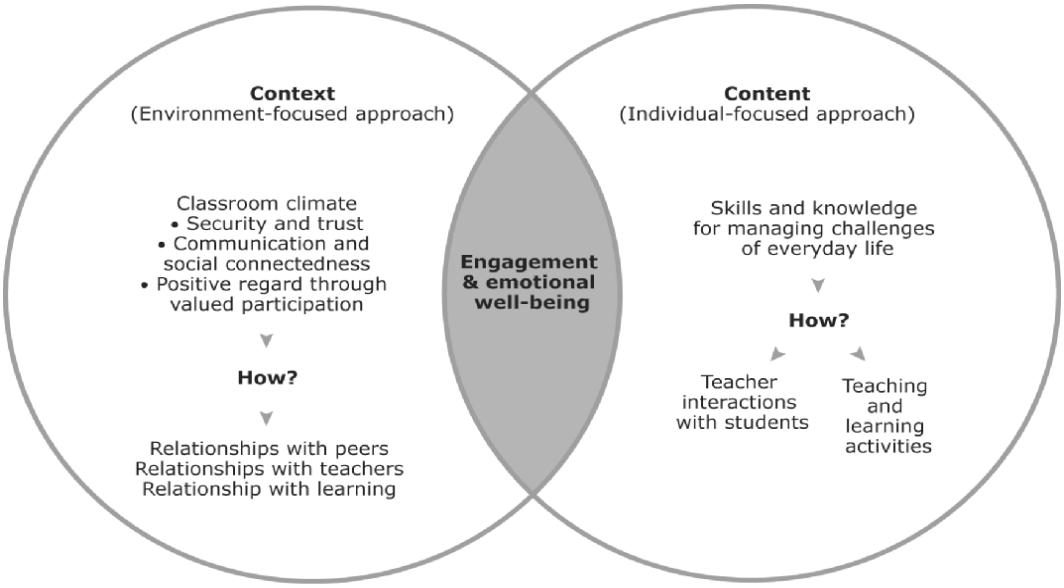


Figure 1: Framework for teaching and learning for emotional well-being in the classroom

Content: thinking, feeling, acting

The teaching and learning resources draw on what we know from psychological practice about what assists young people to manage difficult situations and associated feelings. Such feelings include anxiety, sadness, fear, frustration and anger. These feelings are normal in many situations but are sometimes more intense and threaten to overwhelm us. Emotional responses depend on how we think about a particular situation. Psychological approaches are based primarily on an understanding of the links between thinking, feeling and acting.

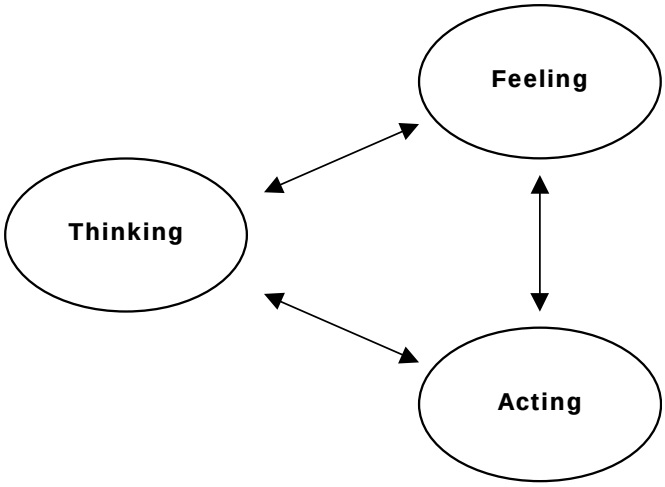


Figure 3: Links between thinking, feeling and acting

Understanding these links can help us to identify and acknowledge a feeling as an understandable response, then consider what we are thinking and telling ourselves about the situation, that contributes to the feeling. Next we can consider if there are other more helpful ways to think about the situation which will lead to more manageable feelings and help us to find useful ways forward. Of course, there are often many complex factors contributing to distressing situations, many of which may be out of our control. Nevertheless, it can be helpful to manage difficult situations and feelings if we are able to remind ourselves that:

- **Everyone's life has ups and downs.**
- **We will experience a range of feelings in response to these.**
- **What we think will influence how we feel.**
- **Sometimes we can change the situation and sometimes we can't, but there are always more helpful and less helpful ways of thinking about it. The way we feel and act will depend on how we think about the situation.**

These are the **key messages** on which the Gatehouse Project *Teaching Resources* are based. Students and teachers have found it helpful to keep returning to these simple messages to regain a sense of perspective in challenging situations. The units in Part 2 explore and reinforce these messages, through activities that:

- recognise and normalise feelings
- create understanding of the links between what you think and how you feel
- help to see common challenging situations from different viewpoints
- use positive self-talk (i.e. reframing) and more helpful thinking in dealing with difficult feelings
- create understanding of the link between how you feel, and what you do.

More about the three strategies

Strategy 1 Foster relationships and classroom climate that promote security, communication and positive regard

Fostering positive relationships and establishing and maintaining a positive classroom climate are critical elements in decreasing risk factors and enhancing protective factors for emotional well-being. For students a positive classroom climate means a secure environment in which they have the skills and opportunities to participate and contribute, and have a sense that their contributions are acknowledged and valued. In a safe and supportive environment students are more likely to feel that they:

- can express a point of view
- are valued members of the group
- will benefit from working as a team
- are comfortable moving out of their established friendship groups to work with other class members
- are able to ask and answer questions about each other's work
- understand the teacher's expectations about behaviour within the classroom
- can respect the confidences of others
- understand the agreed rules for conducting classroom conversations and other activities.

School environments will vary. Each school has its own vision, culture, traditions, programs and priorities. Within this environment teachers have differences in teaching style, expectations of behaviour and favourite teaching and learning strategies. For a variety of reasons, some classes are harder to work with than others, and it is sometimes a difficult process to turn around a negative class (Rogers 1997). There is no single approach to creating a positive and supportive

classroom, however the Gatehouse Project presents a classroom approach that focuses on the following areas:

- classroom organisation
- classroom agreements
- teaching and learning strategies that facilitate classroom discussion
- managing the classroom
- opportunities for one-on-one conversations between the teacher and individual students
- recognition.

The first of the teaching and learning units in Part 2 provides activities for establishing a classroom climate in which students feel secure, connected and valued.

Classroom organisation

Within the constraints of time and space, the organisation of tables and chairs has an impact on the operation of the class. Sometimes moving furniture and rearranging spaces in the classroom is necessary to promote better communication and is a means of practising collaborative group skills:

> *In the past I've been hesitant because I can't be bothered moving the furniture. But then when you've done it (the positioning activity) you can see how valuable it is.*
> Teacher in Gatehouse Project Pilot program, in Patton et al. 1997, p. 47.

Activities such as positioning exercises and values continuums (see Unit 1) will also assist with establishing classroom organisation designed to improve classroom climate.

Give some thought to a classroom organisation that facilitates discussion, role play and other small group activities. Consider a range of different strategies for composition, such as single sex groups, friendship groups or random selection when organising group work. Groups working co-operatively need to have clearly structured tasks in which the role of each group member is identified, understood and undertaken. Further advice is available in Part 3, under 'Group work', page 131.

Some schools are adopting more permanent student work teams such as team small groups (e.g. Glover et al. 1999). These groups are designed to provide:

- a sense of belonging
- a first point of reference for help with class work
- clearly structured tasks
- clearly identified roles for each member.

Classroom agreements

Establishing classroom agreements is a key feature of the Gatehouse Project in the classroom (see Unit I). This process enables students to participate in

developing a set of rules or classroom agreements for their particular class, which then become a fundamental feature of classroom interactions and teaching and learning.

The importance of establishing agreed classroom rules, particularly in relation to holding discussions, is well recognised (see, for example, Lewis 1997, Rogers 1997, Canfield and Siccone 1995):

> *Student ownership of the class agreement has been central to its success. The process of arriving at the agreement took some time, but was time well spent. In the long run, it proved to be a very powerful tool for maintaining a positive classroom climate. On the occasions when students breached the agreement, it was easy to take them aside, ask them to read the agreement aloud, reflect on its contents, who wrote it, and why. The need to control their own behaviour and adhere to the established code became self-evident. It wasn't a matter of being told by a teacher how to behave; it was a matter of following what your peers had already set down and valued. A very different type of 'peer group pressure'.*
> A teacher's view on negotiating a class agreement as part of the Year 8 Gatehouse Project classroom program, in Patton, et al. 1997.

Teachers will have different approaches to setting or negotiating these rules, but it can be helpful to:

- agree collaboratively upon rules or, at least, discuss the implications of teacher-set rules
- frame rules, where possible, in positive terms, e.g. 'Respect the views and feelings of others' rather than 'No put downs'
- discuss importance of confidentiality, and encourage careful consideration before disclosing personal information
- encourage respect for feelings, views and privacy of others
- allow the right to 'pass' when feeling uncomfortable
- emphasise importance of one person talking at a time and of listening to others.

Teaching and learning strategies that facilitate classroom discussion

The importance of using strategies that facilitate participation and engagement has been particularly highlighted by recent work on the middle years of schooling (see for example, Australian Curriculum Studies Association 1996). The use of such strategies is particularly important when dealing with discussion about emotions in the classroom.

Teachers can:

- encourage students to set the parameters for discussions through developing a group agreement
- reflect on the teacher's own role in discussions - the one you take up as well as the one students expect of you
- maintain a 'not knowing stance' in classroom conversations, and help to generate many viewpoints
- value all student contributions and make this known

- use a range of questioning techniques which open up discussion rather than fish for the quick right answer
- recognise that some students may not feel comfortable sharing; explore ways of dealing with this
- recognise that some students may not have an opportunity to speak; explore ways of remedying this
- observe the class dynamics during discussion; make brief notes if possible on who is and who isn't participating.

Managing the classroom

Some classes are harder to manage than others, but when creating a good working environment, it is important to have clear and positive strategies for interacting with others in the classroom. Lewis (1997) talks of the 'pile of goodwill' which teachers can accumulate by taking opportunities to interact with students in less formal ways, showing interest in their students and conveying a sense that the students are valued.

Effective classroom management involves use of clear strategies for planning lessons and monitoring students:

- keep the lesson flowing
- keep students interested - use a variety of teaching and learning strategies and, where possible, make content and assessment part of practical real world activities
- keep students accountable for learning
- use subtle signals such as eye contact to indicate awareness of behaviour, followed up by private conversations, if necessary.

(Lewis 1997)

Opportunities for 'one-on-one' conversations between the teacher and individual students

Communicating 'one-on-one' can add to a student's sense of being valued and to the teacher's 'pile of goodwill'. Of course, it is often difficult to find time for each individual student in a context where large classes are common and there are increasing demands on teacher time. Some schools have reported benefits of reorganising the way teachers and students are grouped. Team teaching, in which teachers spend most of their teaching time with the same group of students, has created more opportunities for interaction with each student and has enabled teachers to know their students better (see, for example, Cumming 1996, p. 35). Use of small groups as work units, when they are working well, can free teacher time for work with individuals.

Recognition

As part of promoting positive regard, look for opportunities to notice student contributions and let students know that their contributions are valued:

- Develop opportunities for students to demonstrate a range of competencies.

- Use, on a daily basis, of simple strategies for positive communication - smiles, simple thank you words or notes, such as 'well done' or similar - increase self- esteem.
- Display student work as often as possible - allow students to select pieces and/or ask students for permission to display their work.
- Encourage students to contribute ideas to discussions, brainstorming and decision-making sessions; acknowledge contributions positively.
- Acknowledge students' contributions to class activities.
- Encourage other students to acknowledge the contribution to discussion and other activities by promoting student discussion and debate about each other's work.
- Provide a range of leadership opportunities for all students over the course of a term/semester.

When evaluating classroom climate, the following checklist is useful:

Checklist for a positive classroom climate

1. Is the physical environment conducive to positive interaction?

2. Do students have the opportunity to work in different groupings - by themselves, in small groups, as a whole class?

3. Do students have the opportunity to take on different roles within the classroom?

4. Do students receive acknowledgment of their contributions to class activities?

5. Are there accepted operating guidelines for behaviour within this class? For behaviour in general? For conducting discussion in particular?

6. Are consequences for breaches of behaviour guidelines clear and well known?

7. Are there accepted and well-known strategies for maintaining and respecting privacy?

8. Are there well known procedures for following up difficult issues that might arise in the classroom?

Strategy 2 Teaching and learning activities

This second strategy provides teachers with a process for integrating the key messages of the Gatehouse Project into the curriculum as a means of decreasing risk factors and enhancing protective factors. The key messages are in three stages: **exploring**, **understanding** and **applying**. Part 2 of *Teaching Resources* provides teachers with six units of work for integrating the key messages into the curriculum, however teachers can use the process outlined in the chart below to help with integrating the key messages into existing curricula.

When working through the stages it is necessary to avoid focusing on individual and existing personal experiences of students, and, equally, to locate

opportunities to examine common experiences that cause difficult feelings. Using set texts of an historical, health or literary nature, viewing films and videos, listening to contemporary songs, exploring popular culture through magazines, and discussing issues in the media, are examples of ways to access the challenges, problems or issues in the common experiences confronting young people. Issues and emotions to work through with students include:

- friendship
- unhappiness
- anger
- family relationships
- sexuality and relationships
- alcohol and drug education.

The three stages of teaching and learning reflect the key messages as follows:

Three stages	Key messages
Exploring common experiences and emotional responses to them	• **Everyone's life has ups and downs.** • **We will experience a range of feelings in response to these.**
Understanding links between thinking and feeling	• **What we think will influence how we feel.**
Applying strategies for dealing with difficult emotions and moving forward	• **Sometimes we can change the situation and sometimes we can't, but there are always more helpful and less helpful ways of thinking about it. The way we feel and act will depend on how we think about the situation.**

In selecting activities for use with classes, it is important that teachers include ones that address all three stages. Practising helpful ways of thinking and acting assists students to gain some control over their emotional responses.

Exploring

As shown in the chart above, this stage of teaching and learning explores the common experiences of students and their emotional responses to them. Students have an opportunity within the classroom to identify and explore common feelings and responses to everyday situations. By using curriculum resources students can practise:

- looking for multiple viewpoints in a range of situations
- exploring the factors that influence viewpoints and affect feelings
- exploring the impact of contradictory and competing messages and expectations that can cause anxiety.

This enables students to discuss and understand that everyone's life has challenges, and that a range of feelings will be experienced in response to these. While students will inevitably draw on their own experiences, the resources encourage the exploration of situations and feelings through other people's stories and experiences. Teachers are encouraged to locate, in existing curricula, trigger resources that allow students to practise strategies of exploring. It is important to note that the situations chosen are simple everyday ones. Practice at dealing with little problems can be used to develop patterns of thinking and acting that can be applied to more difficult circumstances. In each of the units in Part 2 activities are available across a range of themes. These include, *Classroom connections*, *Belonging*, *What if …?*, *Ups and downs*, *Trust* and *Expectations*.

Understanding

An important feature of the Gatehouse Project's individual-focused component is to equip students with strategies for understanding that what they are thinking about a situation influences how they are feeling. The links between these are often implied or assumed, therefore understanding them, and their background influences, provides the knowledge to bring about change in their thinking. In the teaching and learning units, developing this understanding has a particular focus in Units 3 and 4.

Applying

In this stage of teaching and learning students apply what they have learnt about changing thinking and feeling, to creating alternative and positive actions. Part of their learning involves recognising that there are some situations that they can't change, but they can change the way they respond to these. *The Slippery Slope of Unhelpful Thinking* (See blackline master in Unit 4, *Ups and downs*) below, shows how negative thoughts, feelings and actions can result from a negative event.

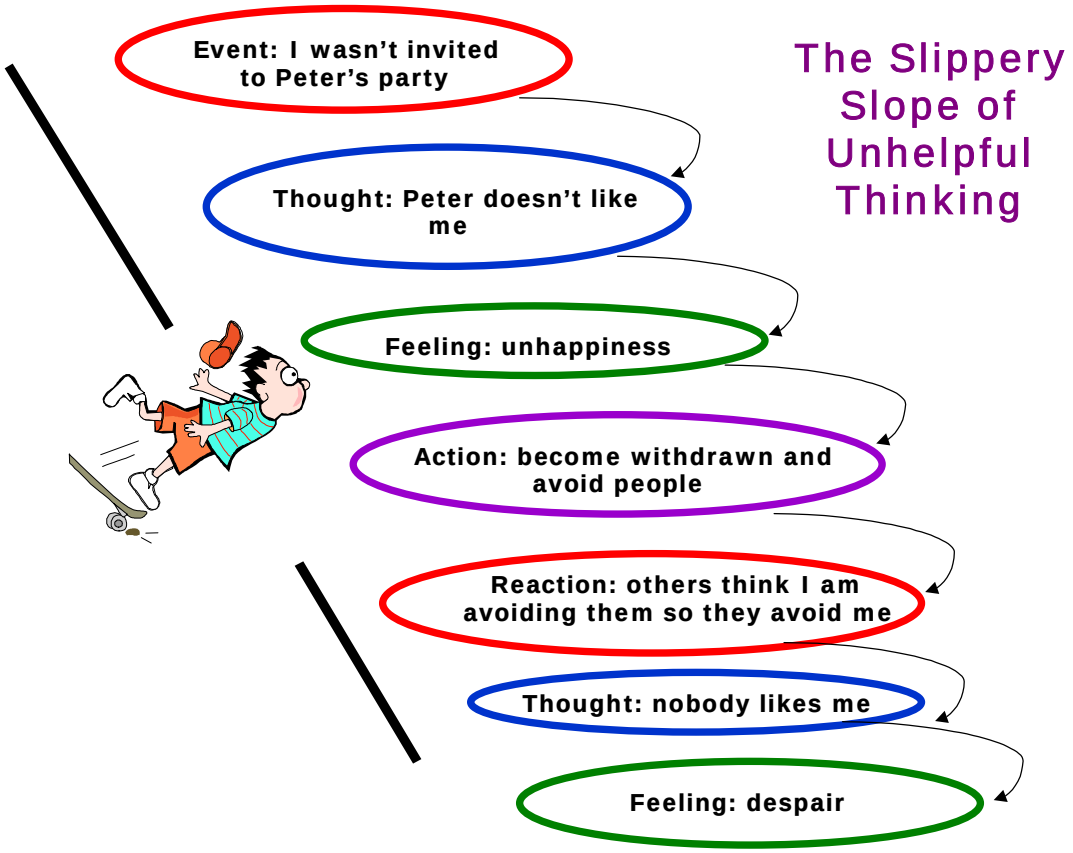


Figure 4: The Slippery Slope of Unhelpful Thinking

The Gatehouse Project materials focus on re-thinking this cycle to lead to a more positive outcome. Reframing, or positive 'self-talk', assists students to interrupt the negative cycle shown above to bring about a change to the way they think and feel about a situation. It promotes a more lateral approach to thinking. For example, a more positive approach to, 'I wasn't invited to Peter's party' is, 'Peter knows I play basketball on Fridays', or 'Peter is having a party for his friends from his old school'. Figure 4, *Stopping the slide*, shows the process of re-thinking.

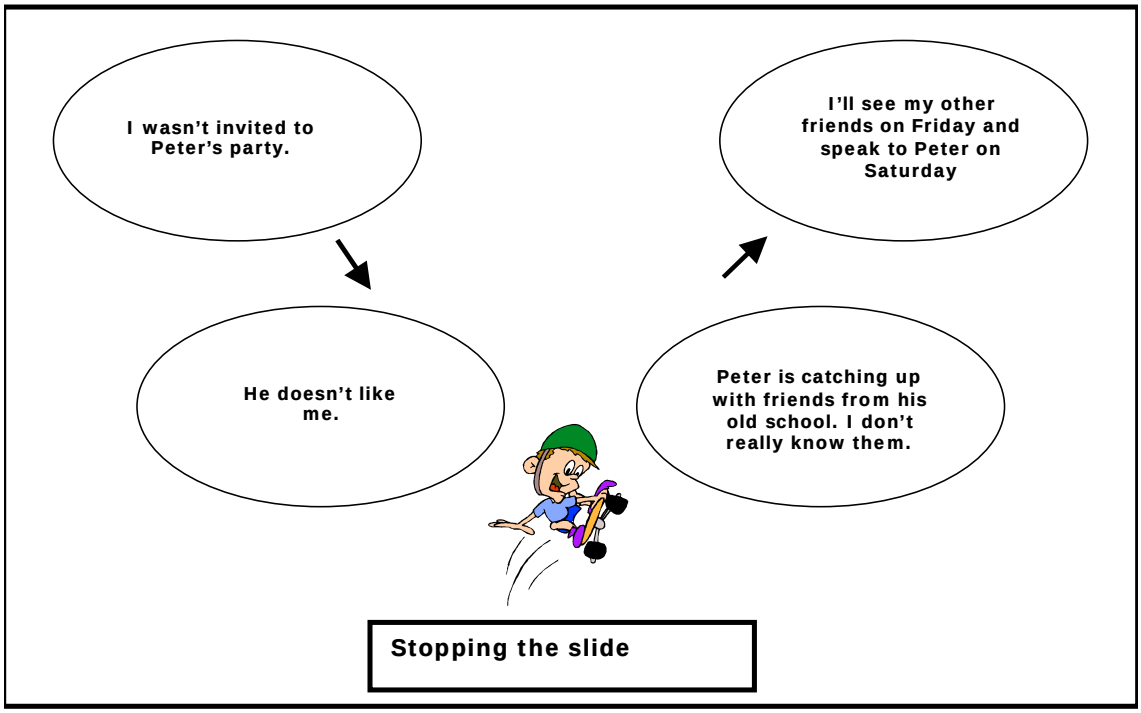


Figure 5: Stopping the slide

Sometimes there will be parties to which a student doesn't receive an invitation, and other times others won't receive an invitation. How the student thinks about that will shape behaviour. Students who may feel hurt at what appears to be rejection, are sometimes advised by others to 'get over it'. When in distressing situations this is often easier said than done. The teaching and learning units give students opportunities to practise ways of thinking and feeling that enable movement forward, rather than experiencing self-doubt and despair.

Strategy 3 Interactions with students

In everyday interactions with individual students, both within and outside the classroom, teachers can reinforce strategies 1 and 2, and guide students to consider positive possibilities in their more common thoughts, feelings and actions. When students are aware of the links between events, thoughts, feelings and actions they are equipped with knowledge that helps to prevent themselves from slipping down the slope of unhelpful thinking (p.23). While it is outside the role of the classroom teacher to function as a psychotherapist, being alert to underlying negative thinking can enable teachers to help students interrupt unhelpful thinking and find positive ways forward.

Teachers are in a position to help students identify and challenge types of thinking/underlying beliefs evident in language and behaviour that can lead to feelings of unhappiness, anxiety and anger. Examples of unhelpful beliefs and more helpful beliefs are:

Unhelpful belief	Helpful belief
• 'It's awful if others don't like me.'	• 'There are people who will like me, and others who won't.'
• 'I'm bad if I make a mistake.'	• 'I can learn from my mistakes.'
• 'Everything should go my way, and I should always get what I want.'	• 'I don't like it when things don't go my way, but there's always next time.'
• 'Things should come easily for me.'	• 'Not everything will come easily for me.'
• 'I must win.'	• 'It's a good feeling when I win, but there will be times when I won't.'
• 'I shouldn't have to wait for anything.'	• 'I don't like waiting, but sometimes I have to.'
• 'My parents made me angry.'	• 'I can't change my parents' actions, but I can change the way I react.'
• 'I can't help the way I am.'	• 'I can help myself feel differently by thinking about this some other way.'

(Adapted from Waters 1982 & Froggatt 1996)

Teachers might see these types of thinking manifested in:

- Challenging behaviour:
  - withdrawal or giving up
  - aggressive or disruptive behaviour
  - undue submissiveness
  - constant complaining.
- Verbal or written language which can catastrophise, personalise, or over-generalise:
  - 'It's a disaster.'
  - 'It's not fair that … '
  - 'I'm hopeless!'
  - 'I'll never be able to … '.

Responding to challenging behaviour and negative language can be stressful in the classroom context. As well as understanding the underlying thinking, it is helpful for teachers to have an established process for working through issues with students. The following checklist outlines a sequence of simple steps teachers can and do use when working with individual students experiencing difficulty. **It is important to remember that when students are in more difficult situations than can be managed in the classroom context, the teacher needs to know school procedures for internal and external referral.**

Checklist for working with individual students:

- Invite a student to talk, if concerned either about remarks made in class or in written work, e.g. 'I noticed that you said/wrote that … and I was wondering if you would like to discuss it further?'. It is important not to coerce or force the student to discuss. It is also important not to be judgemental.

- Actively listen to what the student has to say and acknowledge the way they are feeling.

- Show genuine interest through body language, eye contact, encouraging comments, e.g. 'OK.' … 'What else?' … 'And then … ' … 'Is there anything else you want to say?' etc.

- Use open questions (ones that cannot be answered with yes or no) to show that you are listening and to help the student continue (see Kotzman 1995).

- Help the students break the problem into manageable parts, e.g. 'What are the main things that are bothering you?' … 'Are there any that we can deal with simply and quickly?' … 'Let's take the others one at a time'.

- Help to challenge over-generalising language such as, 'They/It always … '. Respond with, 'Can you think of times when this isn't/wasn't the case?'

- Help to challenge catastrophising such as, 'It's a disaster!' … 'I'll fail!'. Respond with, 'What is the worst thing that can happen?' … 'Is that likely?' … 'Is there anything you can do to avoid this happening?'.

- Encourage the student to reassess the 'facts', e.g. 'What makes you think/say/believe that?'.

- Help the student to 'reframe' their interpretation of the situation, e.g. 'Maybe there's another way of looking at this? Can you think of any?'.

- Help the student to look for alternatives for action, e.g. 'Let's make a list of what you could do.'

- Encourage the student to access support. At the same time let them know that you consider them competent, e.g. 'Are you OK to handle this?' … 'Would you like some help to handle this?' … 'Do you have someone to talk to about this?'.

- Refer students to other sources of help, beginning with home and school. Can the student involve parents/guardians? Is there a relative or close friend who can support him/her? Who are the people in the school who can help? - Student Services Co-ordinator, Counsellor, Chaplain or the Year Level Co-ordinator may be the appropriate person to follow up with the student and link them to other sources of help.

PART 2

Teaching and learning units

Introduction

Gatehouse Project: Teaching and Learning Units aims to assist students to understand the challenges and stresses they experience, to explore the range of emotional reactions to them, and to apply strategies for dealing with them in an everyday context.

Its content draws on our knowledge of psychological interventions and is designed to help young people to deal with difficult feelings that may arise in adverse situations. The six units are founded on curriculum trials and research from the Centre for Adolescent Health's Gatehouse Project, a longitudinal study into health and emotional well-being of students in secondary schools. The units have been reviewed progressively and revised, based on evaluation experiences and feedback from teachers and students.

As outlined below, the units are theme-based and explore feelings such as anxiety, unhappiness and anger. The content is a practical teacher resource designed for classroom use.

Unit 1: Classroom connections
Establishing respectful relationships and encouraging participation and recognition in the classroom.

Unit 2: Belonging
Exploring ways of belonging.

Unit 3: What if …?
Managing anxiety.

Unit 4: Ups and downs
Recognising that all our lives have ups and downs, and exploring ways to deal with these.

Unit 5: Trust
Understanding the value and support of trusting relationships.

Unit 6: Expectations
Exploring how people respond to, and are affected by others' expectations.

Five strategies for managing difficult feelings

The following five strategies are used throughout the units to reinforce the key messages (see Part One of these resources, pages 15-16 & 21) of the Gatehouse Project. These strategies have been identified as useful for managing difficult feelings:

1. Recognise and normalise feelings.
2. Create understanding of the links between what you think and how you feel.
3. Help to see common challenging situations from different viewpoints.
4. Use positive self-talk (i.e. reframing) and more helpful thinking in dealing with difficult feelings.
5. Create understanding of the link between how you feel and what you do.

Key messages

The key messages of the Gatehouse Project are implemented through three stages: **exploring**, **understanding** and **applying** (see page 22). At the beginning of each unit, under the heading of **Key messages**, is a theme-related list of points showing how the unit is linked to the key messages through these stages. The curriculum-based activities make use of the five strategies (see above) identified as useful for managing difficult feelings. The strategies incorporated into the unit activities are based on an understanding of the links between thinking, feeling and acting (see pages 14-15). Being aware of these links enables students to address issues that impact on health and emotional well-being.

When working through each unit, it is important for teachers to select activities which cover the whole process of exploring, understanding and applying. Students will therefore be able to practise the sequence of identifying areas of concern, moving through the process for dealing with them, and making positive steps forward.

Using the units

Unit one, *Classroom Connections*, is a core unit that needs to be worked through before introducing the other units. It is an essential component in establishing the supportive classroom environment that is fundamental to achieving the outcomes of units two to six.

Once a class has been introduced to the concepts of the classroom as a place where students feel secure and connected, can communicate freely, and are positively regarded, teachers can then move on to another unit. It is possible to select the next unit from any of units two to six. Staff may start with a unit that suits the school's specific curriculum needs at a point in time, or select one that is appropriate to a class at a particular time. Activities in each unit can be selected to suit the range and diversity of students in individual classrooms. While the units are particularly appropriate to English, SOSE and Health Frameworks, they can be adapted to suit other curriculum areas, or pastoral care programs.

In this unit students will have the opportunity to, a heading located at the beginning of each unit, shows the range of activities and strategies that students can engage in throughout the unit. This will be particularly useful for teachers when selecting material appropriate to student needs.

The structure of the units

Each of the teaching and learning units presents a range of topics focusing on a theme. Each new topic contains one or more activities accompanied by questions that assist in addressing the issues raised. In some instances additional activities enable the class to consider a topic in more depth. The activities make use of materials that are listed at the beginning of each unit. Within each individual activity, teachers will find the main materials referred to in bold type at the points where they are required. Some of the materials are blackline masters that are located at the end of each topic and can be photocopied by teachers.

Where appropriate, **Words of caution** have been inserted. These highlight content that may raise issues for some students. The insertions provide advice on handling the material.

Questions

Questions used in the activities fall into two categories. They either focus on the content and provide a means of working through the issues raised, or allow for reflection on the process.

What, *Why*, *So What* and *Now What* questions present a problem-solving approach that enables students to unravel causes and effects, and to generate new approaches to thinking and acting in response to an event, problem, or circumstance (Labonte 1997). This structure is used in a range of activities throughout the units, although not exclusively. It is a useful reinforcement technique for responding to everyday challenges, and is an explicit teaching and learning strategy of the *Gatehouse Project*.

What questions are comprehension questions that reveal the process, or thinking and action taken to bring about a resolution or change. Examples include, What did the group do when …? or, What methods did the group use to solve the problem of …? or What is going on here? How questions such as, How did the group come to a decision about …? fall within this comprehension range.

Why questions invite reasons. They consider causes and conditions that create difficulties in relationships and situations. They provide the rationale for improving circumstances and help in developing problem-solving skills. Examples include, Why did this happen? Why did the character think/feel/act this way? Why are some roles in group work harder to take on than others?

So what questions are exploratory questions. They consider the range of possibilities that lead to solutions and analyse their effectiveness. Examples include, Which strategies worked best? What made the problem-solving technique work? and, How did it feel to be left out of the decision-making process?

Now what questions open the way to move forward. Based on the experience of a situation, these questions enable students to examine what has happened, to discard negative aspects, and to extract valuable aspects that can be applied in new circumstances. Examples include, Now what have we learnt in this activity that we can apply when we …? and, Now what could we do to improve our teamwork based on what we have learnt in this activity?

Further information on questioning techniques is available in Part 3 under ‘Group work’, ‘Facilitating conversations in the classroom’, and ‘Using trigger resources’.

Unit 1 Classroom connections

Classroom connections is an introductory set of activities to be used at the beginning of a year or term, or when establishing guidelines to achieve a sense of connectedness in a new class. Its implementation will establish interaction and classroom climate as prerequisites for working as a class on issues related to emotional well-being. Although the activities are sequential, it is possible to select, from within, and at any stage during the school year, those strategies that are most suited to a particular classroom. The main purpose in this unit is to establish processes and procedures that promote the classroom as:

- a safe and secure place
- a place where everyone can communicate freely and feel connected to the group
- a place where everyone knows they are positively regarded.

Key messages

- **Exploring:** In the classroom we experience ups and downs and a range of feelings.
- **Understanding:** Our feelings are influenced by how we think and feel about situations, other people and ourselves in the classroom.
- **Applying:** We often can't choose the people in our class, but there are helpful strategies for thinking about and working with others, which will help us feel more secure and valued as individuals, and connected as a group.

In this unit students will have the opportunity to:

- listen to others and respond constructively
- understand that there are similarities and differences in people
- consider and contribute alternative ideas or viewpoints
- develop strategies for working co-operatively in activities and discussion groups
- express ideas and opinions co-operatively and respectfully.

Topics

Respect
Establishing classroom agreements
People Hunt
Positioning
Photolanguage
Journals and personal writing
Working as a team

Materials

Respect
- A figure (large enough for the class to see) cutout of newspaper or butcher's paper. A blackline master: *Marla cutout* is provided as a model.

Establishing classroom agreements
- Butcher's paper.
- Blackline master: *Classroom Agreement*.

People Hunt
- Blackline masters: *People Hunt 1 & 2.*

Positioning
- A3 cards with AGREE, DISAGREE, etc. written on them.

Photolanguage
- *Photolanguage* kit or visual images collected from magazines.

Journals and personal writing
- An episode of *The Simpsons* or appropriate equivalent (available from a video store).

Working as a team
- Photographs of people working as teams.

Respect

Feeling secure is important for everybody. A learning environment can present fears and anxieties. Having a positive sense of self, and comfort in a learning environment is important. It is also important to understand the impact of our words and actions on others, and the effect of our own thinking about daily events on our own feelings and actions. The following activity highlights how easy it is for the little things to build up to become big things. It is about showing respect and is intended to introduce discussion about relationships within the classroom.

Activity: Marla's Story

- Explain how easy it is to hurt people, and how important it is for people to feel accepted and safe in their environments.

- Tell them a story (see example below) of the young person who is much the same age as them, who starts the day feeling quite happy with the world, but as she progresses through the day little bits are chipped away by the things other people say.

- As you tell the story, hold the ***Marla cutout*** **(blackline master)** in front of the class. Each time the character is 'hurt' by the words or actions of others, fold back a section of the figure.

- Choose a male or female character and circumstances as appropriate to your students. It is important that the incidents are simple everyday ones. The point to emphasise is the cumulative effect of the things that happen. Below is an example of a day in the life of Marla.

  Marla woke up, but lay in bed until her sister yelled, 'Get up lazy bones!' (fold a section). She got up and went into the kitchen where her brother said, 'You look awful. What happened to you?' (fold).

  On the way to the bathroom Marla trod on the cat's tail, tripped and fell (fold). Her brother said, 'Try opening your eyes next time' (fold).

  It was a wet day. Marla missed the bus, and had to walk to school (fold). At school she found she had left her homework at home (fold). In her maths class she was asked a question she couldn't answer, and the teacher made her feel silly (double fold).

  At lunchtime her netball team played against the boys. She missed the deciding goal, and the girls lost the game. 'Thanks a lot Marla,' said her friends (double fold).

  By the end of the day all she wanted to do was to go home, so she quickly grabbed her bag before seeing anyone, and headed for the bus (fold).

Questions

Now discuss with the class how it is possible to restore the figure to a whole one again so that Marla can go home feeling happy. Use questions such as:

1. What words in the comments made to Marla might cause her to feel bad?
2. How do you think Marla feels inside? What negative thoughts might she have about the things that happen in her day? How might she think about those things in more helpful ways? If you were her friend, what advice would you give her?
3. Why do you think people in both her home and school environments spoke as they did to Marla? What advice would you give them?

Additional Activity

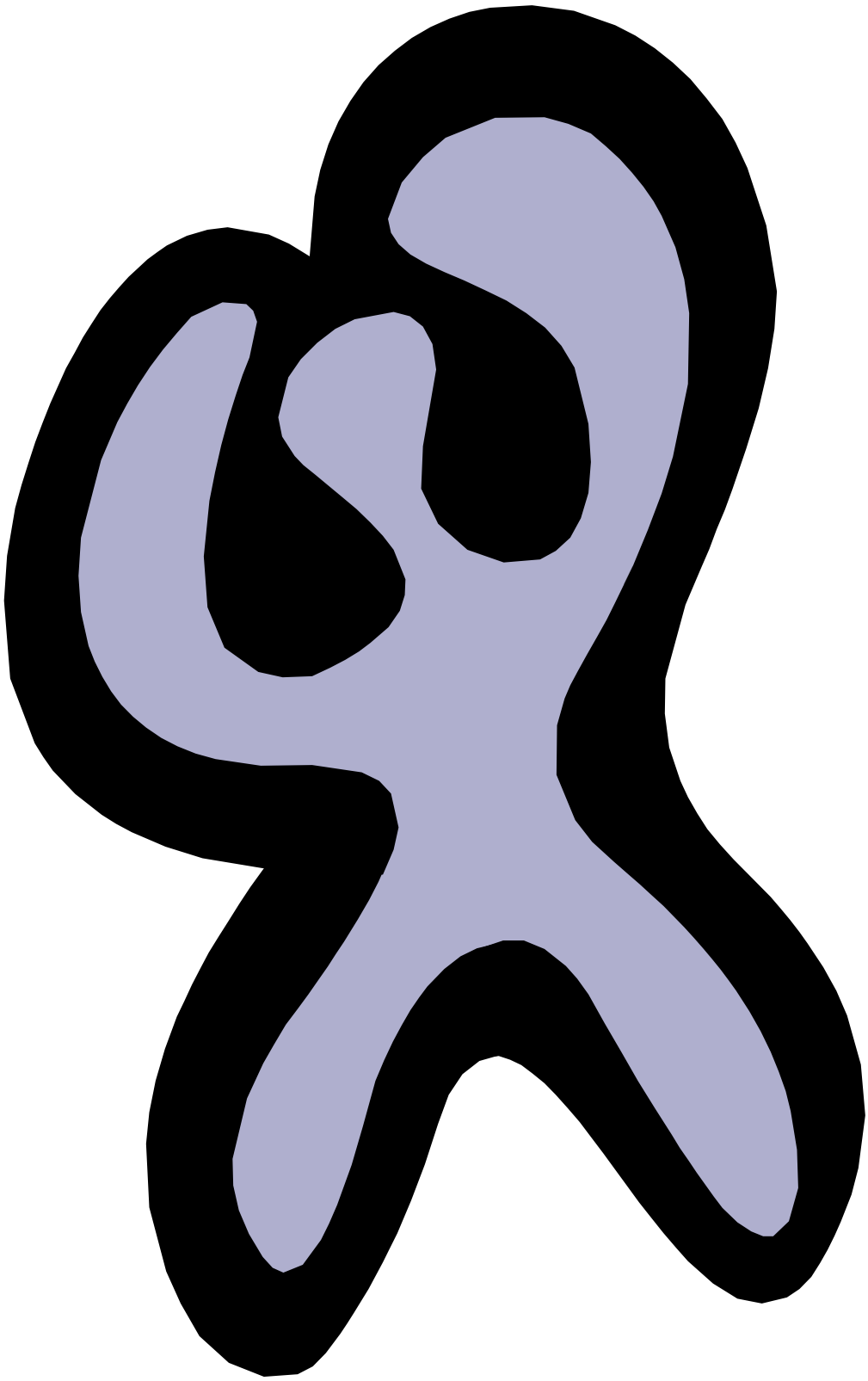
Now, using individual copies of the ***Marla cutout*** ask students to write on one side, words and phrases that cause people to feel bad about themselves. On the other side of the cutout convert these words and phrases into positives that cause people to feel good about themselves. When they are ready, ask students to volunteer their words and phrases to put on the board for others to add to their cutouts. The cutouts can be kept in student workbooks for ready reference and updating.

Questions

1. Was it difficult to convert negative words into positive words?
2. 'That's wicked', 'You're such a dag.' Sometimes we use negative words affectionately. In what circumstances is it okay to use negative words to cause people to feel positive? How do we know if we've gone too far?

Adapted from, Dickinson, P. & Robertson, J. (1997) 'I.A.L.A.C.' activity in *Mental Health Matters: A Health Education Resource for Junior Secondary School*, Mental Health Foundation of New Zealand, New Zealand, pp. 40-42.
(Original source: Sidney Simon's and Merill Harmin's I.A.L.A.C. story in Canfield & Wells, *100 Ways to Enhance Self-Concept in The Classroom*, Prentice Hall, 1976)

Marla cutout



Establishing classroom agreements

The purpose of this activity is to remember, revisit, review or establish some operating principles or classroom management rules. This ensures that everyone can expect the classroom to be a place where they can feel safe and secure, where they can communicate their ideas and opinions freely, and where everyone is respected and valued. For further information on classroom agreements, see Part One of these Teaching Resources (page 17).

Inform students that:

- they will be undertaking different activities to enable them to learn about each other and even more about themselves
- it is important that everyone in the class feels comfortable and that they are listened to and trusted not to make fun of, or 'put down' other people's opinions or situations, but to be supportive of them
- confidentiality is important, and that it is expected that any confidences revealed by students in the classroom, remain in the classroom
- for these lessons to be valuable and enjoyable, it is important that some classroom agreements be established early in a new class. It may simply be a case of revising already established classroom agreements.

Activity: Feeling secure, connected and valued

Use the following questions to discuss with the class the meaning of feeling secure, feeling connected and feeling valued.

Questions

1. What do you think it means to feel 'secure'? Is being secure in a class just about being physically safe?
2. What could 'feeling connected' mean in the classroom? What does communication have to do with this?
3. What are some ways to help others in the class to feel connected?
4. When we feel valued how might we be feeling? How can we show others in the class that they are valued?

Having discussed security, connectedness and feeling valued, use the following steps for students to discuss their own views in groups.

- Organise students into groups of 3 or 4. It may be useful to try a lucky dip of student names to create groups randomly.
- Distribute butcher's paper, 3 per sheets per group. Ask students to write as headings 'feeing secure', 'feeling connected' and 'feeling valued' on their paper.

- Ask students to nominate a chairperson to keep the discussion going, one or two scribes to record their ideas, and a reporter to share their findings with the class. Tell them that this is a shared activity and everyone's ideas are important. (Sharing the roles around helps promote security, connection and value).

- Now spend 5 minutes per heading, brainstorming things which could happen in a class to help them feel secure, connected and valued.

- The reporter tells the class the group's findings.

- The teacher records each group's findings on the board.

- Ask the class to locate the recurring ideas under each heading. Note that these are the sorts of things these students would like to happen in this class. Introduce the idea that groups of people develop rules or agreements to define who they are, and to help keep their group running smoothly.

Activity: Creating a classroom agreement

At this point invite the students to be involved in developing their own classroom agreement. First, discuss with the students their understanding of classroom agreements using the questions below.

Questions

1. What is an agreement?
2. Is it sometimes all right to ignore rules?
3. Why do people sometimes break rules?
4. What is the possible effect on others when rules are broken?

Working in the same groups as for the previous activity students can now work towards developing their agreements.

- Using their three headings, 'feeing secure', 'feeling connected' and 'feeling valued', students use the findings on the board to discuss what might be included in a classroom agreement.

- Students write down at least one rule, or operating principle, under each of the headings. These would be ones they think should be in place to ensure that this classroom is a positive environment for everybody. Tell them to think carefully about how they phrase their rules. Use positive, rather than negative language, e.g. use 'do' rather than 'don't'.

- Have each small group join with another group to share the rules that each group has written.

- Decide on three rules that can be presented to the whole class. Ensure each heading, 'feeling secure', 'feeling

connected', and 'feeling valued' has something written under it. Use butcher's paper for listing their rules.

- Have each newly formed group nominate a person to come to the front of the room with their rules and display and read them to the rest of the class.

- When all nominated students have read their rules, discuss the value of each one. Consider both the merits and the problems of each.

- As a class, agree upon (by voting, negotiating consensus, etc.) no more than five rules for the class to follow. This will become the **Classroom Agreement**.

- Distribute copies of the **blackline master**, ***Classroom Agreement*** and have students copy the agreement onto the sheet.

- Have students sign the back of the agreement.

- The Classroom Agreement can be enlarged to A3 size and laminated for display by the Year Level Co-ordinator, the Student Services Co-ordinator and the Principal.

Questions

1. What problems could arise in our classroom if there are no agreements for classroom behaviour?
2. What could happen if everyone operated in different ways?
3. Now that you've signed the agreement, is everyone happy about these and willing to follow them?
4. What is a possible solution to the problem of someone not following the agreements?

Classroom Agreement

As a member of ..... I understand that in our class the following rules apply to ensure that our classroom is a place where everyone:

- feels safe to express an opinion
- can take risks and be supported by others
- is listened to by everyone
- trusts one another.

The rules are:

1. _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
2. _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
3. _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
4. _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
5. _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

Signed: _____ **Dated:** _____

People Hunt

Often students become very attached to the same group of friends and don't take the opportunity to speak or interact with others in the class. The purpose of this exercise is for students to locate a broader range of people, and to see that they may have things in common with others. It also ensures that everyone is involved in the classroom, rather than just the dominant members of the class.

Activity: People Hunt 1

- Push the furniture to the outer edges of the room and ask students to stand in the centre of the room.
- Have the students work with someone with whom they are used to working.
- Distribute the **blackline master**, ***People Hunt 1***. Direct the students to find people who match the categories outlined on the sheet.
- When all categories have been filled, have the pairs sit in a space and share the information gathered.
- Allow the students about five minutes for sharing, then, still sitting in their pairs, have the whole class consider the following questions:

Questions

Use these questions to explore student experiences through the activity.

1. Was there any difficulty in locating people in your class to fill each category?
2. How did you go about the task of locating other people?
3. What worked and what didn't work when you tried to locate different people?
4. What does this tell you about the people in your age group?
5. Are there any similarities or differences about classmates that surprised you?
6. Refer back to the classroom agreement. Which ones were important for this activity to run smoothly?

Activity: People Hunt 2

- Now have students line up from shortest to tallest or in order of date of birth. Pair off the class from each end until everyone has a person with whom to work. (Ensure that the new partner is different from the first partner.)
- Distribute the **blackline master**, ***People Hunt 2***.
- Have students talk for a few minutes with their new partner to come up with ONE new category - write it down. (Suggestions could be: likes wearing Levi 501s, likes reading horror stories, listens to the same music, lives a long way from school.)

- Repeat the activity as for ***People Hunt 1***.

- Group work can be uncomfortable if members don't work co-operatively. Have the whole class regroup and spend about five minutes discussing the success of the activity as a way into working in groups.

PEOPLE HUNT 1

Work in pairs and find a different person to fit in each of the categories. Write his or her name in the space provided.

Your names: _____and_____

Find two people in your class who:

- were born in the same month as both of you.

_____ _____

- are shorter than both of you

_____ _____

- are taller than both of you

_____ _____

- like the same music as both of you

_____ _____

- like the same food as either or both of you

_____ _____

- read the same things as both of you

_____ _____

- have the same sporting hero as both of you

_____ _____

- like the same television program as both of you

_____ _____

PEOPLE HUNT 2

Work in pairs and find a different person to fit in each of the new categories. Write his or her name in the space provided. Use a different person in each category.

Your names: _____and_____

Find two people in your class who:

- _____ _____
- _____ _____
- _____ _____
- _____ _____
- _____ _____
- _____ _____
- _____ _____
- _____ _____

Positioning

Now that students are beginning to understand that there are similarities and differences in the classroom, they can participate in positioning activities. These activities show that:

- people see things in different ways. These different ways may be the result of gender, age, culture, family structures and so on
- there is a range of views in any group. It is okay to hold a view different from others
- holding a different point of view often requires you to justify that position to others
- you can take up a number of points of view/positions on an issue
- different points of view can often be contradictory.

Activity: Seeing things differently

- Put cards printed with the words AGREE and DISAGREE at either ends of the room. You could use a six point continuum by adding cards with the words, PARTLY AGREE, PARTLY DISAGREE, STRONGLY AGREE, STRONGLY DISAGREE. A good strategy to encourage students to move to a position that best reflects their view is to place the cards along a piece of string or rope stretched along the floor.

- Stand in a position where you can clearly see everyone in the room - perhaps on something a little higher than the students.

- Tell the students that you will read statements and they are to listen to them with their eyes shut. When you say the words, 'You can move now', students are to move to the part of the room which best matches their opinion on the statement. They can open their eyes when moving, but encourage them not to be influenced by other's movements. Remind them that it is okay to have their own opinion, and that there are no right or wrong answers.

- Explain that students will be invited to speak, but ask them to wait to be invited to do so. This gives a number of people a turn to speak. Let students know that it is possible to change their opinion if they are persuaded to do so after hearing another student's comments.

Examples of positioning statements:

- It was much easier being a teenager in my parents' day.
- Friends are more important than family.
- Cloning extinct animals is a good idea.
- The media forces young people to grow up too quickly.
- There are no good Australian shows on television.
- Chocolate is much better than carrot juice.
- Adults should be more aware of children's rights.

Re-read the statement and ask for volunteers to share why they have chosen their positions. For this activity it will be useful to have volunteers whose positions are opposite to one another.

NOTE: It could be useful for students to make up their own statements for this activity.

Questions

1. Can you share with us why you agree/disagree, etc. with the statement?
2. What similarities/differences are there between the reasons people gave for agreeing/disagreeing with the statement? (Did people take the same position, but for different reasons?)
3. Were you hesitant/eager to move to a particular position? Can you explain what you were thinking?
4. How could you explain the diversity of viewpoints in this room?

A word of caution
Provide students with an 'escape route' if they are feeling pressured to make a comment. A simple 'pass', or 'Can you come back to me in a minute?' would do.

Activity: Taking a different position

Part of this activity is for students to understand that the same statement can affect people differently. Who you are, that is your age, your cultural background, your own position (student, parent, occupation) affects the position/point of view that you hold.

Ask the students to imagine that they are one of the people from the list below. Read one of the positioning statements again, then ask them to position themselves at the point in the room that now represents their position. They will need to have a minute to 'think' themselves into the new role.

- an adult of one parent's/guardian's/aunt's/uncle's age
- a person of the opposite gender
- a person who works to support the greening of the environment
- a senior student
- a nutritionist
- a person who works for a television station
- a friend

Questions

1. Consider the statement and your new role. Is your position different this time?
2. If the position is different, what could explain this?
3. If the position is the same, what could explain this?

4. When you took a minute to 'think' yourself into the role, what sorts of things helped you to do this?

Additional Activity

Write the positioning statements and list of roles on the board. Ask students to select one statement and two roles. Ask students to write a dialogue between these two in which they discuss the selected statement. Emphasise that each person has a different position on the subject, and that each is justifying his/her particular position. Give them five minutes thinking time, and fifteen minutes writing time. This could be completed as a homework activity.

NOTE: This activity is a useful prelude to argumentative or expository writing. It is a quick way of determining viewpoints on a range of issues.

Photolanguage

Everyone comes into a class with different experiences in their past and different expectations of the future. Such differences arise from the range of cultural backgrounds; personal histories arising out of events in the past; family structures and life experiences. Photographs or images can be used as prompts for discussion of different perspectives. Participants can be asked to choose an image that represents a situation, an emotion, a group of people, or themselves. Descriptive language often flows more easily with visual prompts than it might when presented with an abstract idea for discussion. This activity is particularly useful for work with participants who are shy, lacking in confidence, or uncomfortable expressing personal opinions. In this activity photographic images are used to:

- demonstrate that people ascribe different meanings to the same things; not everyone holds the same view, or interprets things in the same manner; there are different ways of 'seeing'
- provide students with opportunities for personal expression
- stimulate connections between intellectual reflection and personal experience.

Activity: Different ways of seeing

- Arrange about 20 photographs on the floor or on tables. Make sure the photos are facing the students – a circular arrangement is helpful. Invite the students to walk around the photographs and silently select one or two photographs in response to one of the following:
    - represents security
    - represents feeling connected or communicating
    - represents being valued or positively regarded
    - represents what life is like for young people your age, or your parents' age, or your grandparents' age
    - represents how you feel about your most favourite subject.

- Invite different students to share with the group their reason for choosing the photo. Suggest an introductory phrase such as, 'I chose this photo because ....'. Ask others for contributions about the same photo. (Try to remain in a facilitating role, rather than participating by agreeing or disagreeing with comments.)

- In summing up, draw attention to the diversity of views and interpretations, similarities and differences.

- A further activity could be to ask students to select a photograph that represents how they think a parent / guardian / older friend / grandparent would respond to one of the criteria they have selected.

A word of caution
Focus on one or two of the representations. Don't attempt them all. One or more could be used at the beginning of, or during each of a series of lessons.

If it is appropriate for all students to have the opportunity to discuss their choice it will probably need a double session because it is important to finish the activity with the questions below.

Questions

1. Why do different images trigger different thoughts and feelings in people?
2. Did anyone consider interpreting the image in a similar way to....? Did anyone have a different interpretation of that image?
3. In what way can listening to others help you to understand other points of view?

Additional Activity

Ask students to write a brief (one or two paragraphs) account of a time when it was important to understand that people see things differently. The account may be fact or fiction.

Journals and personal writing

Journals and other forms of personal writing have long been used in English and other subjects to enable students to write about themselves and to explore their feelings. There are different types of journals, some of which are confidential reflections on daily events, while others have a public purpose. The main value of a journal, log or diary, is that it records feelings, events, changes, etc. over a period of time. For further advice on journals and personal writing, see J*ournals and personal writing,* page . The purpose of this activity is to:

- familiarise students with forms of personal writing
- demonstrate to students the usefulness of personal reflective writing.

Writing for confidentiality

Confidentiality is important. The issues of trust and confidence should already have been discussed in the class when the classroom agreement was established. The understanding that all the students share about keeping within the class the private thoughts and lives of their peers that may have been revealed in discussions, also applies to written material. The development of trust, based on the experience of confidences being kept, encourages more trust amongst students and teachers. It is also important to establish an understanding that students don't have to make revelations about their private life and thoughts unless they feel able to do so. In schools it is difficult to guarantee confidentiality, but you can tell students that **you** will not share the contents of their journals with anyone else unless there are clues that someone is going to be harmed.

To assist with confidentiality, the students can:

- use aliases
- write in fictional style, using third person narration
- change names of places, dates and other details that might identify someone.

Use the following questions in the preliminary class discussions about journals and their use in the classroom.

Questions

1. Can the contents of a journal always be confidential?
2. How can journal entries be made to ensure confidentiality?
3. Imagine you find a class member's journal. What agreement can we come to about reading the contents of other people's journals?
4. What are some of the class rules that can support what we do when we share parts of our journals?

   Ask the students to write down a 'Memorandum of Understanding' on the front page of their own journal that outlines:
   - why they will be writing in the journal
   - who can have access to the journal
   - their understandings about the confidentiality of the journal.

Activity: Personal writing

- Discuss with students the different forms of journals – daily logs, personal accounts, professional diaries. Include in this discussion the concept of different audiences and purposes these might have: the writer only, future generations, work colleagues, etc. It is helpful to find appropriate examples of different styles of journals for students to read and compare.

- Tell the class that they are going to watch **an episode of *The Simpsons*** (or equivalent) as a way of observing, understanding, and reflecting on people's feelings and reactions. Explain to the students that they are to 'become' one of the characters from the episode, then they will do some personal writing using one of the activities outlined below. Let them know that their work will be displayed in the room when they have finished.

You may prefer to complete this whole activity using a character from a class text.

- In character, ask students to complete one of the following.

1. Select a character. Write a short journal entry from that character's point of view, expressing (reflecting on) your feelings and reactions to a particular event/incident in the episode.
2. Write a conversation that you (in character) have had with another character in the episode. Complete the entry by writing down what you (your character) really thought.
3. Writing from your character's point of view, write down your observations on the behaviour of another character. Keep in mind your own character's way of looking at people and things. (e.g. Lisa might not think very highly of a person who was littering the environment.)
4. Write a log that documents dates, places, happenings, interpretations of events in the episode.
5. Invite students to display 'their' personal writing/journals, and have the students walk around the room viewing each other's work.

A word of caution
As sometimes students can disclose worrying information in their journals (or indeed, in any personal writing), it is important for teachers to have thought about how they might respond to this. Teachers need to know the appropriate procedures and processes in their school for referring concerns and for accessing support, particularly if the concerns relate to possible self harm of the student. For more general responses to students, where there are no clear and/or immediate concerns, see 'Checklist for working with individual students', on page 26 at the end of Part One.

Questions

1. Was it difficult to 'get inside' the character to understand, how he/she might feel?
2. Did you 'think' yourself into the character? If so, was this difficult to do? How did you do it? What does this tell you about the difficulties of understanding the people around you?
3. When you walked around the room, did you find that the journals were different? If so, in what way are they different? What does this tell you about people?
4. Why do you think people keep journals?
5. Should journals be personal/private, or public documents?
6. Which style of journal entry is the most appealing to you? Why?

Working as a team

Participating in group activities doesn't always come naturally to everybody in the class. The success or failure of a task can depend on the co-operation of all group members. If group work hasn't been a natural part of their learning experience, it can create discomfort, particularly for the more reticent members of a class.

The formation of a circle is the representation of the class as a cohesive unit. The activities in this topic demonstrate the importance of each individual's contribution to group outcomes such as:

- completing a task as a group
- developing an environment in which all students can make a contribution
- establishing a basis for mutual regard
- being part of a setting (sitting in a circle) which encourages students to engage in eye contact with one another and become used to listening to and hearing one another.

Activity: Creating a group story

- Allow students time to move the furniture to make the space to form a circle either by sitting on the floor or chairs. Tell them they are going to share the task of telling a story. The story is continuous, which means that everybody has the opportunity to add to the story. Provide a beginning word, and then direct students to add one word to keep the story going around the circle. The last person to speak completes the story.

  e.g. *Today…I…went…to…the…zoo…and…*

Sometimes the storytelling will start slowly, as students adjust to the task. Keep in mind that part of the purpose is mutual regard.

Questions

1. What needed to happen for the activity to work well?
2. Can group work be effective if some members of a group do not contribute?
3. Was anyone worried about being unable to think of a word? What strategies could you use to deal with that?

Activity: Teamwork

Ask students to bring to class **photographs** showing groups of people working as teams. Photographs could show sports such as white water rafting, hockey, football or basketball. They could also be theatre or dancing groups, or include groups of people working together. (It is useful for teachers to have collected some strong images as a back-up.) Ask students to look carefully at their photographs using the questions below to explore the ways that people work together as teams. Still using the questions as a guide, select two or three students to describe what is happening in their photographs. What overall

observations can the class make about the importance of co-operation in teamwork?

Questions

1. What do you notice about the individuals in the teams?
2. What would happen if the team didn't work co-operatively?
3. How could all members of the team support one another?
4. What does the photograph tell us about teamwork?
5. How could different background experiences affect the way different people behave in a team?

Activity: Our classroom team

Now have students write down two ways in which they could contribute to the classroom team. This could be a personal journal entry or another topic for a group story.

Additional Activity

Write a story about a time when it was important for a group of people to work co-operatively.

Unit 2
Belonging

Belonging focuses on the need for young people to feel that they belong and are welcome in their environments. While a feeling of belonging in the classroom contributes to self-esteem and a sense of identity, it is important for young people to recognise and develop connections beyond the classroom. In managing this potentially sensitive issue, teachers need to ensure that class work does not further isolate students experiencing difficulties with belonging. The aim of the activities is to increase, in an atmosphere of humour, fun and adventure, awareness of the range of ways of connecting to other people, places, things, and ideas.

Key messages

- **Exploring:** We have different as well as common experiences of belonging to various groups, or connecting with people, places, things and ideas. We will have a range of feelings in response to these experiences.
- **Understanding:** Our feelings of belonging will be influenced by how we think about ourselves and our relationships with people, places, things and ideas.
- **Applying:** We can think creatively and find many ways of connecting to other people, places, things and ideas.

In this unit students will have the opportunity to:

- recognise different ways in which they belong
- participate in group activities which build connectedness
- consider new ways of belonging and connecting
- present ideas and experiences through a range of media and genres.

A word of caution
The principle of no 'put downs' is very important here. Revisit the classroom agreement and reinforce its key messages. These activities need to take place in an atmosphere that embodies a sense of humour and a spirit of fun and adventure so that students can think creatively about the groups in the world to which they might like to belong.

Topics

Ways I belong
How we belong: A group exploration
Valuing student work through presentation

Materials

Ways I belong
- Blackline master: *I belong* to …
- Butcher's paper

How we belong: A group exploration
- Suggestions for a range of resources as prompts are included, but students should be encouraged to contribute their own, i.e. particular songs or pieces of music, special possessions or mementos of significant times.
- Blackline master: *My special possession*

Ways I belong

This introductory activity establishes the ideas of identity, place, and belonging. Being able to establish a sense of belonging to people and places is a need true to all people in many different groups in the world. The simple children's game below demonstrates that need.

Activity: I belong to

1. Ask the class to write their addresses following the example below:

   Jo Smith
   2 Station Street
   South Sometown
   Victoria
   Australia
   Southern Hemisphere
   The World
   The Galaxy
   The Universe

- Ask students to think through the groups that each part of their address relates to, and to name these groups.

- Now move into the technological age, and ask the students if they think that individual e-mail addresses are a good indication of groups to which they might belong. Discuss the differences with the whole class.

2. Give every student a copy of the **blackline master**, ***I belong to***. Their challenge is to fill every square with the name of a group of which they are a member. In filling in the squares, challenge them to be as innovative as they can be, and emphasise the idea of belonging, to help them work out their groups.

- It is important to acknowledge to the class that sometimes people want to be part of a group and that sometimes people want to be seen as different and individual. Yet somewhere in the world there is probably someone with similar tastes and ideas who also thinks of him/herself as unique or a bit of a character.

- There are obvious groups to which people belong such as their family (both immediate and extended), their class, and/or their home groups, their suburb or their sporting team. With a bit of prompting, however, and further discussion, students may be able to think of some of their more individual characteristics and preferences which connect them to people outside of those obvious groups.

What about all the people in the world who:

- listen to rock/R&B/techno
- like peanut butter and banana sandwiches
- have red/long/curly hair or dreadlocks
- are the youngest in the family
- play tennis/soccer/chess
- read science fiction or fantasy

- hate spinach/chillies/boiled eggs
- love Star Wars films.

- With the class, brainstorm a list to add to these categories. In filling out these grids, students can choose from this list or make up their own categories.

3. Depending on how much time you have allowed for this activity (either one or a series of classes), use the grids on the handout to complete one or all of the following:

- In groups of three or four complete this sorting exercise:

    - On a separate sheet of paper, make a list of all the different categories from the group's individual grids and enter the numbers of students in each category. This will involve discussion and decisions about combining similar categories, e.g. people who like spinach and people who like silverbeet. The group will need to nominate a scribe, and a person to report their findings to the class. Each group's list needs to be written on the board.
    - Repeat the process above as a class.
    - Sort the groups' findings into a final class list of categories.
    - Write down the numbers in each category.
    - Record the class list on the board or butcher's paper.
    - There should be categories with several or lots of students, as well as categories where there is only one student. Discuss which categories contain many students and which contain few.
    - Choose some of the categories with few students in them. Present the class with the challenge of thinking about ways in which the student(s) in these categories could connect with other people in the school, their suburb, Victoria, Australia, the World. Add the following if the students don't come up with them: telephone directories; register of clubs and associations; classified advertisements in local and state newspapers; municipal and shire offices, the Internet.
    - If, through this process, an interest has been 'discovered', then students might like to join a club or association, or even start such a club in the school. They might want to develop a home page or write a newsletter.
    - As a result of seeing all the categories, are there any students who now want to add new categories to their original grid?

I belong to …

See if you can fill each square with the name of a group to which you belong. Be creative!

How we belong: A group exploration

In this activity students will explore one or more of the themes below. Students might work in pairs or in small groups (up to four) using a story, a poem or music as starting points. Some suggestions for text study ideas are provided, but there are many more possibilities. Students and teachers will have favourite songs, cartoons, paintings or photographs, belonging stories or memories which they will be able to use in class. Encourage students to bring their own to class.

Choose a theme

Teachers can choose to deal with each of the themes below, or select those which connect to a set text or some ongoing work, or a topic in another learning area that is complementary.

Activity: Spirit of place

The notion that some places are special to us; they are places where we feel we really belong. Some students might identify a sense of place at home, at school, at a holiday place. It may not be important in spiritual terms, but is important in the sense of belonging.

Text study ideas

- Poems: *My Country* by Dorothea Mackellar
- Songs: by Archie Roach and Yothu Yindi
- Short stories: *Fran* by Libby Gleeson
- Novels: *Feral Kid* by Libby Hathorn
- Collections of myths and legends in which the themes of belonging to place is highlighted. Try to find some from other cultures as well as those related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and contemporary life.

Questions

1. What is the important place in the text?
2. To whom is the place important?
3. Why is the place important?
4. How has a sense/spirit of place been established?
5. How does thinking about the place influence the character's feelings?

Additional Activity: Personal writing

Chose one of the activities below to write about belonging:

- The idea of belonging to a place gives strength to many people. Write your own myth which shows the importance of belonging to a person or animal. For example, there are many stories of cats that have wandered away from their owners, been missing for a long time and return almost minutes before the owner moves away.
- Write the story, *My Place*.

Activity: Special People

The notion that there are some people who are special to us because they make us feel that we really belong to them, or they really belong to us. These people include parents, grandparents, other relatives, sisters and brothers, boyfriends/girlfriends. They might also be people who are not part of our immediate and/or extended families.

Text study ideas

- Picture story book: *My Grandmother: Years of Wit, Warmth and Laughter – A True Story* by Barry Dickens
- Novels: *Feral Kid* by Libby Hathorn
- Short stories: *Barbed Wire and Gold*
  Bannisters by Kay Arthur
- Films/videos: *Shrek*

Questions

1. Who is important to whom in the text?
2. What is the relationship between the characters?
3. How do you know that there is a feeling of belonging between the characters?
4. Why is it important for one, or more, of the characters to belong to others?
5. How does thinking about other people influence the way characters feel about themselves?

Additional Activity: Personal writing

1. Write a letter to someone saying how important he or she is to you.
2. Try your hand at writing a song about two people who feel they belong to one another.

Activity: Faith

Sometimes people feel quite strongly that we are connected to something bigger than ourselves**.** This feeling can be described as faith in God or Allah or Buddha or in some other being. It could also be seen as a connectedness to nature or a faith in the goodness and kindness of others. It is important here to ensure that the class respects the religious faith and practice of other students; this is part of the classroom agreement, but may need to be re-emphasised.

Text study ideas

- Films/Videos: *Karate Kid 1* and especially *Karate Kid 2*, *The Last Emperor*.
- Collection of prayers representing a range of religions and beliefs. The teacher should be able to find some using the library's resources. It may also, depending on the class, be possible for students to bring to the class some prayer that they use in their observances.

Questions

Choose a character from a text and consider:

1. What is the faith to which the character feels connected?
2. Why does the character belong to this faith? Was it a family connection, or did the character adopt the faith to fill a need?
3. How does belonging to the faith/having a belief help the character?

Additional Activity: Personal writing

1. What does faith mean in your life?
2. Have a little faith. Write a story, poem or song using this saying as a theme.

Activity: Shared experiences and ritual

Sharing the same experiences for celebrations or remembrances, or sorrowful occasions, such as funerals, can help people to feel part of a group. The range of shared experiences students may talk about is extensive. They could be part of a team for sport or a drama production; they might go together to a sporting event because they all support the same team; they meet to go skating at a ramp in a nearby suburb; they belong to a fan club or go to a concert because they like the same performers; they belong to the Scouts, they go camping or do other outdoor activities that they organise themselves; they do voluntary work for a community organisation, etc.

The range of rituals can include religious ceremonies such as christenings, weddings, communions and funerals. In these the student might take an active role or they might be part of the group because their parents or family expect their attendance and participation. It would be good to include discussions about the secular or non-religious versions of similar ceremonies.

In Australia there are some celebrations that are publicly acknowledged (as national holidays) even though they can't always be enjoyed by everyone. For example Christmas and Easter are important celebrations for Christians but are not part of the religious or cultural heritage of Muslims, Buddhists, Hindis or other religions. There are some shifts in community attitudes and practices where the observance of Ramadan is acknowledged in the work place and educational settings.

Text study ideas

- Poems: those by Oodgeroo Noonuccal (Kath Walker), particularly *Bora*.

Questions

1. What is the ceremony/ritual/shared experience described in the text? To what culture does it belong?
2. Who participates in the ceremony, etc.?
3. Is participation in the ceremony, etc. voluntary, or is it expected that a character participates because he/she belongs to a group or family? Explain why.
4. How important is the ceremony, etc. to the group or family?
5. How might an individual's thinking about the ceremony/ritual affect their feelings of belonging to the group?

Additional Activity: Personal writing

1. Write about a time when it was important to participate in a group/family ceremony, etc.
2. Describe a ceremony, etc. that is important to you.

Activity: Special things

Sometimes there is, or has been, a special possession or thing which makes us feel secure, or which connects us to other people alive or dead. In their groups students can talk about their own special possessions. These may be pets, toys, something from the time they were babies or toddlers, or a memento that has been passed down through the family.

There may be some students who don't want to take part in this activity for a variety of reasons. If this is the case they can write about a special possession using the **blackline master**, ***My special possession***. Alternatively they may remember an incident in a film or book they have read that refers to someone's special thing, and may choose to write about that.

If students are happy to do so, organise a class display of special things or have students volunteer to bring their special thing along and talk about how they received it and why it is special to them.

My special possession

We all have things that are important to us. It might be a baby bracelet given as a present by a grandparent, or a book or CD given by someone who is special to us. It may be something inherited, or a letter received. Whatever it is, it is important. It signifies someone, something or a time.

Use the space below to write about your special possession.

Valuing student work through presentation

This activity should be seen as an opportunity to bring together all the student work that has focused on connectedness and belonging. It also puts into practice the concept of valuing student work and fostering positive regard through presentations and performances. It will provide an opportunity for staff in other learning areas, such as art and drama and media production, to co-operate with their colleagues.

The following suggestions can be undertaken by a class or classes in a year level to emphasise the work the school is doing to promote the emotional health and well-being of its students:

- Poetry writing displayed on posters.
- Creation of myths and legends about their school, suburb or neighbourhood.
- Creative representations of myths and legends that the class has already read and studied.
- Photographic display of photographs of different students/classes/year levels engaged in school activities, such as camps, plays, sporting events. These could be displayed appropriately so that they are visible to parents and visitors to the school.
- Student writings generated from the class or year level work in the different units.
- Role plays, improvisations or brief dramatic presentations to the year level or junior years, or at a staff professional development session.
- Inter-class debates.
- Production of a video based on principles of co-operative teamwork in scriptwriting, filming, editing and producing the final video.
- Multimedia productions and displays.
- Cartoons.
- Music anthologies/ compositions/ presentations representing any themes across the unit/s.
- Art exhibitions representing any themes across the unit/s.
- Work in the community.

Activity: Language study

Each student lists, in his or her workbook, as many words as possible that represent belonging. Students then offer their lists to compile a grand dictionary for the class, year level and school library. An extra challenge could be for students in small groups to think of words that represent belonging for different parts of speech e.g:

collective nouns:	herd, family
verbs:	belong, connect, relate
adverbs:	together, lovingly, amiably
phrases or common sayings:	hand in hand; a part of; one of the family; make yourself at home

The teacher or a volunteer group of students could compile a list of these words and phrases to be used as the basis for writing sentences, short stories, poems, dialogues or songs.

Activity: Saying something positive

This is a tried and true activity, but still relevant and fun.

Ask each student to write his or her name at the top of a blank page of A4 paper. Each student writes something positive about every other student so that every student has many different things written about him or her. These can be for private and personal reflection, or the teacher or different students might read these aloud.

If it is appropriate to the class, these offerings could be made into a class poster. Have the class come up with a self-congratulatory title such as the *8A Stars* or the *Legends of (insert date).* Each student selects the one comment which he or she would most like to see on the poster.

Display the poster in the classroom.

Unit 3
What if ...?

What if...? recognises that feeling anxious is a common experience. From time to time everyone will experience anxiety, sometimes to a lesser extent, sometimes to a greater extent. Part of dealing with anxiety is to recognise it, and to implement strategies to reduce it before it becomes an overwhelming problem.

Key messages

- **Exploring:** In everyday situations we may experience anxiety.
- **Understanding:** What we think about the situation, ourselves and others, will influence whether we feel anxious, and how anxious we feel.
- **Applying:** We can develop thinking skills and strategies for action that help us manage feelings of anxiety in difficult situations.

In this unit students will have the opportunity to:

- discuss, and reflect on everyday situations that cause anxiety, and affect how people might feel, and what they might think in these situations
- practise listening skills and reframing skills
- broaden their repertoire of strategies for helping themselves and others work through anxious moments.

Topics

Introducing anxiety
Being embarrassed
Reading the actions of others
Feeling anxious
Helping each other
Hot tips for staying cool

Materials

Being embarrassed
- Blackline master: *Peanuts* cartoon
- Blackline master: *Ranking Ladder*
- Blackline master: Thought Bubbles

Reading the actions of others
- Blackline master: *Jordan and Sam*

Feeling anxious
- Blackline master: *Please don't make me speak!*

- Blackline master: *Whatif*

Helping each other
- Blackline master: Being a Good Listener

Hot tips for staying cool
- Materials for making posters: magazines and photos, glue, scissors, paints, cardboard, coloured markers, stickers, and so on.

Introducing anxiety

The following questions can be used in class with a set text, poetry, film, or perhaps a newspaper article, to introduce the subject of anxiety, and to assist in the development of skills to deal with this feeling.

- What is anxiety?
- What sort of situation has caused the character/person, to feel anxious? What do you think he/she was thinking and feeling?
- Why do people react in these ways?
- What do you think could have been done to help the character/person cope with these situations and their reactions?
- How could he/she change the way he or she is thinking about events, themselves and others, to reduce their anxiety?
- What do you think would be the most useful ways to help the character help him/herself, or others, to deal with the situations causing anxiety?

Being embarrassed

This activity allows students to explore the sorts of situations or events that cause feelings of anxiety, and to understand how these might be different for different people. Students do not have to offer any personal stories about feeling anxious. The use of the third person, in the example of the *Peanuts* cartoon, provides the content for discussions and written work.

Activity: Thoughts, emotions and feelings

- Give each student a copy of the **blackline master**, ***Peanuts* cartoon**. Allow a few minutes to read it.

- Have a whole class discussion about the thoughts, emotions and feelings Charlie Brown is having/experiencing and why. To begin with, show the students a copy of the cartoon with the last frame covered. (This will work well using an overhead.) The following questions might help to focus the discussion.

Questions

1. What is Charlie Brown feeling? How do we know?
2. What thoughts go with these feelings?
3. What assumptions might Charlie be making about himself? … about the 'little red-haired girl'? How could these assumptions be different?
4. What might he be saying to himself? How could he talk to himself differently?
5. If you were Charlie Brown's friend, what could you say to him?
6. What is the worst thing that could happen? This question allows the teacher to introduce the notion of positive and negative self-talk and the notion of 'catastrophising' (thinking that the worst consequences will occur).
7. What is the best thing that could happen?
8. What do you think he will do?

Now uncover the last frame and discuss the merits of his choice of action. You could also ask students to volunteer for role plays of alternative endings to the cartoon.

Additional Activity

- Give each student a copy of the **blackline master**, ***Ranking Ladder***.
- Working by themselves, have students write an everyday situation in which people might be anxious, on each rung. Rank the situations in order, starting with the one that might create the least anxiety on the bottom rung, to the one that might create most anxiety on the top rung.
- Using the ***Thought bubbles*** **blackline master**, ask the students to write thoughts that each person on the ladder might be thinking about her/himself and others, in each situation. In the space below each situation (on the ladder), write one useful piece of advice that the person could give to her/himself.
- Where would Charlie Brown's situation fit on the ladder?
- When all the students have completed their responses bring the class together and use the following to summarise their work.

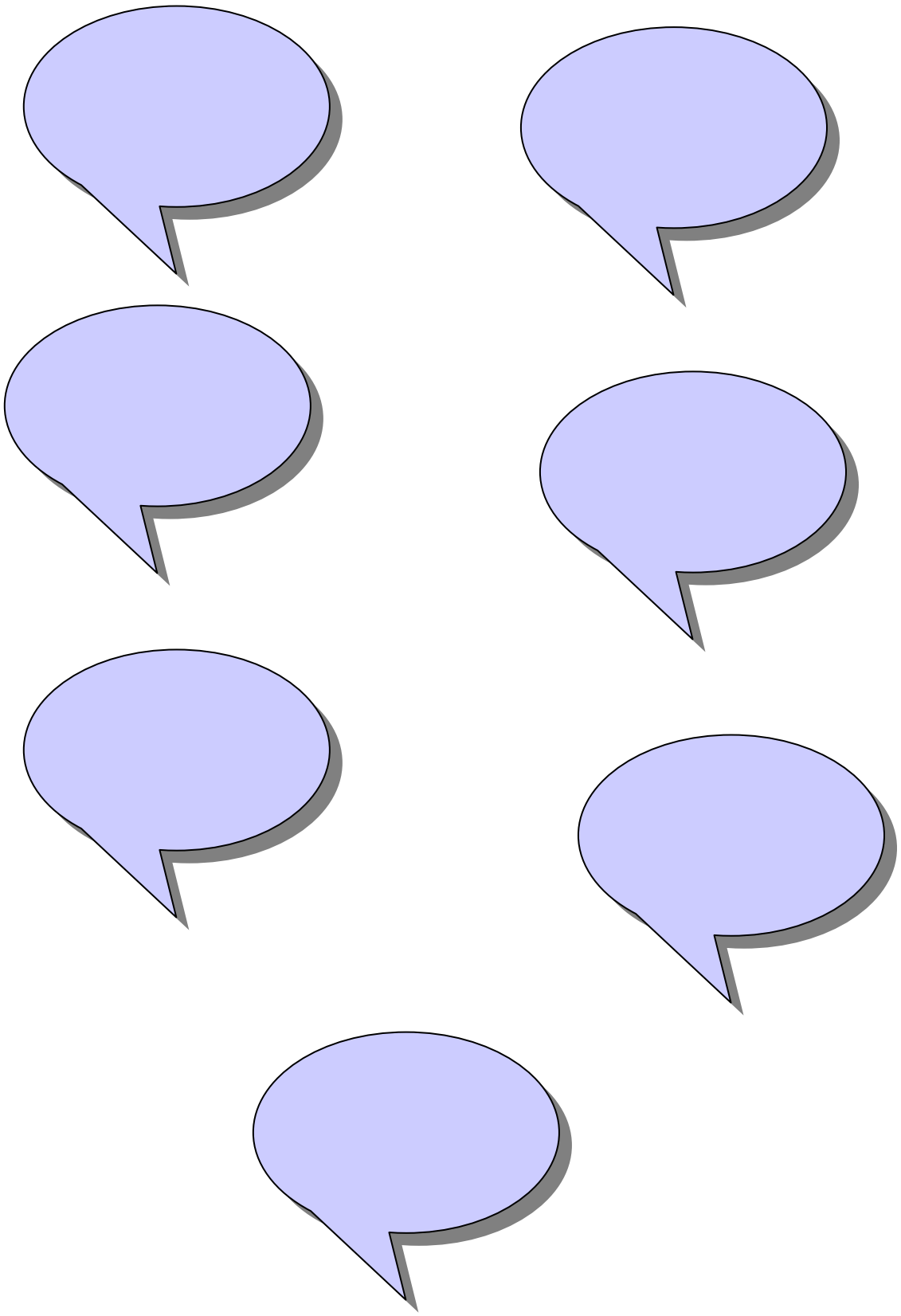
Questions

1. What is meant when people say they feel 'anxious' or have 'anxiety'? (This question asks students to express different ways they might describe anxiety.)
2. What type of everyday situations might cause people to feel anxious or worried?
3. How might these be different for different people at different times?
4. What thoughts do you have when you are in a situation where you feel anxious?
5. What might you do when you find yourself feeling anxious?

Peanuts cartoon

James Bellanca 1991, *The Co-operative Think Tank: Practical Techniques to Teach Thinking in the Co-operative Classroom*. Reproduced by Permission from Hawker Brownlow.

Thought Bubbles



Reading the actions of others

This activity has been designed to allow students to explore the ways that we try to interpret the actions of others, and how the messages we give ourselves can increase or diminish anxiety.

Activity: The telephone call: Guided improvisation

- Explain to students that sometimes the things we tell ourselves about others' actions can make us more anxious. By learning to be aware of this, and learning to give ourselves positive and helpful messages, anxiety can be reduced.

- Explain that the activities in this unit of work will help students to look at the different ways that we explain the actions of others. Sometimes these explanations are negative, may not be accurate, and certainly are not very helpful.

- Inform students that they will be considering a story about two friends, Jordan and Sam, who could be best friends, girlfriend and boyfriend, or just friends.

- Invite three students to perform the script, ***Jordan and Sam***, using copies of the **blackline master** (see below). Ask them to select the parts of narrator, Jordan and Sam. Allow them time to decide the relationship between Jordan and Sam, e.g. girlfriend/boyfriend; best friends. Have them read the script to the class, stopping where indicated, for students to read lines or respond.

- When the script reading is finished have a whole class discussion on what happened, using the following questions:

Questions

1. What did Jordan think when Sam didn't call back?
2. What did Jordan think about Sam? What did Jordan think about himself/herself?
3. Did these thoughts change as time passed? How?
4. How were Jordan's actions affected by what he/she was thinking?
5. What are some of the possible reasons Sam might have had for not ringing back?
6. What can Jordan do about that?

Activity: Reframing

The following activity provides students with practice at reframing negative thoughts into positive ones and at looking at a situation from different perspectives. Passing a physical object back and forth with the 'thoughts' underlines the reframing process.

- Choose 10 students by taking names from a 'lucky dip' of class names. Line them up in two groups of 5 facing each other.

- Explain that one line of students will represent positive thoughts about why Sam didn't ring back. The other will represent negative thoughts.

- Explain that the students are going to pass a ball/bean bag backwards and forwards across the lines from negative thought to positive thought and back again, beginning with the first negative thought and finishing with the last positive thought. As each 'thought' passes the ball on, they respond to the previous thought by first saying, 'But maybe . . (state their thought)'.

- The first negative thought might be 'She doesn't want to speak to Jordan'. The first positive thought might then be, 'But maybe she was just finishing her tea'.

Jordan and Sam

Narrator: Jordan and Sam have always been really close, ever since the Year 7 camp. At the end of the school day today, they had just started to discuss what happened over the weekend, when the teacher sent Jordan off to take a message to the office.

Jordan: I really want to know what Jo said. I have to catch the bus, so I'll ring you tonight, O.K.?

Sam: O.K. I'll be home all night.

Narrator: Jordan was quite anxious to continue the conversation started at school, and rang Sam right on 6.00 p.m. Sam's Mum answered and said that Sam couldn't come to the phone right now, but could ring back in 5 minutes. … How are you feeling, Jordan?

Jordan: O.K. A bit disappointed – more like impatient. Now I have to wait a few minutes.

Narrator: Fourteen minutes pass by. There is no phone call. What do you think about this, Jordan?

Jordan: Well, I'm busting to get the call. How much longer will I have to sit here and wait? I can't even go outside and throw baskets or anything, in case the call comes and I don't hear the phone ringing. I'd like to ring Sam back now, but I guess that would look a bit dumb.

Narrator: Twenty-two minutes pass. Still no phone call. Jordan, you still won't ring Sam because that wouldn't be cool. What are you thinking now?

Jordan: Maybe Sam won't ring at all. Maybe he/she can't be bothered, and I'll have to wait until tomorrow to find out what Jo said. Then again, maybe Sam's Mum didn't pass on the message, and I'm sitting here for nothing.

Narrator: What will you do?

Jordan: Well, I can sit here and keep waiting. I could watch some more T.V. maybe, or have my dinner. It's a bit hard to get my mind onto something else, though, because I keep imagining the phone will ring any old tick…

Narrator: Forty-five minutes have passed. What are you thinking now, Jordan?

Jordan: I think it's tight. Sam should have rung me by now. He/she's not much of a friend, to leave me hanging like this. What am I supposed to do? Wait all night? Wait until it's convenient for him/her to make the call? How slack! I rang at 6 o'clock and I couldn't have rung any sooner. Sam just doesn't appreciate the efforts that I make in our friendship. Maybe he/she doesn't value the friendship like I do. The least Sam could do is call me. Assuming he/she got the message, that is … Maybe something came up and he/she had to go out, or do something important. I hope nothing is wrong over there.

Narrator: Jordan has now waited around for just over an hour, weighing up all the possibilities, when the phone rings. Jordan's Mum answers it. It is Sam. Jordan, what are you thinking? What will you say?

(Revision of this scripted activity was largely the work of Andrea Dart, a teacher from Overnewton Anglican Community College.)

Feeling anxious

This activity is designed to enable students to continue exploring situations that cause anxiety. It considers the messages we give ourselves in such situations, and the ways that we can help others by being supportive friends and good listeners.

Activity: Thinking and feeling

- Distribute the **blackline master**, ***Please don't make me speak!***, then read through it with the class.

Questions

Use the following questions to discuss what the young person was thinking and how he/she was feeling.

1. How was the student feeling?
2. Why was the student feeling this way? What was the student thinking about the responses of others? What was the student thinking about him/herself?
3. How could some of the negative thoughts be turned around into more positive thoughts?
4. What are some specific statements or questions you could use to challenge the negative thoughts?
5. What could other people do to help this person through the situation?

The following questions enable students to reflect further on the feelings associated with anxiety.

1. What signs do our bodies give us when we are anxious?
2. What can you tell yourself to enable you to cope with these situations?

Activity: What if?' – 'Then I'll' poems

Using the poem *Whatif* by Shel Silverstein, this activity provides students with an opportunity to explore and practise ways of reframing anxious and negative self-talk.

Whatif
Shel Silverstein

Last night, while I lay thinking here, Some Whatifs
crawled inside my ear
And pranced and partied all night long
And sang their same old Whatif song:
Whatif I'm dumb in school?
Whatif they've closed the swimming pool?
Whatif I get beat up?
Whatif there's poison in my cup?
Whatif I start to cry?
Whatif I get sick and die?
Whatif I flunk that test?
Whatif green hair grows on my chest?

Whatif nobody likes me?
Whatif a bolt of lightning strikes me?
Whatif I don't grow taller?
Whatif my head starts getting smaller?
Whatif the fish won't bite?
Whatif the wind tears up my kite?
Whatif they start a war?
Whatif if my parents get divorced?
Whatif the bus is late?
Whatif my teeth don't grow in straight?
Whatif I tear my pants?
Whatif I never learn to dance?
Everything seems swell, and then
The nighttime whatifs strike again!

(*Whatif*, from A LIGHT IN THE ATTIC by Shel Silverstein. Copyright (C) 1981 by Evil Eye Music, Inc. By permission of Edite Kroll Literary Agency Inc)

- Ask students to write their own 'Whatif' poems and to think back over the different activities they have been involved in so far for ideas. Students may also base their poems on the ideas explored in *Whatif*.

- Let them know that when they have finished they will give their poem to another student who will write 'Then I'll' poems in response. For example: '**Whatif** I lose my Grand Final?' Response: '**Then I'll** know I made it to the final past lots of other players', or 'Then I'll know I tried my best'.

- Return the poems to the original writer to read how the thoughts were reframed.

A word of caution
It may be useful to remind students of their classroom agreements to ensure that the responses are positive.

Please don't make me speak!

I just feel really sick
every time I have to talk in front of people.
I get that funny feeling in my
stomach. It's like butterflies … but it's worse.

It seems like it's taking over all of me
and I just want to crawl into a hole
and hide.

It happens when I have to stand up
in class … or answer a question …
or speak about something.
It's when people are looking at me, and
only me
that it happens.

I don't want to get out of my chair,
but I know I have to.
Everyone's watching me,
and that's when I feel myself
start to go bright red …
All over!

I'm sure that people can see my hands shaking.
Hear my voice wobbling.
I don't know where to look.
I'm too scared to look at anyone.
They might be laughing at me.
They probably think I'm hopeless.

It doesn't matter how good I feel
about what I'm saying.
I'm sure I will make a fool of myself.

Whatif

Last night, while I lay thinking here, Some Whatifs
crawled inside my ear
And pranced and partied all night long
And sang their same old Whatif song:
Whatif I'm dumb in school?
Whatif they've closed the swimming pool?
Whatif I get beat up?
Whatif there's poison in my cup?
Whatif I start to cry?
Whatif I get sick and die?
Whatif I flunk that test?
Whatif green hair grows on my chest?
Whatif nobody likes me?
Whatif a bolt of lightning strikes me?
Whatif I don't grow taller?
Whatif my head starts getting smaller?
Whatif the fish won't bite?
Whatif the wind tears up my kite?
Whatif they start a war?
Whatif if my parents get divorced?
Whatif the bus is late?
Whatif my teeth don't grow in straight?
Whatif I tear my pants?
Whatif I never learn to dance?
Everything seems swell, and then
The nighttime whatifs strike again!

Shel Silverstein

Helping each other

Explain to the class that in this activity they are going to practise listening to and giving positive feedback about other people's stories of feeling anxious. It is important for the students to understand that we can't always solve each other's problems, nor should we necessarily try to do so. However, being a good listener and a positive friend is often very helpful. Young people are often placed in the position of hearing the problems of their friends. One of the most helpful things they can do is encourage the friend to access appropriate help. So it is important for young people to know the sources of appropriate help, especially in the school.

> ***A word of caution***
> *Young people are often placed in the position of hearing the problems of their friends. One of the most helpful things they can do is to encourage the friend to access appropriate help. Do they know what staff are the first points of contact in the school?*

Activity: Active listening- improvisation

The activity below is an improvisation which involves active listening.

- Explain to the class that they are going to watch a poor listening skills improvisation. Ask for a volunteer to work with you in the improvisation in front of the class.
- The improvisation involves a student (the speaker) telling you what happened at lunchtime or over the weekend. While the student is talking, demonstrate lack of interest by using eye movement and contact, gestures, posture, tone of voice in responses, facial expressions.
- Ask the rest of class to describe what they observed.
- Have another pair demonstrate active interest when listening. Ask the rest of the class to describe what they observed and what was different in the two situations.
- Give out **blackline master**, **Being a good listener**. Read it aloud with the class listening. As appropriate refer back to the previous enactments to illustrate points.
- Now, the students will use these skills, together with what they have learned about reframing in the work on *The Telephone Call,* as they take it in turns to be the speaker and the listener.
- Divide the class into pairs. One student practises being a good listener and supportive friend, while the other (the speaker) tells the story of how anxious he/she is/was about a hypothetical situation, chosen from the list below. It should be stressed that these are all hypothetical but they represent some of the situations in which people feel anxious:
    - starting at a new school
    - starting a conversation

- organising a date
- sitting for an exam/test
- catching a train/bus for the first time
- being in a crowd
- moving to a new country.

- Now have the students swap their roles, and choose a different situation.

- Back in the whole class, ask students to contribute observations about what it was like to be the speaker/listener. Use the questions below to start the discussion.

Questions

1. What was helpful in the conversation with your partner?
2. What was not helpful?

Being a Good Listener (Adapted from Kotzman 1995)

Use body language to show that you are sincere:

- Look at the other person
- Use eye contact
- Look confident
- Sit with arms comfortably placed, rather than crossed
- Sit with just enough, but not too much, space between you and the person
- Watch your facial expression
- Give your time to listening.

Show in your spoken responses that you are interested:

- Avoid interrupting
- Vary the tone of your voice
- Use 'encouragers' - yes, mmm, I see
- Ask open-ended questions, rather than closed ones, which encourage yes/no responses,
  e.g. What do you mean?
  How did you feel about that?

Check that you have heard and understood accurately:

- 'I'm not exactly sure what you mean...'
- 'So what you are saying is...'
- 'It seems that...'

Reflect back the feelings the other person is displaying to show that you have understood and to show empathy:

- 'You seem to be feeling sad about that.'
- 'You felt angry about that?'
- 'So what you did was laugh it off, but you really felt pretty hurt.'
- 'You're feeling unhappy because you thought you could trust ...'

Reflect back the content of what the other person is saying to show that you have understood:

- 'So you are worried that ...'
- 'So this is what happened, ...'

... and ...

- Do offer support.
- Do show respect for others' views – you don't have to agree with them.
- Do help the person to understand his/her own meaning.
- Do seek someone to support you if what someone else tells you is really worrying.
- Don't put the other person down – 'What a dumb thing to say!'
- Don't give solutions - let the other person find his/her own.
- Don't talk about yourself.

Hot tips for staying cool

This activity has been designed as a way to draw together ideas generated during work on the unit. Designing and making a poster provides a useful opportunity for students to think about a broad range of issues related to problem solving. The poster should include the kind of advice that students would themselves find helpful.

Activity: Designing a poster

- Give students the choice to make a poster by themselves or in a small group.
- Using ideas generated in the previous activities, and with as much colour and imagination as possible, ask students to make a poster with the title 'Hot tips for staying cool', or they can give it their own title.
- This could be individual work, homework, group work, or completed as an art or computer class activity. Whatever suits your program is appropriate. As a part of fostering positive regard, it is important to display the posters in the classroom or library, or outside the administration area, etc.
- The activity provides an opportunity for teachers to work with staff in other curriculum areas such as art, graphic design and technology.

Additional Activities: Personal writing

Ask students to think of a situation that creates anxiety, and then recall some of the most useful ideas for staying calm. Now write a journal entry or a letter to a supportive friend. Again it is important to allow students the opportunity to complete this activity in a hypothetical way, such as writing about a character in a text they have studied or in a film they have seen, or by inventing their own fictional character.

Text study

- Ask the students to choose an episode from the set text in which a character is feeling anxious.
- Name the text and character.
- Have the students draw cartoon frames in their books. Use these frames to show what happens to the character in this situation, using thought bubbles to show what the character is thinking.
- If the character's thoughts were not helpful ones, make another cartoon, giving the character more positive thoughts.

Word study

The following word study helps students distinguish between words that suggest someone is *feeling O.K* and words that suggest someone is *feeling anxious*. It also helps students recognise that the way we think about a situation can influence how we feel.

- Write the list of words below onto a white/blackboard or have them on a handout for distribution to the class.

  anxious, at ease, uneasy, relaxed, agitated, unconcerned, confident, unworried, apprehensive, nervous, cool, pessimistic, ill-at-ease, composed, uncomfortable, calm, worried, optimistic, concerned, comfortable, hassled.

- Draw 2 circles on a white/blackboard. Label one *Feeling O.K* and the other *Feeling Anxious*.

- Divide the words in the list above between the circles.

- To explore the link between feelings and thoughts ask students to write 5 sentences, using the pattern below:

  Nick was ... (insert a word from the *Feeling O.K* circle), when ... (insert a situation), but … (insert a word from the *Feeling Anxious* circle) when ... (insert a situation).

- In pairs, ask students to read each of the sentences their partner has completed using the pattern above.

- Ask students to think about whether they agree with the situations their partner has chosen for each word from the two circles. If they disagree, ask them to think about why. What is the difference between how each student thinks about that situation. For example, not every student would agree with this combination. 'Nick was *calm* when *he saw the spider on his bedroom wall…'*. In fact, some students might feel anxious when they see a spider. You can ask students what someone might think when they see a spider and how that affects the way they feel. You might also ask them how that would influence what they did when they saw the spider.

- Conclude the discussion by making the point that the way you think about a situation influences how you feel, and both these influence how you might act in that situation.

Unit 4 Ups and downs

Ups and downs is about the changes and uncertainties we all sometimes experience. Everyone has ups and downs, achievements and disappointments. How we respond to these is determined by how we think about them, and how this makes us feel. In turn, others are affected by our actions, and respond according to their own positive or negative thinking and feeling. There are always more helpful and less helpful ways of thinking about things occurring around us. The activities in this unit are based on a **framework** which links **thoughts**, **feelings** and **actions**:

- something happens or someone does something that affects people
- they think about it in a particular way
- they feel a particular way, depending on how they think
- they act according to their feelings
- their actions bring a response from somebody who affects them
- they think about this in a particular way.

These activities are very useful in alerting teachers and students to situations where people may catastrophise, personalise and overgeneralise. They are also useful in exploring strategies to challenge these sorts of responses. However, it is important to bear in mind that some students will have experienced or may be currently experiencing 'downs' which are particularly distressing. They may not have shared these experiences with you, or with anyone else. It is advisable therefore to proceed with caution when encouraging students to share their experiences. Indeed, it is usually more effective and less threatening to explore these issues in the third person. Discussions and written work can be framed around print texts, TV shows, movies, cartoon strips or performances.

It is also important to be ready to interrupt to protect a student when they look likely to disclose personal information which they may regret later. (See Part Three: 'Disclosure' page 134.)

Key messages

- **Exploring:** In everyday situations we experience ups and downs and a range of feelings in response to these.
- **Understanding:** How we think about the everyday ups and downs in our lives will influence the way we feel.
- **Applying:**We can learn strategies to help us deal with difficult situations, and difficult feelings. Using these strategies for thinking and acting, will help us to work through difficult times and move forward.

In this unit students will have the opportunity to:

- explore the idea of life's ups and downs through storytelling
- identify the way body language expresses moods
- analyse, discuss and brainstorm cartoons as a way of understanding thoughts, feelings and actions
- brainstorm strategies for moving forward when you're feeling down.

Topics

A group story
The power of the non-verbal
Ups and downs
Thoughts and feelings
I don't know why - I just feel down

Materials

The power of the non-verbal

- Mood cards: Use a series of index cards and write a mood or feeling on each: e.g. bored, angry, sad, shy, afraid, despairing, unsure, fed up, uncomfortable, aloof, tired, panicky, tense, calm, distracted, happy, ecstatic, down, etc. There will need to be enough mood cards for each student to have one. Laminate these for future use.

  Alternatively, it can be fun to use *The Bears* card pack instead of student prepared cards to depict moods and feelings. (*The Bears* card pack is available from St Luke's, PO Box 315, Bendigo, 3552. Tel. 03 5440 1100, fax 03 5440 1139.)

Ups and downs

- Blackline master: Leunig cartoon

Thoughts and feelings

- Blackline masters: The slippery slope of unhelpful thinking, and Reversing unhelpful thinking

I don't know why - I just feel down

- Blackline master: I don't ***know*** why - I just feel down
- Enlarged Blackline master: I don't ***know*** why - I just feel down
- Fluorescent post-it notes in two different colours

A group story

This activity introduces students to the idea of ups and downs in an enjoyable and light-hearted way.

Activity: Fortunately … unfortunately

Have students move any furniture to the edges of the room, then have them sit in a circle, either on chairs or on the floor. Explain to the students that they will tell a story one sentence at a time. Alternate the beginning of each sentence with **fortunately** and **unfortunately**.

e.g. **Fortunately**, I did my English homework last night.
Unfortunately, I left it at home.
Fortunately, the teacher was away.
Unfortunately, the dog ate it.
Fortunately, I had another copy.

- Students can restart another topic when the responses seem to be running out.

Questions

- What did you notice while you were doing this activity?
- What was difficult/easy about participating in this group story?
- Was it easier to think of positive or negative responses?
- How well did you listen to one another?
- How well did you work as a group?
- Did you have fun?

A golden opportunity
Here you might like to re-introduce the concept of 'reframing,' that is, taking a statement and looking at it from another perspective, usually to change it from a negative to a positive. You could draw attention to the idea that there were so many positive and negative possibilities in the same story.

The power of the non-verbal

This three-stage activity demonstrates how moods can be detected in body language and the tone and pitch of voice.

Activity: 1. Modelling moods

- Provide each student with one of the prepared **mood cards**.
- The students read the word on their own card, but don't tell other students.
- Inform the students that they will have a few minutes to think about how they can best demonstrate their mood to the rest of the class. It could be a simple action as in entering the room and sitting down displaying the mood. Allow time for students to identify the mood that has been portrayed.
- List the moods on the white/blackboard.

2. Moods and feelings

- Write a series of questions and responses, such as those listed below, on the board.

'How are you?'	'I'm fine thanks.'
'Where are you going?'	'I'm going home.'
'Do you want to come shopping?'	'Sure.'
'How much more do you have to do?'	'I'm almost done.'
'What's wrong?'	'Nothing?'

- Shuffle the mood cards and distribute one to each student.
- Go around the class asking each student the same question from the list on the board. For example, 'How are you today Tran?', 'How are you today Francesca?'. The student will reply, using the matching response from the board, but shaping their response according to the mood on their card. For example, 'I'm fine thanks', (angrily, or sadly, or happily). Repeat using other questions and responses from the board.
- Discuss with students how they could tell what the person was really feeling. This will allow students to recognise that people often give out messages through body language that are different from what they are saying in words.

Questions

1. How did body language change with the different moods? What were the signs you noticed?
2. How did voice, tone and eye contact change?
3. How did the impact and meaning of the statement change with each mood?

3. Mood through voice and body language

This activity explores the way people use their bodies and voices to show how they are feeling, and sometimes what they are thinking. It also explores the relationships between thoughts and actions, especially in interactions with others.

- Set up a scene where one person has to order a milkshake from a waiter or waitress in a cafe.

- In order to have the characters really immerse themselves in the thought/feeling, tell the person ordering and the person serving to repeat a thought mantra over and over in their heads.

e.g. I love you ... I love you ... I love you ...
I'm really grumpy ... grumpy ... grumpy ...
I'm bored ... bored ... bored ...
I'm frustrated ... frustrated ... frustrated ...
I'm angry ... angry ... angry ...

- Have the characters play out the ordering of the milkshake while keeping the thought mantra going in their heads.

- After this has been done two or three times, ask students to suggest ideas for varying the moods and the situation.

Questions

1. What did you notice about the body language, emotions, eye contact and the conversation?
2. What things masked the true thoughts and feelings?
3. How do people's moods affect the way we communicate with others?
4. Can you tell what mood people are in if they don't speak?
5. What clues do people give about their moods?
6. How can you tell if your Mum, Dad, teacher, friend is in a good mood?
7. Are there times when you think someone is thinking or feeling a particular way and you are wrong?
8. Do the people you mix with always have the same effect on you?

Ups and downs

Everyone has ups and downs. Sometimes we can change our situation, but sometimes the circumstances are out of our control. There are always better and worse ways of thinking about a situation. The way we think about it will affect the way we feel and act.

Activity: Leunig cartoon

- Distribute **blackline master**, **Leunig cartoon**.
- Allow students a minute to jot down what they think this cartoon is about. Are they reminded of anything when they look at the cartoon?
- Using the questions below, ask for volunteers to respond, looking at the cartoon in different contexts.

Questions

These questions can be applied to the school/peers/family.

1. What tells you how the cartoon character is feeling?
2. What do you think could be happening in this character's world here? (Point to an **up** position on the cartoon.)
3. What are the possible thoughts that this character might have at this point? (Point to an **up** position.)
4. What could be going on for this character here? (Point to a **down** position.)
5. What are possible ways of thinking about being here? (Point to a **down** position.)
6. What does this cartoon remind you of?

The next set of questions allows students to reflect on how a situation can be viewed differently.

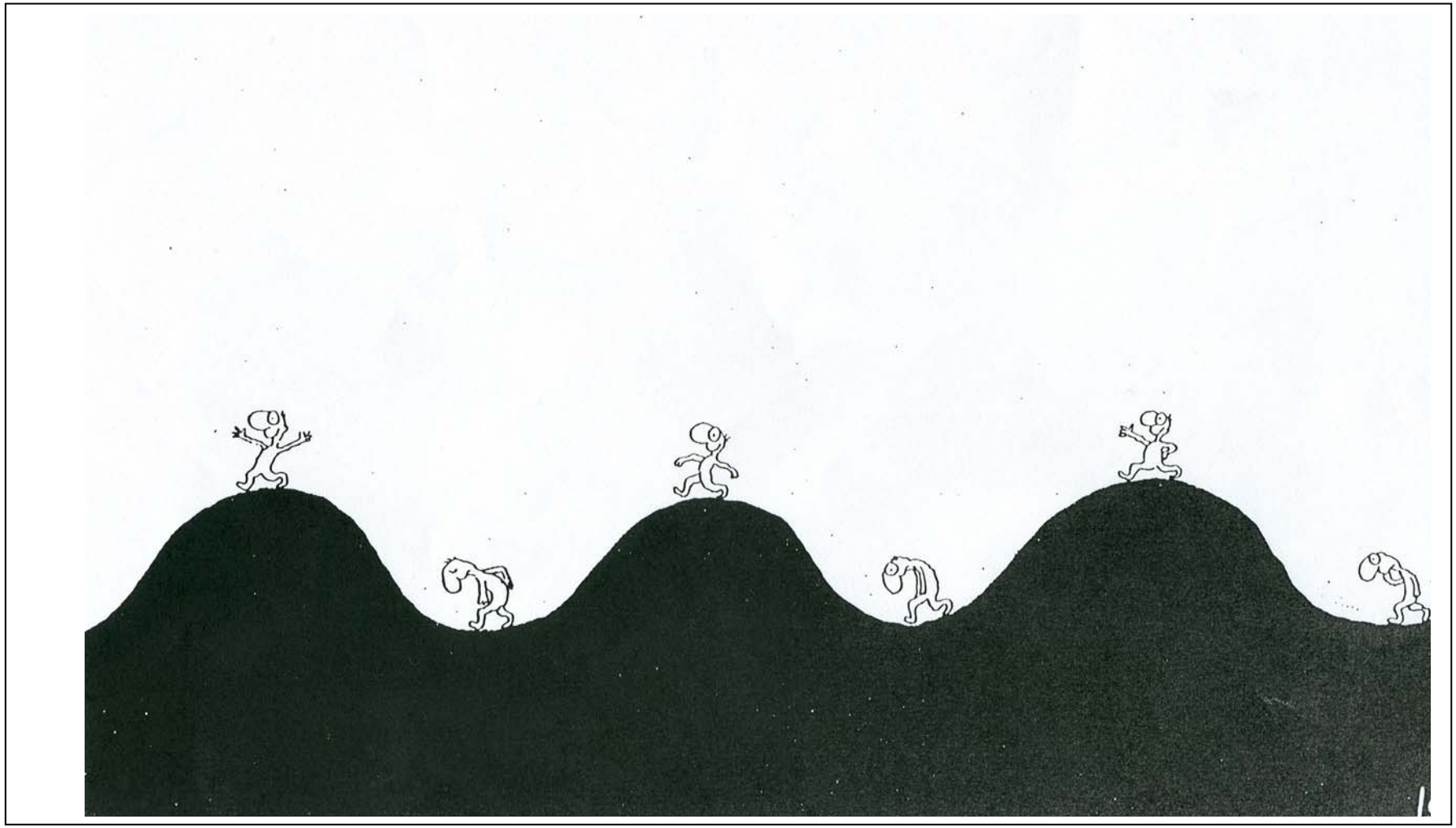
1. In what ways are the views of the class similar/different?
2. Why is it that people see things differently?
3. What is meant by ups and downs? What are other ways of saying this?
4. How could it be that one person's up, is another person's down?
5. What could possibly be positive about a down?
6. What could possibly be negative about an up?

A word of caution
This is another activity where teachers need to be alert to the individual's circumstances and feelings.

A golden opportunity

This discussion offers teachers an opportunity to draw attention to support available within the school for students who might be feeling down. Any student feeling down can talk to the Student Welfare Co-ordinator/Student Services Staff, Year Level Co-ordinator or Chaplain. Give the names of the people who hold these positions and if necessary, explain how and where they may be contacted. Let students know that these people within the school are able to link students to support agencies and services in the community.

Leunig cartoon



Michael Leunig / *The Age* Reprinted by Permission

Thoughts and feelings

This activity is designed to further explore the Leunig cartoon by helping students to:

- move on from an acknowledgement of ups and downs as a normal part of life, to consider how thoughts and feelings are linked
- explore how there can be better or worse ways of thinking about a situation which will affect the way people feel, and the actions they take.

This activity asks students to create their own character of about their age. It can, however, be completed using a character from a set text, or using an adult, such as a historical figure, a scientist, an artist, a famous sportsperson, etc. It might be preferable to do this first (as a class activity), then to complete the activity using their own character.

Activity: Helpful and unhelpful thinking

- Remind students of the discussion about ups and downs in the context of the Leunig cartoon.
- Ask students to brainstorm, individually, in their books, examples of situations in which people their age might feel up or down.
- As a class, call for students to volunteer their response to write on the board. Acknowledge that sometimes people don't know why - they just feel up or down. (This concept will be explored in a later activity).
- Ask students to move into pairs for the next activity.
- Give each pair a copy of the **blackline masters**, **The Slippery Slope of Unhelpful Thinking** and **Reversing Unhelpful Thinking**.
- Ask each pair to make up a character who is about their age. Put the character in a difficult everyday situation, one that might cause the character to think negatively. Ask the students to give the character a fictitious name.
- Together the students should brainstorm the character and the situation, using **The Slippery Slope of Unhelpful Thinking**:
    - What might the character be thinking and feeling? Fill in the Thought and Feeling bubbles
    - What action might the character take? (Fill in the Action bubble). What is the reaction of others? (Fill in the Reaction bubble). What does the character think and feel now? (Fill in the remaining Thought and Feeling bubbles.) See the example below:

Event: *I wasn't invited to Peter's party.*
Thought: *Peter doesn't like me.*
Feeling: unhappiness
Action: become withdrawn and avoid people

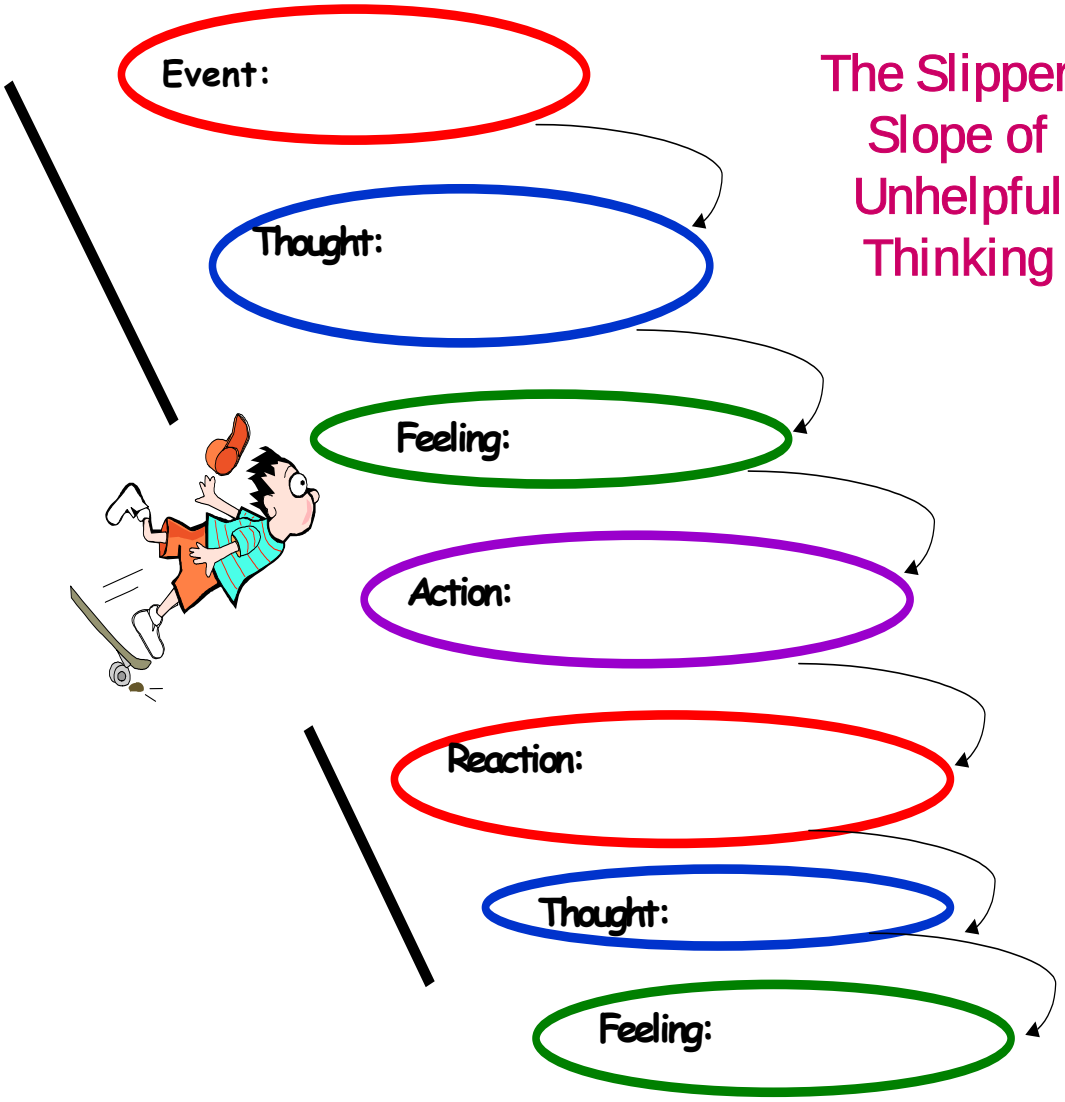
Reaction: others think I am avoiding them so they avoid me
Thought: *Nobody likes me.*
Feeling: despair

- Still in their pairs, ask the students to re-think the character in the situation, by filling in the bubbles in **Reversing Unhelpful Thinking**. Consider how the character's thinking could be more helpful.

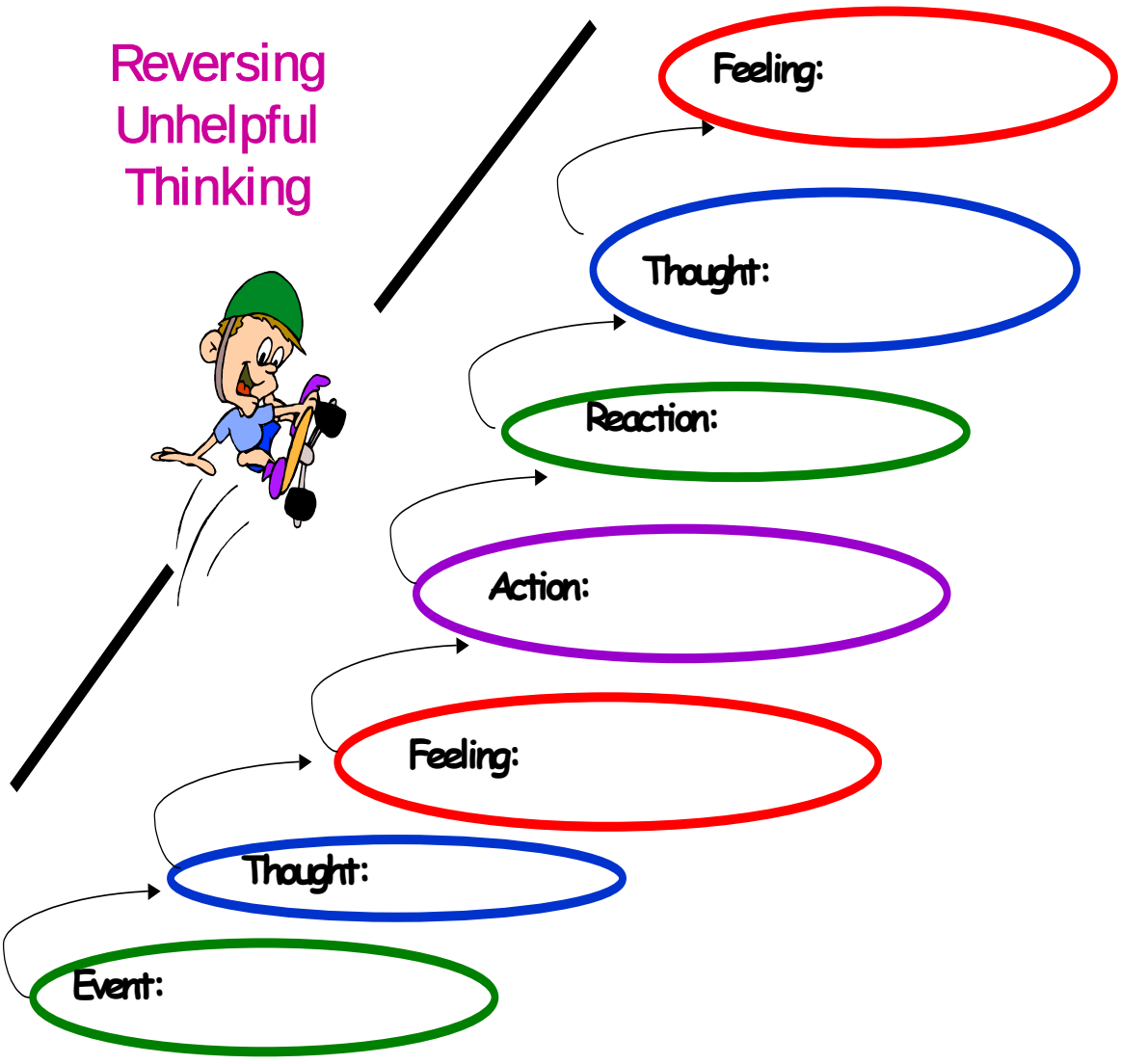
Questions

1. How did the character's thoughts about the situation affect the way he/she felt about him/herself and about others?
2. What effect does more helpful thinking have on feelings?

The Slippery Slope of Unhelpful Thinking



Reversing Unhelpful Thinking



I don't know why - I just feel down

This activity offers students an opportunity to reflect on the idea that often people simply don't know why they feel up or down - they just do. It explores some of the actions people might take in these situations, evaluates the consequences and emphasises the value of taking action to change a situation in order to break a negative mood.

Activity: Helpful and unhelpful actions

- Give each student a copy of the **blackline master**, **I don't know why, I just feel down**, and ask them to fill these out in pencil so that they can change ideas if they wish.

- Ask them to think about times when they feel happy or sad for no reason. What is it like?

- Explain that when people feel down for no reason, it is sometimes hard to do anything about it. It's not like finding another way of looking at an event. Sometimes people just have to find a way to break the mood, usually by doing something else for a while. **Make the point that some things that do make people feel better for the moment, are not always helpful in the long term.**

- Explain that sometimes the actions people take when they feel down for no reason, have short and long term consequences such as:

    - Someone feels down. They go to a movie with a friend. They feel a bit better, especially if they liked the movie!
    - Someone feels lousy. They go and kick the footy with a friend. They feel a bit better, at least while they're kicking the footy. They might even improve their footy skills long-term.
    - Someone feels down. They pick a fight with Mum or Dad. They feel worse and are not allowed to go out on the weekend.

- Ask students to fill out their blackline masters.

- Put the **enlarged version** of the **I don't know why, I just feel down** blackline master on the wall where students can reach it.

- Give each student 2 **Post-it notes** in different fluorescent colours, e.g. pink and yellow.

- With the whole group, ask the students to look at the two sides of their chart.

- Ask them to take one thing from the 'feeling better' side and write it on the pink post it note, then stick it on the large poster.

    - Ask them to take one thing from the 'feel even worse' side and write it on the yellow post it note, then stick it on the large poster.

Questions

1. What are the short term effects of each of the 'feeling better' suggestions?
2. What are the long term effects of the 'feeling better' suggestions?
3. What are the short term effects of the 'feel even worse' suggestions?
4. What are the long term effects of the 'feel even worse' suggestions?
5. Have a student, or a group of students, collate the ideas and make a large colourful version of the chart.

Additional Activity

Suggest to the students that they think about films and television shows they have seen, or books they have read. Have them write about a situation from a book, a movie or a television show in which someone was feeling down. Is there anything this character could have done to make it better or worse? Try to think of at least 3 things which would have made it better.

Decorate these pages with photos, pictures or words describing things that they like, which make them think more positively and feel better when they're feeling down.

Book writing

Teacher reads aloud the picture book, *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good Very Bad Day* (Viorst, J. 1986).

Discuss with the class the messages in this story and the importance of being able to talk about feelings, especially if someone is feeling down.

Allow the class the choice to work by themselves, in pairs or in small groups (no more than 4) to create a similar picture story-book for teenagers. Alternatively students might like to develop a picture story-book called 'How Alexander Came to Have a Terrific, Wonderful, Really Good Day'.

Comedy sketch writing

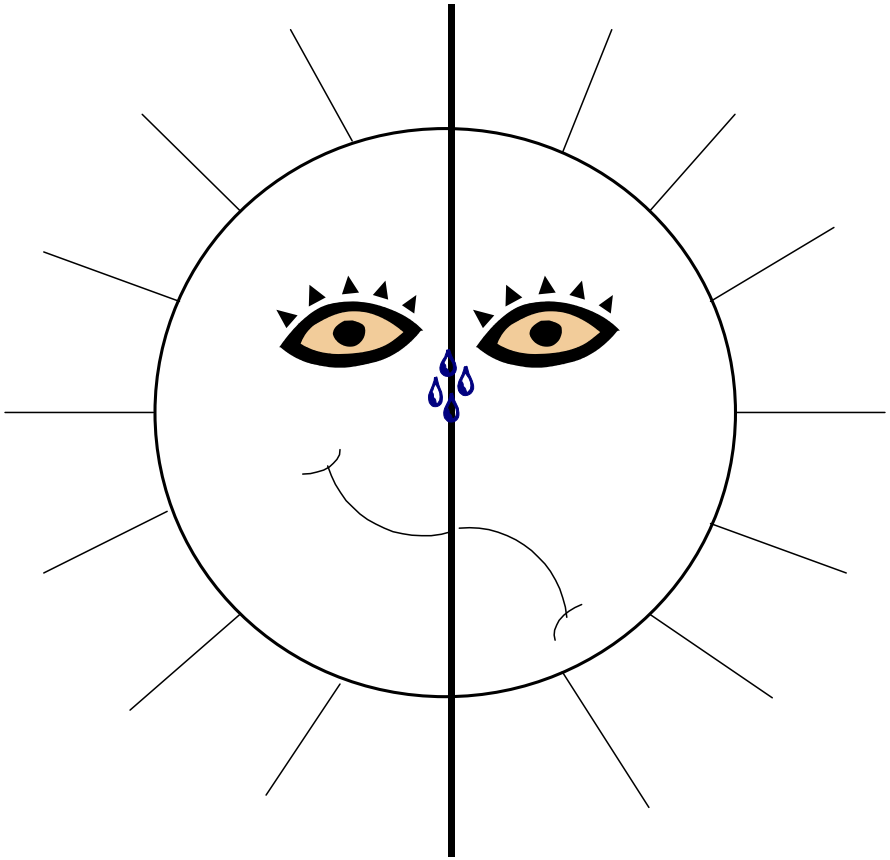
Much stand-up comedy, or skit comedy, depends on exaggeration of events, thoughts and feelings. Sometimes this can make us feel uncomfortable, but it can also help us to see the lighter side of being swept away by our emotions.

- Students work in pairs to devise a comic dialogue between two people trying to outdo each other on either how awful something in their lives has been, or how fantastic something has been.

- Ask for volunteers to present their sketch to the rest of the class.

I don't ***know*** why - I just feel down

What could I do to make me feel better in the long run?



What sort of actions might make me feel even worse in the long run?

Unit 5
Trust

Trust is about the role of trust in relationships. Trust is an important element of feeling connected to others. In our lives we have relationships with many people. We trust people to a greater or lesser extent, according to the nature of the relationship. This unit is designed to explore learning to trust, expecting trust, being trustworthy, and showing respect as critical experiences for emotional well-being.

Key messages

- **Exploring:** Trust in relationships can be a source of ups and downs, and sometimes difficult feelings.
- **Understanding:** How we think about others and our relationships with them will influence how we feel about them and ourselves.
- **Applying:** We can develop strategies for developing and maintaining trust in relationships, setting boundaries around who we trust and the circumstances in which we give our trust, and for dealing with difficult times in our relationships.

In this unit students will have the opportunity to:

- read and discuss stories about trust
- role play a situation that shows how trust can be established
- use circles of trust to explore the boundaries of trust in relationships.

Topics

What's going on here?
What should I do?
Circles of trust

Materials

What's going on here?
- Blackline master: Trust stories

What should I do?
- Blackline master: Trust stories

Circles of trust
- Blackline master: Circles of Trust Diagram
- Blackline master: Circles of Trust Instuctions

What's going on here?

Knowing who to trust can be difficult. The activity below explores the feelings, thinking and actions related to issues of trust.

Activity: Trust scenarios

- Distribute the **blackline master**, ***Trust stories***. Read each story aloud and then, using the following questions, discuss each story with the class.

Questions

These questions can also be used in relation to a text study in which a person is faced with an issue of trust.

1. What is the issue of trust in the story?
2. How does the main character feel because of this?
3. What is the decision that the main character needs to make?
4. What will influence his/her decision?
5. The character needs to talk to someone about his or her situation. Who do you think that person will be? What qualities might be valued in that person? How would the character want that person to respond to him or her?
6. How might the character go about deciding the person in whom he or she will confide?
7. What are the issues for the future?

Additional Activity

Consider a film, television show, or a class text, issues in the news, or issues in history, in which a person faces a similar dilemma. Apply the questions above to the selected text.

Trust stories

Pam's story

I've been having some arguments with Dad lately. He's just got remarried and I overheard his new wife, Jenny, talking to a friend about how she thinks I should change schools. She's OK as a person and she's trying to be my friend, but she's interfering too much. She's not my Mum.

I don't want to talk to Dad about this. And I don't want to upset Mum. She's having enough problems of her own with the situation. I've got two of my closest friends' Mums who I can talk to, so I guess I could talk to one of them. And my best friend's older sister- she's like 22 or 23, I think- she's the sort of person who if I've got a problem, I can go to her. But her Mum's really good friends with my Mum. I need to talk to someone, but I don't know who.

Kim's story

Well, my trust was broken by one of my friends. I told her who I liked, and she told another two of my friends. Then one of them told him and then everyone knew and everyone was teasing me and saying, 'You like Matt'.

You know, I didn't want him to know, because I thought if he knew he wouldn't like me as a friend, and that he would think I'm ugly. Anyway, he did still like me as a friend, but I still didn't feel comfortable. I felt really angry about Jo saying to everyone what I didn't want her to say. How can I ever trust her again? Should I tell her how I feel? Should I tell Matt how I feel?

Chris's story

I was coming home from the city on the train. When we got to North Melbourne station, the Transit Police got on. I panicked because I had spent all my money at Timezone, so I didn't have a ticket. I pretended to search for it and told them I had lost it. They took my name and address and said that my parents would be fined. I told them that Mum and Dad just don't have the money. The police said that if this is really true, then I need to get an adult to contact them. There is no way I can tell Mum and Dad. What should I do?

What should I do?

This small group activity enables students to explore the role of trust in relationships. By using a fictitious situation, students can more easily focus on types of thinking and how they relate to feelings and actions. It may be necessary to conduct this activity in a double session, or spread it over a cycle of two or three classes.

Activity: Trust role-plays

- Students should form groups of four. After reading Pam's, Chris's and Kim's stories again, each group should choose one of these to explore more fully.

- The group should discuss the story and then brainstorm possible advice for the young person at the centre of the story.

- After the brainstorm, the group will develop a brief role-play exploring how Pam, Chris or Kim can work out what they could do in their particular situation and who they might be able to trust.

- The group needs to choose someone to be the story's central character, then decide on three other people who might be involved. For the stories above, you might choose from:

    - Pam's story: Pam, her best friend, a friend's Mum, her step-Mum, her best friend's sister
    - Kim's story: Kim (14), Matt (14), Jo (13), Kim's mother (41)
    - Chris's story: Chris, a friend, a parent, a teacher, a brother or sister, a transit police officer.

- Students need to 'think themselves inside' the character they are playing and consider how their actions, reactions and responses might contribute to, or undermine a trusting relationship. They need to consider:

    - Who am I playing?
    - How would my character feel about the situation? What might my character be thinking about self and others which would influence the way they were feeling?
    - What would my character do?
    - What would my character think the other characters should do?
    - Who can my character trust?

- Depending on time available, all groups, or a selection of them, could perform their role-play for the whole class. Each performance should be followed by a class discussion based on the questions below. (The questions could be reproduced on a handout).

Questions

- What was happening? What difficulties were the characters facing?
- What decisions did they choose to make? How were these decisions affected by their thinking and feelings about the situation, themselves and others.
- What are the type of relationships shown in the role-play? Were some more helpful than others? What might change to improve trust in the relationships?
- Why did the main characters choose to trust or not to trust other characters?
- So what does this tell us about how people decide to trust someone? Which actions increased the level of trust between characters? Which actions decreased trust? What does this show about how to support someone who chooses to confide in you?
- Now what would we look for in a close friend? Who else might we turn to if we needed to talk to someone about - feeling sad? family conflict? seeing someone steal something?

Additional Activity

This activity could be structured so that students, either individually or in small groups, develop a written script rather than a performance.

Circles of trust

In our lives we have relationships with many people. We trust people to a greater or lesser extent according to the nature of our relationship.

Activity: Text Study: Character web

One of the important things we need to learn in managing relationships is where we set the boundaries of trust. It can be just as unhelpful to trust everybody all the time, as it is never to trust anyone. This activity explores those boundaries.

- Divide the class into pairs. Give each pair the **blackline master**, **Circles of Trust Diagram**. Explain how the circle diagram is used to 'map' the extent to which a person would talk about things with others.

- Ask each pair to choose a character from the text they have been studying. You may prefer to use a film or a television program that they have seen lately.

- Ask students to use the circle diagram to show the relationships of their chosen character to other characters in the text (include animals as characters). Place the name of the chosen character in the centre circle and put names of other characters in the various surrounding circles, according to how close the students perceive each one is to the chosen character.

Questions

1. What is the range of characters with whom this character interacts? Find a word to describe them.
2. What similar and different things does the character talk about with the people in each circle?
3. Does he/she have anyone with whom to share private thoughts and feelings?
4. Does he/she have someone to talk to when he/she is upset? Who would you recommend?
5. Ask 4 or 5 pairs to show their diagrams and justify their positioning of characters.

Additional Activity: Personal writing

Ask the students to write a letter from their chosen character to another character, explaining how their relationship has been strengthened or weakened, and describing how they feel about this.

Activity: My own circles of trust

This activity extends the concepts of the previous activity into the students' own social worlds. Students will mark on the diagram people they know according to how much they would confide in them about personal information. (See **blackline**

master, ***Circles of Trust Instructions***). It helps students to explore their own circles of family, friends and others, and to consider how they trust and depend on different people in different situations.

> ***A word of caution*** *sometimes there will be students in the class who have had their trust broken, in quite serious ways, by people on whom they depended. Participation in this exercise should be optional and no-one should be forced to share their information with others.*
>
> *It is important that students are encouraged to look for people in their social world to whom they can turn if they need some support. Many students will have been familiar with a similar activity from primary school in identifying safe houses or people to go to if they feel threatened by someone in the playground, or on the way home from school. This is another opportunity to remind students of the support network available in the school, and links to support services and agencies in the community.*

- Give the students another copy of the **blackline master**, ***Circles of Trust Diagram***.
- With the whole group, explain the nature of the circle diagram as described in ***Circles of Trust Instructions***.
- Brainstorm what sorts of subjects might go into each circle. Students could use a different colour for each circle and make a legend to show what is covered in each circle.
- Explain that each student will place people from their own lives in the various circles of the diagram. Circles of Trust Instructions shows a list of possibilities to help students make a start.
- Allow time for each student to complete the diagram.

Questions

Answer these questions in relation to each of the people in your inner circle:

1. What do they have in common?
2. What are some of the subjects that you can talk about with people in your inner circle?
3. What might be the advantages of having lots of people in your inner circle?
4. What might the disadvantages be of having lots of people in your inner circle?
5. Why is it that some people can talk a lot with one another, and still not be friends?
6. Why is it that some people hardly talk at all, and are still friends?

7. How can some people fight with their friends all the time yet still stay friends?
8. Are there any people you trust even more than your friends?

Additional Activity: Personal writing

Complete a piece of personal writing in response to one of the following:

- Remember a time when someone you trusted was there for you when you needed him/her?
- Remember a time when you were anxious about something, and someone helped you through it?
- Tell someone who helped you through an anxious time, how much you appreciated the help. Write a short note to him/her.
- Write a description of someone you really trust. In your description say what it is about the person that makes you trust him/her.

Additional Activity: A trusted person

Working in small groups, use the information covered in class to create an advertisement (print, radio or television) for a big brother, big sister, parent, teacher, or friend.

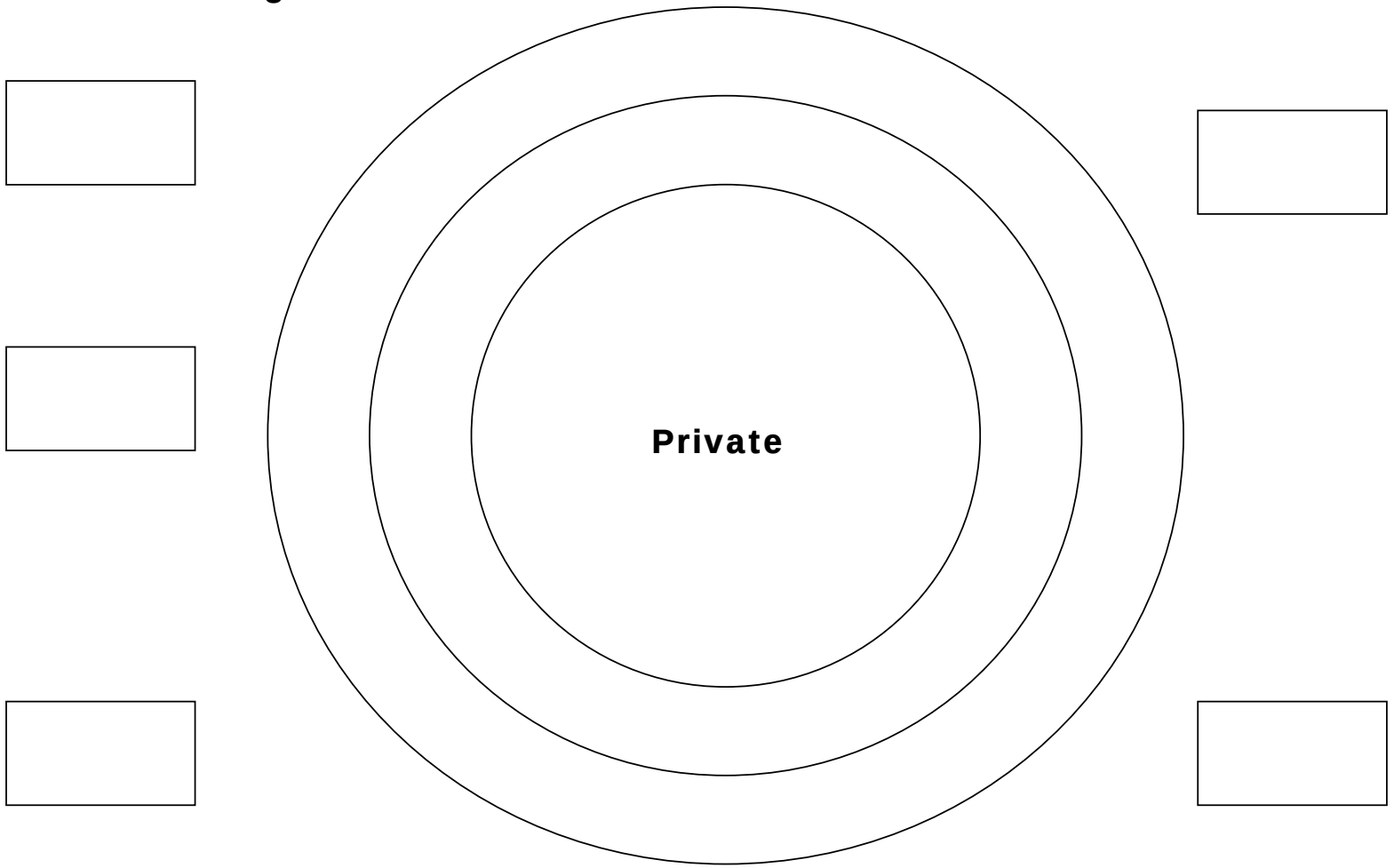
Think about:

- the qualities of trust considered important in such a person,
- the audience
- how you will communicate your ideas and requirements to the audience
- the people replying to the advertisement. How will you check that they are really what you are looking for? (Interviewing applicants could be another activity.)

Songs

Make a list of songs about trust – it could be about trust being broken. Find a favourite one. What were the thoughts, feelings and actions of the central figure in the song? What advice would you give to the central figure?

Circles of trust diagram



Circles of trust instructions

Before starting, ensure you know the meanings of these words:

- confidential
- personal
- private

How are they different? If you are not sure, check a dictionary, then write the definitions into your workbook.

The circles

1. The small circle in the centre (Circles of Trust Diagram) is your private space where you would put the thoughts and feelings that you want to keep to yourself.

2. The next circle is for the really important things, confidential things. The people in this circle are people you can really trust and with whom you feel really comfortable.

3. The next circle is for the things that are quite personal, but which you wouldn't mind some other people knowing. In here you would put the people with whom you are reasonably familiar and share some things.

4. The next circle is for the day-to-day management of your life, e.g. homework, sport, shopping, films, music. In here you would put the people with whom you would have a casual chat about these things.

Don't forget that issues and people in the various circles will be different for each individual. People move in and out of our inner circles as we develop and change. There can even be quite a lot of movement in a single day!

The boxes

The boxes around the circles represent services which you might use instead of, or in addition to, talking with people from within your circles, e.g. community health centre, Kids Helpline, GP.

Some tips

- People can be represented by roles/relationships/initials rather than names, e.g. friend's Mum instead of Mrs Smith, or English teacher instead of Mr Cooke.
- There can be different numbers of people in different circles. In some circles there might not be anyone, in others there might be more than one person.
- When filling in the circles, consider people within and outside the school.

Here are some possibilities for inclusion in your circles:

Family	Friends	School	Other
Mum	best friend	best friend	pet
Dad	neighbour	subject teacher	sports coach
brother	team mates	class mate	priest
sister	people you go out with	Student Welfare Co-ordinator	police officer
stepmother	people you work with	coach	music/dance teacher
stepfather	best friend's Mum/Dad	home group teacher	boss at work
grandparent	cousin	canteen worker	family doctor
guardian	girlfriend/ boyfriend	Principal	
aunt/uncle		school nurse	

Unit 6 Expectations

There are many times when people are expected to behave in certain ways in certain situations because of their age, their gender, their family, or their culture. When people are different, or step outside what is expected, they run the risk of being judged and labelled.

Key messages

- **Exploring:** We have a range of feelings in relation to perceptions of expectations, success and failure.
- **Understanding:** What we think about our own and others' expectations of us, and about success and failure, will influence how we feel.
- **Applying:** There are more helpful and less helpful ways of thinking about, and responding to expectations, success and failure.

In this unit students will have the opportunity to:

- discuss similarities and differences in the assumptions we make, and the expectations we have of people
- report on the way young people are presented in popular culture and the media
- use a problem solving approach to examine the short and long term impacts on young people's feelings and responses to others' high expectations of them
- conduct an interview to explore the similarities and differences of expectations of young people, now and in the past
- engage in a range of activities to explore the concepts of success and failure.

Topics

Expectations
Representations of young people in the media
Things people say
Adolescence: then and now
Success and failure

Materials

Expectations

- Photographs of people, from a range of sources, e.g. magazines, newspapers, school, who could be subject to expectations. The people could be well-known or otherwise.
- Short newspaper articles which show expectations of well-known people, e.g. politicians, sportspeople.

Representations of young people in the media

- Examples of media
- Materials for making a magazine

Success and failure

- Blackline master: *Failed*
- Materials to make cards for activity, Considering success

Expectations

This activity is designed to assist students to explore similarities and differences between what others expect of us, and what we expect of them.

Activity: How do expectations come about?

This activity is designed as a means of exploring ideas about expectations.

- Talk with the class about the idea that people have expectations of others, and we all have expectations of ourselves.

- Use **photographs of people**, well-known or otherwise, who could be subject to a set of expectations because of their age, gender, ethnic or cultural background, or position in society. Or, read short **newspaper articles** depicting expectations of people such as:

    - the Prime Minister or other politicians
    - athletes
    - rock stars
    - models
    - the Australian Cricket captain
    - older people
    - students
    - housewives
    - businessmen
    - young people
    - surfers

- For each article, discuss what might be expected of each person in terms of:

    - what they should be good at and not good at
    - how they should look
    - how they should behave
    - what they might do in their spare time
    - what they should achieve.

Questions

1. What are the similarities between our expectations of the various people?
2. What are the differences between our expectations of the various people?

Representations of young people in the media

This topic enables students to examine the range of ways teenagers are represented in the media and popular culture, and how these reflect expectations of young people in today's society.

Activity: Teen Trends

- Tell the class that they are going to be reporters for a new magazine called *Teen Trends*. They will be trying to give an accurate picture of the way today's teenagers are represented in the media and other forms of popular culture.

- Divide the class into groups of 4 or 5. Ask each group to choose some aspect of the media or popular culture on which to report. It is important that there is a variety of materials for the class to use:

    - teenage magazines
    - television magazines
    - national, state and local newspapers
    - cartoons, comics
    - computer games
    - Internet and websites
    - brochures/advertisements/fashion journals
    - sporting and hobby/interest magazines
    - music lyrics and MTV clips on video
    - TV programs, including documentaries and 'soapies'
    - videos and DVDs.

- From within the broad category, the group should select ONE item, e.g. one magazine, one comic, one television program, etc.

- Each group will consider how teenagers are represented in their selected material and report back to the whole class. Use the following questions to focus the discussion and report back.

Questions

1. What is your chosen material? e.g. *Dolly* magazine.
2. What aspect of teenagers' lives is the focus of your material? e.g. fashion, lifestyle.
3. Who is the audience for the material?
4. In this material as a whole, what are the different ways that teenagers are represented? Are these different for boys/girls? Are they different for teenagers from different cultural backgrounds?
5. If this were the only source of information you had about teenagers, what would you know about them?

A framework for a final report

- Ask the groups to write responses to the following about their chosen item:

    - Ask each group to select one item from their magazine/program/newspaper to examine more closely. It could be an article, a song, a photograph, film sequence, cartoon, or a story.
    - What is its purpose? Is it to persuade, inform, entertain, or report?
    - How is this done? Consider camera angles, anecdotes, catchy words, rhyme, similes, metaphors, shades of light and dark, dialogue, etc.
    - Complete the following sentence:

    In this item, the writer/editor/designer/photographer wants people to believe that teenagers are…

- Have the groups report back to the whole class, describing the impressions given of teenagers in their chosen material and how these are created.

Questions

These questions enable students to reflect on how people are represented in the media and make preparations for their final report.

1. What is the range of ways young people are represented in media and popular culture?
2. How does this information compare with students' own experiences?
3. Why are these images of teenagers promoted in the media? What other kinds of images could be depicted?
4. What are the similarities between different sections of the media in their representations of young people?
5. What are the differences between different sections of the media in their representations of young people?
6. What does your investigation tell us about what is expected of teenagers by:

    - families?
    - friends?
    - school?
    - communities?
    - other teenagers?

7. Are there any conflicts between the expectations of these different groups?
8. What do you experience when there are conflicting expectations of you? How do you try to deal with this?
9. In all the representations of teenagers what was similar to your own experience of being a teenager? What was different?

The Final Report

Individually or in pairs, have students produce the report on media representations of teenagers for *Teen Trends* magazine. This may incorporate writing, photo collage, headlines, phrases, key words…

Additional Activity: Letter to the Editor

Have students write a letter to the editor/producer to praise or criticise the representation of teenagers in a magazine article, television program, computer game, etc. In writing these letters, students will need to pay attention to appropriate language, tactfulness, grammar, and layout.

Things people say

This activity is designed to explore ways of responding to the expectations that people may have of young people.

Activity: Discussing expectations

- Discuss with the whole class the idea that sometimes people have expectations of us, and living up to those expectations can create anxiety. Relatives, guardians, teachers, coaches and friends might have an expectation of what a young person is capable of in sport, hobbies and activities external to school, in school work, or in tasks around the home/place where they live.

- Give the class a list of 'things people say' that place pressure on people to perform/do better/be grateful.

    - 'You can do better than that.'
    - 'What did I tell you?'
    - 'Everything I do is for you.'
    - 'You'll do better next time, I know.'
    - 'Hurry up!'
    - 'Don't keep me waiting.'
    - 'Why can't you get it right.'
    - 'Don't be a loser.'
    - 'Just be quiet and listen.'
    - 'Just do it.'
    - 'That's just not good enough.'
    - 'You're just not trying.'
    - 'I just want to be proud of you.'

- Ask students to add to the list. Write their suggestions on the board.

Questions

1. What are the messages in these sentences?
2. Who could be saying them?
3. What are the expectations of the people saying them?
4. Imagine the thoughts of the people who are saying these things. What might they be feeling? What might they think that other people expect of them? (e.g. as a parent/friend/teacher/coach).
5. What might the thoughts be of the person to whom these things have been said? What might the thinking be underneath these feelings – about themselves and the other person? How might this affect what they do next?

Activity: Writing descriptions

- With students working in pairs, ask them to think of a situation in which someone might say some of these things to a young person. Work together to write a short description of the situation (Tell the students that they will be handing their

description to another pair when they have finished). Their description could relate to any of the following situations:

- making something
- a teacher returning work to a student
- winning/losing an individual swimming or athletics race
- losing an item of clothing
- being in trouble at school, home, or community group
- achieving 85% on a test
- failing a test.

- When they have finished, ask them to hand their writing to another pair. Ask them to read the description and discuss ways the young person might respond that:

    - let the other person know how hurtful the words are
    - let the other person know how the young person feels when someone says these things.

- Ask the students to devise a list of more helpful comments that the other person could have made.

Adolescence: then and now

This 'take home' activity is designed to enable students to explore similarities and differences between the experiences of adolescence now, and in the past.

Activity: Interview

- Ask students to devise a set of questions to ask their parents, grandparents or other adults about what it felt like to be 14 in their day. Students could work in pairs or small groups to create the initial set of questions, then back in class they will listen to the suggested questions of other students and decide which ones they will use.

- Ask students to think of questions which will help them to understand:

    - What was important to young people then.
    - What they were expected to be able to do.
    - What they were allowed/not allowed to do.
    - What they did do in their spare time.
    - What school was like.
    - Who their friends were and how their parents felt about their friends.
    - What was difficult for them.
    - What was easy for them, what fears they had.
    - How they had fun.

- Have students interview their chosen subject either by taking notes or taping the interview and later transcribing notes. Students will need some assistance with how to approach such an interview with a parent or other adult. They will also need some guidelines on listening, note-taking and point form summary.

- Students can present their findings in a variety of ways, including a talk to the class, a video, a written biography, or a debate.

Topics for debate

- It was tougher growing up in the 1960s/70s/80s than it is now.
- It is easier growing up now than it was in the 1960s/70s/80s.
- Being a teenager is being a teenager… Nothing really changes.

A word of caution
This activity requires sensitivity to students' family backgrounds. For a range of reasons, some students are uncomfortable completing activities which involve providing information about their families.

Success and failure

This activity assists students to explore the concepts of success and failure, and to see that definitions change according to individual values, particular age or cultural groups, and in particular situations. We look at situations from different perspectives and reframe notions of success and failure.

Activity: Considering success

This is an activity for groups of up to eight students and encourages students to consider a broader range of ways to feel successful.

- Make up a set of **cards** for each group. Each card should have written on it something that might be considered a measure of success. They should include big and public measures of success, such as being rich, being famous, having a well-paid job, as well as less obvious ones such as being happy, enjoying your work, being loved, and being a good friend. Students could make these cards.

- In their groups, each student places his/her card on a continuum, with most successful at one extreme and least successful at the other. Students have to justify their choices and can move each other's cards.

- Groups could come together at the end and compare their ladders, discussing the differences between the various choices. The discussion may be guided by using the questions below.

Questions

1. How does the media present images of success?
2. Are these images a measure of success?
3. Does someone's appearance tell you whether or not he or she is successful?
4. What is the meaning of success?

Additional Activity: Personal writing

Students write in their workbooks about a famous person who they consider to be successful. It can be an historical figure, or a contemporary person. Ask students to explain the qualities that make the person successful.

Activity: Dealing with feelings of failure

Provide students with copies of **blackline master**, ***Failed***. Read the poem aloud as students follow from the blackline master.

Questions

As a class, or individually, ask students to respond to these questions:

1. In what situation might the person have experienced this failure?
2. What does the repetition of 'Not again' tell you about how the student is feeling?
3. What causes the physical reactions of coldness and shakiness?
4. Why might the student think that everyone knew the result?
5. How could the student feel that 'the whole of me has failed'?
6. What thoughts is the student having about Grandma's reaction? How could these thoughts be turned into positive thoughts?
7. Brainstorm helpful ways of answering the questions, *What do I do now? How do I go on?*

Activity: Different ways of responding to failure

- In pairs students choose to be either the student or the person they tell of their failure. This person might be a friend, a sibling, a parent/guardian, a family friend, or an adult at school. The student playing the role of the other person should show support and sympathy. Think carefully about how the student would respond.

- Now change roles. One student plays Grandma, the other takes on the student role. How does Grandma respond? Disappointment, anger, sadness…?

- Allow sufficient time in the role-plays to explore both the positive and negative reactions to the news of the student's failure.

Questions

1. How did the response of the listener affect the person revealing that he or she had failed the essay/test?
2. When the listener responds supportively, what message does this give to the other person about him or herself?
3. When the listener responds negatively, what message does this give to the other person about him or herself?

Activity: Finding the right words

We often find it easier to encourage others than to encourage ourselves. This activity finishes the unit on a positive note, and provides students with helpful messages they can give to others – and to themselves!

- On the black/white board do a class brainstorm of things to say that support someone towards feeling better when they have experienced some sort of failure or disappointment.

- Ask a student or two to make these into a colourful poster to hang up in the classroom.

Failed

Not again

I've tried so hard.
I really have.

I went all shaky
and cold inside.
I didn't know what to do.
I feel like the whole of me has failed.

Not again

I've tried so hard.
I really have.

I felt like everyone knew I'd failed.
I feel like such a loser.
How will I tell Grandma?
What will she think of me?

What do I do now?
How do I go on?

PART 3

More about Teaching and Learning

Issues for teachers

Schools implementing the strategies of the Gatehouse Project will identify areas in which they need further professional development, for example, teaching and learning strategies, student participation or classroom management, and issues of a more sensitive nature. Often the most useful professional development is that undertaken with colleagues, exploring and sharing new and existing ideas and practice. The materials in Part Three: *More about Teaching and Learning*, can be used by groups of teachers such as those in Key Learning Areas, inter-disciplinary teams, year level groups and pastoral care groups, to develop and explore shared understandings of pedagogy. This can be particularly useful for first year teachers, or teachers new to the school.

This section of the *Teaching Resources* provides some opportunities for teams of teachers to undertake professional development together, using the articles as a reference. The questions listed below will be useful to initiate discussion, and can be applied to a range of the subject areas covered in the articles:

Questions for initiating discussion

- What is happening in our school in this area?
- What is our current practice in this area?
- Where is our relevant policy located?
- Do we need to review this policy?
- Who should be responsible for reviewing this policy?
- Do we need further information or training in this area? If so, what, how, when, where and who?
- Are there other members of the school community who need to know more about this area? e.g. students, parents, other staff.
- What are our resources in this area? Do we need to update our resources?

Group work

Working in groups is a large part of a student's school life. Whether it be a small group for Drama, a larger group in Sport, or a co-curricular group engaged in planting a school vegetable garden, the composition of the group can lead to the successful completion of aims, or it can result in their disintegration. Trust between individuals working on a group project is not automatic. Building trust between students and their classmates and between students and their teachers takes time. Trust, a feeling of safety in the group and a feeling that the group will be able to work co-operatively are important considerations when establishing groups. No matter what the project, group members will be diverse, and personal opinions and views will arise when the group is carrying out its task.

There are steps which teachers can take to minimise the risk and maximise the trust when undertaking group work:

- Use a group leader for the small groups.
- Make sure that all students have been trained in aspects of leading groups.
- Remind all students of some of the simple things such as ensuring everyone is listened to with respect and that everyone follows the classroom agreements.
- Ensure that everyone in the group has a clear idea of the purpose for the group work and also of the process to be followed.

The key messages at this stage are that:

- people share their experiences, thoughts and feelings so that all can learn from those experiences
- people engage respectfully, yet with critical awareness, in discussion about these experiences
- people cannot be given specific instructions about how to manage different experiences; there are no recipes or one right way.

When establishing groups try to keep the them small. Have the group sit in a circle, either on the floor or in chairs that have been rearranged. In this way every student can be seen and heard, and there is less chance of his/her opinion being unintentionally unvalued.

Group work should take place in the context of classroom agreements (see Unit 1). It is preferable for the teachers and students to collaborate on the development of these agreements, but if this is not possible, then the students need to be aware of the following three factors for successful group work:

- Showing care ensures that questions and answers are generated in a climate of respect for motivating values, and for existing skills and knowledge.
- Showing respect ensures that the confidences of those taking the risk to share their stories and experiences don't go outside the group.
- Being critically aware ensures that the task remains challenging. Ask and answer probing questions in order to establish the challenge to manage things differently and better in the future. There is no place for criticism or blame in the group.

By establishing classroom or group agreements, sources of conflict and unnecessary risk are minimized. Conflict and risk in group situations are not completely unavoidable, and we shouldn't expect them to be, but the possibility shouldn't prevent teachers from undertaking group sharing activities related to the issues of promoting emotional well-being. Allow time for the group to develop the trust needed for effective and meaningful group work.

Co-operative and small group work

As the concept of co-operative group work has become more popular and familiar, it is important to consider the impact of gender on group work. It is a good idea to take time to reflect on some of its distinguishing features and review your classroom practices in light of some understandings about gender issues in education.

Co-operative learning was promoted as one of many new teaching approaches that would broaden the range of strategies catering for the needs of individual students and a range of learning styles. Many teachers adopted it, based on research at the time, as a teaching and learning strategy best suited to girls' needs for learning in a social context. However, as further research and observation have shown, there is no one fixed style of teaching that will suit all girls, just as there is no fixed style that will suit all boys. Teachers need to be looking for teaching styles that match the particular learning styles of groups, whether they are made up of girls, of boys, or boys and girls. Co-operative group work is one of these styles or strategies, but it is not the only one.

It is important to see that co-operative learning is not necessarily the same thing as group work. The distinguishing features that follow have been adapted from the work of Allard et al (1994).

- Goal similarity: where all members of the group are working towards a similar end point.
- Positive interdependence: the group's success relies on the group working together with roles, and tasks being divided amongst its members.
- Accountability: individual group members are encouraged to support each other. As well as making their own contribution, group members are also responsible for each other.
- Explicit learning of interpersonal skills: effective teamwork is reliant on both task oriented and group management skills, many of which will have to be taught.

Starting group work

Before starting co-operative work in small groups the whole class should revisit its classroom agreement to reinforce the concepts of active listening while respecting the views and feelings of others; trust and acceptance, and the feeling that the classroom is a positive secure environment where individuals are valued and are free to express opinions and make suggestions.

Assigning roles for group work is a means of creating effective group work. Giving responsibility to each of the team members ensures that each person feels positively regarded. How to distribute the roles is a part of the process towards successful groups. When one student feels another is regularly given key responsibilities, conflicts can emerge. Furthermore, doing so limits the opportunities for each group member to add to and enhance individual skills.

There is a variety of techniques available for sharing leadership roles and avoiding conflicts that may arise when the same students take on roles of responsibility. Some of these include random allocation of name tags with the role title written on it; a 'lucky dip' of roles, or choose a colour or number which is tagged to a particular role. Students can keep a checklist of the different roles and who has done what, so that everyone has a chance to experience the different roles, and to avoid repetition. Here are some roles involved in group work:

- leader
- recorder
- reporter
- organiser,
- timekeeper
- team support clarifier
- observer, encourager
- checker (are we still on the topic?)
- resource collector
- researcher, publisher, designer, artist
- thinking strategist, as identified in de Bono's *Six thinking Hats*
- team member/other helper, apprentice to learn from a peer or no defined role yet.

For further information on co-operative learning and roles in group work, see Hill & Hill 1990, *The Collaborative Classroom: A Guide to co-operative learning*.

Once roles are allocated, and students are working on their particular task, the teacher may need to intervene to assist the group to resolve any differences and disputes (see Conflict resolution, page 149) that may occur while the task is in progress. Conflicts can arise when students aren't working co-operatively, or fulfilling the requirements of their role. When the teacher intervenes it is as a problem solver. The teacher takes some time to resolve the problem with the students, and, in doing so, models problem solving skills to the students. Once students have these skills they can use them in future situations. Conflict resolution skills are useful skills for developing the kind of positive class and school environment in which young people feel secure and valued when making their contributions.

Disclosure

In any programs or classroom discussions that focus on emotional well-being, and explore and develop strategies for dealing with them, it is likely that students may reveal or disclose personal issues of concern. It is essential for all staff to be aware of school procedures and processes for referring concerns about a student.

In undertaking any of the activities in the *Gatehouse project: Teaching resources for emotional well*-being, unintentional disclosure by students of personal information about themselves or their families (which they may regret later), may occur. In order to minimise this possibility, it is important for teachers to clarify to students that, while some of the classroom activities may be about personal values and issues, they are explored in an objective context, and students do not have to talk about their own personal experiences.

The technique of protective interruption, where students are interrupted before they do disclose or reveal something very personal, is a useful strategy to prevent or forestall inappropriate revelations or comments. If, however, a student does disclose something personal that is troubling them, then it is important to:

- avoid discussing the information in the class
- accept the information, by an eyes, head or hand signal, to acknowledge that it has been heard
- accept possible associated feelings, without soliciting any further details, 'that sounds sad or frightening'
- leave time at the end of the class to acknowledge the student, and to suggest making time for private discussions about the issue
- remember to follow up this offer by meeting with the student.

If the disclosure is related to physical injury as a result of abuse or neglect and/or sexual abuse it is mandatory that the disclosure be reported. The teacher must inform the designated teacher or the principal. The principal will then contact the appropriate personnel.

If the teacher has reasonable grounds for believing that a student is likely to suffer significant harm from physical injury or sexual abuse and that the parents are unlikely to protect that student, then they must act on those beliefs.

More information about teachers and their legal responsibilities at school can be found in Hopkins, A (2000) *Teachers, students and the law: a quick reference guide for teachers*, Victoria Law Foundation Publishing, Melbourne, Victoria.

Disclosures of sexual identity or sexual preference do not need to be reported in the same way. It may be that the student tells a teacher that someone in his/her family is gay, lesbian or bisexual or that the student thinks he/she might not be exclusively heterosexual. Unless there is a concern that the student may be at some clear risk, the information is confidential. The student may be seeking some support and assistance so it is again important the teachers know who the support people are, and what support services are available in the school and in the local and wider community. It is important for students exploring their sexual preferences and identity, to know they can trust the person in the school in whom they confide.

There are three major levels of response to a situation where a student has disclosed something about which he or she has expressed a serious concern. The following provides a range of questions to consider in such a situation:

1 Protect the student

- How much confidentiality can you guarantee?
- Is the technique of protective interruption appropriate?
- Are you taking the student seriously in the expressed concerns?
- Have you clarified what you think you have been told? Rephrase what you have been told. For example, 'You are worried that …', 'You feel that …'.
- Are you considering other viewpoints as well as that of the student?
- Have you kept everything in perspective and retained objectivity?
- Is there someone else who is in a better position to help the student? These people may be more experienced, more knowledgeable, have more time, or have more ready access to a range of specialist professionals or agencies.

2 Protect yourself

- If promises relating to confidentiality are made to the student, can they be kept?
- Is there anyone else who needs to be informed?
- Do you know the limits of your expertise?
- What is your role?
- Do you need more time? You may need time to clarify your own response. You may need time to identify sources of specialist support and other information such as costs, location, waiting lists, etc.
- Do you have someone to support you?
- Is a secondary consultation necessary or appropriate?
- Do you need to refer to the student to someone else?
- Do you know the most suitable referral pathways?
- Do you need to keep notes about this matter?
- Have you considered how to ensure the safe and secure storage of any note or file?
- How would you deal with the situation if it became a public issue?

3 Empower

- Are you listening?
- Are you hearing what is being said?
- Are you acknowledging the competence of the student to deal with their problem?
- Are you allowing the student ownership of the problem and possible solutions?
- Are you making any questionable assumptions?
- Have you consulted the student before involving other people?
- Are you encouraging the student to explore a range of viewpoints and options?

A whole school environment with policies and procedures in place that affirm diversity and work to reduce discrimination and harassment, provides the safe and supportive climate in which students feel able to seek out help and advice.

Journals and personal writing

Journals have long been used in English and other subjects to enable students to write about themselves and to explore their feelings. In the Gatehouse Project, journals and personal writing are seen as a valuable component of the curriculum materials. It is important for teachers to consider both the possible benefits and pitfalls of using journals in the classroom. Many students will already be familiar with some form of personal reflective writing. But not everyone is always comfortable about this style of writing. Following are some ideas for introducing journals in different ways, together with some advice about confidentiality and ownership of student writing.

Before you begin: confidentiality and ownership of personal writing

Whatever is decided in relation to content and style, care needs to be taken in explaining the parameters of confidentiality to students. It is unwise of teachers to offer absolute confidentiality to students, as this is very hard to guarantee. It is recommended that teachers tell students that they will keep material confidential except where there is an indication that the student is being harmed by someone, is harming him/herself, or is harming someone else. Students need to be aware that their choice of content is very important because anything put in writing always has the potential to become public, for example, a journal could be lost and read by the person/s who find it. Where the journal is only to be seen by the teacher and the student, confidentiality is still hard to guarantee as the student's writing may contain issues of concern to the teacher. These may be related to disclosures of abuse (physical and/or sexual) suggestions of, or thoughts about, self-harming practices that either need to be reported or discussed with another professional.

It is recommended that teachers, and, where possible, faculties, understand the processes and procedures that should be followed within the school where students disclose worrying information in journals. This could involve discussion with the Principal, Student Services Staff, or Year Level Co-ordinator and then referral to outside support services professionals. Issues to do with confidentiality are closely related to the Gatehouse Project themes of security/trust and positive regard, so discussions with students about these issues are very important in setting a positive climate for undertaking future activities.

It is crucial that students and teachers have a clear and agreed understanding of what is expected of content and style and about who will have access to the material included in the journal. This may be decided by teachers or, preferably, by students and teachers working together to reach an agreed position. It may be useful to have a set of written criteria issued to the students at the outset. Once these criteria have been determined, they can be revisited throughout the term/semester/length of curriculum focus.

There are many ways of handling the material included in journals:

- setting a specific amount to be written each class/day/week, e.g. 10 lines/half a page/ a page
- setting a time frame, e.g. 10 minutes writing at the beginning of a lesson
- leaving the amount up to the student
- setting parameters for content allowed/required, e.g. language, comments about other students/teachers/family
- leaving content entirely up to the student
- teacher collecting and reading journal on a regular and frequent basis

- teacher collecting and reading journal infrequently and irregularly
- teacher commenting on entries in a conversational way only, verbally or in writing
- teacher grading entries (although this would seem to be unhelpful in encouraging free expression of feelings and observations,)
- teacher not looking at entries at all unless invited, so that the writing is totally personal and confidential
- students sharing entries with trusted peers.

Exploring personal writing by others

Rather than expecting students to move straight into writing their own personal reflections, it may be useful to look at ways other people have written journals and diaries, and to experiment with some fictional journals/personal writing. Examples of these will be available in your school or local library.

Activities

- Read a selection of diary/journal entries, ranging from factual logs (e.g. a ship's log) to quite personal diaries (e.g. *Go Ask Alice, The Diary of Anne Frank,*). Discuss the features of each entry - language, tone, layout, content.
- Write a diary/journal entry as someone else - a friend, family member, character from a favourite film or from a book, perhaps the English text currently being studied.
- Read a newspaper article or watch a TV news item and write a diary entry for someone involved, e.g. article on a bushfire - write an entry for a fire-fighter, fire-fighter's family or a person fleeing a fire.
- Write/improvise a conversation involving a disagreement between parent and child, teacher and student, between friends. Then write a diary entry for one of the participants, showing what they really thought.
- Experiment with tone and purpose, e.g. serious/humorous/sarcastic approaches to information/reflection/description.

Exploring personal experiences

It may be useful to begin with less threatening or revealing content, then move on to more personal reflection. Students should choose one of the following suggestions to practise this genre of writing.

- A travel diary, concentrating on recording dates and places. Experiences of a recent holiday or even school camp might be useful for this activity.
- The daily journey to school journal, documenting what happened on the bus, train or walk. Vary the focus from change of seasons to what people are wearing, changes in the scenery, and so on.
- A reading journal, either for a set text or for books chosen freely. It is useful to give some suggestions about content, for example why the book was chosen, what was expected from the cover and blurb, first impressions, feelings about characters and changes in these, questions that arise, parts which are boring/exciting.
- Sports journal - for students who play a sport, keeping a record of games played, scores, own performance and other details.
- Journal of a performance, for example a Rock Eisteddfod, school production, ballet, music or other concert.
- Journal of a trip from one country to another.

After completing the activity above students may then move on to more personal reflective writing in the following forms:

- journal recording events in a particular class
- journal recording events of the school week
- personal diary recording any material the student wants to include.

Resources
Many general English textbooks include sections on writing diaries or journals, including extracts from such writing.

There are also many fiction and non-fiction texts written in diary/journal format. Some examples include:

Anonymous, *Go Ask Alice*
Cook, Captain James, 'The Diary' extract in Doolan, J. *Active English 3 Reaching Out*, Edward Arnold 1990
Frank, Anne, *The Diary of Anne Frank*
Defoe, D., *Robinson Crusoe*
Marsden, J. *So Much to Tell You*
Townsend, S. *The Secret Diary of Adrian Mole Aged 13 ¾*

A useful guide to journal writing, although aimed at teachers as writers rather than at students as writers, is: Holly, Mary-L. 1995, *Keeping a personal-professional journal*, Deakin University.

Words of caution
As with all personal responses in writing, care needs to be taken to provide an environment in which students feel safe to explore their thoughts and feelings about their own lives; to consider confidentiality issues and to be prepared to provide follow up where necessary if students disclose worrying information.

Facilitating conversations in the classroom

The Gatehouse Project uses the strategy of questioning as a means of encouraging student participation.

Engaging students in the process of inquiry through questioning requires teachers being able to:

- use questioning techniques
- develop relevant questions
- have a non-judgmental approach
- have a clear understanding of the purpose of the task.

When using the questioning technique as a device for learning, the teacher needs to:

- maintain a 'non-knowing stance'
- be open to and help to generate alternatives
- call on students to ask questions and respond to others
- identify assumptions being made
- listen to and accept different points of view
- ask students to give reasons for opinions
- listen to what has been said, rather than who said it
- allow time for students to answer.

It is preferable not to ask personal questions of individual students as in 'Have you ever felt that way?' or 'What did you feel when…'. Instead, consider alternative ways of framing the same question as in, 'If you were (the character) what would your reaction be?' or 'Can you think of a character, in a book or story you have studied, who had to deal with ….?'

The strategy of giving a particular student or students the responsibility for asking a question during discussion can be helpful in a class where some students are reluctant to participate in discussions. With the responsibility to ask a question, students will need to listen carefully to what is being said and decide the best time to ask it, for example:

- What makes you say that?
- How do you know?
- What is your reason for saying that?

The same questions could be printed on cards and handed out to those students teachers have noted as being less involved than others before a discussion activity takes place.

The following questions, which focus on specific ways of asking and answering questions, can help teachers to move on if they feel stuck on just one issue or topic, or if too many anecdotes are being given.

- Who is puzzled by this?
- Does anyone else find this strange?
- Can someone ask that question in a different way?
- Are you happy with that way of asking you questions?
- How can we go about asking that?
- What reasons do you have for saying that?
- Does anyone disagree?

- Who can give an example/counter argument?
- Are Jan and Mario saying the same thing?
- Do you agree with their reasons?
- Are these points of view consistent?
- Is that always true?
- Let's see what would happen if….?
- *Can this group make up some questions?*
- Does that explain it?
- Is this a solution?
- Who is still confused?
- Can someone summarise that part of our discussion?

Sample questions

This section provides sample questions to help in planning thoughtful, open questions, which challenge the thinking of all students. Under the headings below the fairy story *Little Red Riding Hood* is explored through a range of question types. In a class with students from diverse cultural backgrounds it would be appropriate to read the story aloud to the whole class before starting the activity, or invite a student to bring a story to class.

Quantity Questions

- List all the things you would take if you were going to visit a sick friend?
- How many different ways might Red Riding Hood have travelled to Grandmother's house, other than walking?

Change Questions

- In what way would the story change if Grandmother had refused to open the door?
- How would the story be different if Red Riding Hood had arrived at Grandmother's house before the wolf?

Prediction Questions

- Try to work out what might have happened in the wolf's early life to make him so mean?
- Just suppose the wolf had been a vegetarian, what might all the consequences have been?

Point of View Questions

- If you were the wolf, what plan would you devise for catching Red Riding Hood?
- If the wolf was telling the story, what would he say?

Personal Involvement Questions

- You are Red Riding Hood in the forest. How do you feel about visiting Grandmother?
- What would the Grandmother say about being eaten by a wolf?
- You are the woodcutter. How does it feel to release the Grandmother and Little Red Riding Hood?

Comparative Association Questions

- Compare the wolf in this story with the wolf in the *Three Little Pigs*. Which wolf do you think was the more clever? Say why?
- Compare Red Riding Hood's experience of being swallowed by the wolf with the pigs' experiences. How are they alike or different?

Valuing Questions

- Is it appropriate for Red Riding Hood to be out in the forest by herself? Give reasons for your answer.

The ideas of Susan Wilks and Laurance Splitter have been incorporated in this advice and are particularly useful for developing and maintaining processes in the classroom for engagement.

Splitter, L. & Sharp, A.M. 1995, *Teaching for Better Thinking: The Classroom Community of Inquiry*, ACER, Camberwell, Victoria.

Wilks, S. E. 1995, *Critical and Creative Thinking: Strategies for Classroom Inquiry*, Eleanor Curtain Publishing, Armadale, Victoria.

Gender

After many years of international and national research and observation, it is clear that the more straightforward comments that can be made about gender issues in education are that:

- gender has an impact on the educational experiences and outcomes for both girls and boys
- other factors such as socio-economic background, geographic location, cultural and ethnic backgrounds can enhance or detract from that impact.

It is also clear that, in discussions about gender and its impact on schooling, teachers need to move to an understanding that it is no longer possible to talk about girls as if that term means the experiences of all girls, and about boys as if that term means the experiences of all boys. Girls and boys are not homogenous groups, although they may share many common characteristics. This is particularly important in the context of single-sex schools or groupings in co-educational schools.

Some teachers in single-sex boys' schools have commented on the difficulty of groups of boys talking about personal issues, and having discussions about relationships and their feelings in general. This may be because they are a new group in which the understandings about confidentiality and privacy have not been established. So it would be useful for the class to look more closely at the activities in Unit I and to work towards an accepted classroom agreement or set of operating principles.

Another useful strategy is the use of the third person. The English teacher prepares cards with extracts, particularly dialogues, from texts currently being studied or in suggested wide reading lists. The characters will be male. Then students are chosen to read them aloud to the rest of the class as a stimulus to further discussion about the character and what he might be thinking or how he might react to a particular situation (see 'Using trigger resources' in this section).

Working collaboratively with colleagues in the Drama department to offer techniques or skills classes in presentations, role plays, mime, working as a sole performer and working in a cast, can increase the levels of student confidence. Students will feel more involved, and therefore more inclined to respond, if they write scripts themselves. In such writing the emphasis need not be on their own experiences. Students, having seen taped episodes of popular TV shows, could rewrite the dialogue for a particular character or characters according to some variations prepared by the teacher. Ask these questions as a stimulus:

- How would that character speak and act if he was a postman, or a schoolteacher, or the eldest son of a successful businessman, a surfer or a refugee?
- What might the character feel about certain people?
- What might the character think about situations they experience?

Classroom management and organisation

In co-educational schools and classes a useful strategy for fostering discussion amongst students is to allow time for single sex groupings. Single sex groupings offer a broad range of experiences, values and understandings so it remains essential that students work to classroom agreements. Difference needs to be respected and valued.

It is also important that there are opportunities for the whole class to work together to share experiences and discussions so that there are opportunities for boys and girls to listen to each other, to learn to understand and respect differences as well as to acknowledge similarities and common experiences and feelings.

Similarly, it is important in the co-educational classroom, that girls and boys are acknowledged equally. This is particularly important when class numbers are dominated by either males or females. Not only does equal recognition lead to feelings of security and emotional well-being, it has an impact on the quality of achievement in the classroom. Strategies that stress co-operative, rather than competitive activities, are variable, that give equal opportunity for input from either gender, are free of gender harassment, and assert independent and divergent thinking (McInerney & McInerney 1998) are important. When classroom agreements are established at the commencement of the class, ensure that these issues are addressed.

Diversity

Diversity refers to the broad range of differences amongst students and their communities. The concept includes gender, age, disability, religion, geographic location, culture, socio-economic background, sexuality, ethnicity, and the composition and structure of families in which they live. Students bring with them a variety of social and personal experiences which create diversity in the classroom.

Meeting the needs of diversity within the classroom is an intrinsic part of classroom management. Classroom agreements established when a new class commences need to be developed with diversity in mind. Respect for individual difference, and an environment in which all students feel secure, connected, and positively regarded is necessary for the promotion of emotional well-being in the classroom. Classroom and school environments need to be safe and supportive, and inclusive of individual difference for all students.

School populations differ in their compositions, but teachers and schools need to develop school-based programs that are culturally sensitive and demonstrate an awareness of the impact of cultural diversity on students' experiences.

A closer examination of some current teaching and learning strategies in the context of what is culturally acceptable and appropriate might lead to the use of more single-sex groupings for discussions on personal issues and an understanding that not all students will feel comfortable participating in role plays. It is also important to consider, or to seek advice from, appropriate community leaders about group seating arrangements. Here are some questions to consider:

- Is it acceptable for girls and boys to sit together?
- What might teachers need to consider when asking students from different cultural backgrounds to work together?

When developing a curriculum it is important to be inclusive of diversity. Programs that highlight difference are socially and educationally isolating. The Gatehouse Project aims to foster belonging in the classroom, therefore it is important to incorporate the knowledge, interests and values of all students and their families. When a student feels assured of acceptance by a group, and has a sense of belonging, it produces social happiness and positive educational outcomes. 'A feeling of being one of the group and having a cohort with whom to identify within the school is important to children.' (McInerney & McInerney 1998, p. 360).

See our website, www.gatehouseproject.com for resources, both material and personal, for support and advice about addressing issues related to students of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and those of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background.

The issue of religious diversity also needs to be considered, as even within denominational schools there will be a range of religious views and values held and expressed. The promotion of safe and supportive classroom climates and school environments enables students, who already have developed their own moral and ethical views or who are working through these issues, to feel respected and accepted.

In planning classroom activities that involve movement around the class, as in positioning activities or moving into small groups, or discussions about difficult situations for young people, teachers need to account for the needs of any students with disabilities or impairments. Students with disabilities also need opportunities to talk about friendships and relationships and fights with their families and friends. Teachers might need to involve the student's aide, if they have one, and make some arrangements for supportive and inclusive physical space.

The more opportunities students have to practise the classroom agreements in terms of respectful acknowledgement of all students, the more supportive the classroom will be for all students.

Current national research shows that about 11% of secondary school students are not exclusively heterosexual in their feelings of attraction towards others. For gay, lesbian and bi-sexual young people, issues of relationships and friendships, although they may be more challenging, raise the same range of emotional responses as they do for heterosexual young people.

Same-sex attracted young people do not have to disclose their sexual preference or identity, and if they do then it is their choice and not a matter of immediate concern unless associated with harm or clear risk taking behaviour (see 'Issues for teachers: Disclosure', page 134).

The experiences of same-sex attracted young people do not need to be made invisible in the classroom by teachers and other students acting on the assumption that heterosexual experiences are the norm. Discussions about relationships and conflict with families and friends should include the experiences of same-sex attracted young people. It is important, however, not to identify a same-sex attracted student within the classroom, unless it is their choice.

Teachers need to be aware that while adolescence is sometimes characterised by a spectrum of risk taking attitudes and behaviour, for same-sex attracted young people there are other additional risks. Their declaration of sexual preference may expose them to 'community violence, loss of friendship or family rejection' (*Suicide Prevention: Victorian Task Force Report July 1997).*

In the context of dealing with issues of diversity it is also important for schools to acknowledge their legal responsibilities, both as employers and providers of services, to State and Commonwealth legislation. These legislative frameworks can be a useful adjunct to system and sector policies in the development and maintenance of safe and supportive learning environments that are free from discrimination and harassment.

The relevant legislation is:
Commonwealth Racial Discrimination Act 1975
Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act 1984
Commonwealth Human rights and Equal Opportunity Act 1986
Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992
and
Victorian Equal Opportunity Act 1996.

Bullying, violence and harassment in schools

While bullying in schools is certainly not new, through media exposure in recent years, it has received increased public attention throughout the world. Can schools do anything to make a difference to what is a problem for society in general? Recent experience in Victoria would indicate that schools acknowledge that they have a responsibility to address these issues and are doing so. (See DEET Sofweb link to bullying. The address is available through www.gatehouseproject.com).

Bullying is 'a form of aggressive behaviour which is usually harmful and deliberate; it is often persistent, sometimes continuing for weeks, months or even years and it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. Underlying most bullying behaviour is an abuse of power and a desire to intimidate and dominate' (Sharp, S. & Smith, P., 1994).

Bullying, including sexual harassment, is an issue for all schools, single-sex and co-educational alike. It is not true to say that a single-sex setting is an environment which is free of such issues. Issues of religion, culture, sexuality, difference of any type have no boundaries. It is a reality that incidents of bullying, violence and harassment occur in all kinds of school settings.

Bullying behaviours are practised and experienced by males and females of all ages, with some students being both the perpetrators of and the targets for bullying behaviours. Bullying is no longer seen as the sole preserve of the male or the young boy at school. As more attention has been paid to issues of bullying and violence, this perception has shifted to an acknowledgment that girls can also engage in such behaviours.

Students, parents and teachers can sometimes feel that bullying is an inevitable part of school life and that nothing much can change it. School staff, while concerned about bullying, often find it hard to detect because much of it is subtle. It is now recognised that bullying in schools is something that can and should be tackled by the whole school community. Schools need to work together with students and families to develop strategies for preventing bullying and dealing with it when it occurs (For further information see Olweus 1993 and Rigby 1996).

Understanding the nature of bullying is one of the first steps in responding to and dealing with the issue. There has been a significant shift in definitions of bullying from ones about physical power and violence, to ones describing a broader range of behaviours best summarised as 'Repeated oppression, psychological or physical of a less powerful person by a more powerful person or group of persons' (Rigby 1996, p. 16).

Using labels such as 'bully', 'victim' and 'bullying' may be less helpful than using language which describes and deals with particular behaviours. These behaviours can be expressed in:

- verbal ways, as in repeated teasing, name calling, 'put downs', because of gender, race, sexual preference (perceived or otherwise) and threats
- physical ways, as in hitting, tripping, poking, scratching, punching, kicking, throwing objects with an intention to cause harm, and stealing, hiding or damaging possessions

- indirect ways, as in ignoring, ostracising and deliberately excluding someone from a social group, giving dirty looks and spreading rumours.

In 1997 the Centre for Adolescent Health's Gatehouse Project surveyed Year 8 students in a number of schools. Resultant data showed that 53% of students surveyed (13-14 year olds) reported experiencing some form of bullying recently, with 16% experiencing it daily. Teasing was the most common form, followed by rumours, deliberate exclusion, being threatened or physically hurt (Glover et al 1998, pp. 11 - 15). Research has shown that a young person's experience of bullying can affect their physical and emotional well-being, both at the time of, and well after the bullying experience, which affects their ability to participate in the full range of activities offered at school.

Listed below are some suggested strategies for the whole school community to adopt in responding to and preventing bullying and violence at school.

Schools can:

- acknowledge that bullying happens and take a public stance on its unacceptability
- develop school policies and programs aimed at both preventing bullying and dealing with it when it occurs
- develop, maintain and review supportive curriculum approaches to give a message consistent with school policies
- provide opportunities in curriculum programs and classroom activities for students to experience a range of communication skills including problem solving, help seeking and assertiveness
- provide opportunities for effective and meaningful student participation
- develop, maintain and review clearly understood processes and opportunities for reporting incidents and concerns
- involve students, teachers and families in resolving problems
- provide for needs of both the students who are bullied and those who engage in bullying
- develop, maintain and promote a safe and supportive school environment in which it is understood that incidents of bullying, violence and harassment are unacceptable and will be responded to appropriately.

Students need to know that:

- lots of people have been bullied at some time in their lives and that if they are bullied then they are not the only ones and it is not their fault
- there is always someone, in their family, a trusted friend or teacher, who they can tell about being bullied. People who mistreat others keep their power when people say nothing
- they can call *Kids Helpline 1800 551 800,* if there is really no one else they feel they can talk to; this service is confidential and free
- they should try to avoid being a silent bystander when others are bullied
- there is help available to work out a plan of action – the solution may not be simple, but there are lots of things they and others can do to improve the situation.

The Gatehouse Project through *Promoting emotional well-being: Team guidelines for whole school change,* offers schools a way, based on surveys and observations of student behaviour, to review their policies, programs and practices, and to work towards a positive and supportive whole school environment in which all students feel safe and accepted (Information on further resources can be found at www.gatehouseproject.com).

Conflict Resolution

Conflict is a part of everyday life that can occur in any environment. Given the complex composition of any school environment, conflict needs to be understood. While it is ideal to be free of conflict in our daily lives, it needs to be understood as an inevitable part of life, albeit it to lesser and greater degrees, that can arise from a range of situations. If we recognise it, rather than avoid it, or even prefer that it didn't exist, then we are part way towards managing conflict.

Part of the process of managing conflict means understanding that it arises for a variety of reasons. It can be caused by a disagreement concerning divergent interests, or misunderstandings evolving from differing views on the same issues, from differing purposes and backgrounds, or it may arise when needs are not met. Whatever the direct cause, conflict represents a different perspective that results in a wide ranging field of responses. The responses are often emotional and require input of an external nature to enable the parties involved in the conflict to move forward. While conflict can often be resolved, there are times when the solution is conflict management. Whether the conflict be resolved or managed, change occurs that will help the parties to communicate, or function reasonably in a common environment.

Moving forward from conflict in the school context

The ability to move forward, in the school context, necessitates a policy and processes by which all involved can be guided through their responses. Within the Gatehouse Project framework of a whole school approach to emotional well-being, such a policy can be developed through the review and planning process. When a school has strategies in place to deal with conflict between members of the school community, it can function at a level of prevention and intervention that establishes constructive working environments.

Unit I of *Teaching resources for emotional well-being* plays an essential part in the prevention of conflict in the classroom. Student participation in establishing classroom agreements helps to create a sense of connection to, and hence ownership of, agreements which can be drawn on in times of conflict.

Conflicts occurring beyond the scope of the classroom agreements will require the intervention of a third party, in many cases a teacher, who is trained in a suitable form of conflict resolution. Selected methods of conflict resolution need to be fair, equitable, confidential, and address both the immediate issue, and the more extended background issues to the conflict. Those involved need to feel that their issue is valid, that they will have time to express their viewpoints/feelings/ grievances, and be assured that they will have an equal opportunity to be heard. When engaged in a conflict resolution process such as mediation, the parties are assured that the resolution will not be imposed on them by an external party, they know that time will be available to express their side of the story, and they know that what they say in the mediation session will be confidential. The resolution agreed to by the parties will be mutually acceptable, and decided on by the parties. The mediator guides the parties towards their decisions in an environment that is safe, secure, and non-adversarial.

A school implementing the Gatehouse Project's whole school approach to emotional well-being will involve members of the school community in professional development such as mediation training (see VADR 2001). Information on such training can be found at <www.gatehouseproject.com.au>.

Using trigger resources

Stories and vignettes are powerful ways of conveying the experiences of young people and are valuable as 'triggers' to initiate discussions about a variety of issues. It is important to have a clear teaching and learning framework for using trigger resources to discuss such issues as security and trust, competing and conflicting expectations and demands, and positive regard of self and others. The framework needs to be flexible enough to allow teachers to follow it and also adapt it to meet the needs of a diverse range of students.

Labonte (1997, p. 69) provides a useful framework which is consistent with contemporary teaching practices and appropriate for using literature as stimilus material. By using a series of open-ended questions, teachers can apply the framework to triggers such as stories, vignettes, music lyrics, film, poetry, plays and cartoons. The questions can be used to facilitate discussion, debate and critical and creative thinking which encourage students to voice a range of views on selected issues.

The framework offers a series of questions: 'What?' 'Why?' 'So What?' and 'Now What?'. The Gatehouse Project has adapted Labonte's framework for use in the *Teaching and Learning Resources*:

Describe	=	What?
Explain	=	Why?
Synthesise	=	So What?
Act	=	Now What?

What questions invite students to describe their perceptions of what is happening in a given situation. They are similar to the journalistic approach to questioning in which Who? What? When? Where? and How? are asked. The descriptive details provided in the answers enable movement forward in the discussion.

Why questions encourage students to explain why things happened as they did. Why questions will generate a range of interpretations of what has been described. The explanation begins to reveal different perceptions, assumptions, expectations and values that they, and others, may hold. Responses here may be based on background experience.

So What questions enable synthesis to occur. The answers begin to draw together what has been learnt up to this stage. The task now is to draw out some generalisations and establish connections with the students' own experiences.

Now What questions, through characters in texts, and based on their discussions, encourage students to consider ways to act in the future. It is about reflecting and reframing; to think about options for action; to develop and practise strategies for dealing with particular situations and difficult emotions. What would I do if that happened to me?

Further ways of using trigger resources: an example

Using trigger resources as a means of exploring issues of emotional well-being provides an opportunity for students to:

- recognise and discuss a **common situation** which is problematic for young people
- identify **common feelings** experienced in such a situation
- practise the skills of looking for **multiple viewpoints** on all situations

- consider what things might be like for various people in a given situation – peers, parents, teachers
- consider those **factors of influence** affecting attitudes, beliefs and values – media, advertising, other people, etc.
- consider **contradictory and competing messages** and expectations
  - be an individual / be part of a group
  - take initiative and be independent / follow the rules.

While the teaching units are one way of doing this, teachers are encouraged to find opportunities in existing curricula, or to develop new curricula to undertake a similar process.

Below is an example of how a character's thoughts can be explored as a means for the young people in your class to recognise and manage their own feelings, thoughts and reactions to common situations. This extract is from *Andrew*, by Libby Gleeson (pp.120 –122), and is suitable for junior students.

'Do you think I'm ugly?'

Andrew stood in the doorway of his sister's bedroom. She had a Maths textbook in front of her and was tracing with one finger the pattern of a graph.

'Anna?'

'Mm.'

'I asked you a question. Do you think I'm ugly?'

'No more than usual.'

'No. I mean seriously.'

She turned her chair around slowly. He wouldn't look at her but stared at a pile of clothes on the floor. Her school shirt, socks that were brown at the heel, knickers and a flesh-coloured bra.

'You really mean that as a serious question?'

'Sort of. Yes, I do.'

'Well. You aren't exactly Mr Universe …' She leant back in her chair and ran her eyes over his face and body. He blushed.

'… but no. You've got two eyes, two ears, no more pimples than the average, the odd muscle. You're not *ugly*. What do you want to know for?'

Andrew came into the room and sat on the end of the bed. He pushed a pile of Ancient History books and notes onto the floor. 'It's bloody Troy. He gets this invitation to Fran's party, right. It's the first one she's ever had. They had this house near Pete's but now they've moved to a bigger place. He sounds off about it all lunch time in front of those of us guys that he knows aren't going. It's him and Pete and Rodney of course and a few others who are in the teams with them. I think the rest are in Year Nine. It's always them. It just gives me the shits.'

'Why don't you and your mates just go? Crash it.'

'And get punched out? You've got to be joking.' He paused. 'What mates, anyway?'

'Thomas. You're mates with him.'

'S'pose so. But even he's going. He's just the big hero ever since that special thing they got in the Maths Competition.'

'You were in that too.'

'Yeah. But I didn't win the prize like they did, did I?'

Anna sat for a minute without speaking. She bunched her knees up and put her arms around them and rested her chin on her hands. She was four years older than Andrew and had a boyfriend, not her first, and she had even been allowed to go away with him for the weekend.

'Maybe you have to get to know the girls a bit better. Sit with them in class.'

'I do a bit. Rebecca and Katerina in Maths. Sometimes.'

'Do you talk to them?'

'Just work stuff.'

'Not that. I mean really talk.'

'But what would I say?'

'Whatever you like. The weather. Your homework. Music. TV. Tell them a joke. Tell them about your collections. Talk fossils. Whatever comes into your head. They won't eat you. It's not easy for them either, you know.'

'Says you.'

'Oh, come on, Andrew. I've been there. Remember? I wasn't always in Year Eleven. There's probably someone in the class who'd like to be friends and you haven't even noticed her.'

'Someone ugly like me.'

'Well, if that's your attitude.' She turned back to her desk. 'Why don't you smarten yourself up a bit? Comb your hair properly for a change, put on some of my pimple cream. Speak to them.'

Libby Gleeson, *Love Me, Love Me Not*, Penguin Books Australia. Reprinted by permission.

Now explore the extract using the following as a guide:

1 What is the common situation? - Not being invited to a party.

2 What are the common feelings? - Anxiety, self-doubt, resentment.

3 Who holds multiple viewpoints? - Andrew, his friends, his sister. What are these viewpoints? What is he thinking? What messages is he receiving from his friends? What message is he receiving from his sister?

4 What factors of influence might be the background to each of these viewpoints? What is influencing Pete's attitude? Why does Andrew make reference to Fran's 'bigger place'? Why does Andrew refer to Fran's party as '... the first one she's ever had.'?

5 Identify and discuss any contradictory and competing messages Andrew receives from his sister, Anna.

It will also be useful to discuss with the class the character's thoughts using the following format:

What is Andrew feeling?	Left out, resentful, unhappy.
What is he thinking to make him feel this way?	I wasn't invited to the party, so I must be ugly and unappealing. No-one likes me.
Is Andrew's thinking helpful?	No, it is making him feel that he is hopeless and unattractive.
How might Andrew think about this situation more constructively?	His sister, Anna, offers him some ways of reframing: 'Maybe you have to get to know the girls a bit better. Sit with them in class.'
What actions might follow from Andrew's present thinking? What if he thinks about the situation as Anna has presented it?	He might become withdrawn and avoid people. He might then lose touch with the friends he has had so far. If he follows Anna's line of thinking, he might feel more optimistic, he might go on to make some new friends.

After discussing the ideas above, explore with the class the most appropriate course of action for Andrew.

Trigger resource: *Looking for Alibrandi* by Melina Marchetta

This is suitable for use with students in Year 9 and above.
Strategically select 4-6 significant extracts from *Looking for Alibrandi* then type them up or reproduce them in large print and make flash cards. The chosen extracts, including quotes, should be examples of thoughts and feelings of the characters and should highlight situations which are commonly difficult. Use the following extracts with the activity below:

Card 1
'How did your mother die?' I asked him quietly.
'Cancer, about five years ago,' he said.
'I'd die if my mother died.'
He shook his head and looked at me almost gently.
'You don't die. You just … get really angry and then after you're angry you hurt a lot and then the best thing is that one day you remember something she said or did and you laugh instead of crying.' (pp. 61-2)

Card 2
'My father was home when I got there this afternoon. Went through my mail. He owns my life so of course he's entitled to open my mail,' he spat out bitterly. 'I didn't win the maths competition. I didn't even get in the top five percent. … when I lose he hates me.' (p. 133)

Card 3
'You've opened my mind so much. … But this year I realised, because of you, that there's more to life. I still want to be a mechanic, but I want to step outside my circle and look at the other options. I don't want to do what other people think I'll end up doing. I don't want to be stereotyped because of the school I attend or the district I live in.' (p. 251)

Card 4
'No. It's you who doesn't understand,' … 'you never have understood what I feel or want in my life. Everyone's opinion has always come before mine. Why can't you understand how I feel for once…?' (p.97)

Card 5
'He said that he could take me away from the life that I hated so much but I … I pushed him out of the door, … Pushed him.'. … ' I … I pushed him because he was saying someting that I had dreamt of him saying for so long and by pushing him out I was trying to … to push my own feelings, … But he just grabbed my arms and shook me and I could not fight him any more. Do you understand?' she asked me.
I nodded because I knew that she needed me to understand. (pp 222-4)

Melina Marchetta, *Looking for Alibrandi*, Penguin Books Australia. Reprinted by permission.

(Context for Card 4: Christina to Nonna when Christina wants to go out with a man, and talking about her friendship with Paul Presillo.
Context for card 5: Nonna describing to Josie the lead up to her decision to stay with Francesco and to deny her love for Marcus Sandford.)

Use these text specific cards in conjunction with a selection of moods and feelings cards that have been stacked along the board ledge or propped up on the table.

Ask a number of students holding the flash cards to form a horseshoe shape with the cards in chronological order. They stand facing in towards the rest of the class. Ask the rest of the class to provide feedback on the order of the cards.

Ask each student holding the cards to take it in turn to:

1 Read the card.
2 Identify the thought/feeling of the character. Who said it?
3 What is the character feeling? Select the appropriate mood card.
4 Why might the character be feeling bitter, angry, etc?
5 What thoughts/feelings might have been helpful in their situation? How else could the character have viewed the situation or behaved?
6 How did the thought affect the action or an outcome? What other action could the character have taken?

The excerpts can also be used as prompts for role-plays, dialogues and reading aloud to practice the expression of different feelings.

(This activity was devised by Amina Schutz from Kangaroo Flat Secondary College.)

Adapting set texts to the Gatehouse Project

It is possible to implement many of the activities in the six teaching and learning units through the study of a set class text. The following suggestions illustrate how this might be done using *Two weeks with the Queen* by Morris Gleitzman. The material below connects the novel to each of the six units explored in *Teaching and Learning Units*. A proforma (Working with text) is available at the end of this section to enable teachers to use this strategy with set texts.

Unit 1: Classroom connections

This unit introduces teachers to the strategies designed to contribute to the development and maintenance of a positive and supportive classroom climate. Several of the activities could be related to the text as follows:

Establishing classroom agreements

Establishing or reviewing and revising operating rules for the classroom or the classroom agreement is a key introductory activity. Use the text as the basis for student reflection on the issues of how to establish rules in particular situations.

In chapter 3 cricket is played in the ward of the Australian hospital. Colin argues that the cricket game is useful therapy. The matron clearly disagrees. Discuss the rules needed for acceptable behaviour in hospital wards. Should there be a rule specifically about playing cricket or another type of indoor sport? Uncle Bob and Aunty Iris's house? What rules seem to exist there? Are the rules reasonable? Would you change any of them? Which ones and why? Would Alistair be different if the rules in his home were different? How? Why are rules needed? Can they be different in different places and times? Why are rules needed in a school? What rules would be reasonable for your classroom?

Positioning

Use this activity in relation to a number of issues raised in the text. Students participate in positioning activities about particular statements before studying the text and then again after they have read the novel. In this way they come to understand that there is a range of views on many topics and that people often change their views after listening to others or reading more and thinking again about their position. Try these statements:

- I'd rather be the eldest child in the family than the youngest.
- It would be useful to make an appeal to the Queen if you had a problem.
- Children should be protected from contact with dying people.

Photolanguage

This activity is about how people interpret things, words and images in different ways according to their different backgrounds and history. Students choose from a range of photos or pictures, ones which represent, for them, how they think Colin, Luke or Alistair might have felt at various points in the story.

Group work: continuous story
As a whole class group activity each student contributes a word or a sentence to help summarise the main events of each chapter they read.
Alternatively this activity is useful for summarising a character's feelings or personality, e.g. 'Colin is a boy who……'

Journals
Once the class has read chapters 1 and 2 they could write a journal entry as Luke on Christmas day. Writing a journal for Luke or Alistair could be a major task for a term's assessment.

Unit 2: Belonging
This unit explores the ways in which people belong to someone or something. In 'Two Weeks with the Queen' Colin suddenly finds himself detached from his family at a time of crisis.

Introductory activity: I belong to
- If Colin were writing his address, how would he write it?
- Name the groups, or people, to whom Colin would feel a sense of attachment. Use separate headings of Australia and England.
- Describe how Colin felt when he was sent to England.
- Select one character from the novel with whom you think Colin felt the greatest sense of belonging.
- Explain what caused him to feel this way.

Unit 3: Whatif……
Work in this unit is aimed at helping students to understand that feeling anxious is quite common and that everyone will experience anxiety from time to time. Students will come to recognise anxiety and develop strategies for coping with it.

This novel presents a range of situations that create anxiety for particular characters. Uncle Bob, Aunty Iris and Alistair experience anxiety even over quite trivial matters, whereas Colin refuses to let the news of his brother's fatal illness make him feel anxious. Colin's response to this news is to find solutions. What are his solutions?

The telephone call
This activity encourages students to use the reframing approach to dealing with situations that may cause anxiety. The novel presents many situations where reframing would be useful or is actually used.

In chapter 2 when Luke first collapses, what kind of things might happen? What positive or negative thoughts are going through the characters' minds? How does Colin reframe this? Students respond to these questions by writing individual responses in their workbooks.

Group work using the reframing technique:

- Students pass the bean bag/ball back and forth in relation to an imaginary situation where someone they know has collapsed for no apparent reason.
  'It's ok, they just haven't eaten all day.'
  'No, they never faint, maybe it's a heart attack.'

- Chapter 8 after he fails in the attempt to break into Buckingham Palace it seems to Colin that all is lost. Students practise the reframing exercise to show the positive and negative thoughts going through his head.

- Chapter 13, Ted has been bashed and is unable to visit Griff in hospital. What negative thoughts might be going through his mind? How could these be reframed?

What is it like to feel anxious?
The text has many examples in which the descriptions of characters show that they are anxious. For example p. 13, 'Mum and dad were sitting in the waiting area anxiously chewing their bottom lips' or p. 67 'Alistair gave a little whimper.'

- Students in pairs or small groups make a list of non-verbal signs of anxiety displayed by different characters in the book. Each group could be given a different chapter or different character on which to base their list.

- Use the Ranking Ladder activity to rank various events or situations (Luke's first collapse, Alistair finds out that Colin is sneaking out, Ted is bashed and can't visit Griff in hospital and Colin fails to break into Buckingham Palace) in order of degree of anxiety involved for the different characters. As a class, brainstorm and identify any other situations in which characters were anxious and then rank them. In pairs or small groups assign students to a particular character, and make up a list of anxiety-provoking situations for that character.

Hot tips for staying cool
Students in small groups choose either Colin or Alistair and write them a list of things to do to minimise or avoid anxiety.

How can we help each other?: Active listening
These questions can be used as a whole class activity or completed by students in pairs, who then report back to the rest of the class.

- Are Colin's mum and dad good listeners?
- Does anyone really listen to Colin in this story?
- can you find examples of where one character really helps another character by being a good listener?

Unit 4: Ups and downs

Colin experiences many ups and downs in his quest to find a cure for Luke's illness.

Fortunately/unfortunately
There are many opportunities throughout the text for this activity, e.g. in chapter 9, *fortunately Colin thinks he has found the best hospital and the best doctor in the world. Unfortunately, this doctor turns out to be very uncaring*…… Students could continue the story.

Power of the nonverbal
Again there are many examples of non-verbal expressions of feelings in this novel. Brainstorm a list of moods and then look for examples of these being shown by body language in the text. Role play particular moods and situations, e.g. Colin receiving school shoes as his Christmas present; Ted on hearing that Griff had died.

Leunig cartoon
This could be seen as representing Colin's experiences and story.
Draw a graph or image of Colin's journey from the time Luke collapses to the time when Colin sees Luke's face in the hospital after Colin returns to Australia.

Thoughts and feelings
Fill out thoughts and feelings charts for Colin, Ted or Alistair to show how, in particular situations, their positive or negative thoughts led to positive or negative feelings.

Unit5: Trusting me, trusting you

Colin, in trying to help Luke, needs to find people he can trust, so he tells his story to many people who do not take him seriously.

Write, from Colin's point of view, a description of the sort of person he needs to help him in his search for a cure. Does Colin find anyone he can trust?

Circles of trust
Students individually complete the circles of trust diagram from Colin's point of view. Where would he place his parents? Uncle Bob and Aunty Iris? Alistair? Luke? Ted and Griff? The doctor in Australia? The doctor he approached in England? Students compare their charts. The discussion of the similarities and differences and sharing information and interpretations, can add to students' understanding of the text and its characters. The discussion will help to deepen students' understanding of the nature of trust.

Unit 6: Expectations

There are many opportunities in this text to consider the question of expectations, including those that people have of themselves, and those that others may have of them. In relation to this unit the issues raised in the text about gender and same sex attraction can be discussed. This unit provides teachers with opportunities to work co-operatively with other staff, particularly the health education or personal development teacher.

Expectations
Answer the following questions in workbooks:

- What are Colin's expectations of successful people? He assumes that the more *important* they are the more they will be able to help him. e.g. the Queen and the best doctor in the world. How do his experiences change this view?
- What sorts of people actually help Colin?
- What expectations does Colin have of adults? (see chapters 3 & 5)
- What expectations do adults have of Colin?

As a whole class, brainstorm the following questions:

- What expectations does Colin have about being a bloke? Teachers read from the text to provide stimulus for this discussion. Look at the last page of chapter 3 where Colin's dad asks him to look after his mum. In chapter 10 how does Colin feel when he sees Ted crying?
- Would the story be different if Colin was a girl?
- What expectations does Colin have about gay men before he meets Ted? What might Colin say to the young men who bashed Ted?
- What is expected of women in this story?

Measuring up - success and failure

- In pairs or small groups (3-4) students make a list of nominations for the most successful and the most unsuccessful characters in the novel. In presenting their nominations to the rest of the class students should be prepared to justify their choices by explaining their criteria for success.

- Students read pp. 94-95, where Colin sees the doctors and nurses as failures because they are unable to cure Luke. Is this a reasonable assessment? How can this be reframed?

- Students imagine themselves as Luke and write about how they might see Colin when he returns to Australia. Would Luke see him as a success or failure?

- See the following proforma, *Working with text*, to help adapt other class texts to the Gatehouse Project approach.

Working with text

Text:_____ **Author:**_____ **Year level:**_____

Gatehouse Project themes	Opportunity from text	Activities from units
1. Classroom connections Establishing respectful relationships and encouraging participation and recognition		
2. Belonging Exploring the ways in which people belong		
3. What if……? Anxiety		
4. Ups and downs Recognising that all our lives have ups and downs and considering ways to deal with these		
5. Trusting me, trusting you Exploring the importance of trusting relationships and support		
6. Expectations Exploring how we respond to and are affected by the expectations of others		

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Further reading and resources

For further reading and links to other programs, see our website at www.gatehouseproject.com