

I Hate School Because ...

Reasoning

Honesty

Curiosity

Patience



"We keep moving forward, opening new doors, and doing new things, because we're curious and curiosity keeps leading us down new paths."

Walt Disney



"It is a miracle that curiosity survives formal education."

Albert Einstein

Activity 1



Aim(s)

- To explore barriers to learning and how some of these might be addressed.



Resources

- *I hate school because...* Worksheet, or plain paper.
- *Barriers to Learning* Power Point.
- Scissors.



Delivery Guide

Part I



This is best completed by the young people as individuals, before coming back as a whole group to feedback when appropriate.



The 'I Hate School...' sentence stem may be the wrong one for the young people you are working with, as it may be that they like school! It may be better to frame this activity with the sentence 'I find learning difficult because...' or something similar. It will depend on what you think will engage and be appropriate for the group you are working with.

Ask students to complete the sentence 'I hate school because...' as many times as they can. This can be completed on the worksheet provided, or just written on plain paper.

It might help to look at the 'barriers to learning' list (below and on the *Barriers to Learning* Power Point) as a prompt:

- The work is too difficult.
- It takes too long.
- You have to sit still in a classroom.
- You're all expected to be and think the same.
- It frustrates me.
- I need silence to work and there's a lot of noise and talking.
- I can't concentrate.
- I can't see the point of learning.
- I got it wrong and so I don't want to do any more.
- My friends don't want me to study.
- Teachers always think they're right.
- I don't like my teacher.
- I'm not in the mood.
- I might fail and I'll look stupid.
- I disagree with the things we're learning.
- The teachers talk too much.
- I'm learning stuff that's pointless.

Ask the young people to share some of the ways they've completed the sentences. As a class, decide whether they relate to:

- Their own motivations?
- What they're learning?
- The environment (too much noise/not enough space etc.)?
- How they're feeling on that day?
- Whether they believe they can do it?

Depending on time and interest, you could ask them to go through their own sentences and categorise them.

Once they have completed all of this, get them to cut up the worksheet so that each 'I hate school because...' sentence is on a different piece of paper.

STEP 1

Ask each young person to sort the pieces of paper into one group of 'external' barriers (ie. environment etc.) and one group of 'internal' barriers. There might be a few that go in between the headings.

Ask them to think about whether the internal barriers are under their control. What about the external barriers? Almost all of the internal barriers will be under the young person's control, and a few of the external ones probably will be too. It may be worth having a discussion about what constitutes something being 'under your control'. Quite legitimately, some may argue that being in a bad mood is outside their control (they are just in a bad mood, it's not something they did) but there can be a discussion about how we may be able to change moods or similar states.

STEP 2

Ask them to re-sort the barriers into the ones that are within their control and then those that they have less control over. The 'within my control' will almost certainly be a larger pile, showing that they have a lot of space to challenge and change their own barriers to learning.

Part II

Ask the group to think about ways they could address these barriers that are under their control. They need to look at the sentences they wrote and try to come up with a way to overcome them. For instance:

- When it gets too difficult I... will have another go, and then ask for help.
- When I can't concentrate I... will ask to move to a quieter place.
- When I can't see the point I... will give it a chance, or ask my teacher to explain why we're doing it.

There are some examples on the *Barriers to Learning* Power Point.

Points to highlight

- Some barriers to learning are external (environment etc.) and some are internal (mindset, mood etc.).
- Some barriers to learning are within the young people's control, even if it doesn't immediately appear that way.
- Changing mindsets and developing curiosity can make learning more enjoyable.

Further Resources

This is an animated video exploring how your brain learns:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=cgLYkV689s4 (available 8/16)

Growth Mindsets.

Having a 'growth mindset' is about believing that talents and abilities can be developed through effort (you can learn to be good at maths and get better at it) and they are not just fixed (you are born without the trait that means you are good at maths, and that never changes). This is a theory taken from Carol Dweck. This video and article help to explain it:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=EIVUqv0v1EE&list=PL4111402B45D10AFC
(available 8/16)

www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2015/09/23/carol-dweck-revisits-the-growth-mindset.html
(available 8/16)



Links to Other Areas of the Curriculum

PSHE:

Exploring barriers to and strategies for learning relate to PSHE and learning skills work.

Literacy:

Using sentence stems links with literacy.

