

What to do about worry

Overview

In this lesson, pupils learn how to identify worry and actions that a person can take if they feel worried.

Recommended age group

Education providers for ages 10-11 (Year 6)

Time

45 minutes approximately

Preparation

Before delivering the lesson:

- consider cross-curricular links and how this could be related to other subjects
- watch the film on slide 11 of this PowerPoint
- read through classroom tips on slide 3

This lesson has been designed to be part of the planned programme for PSHE education and should be taught within the context of other PSHE education lessons.

It supports the Mental wellbeing strand of the Relationships Education and Health Education statutory guidance. See [Curriculum Links](#) for further information.

Resources

- Blank A4 paper and pens
- Relaxation activities PDF (optional)

Key vocabulary

Worry, nervous, emotions (feelings), relax (calm), resilience (keeping on when its hard), support (help), communication (talking/listening)

Follow up

You may wish to extend pupils' learning with one of the extended learning projects on slide 24.

Classroom tips

Climate for learning

Read through [Guidance for Learning in a Safe Environment](#).

This includes advice on:

- developing and revisiting effective ground rules drawn up with pupils
- familiarity with your school's safeguarding policy and procedures, including Child Protection and other relevant policies
- being prepared in case pupils make a disclosure
- including and protecting vulnerable pupils
- using distancing techniques so that pupils can discuss sensitive issues without being encouraged to make a disclosure
- handling sensitive questions
- involving pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and autism

You may also wish to familiarise yourself with any schemes or offers available in your school, organisation or local area to support young people's mental health. Your local public health team or school nurse should be able to help signpost you to this.

Anonymous question box

Place a question box or envelope somewhere in the classroom. Pupils write down any questions that occur to them during the lesson and submit them anonymously. You can address these questions in the next lesson.

Social distancing

Preparation

Returning to school and managing the changes that have come about in their lives because of Covid-19 will have posed many different challenges for young people. Every young person will have been affected differently and it will be more important than ever before for pupils to have a safe space to explore their feelings and experiences.

Reassure pupils that it's normal to worry about the impact of Covid-19 and that everyone will have had different responses.

For example, some may have experienced loneliness, while others may have enjoyed lockdown – for many, there will have been a mixture of different emotions.

This lesson has a scenario related to Covid-19 and this may be particularly sensitive for any pupils who have experienced significant distress, loss or trauma prior to Covid-19 or during this time. There is clear guidance for teaching sensitive issues in the [Guidance for Learning in a Safe Environment](#) document and it is important that this is read before delivering this lesson.

Adapting lessons to social distancing;

- Please refer to the Government guidelines and your own school's advice
- Where pair or small group discussions aren't possible, replace with personal reflections or individual contributions to whole class discussions
- **All scrunched-up/Un-scrunch me (slides 8 and 14)**
 - a. Pupils could each have their own drawing of a pupil that they scrunch up/un-scrunch as ideas are discussed as a whole class.
 - b. Alternatively a piece of flipchart paper could be used and the activity carried out as a whole class with pupils instructing the teacher or one of the pupils could add ideas and carry out the scrunching and un-scrunching.
 - c. A third option is that pupils make a 'pupil' out of pipe-cleaners which they can scrunch and un-scrunch at the relevant points.

What are we learning?



Key vocabulary

- worry, nervous, emotions (feelings)
- relax (calm), resilience (keeping on when it's hard), support (help)
- communication (talking/listening)

Learning objectives

- recognise what worry might feel or look like
- describe actions a young person can take if they are worried
- decide which actions might be more or less effective in dealing with worry

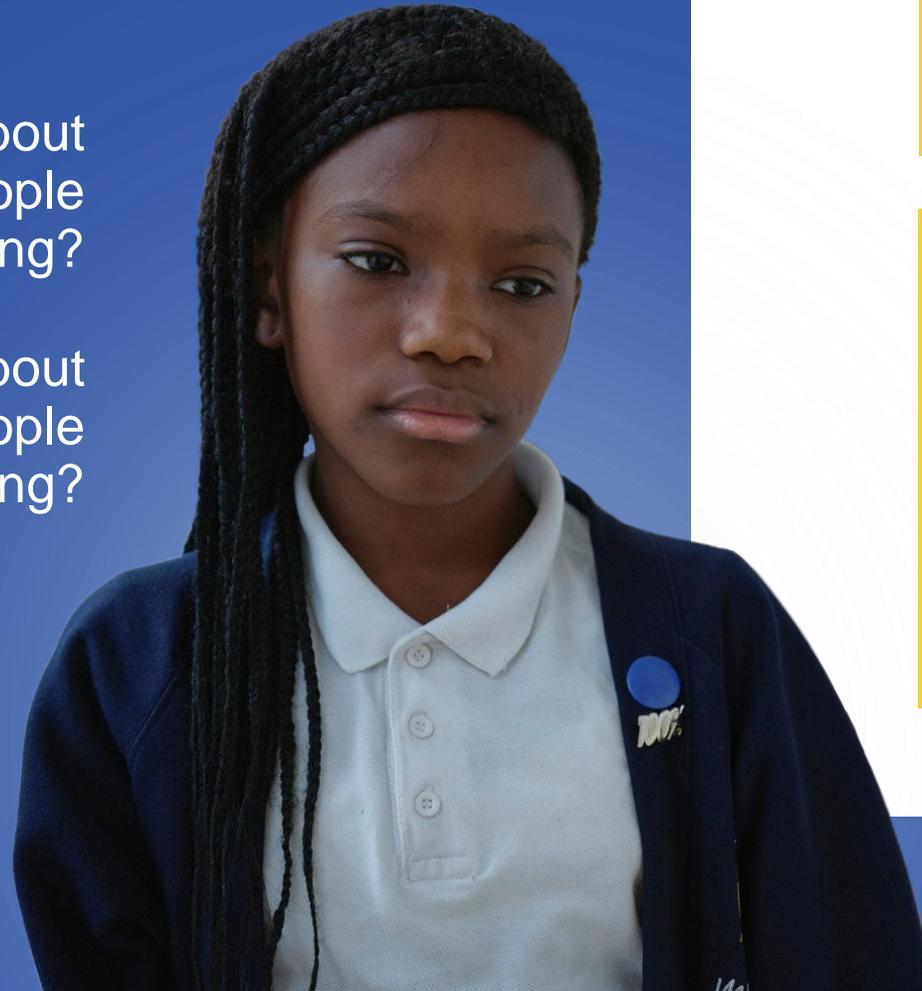
Learning outcomes

We are learning how to recognise worry and actions that a young person can take if they feel worried.

Scenarios

What is **similar** about how these young people could be feeling?

What is **different** about how these young people could be feeling?



Scenario 1

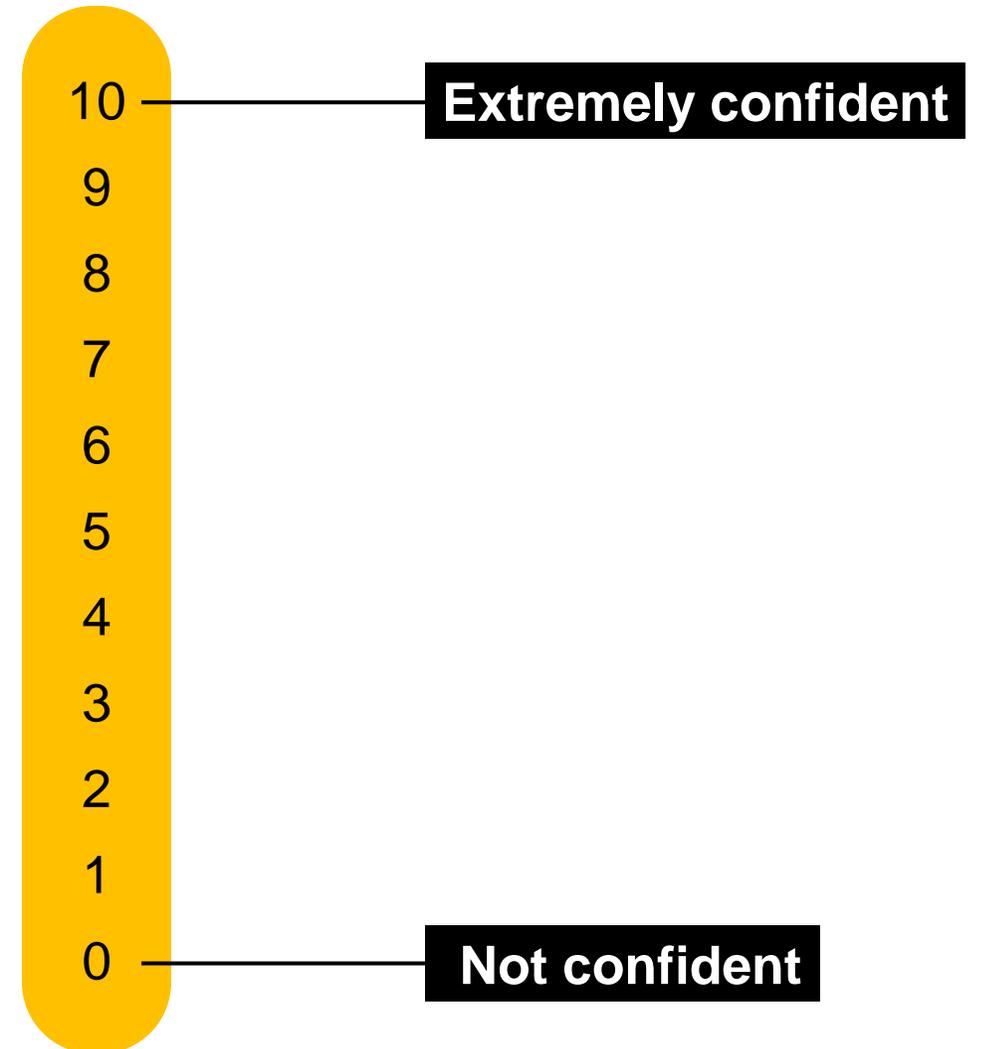
It is the night before Sean's birthday. He is going to the park with his two best friends to celebrate!

Scenario 2

Later today, Zara is playing in a national wheelchair basketball competition. Zara's coach says that she and her team should win the competition.

How confident are you in...

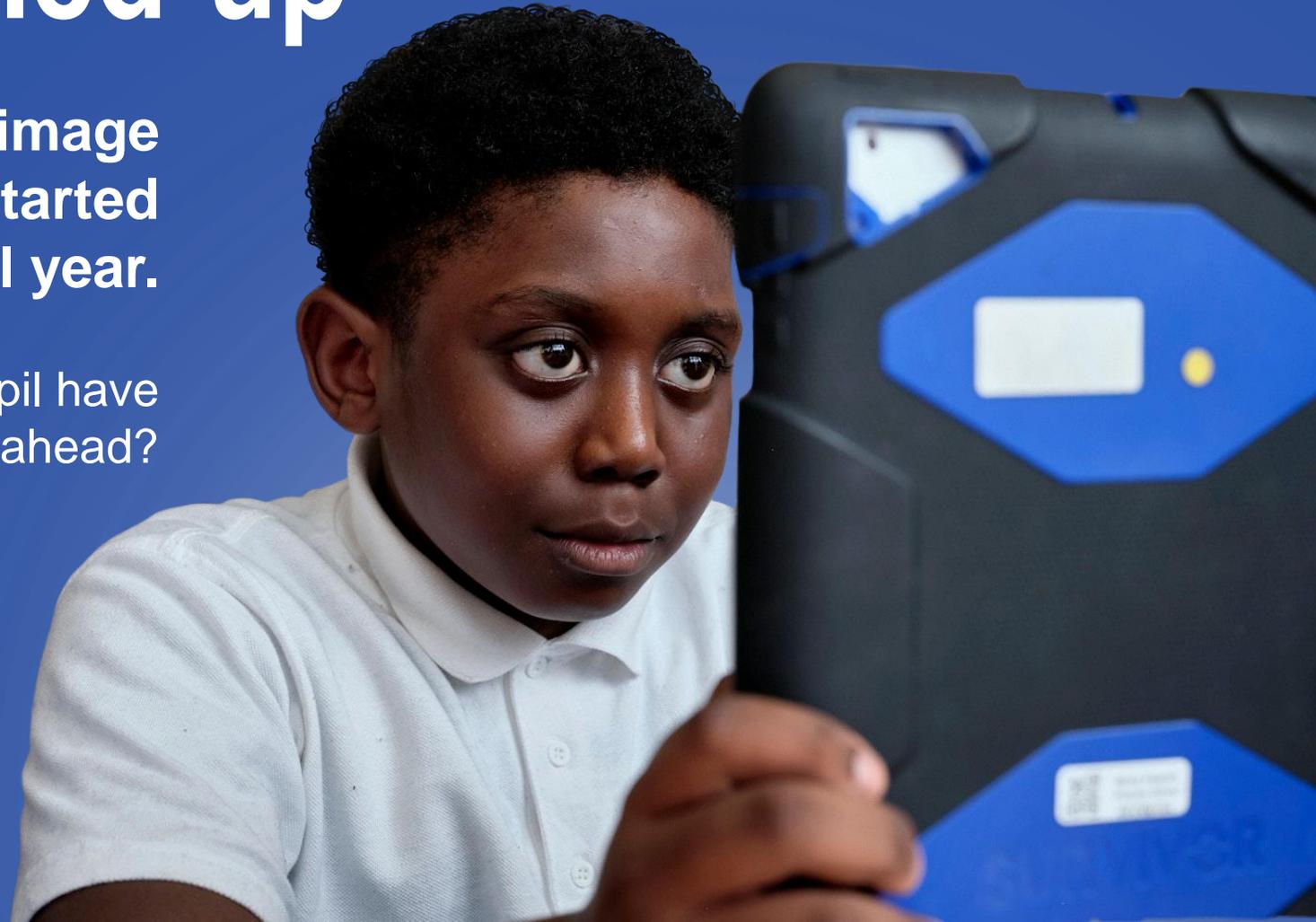
- recognising worry? Including what it looks and feels like
- describing actions that a young person can take if they are worried?
- deciding which actions might be more or less effective in dealing with worry?



All scrunched-up

In your groups draw an image of a pupil who has just started the new school year.

What worries might this new pupil have about the school year ahead?



What are the signs of worry?



Physical signs:

Where might the Year 6 pupil feel the worry in their body?



What physical signs of worry might be seen?

Feelings:

What feelings might the Year 6 pupil have?

Think about positive and negative feelings that might be linked.

Actions (or behaviours):

How might the Year 6 pupil behave or act as a result of these thoughts, feelings and physical signs?

Thoughts:

What might the Year 6 pupil be thinking?

Discussion questions

- Which of the four areas might be the strongest sign of worry and why?
- Why can it sometimes be difficult to tell if people are worried/nervous?
- Is worry different from excitement? How?

Challenge

Do you think worries can ever be helpful?

Explain your thinking.

Un-scrunch me



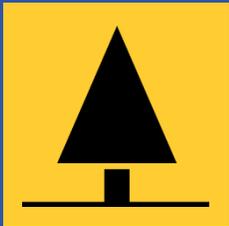
- What actions could help the pupil to un-scrunch and find a way to deal with their worries? Come up with a list of ideas.
- Can you add any new ideas from this video?

Private reflection

- During Covid-19, what helped you relax or feel good?
- Do you think the same thing could help another pupil who was feeling worried?

The worry tree

Can you help the Year 6 pupil to work their way through the worry tree?



“I’m worried about making new friends.”

Notice the worry

What are they worrying about?

Can they do something about it?

No

Try to let the worry go

Yes

Make a plan!

What? How? When?

Now?

Later?

Do it!

Decide when

Try to let the worry go

Ideas bank

Some other ideas if you get stuck:

- Writing worries down
- Speaking to someone trusted about worries
- Doing something about it (if possible!)
- Being active
- Learning something new
- Doing a favourite hobby
- Creating (for example, doing a piece of art, crafts or making a drama)



Un-scrunch me



Pass the scrunched-up ball around. On your turn pick an action you think will help with worries and un-scrunch the ball before passing it on. Keep going until the ball is completely un-scrunched.

Discussion questions



- How might the Year 6 pupil feel now they are un-scrunched?
- Did you learn any new ideas a young person could use to deal with worry?

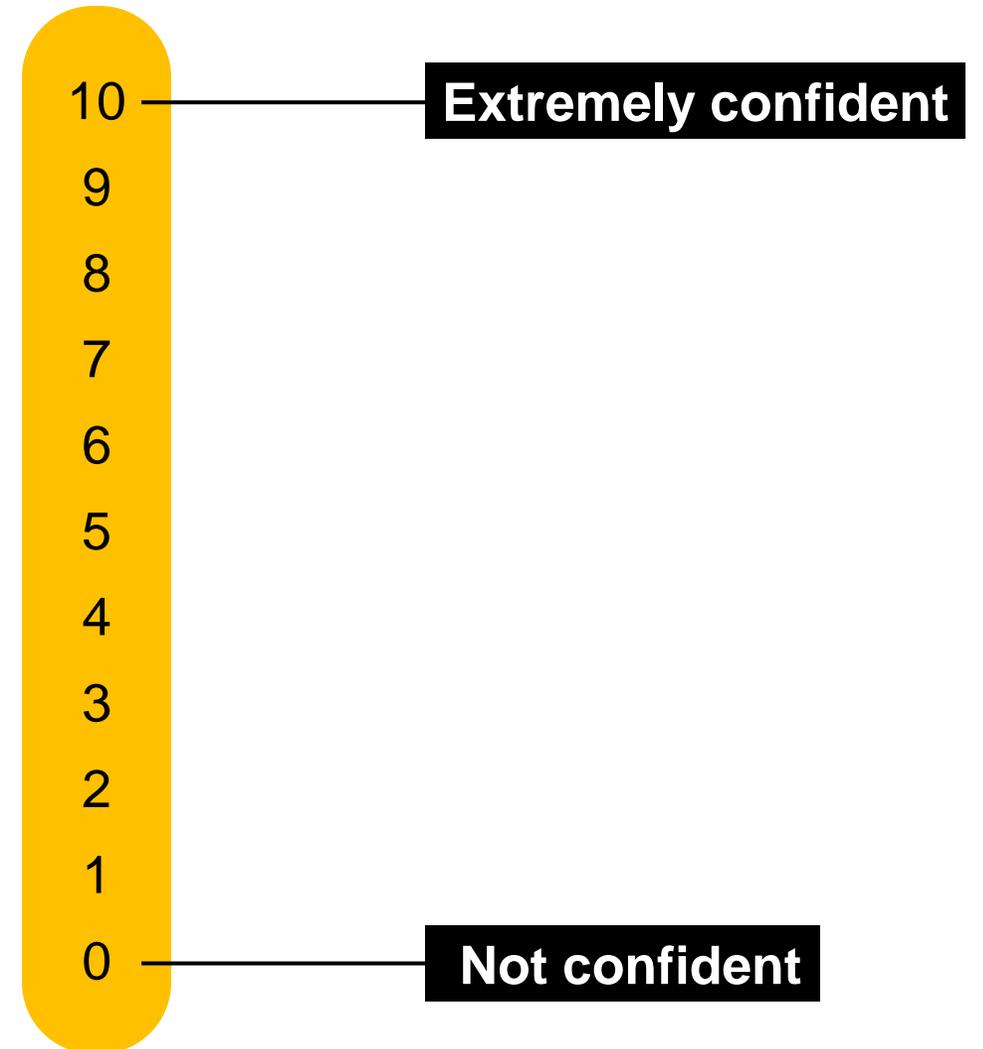
Challenge

Which ideas were the most helpful for un-scrunching and why?

Do you think the person would have been able to un-scrunch on their own?
Explain your answer.

How confident are you now in...

- recognising worry? Including what it looks and feels like
- describing actions that a young person can take if they are worried?
- deciding which actions might be more or less effective in dealing with worry?



Everybody feels nervous or worried at times.

It is always good to try out the different actions you have learnt in the lesson but if worries get too much, it is important that you speak to a trusted adult and get some more help.

Childline:

[childline.org.uk/info-advice](https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice)

Or call 0800 1111

Shout:

Text 85258



Additional relaxation activities



Advice station

What advice would you give to help the pupil with their worry?



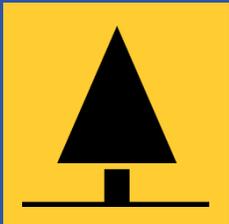
Khairah found learning at home very difficult during Covid-19. She is worried that she won't remember lots of things now she's back at school.

Lauren has trouble speaking up in front of the class. She finds it hard to breathe and always thinks she's going to mess it up.

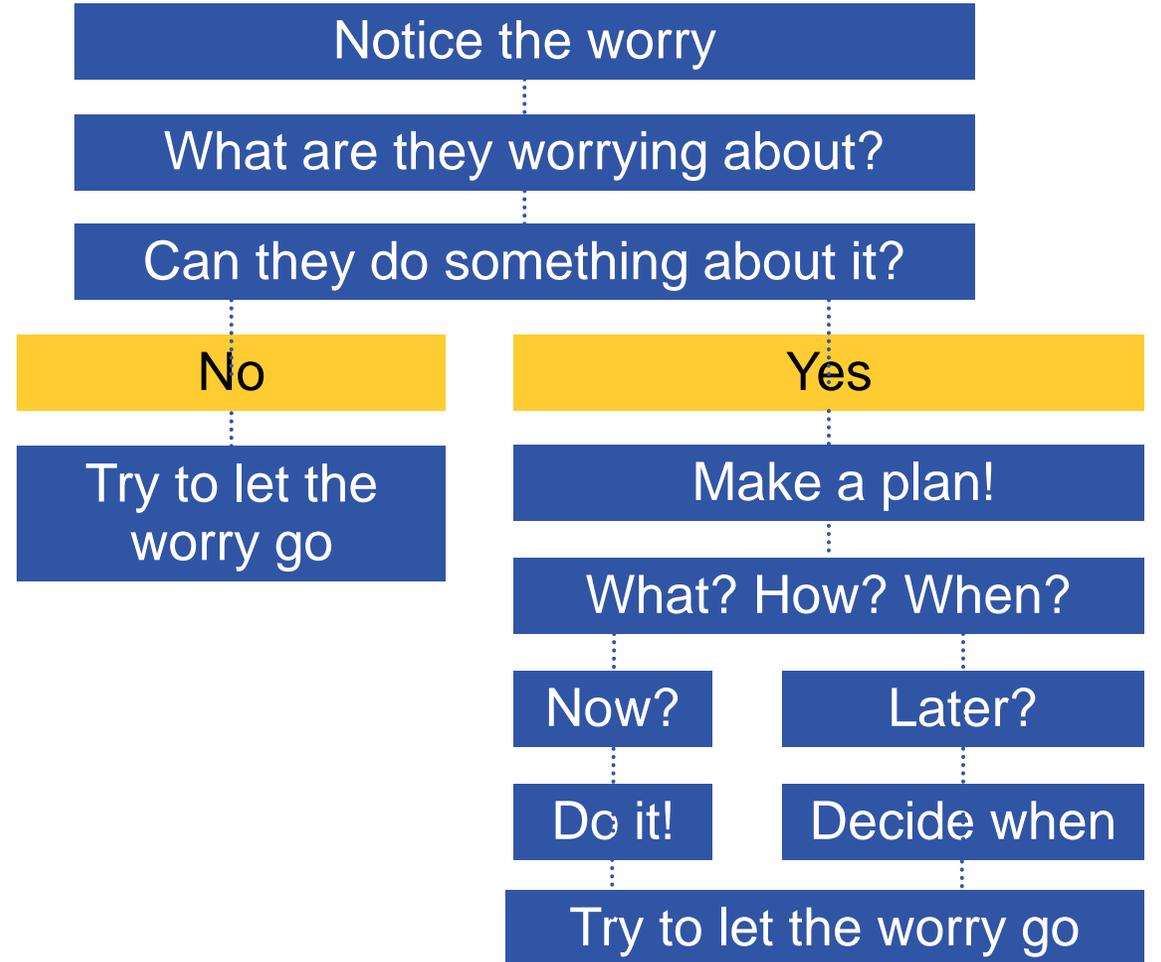
James' cousin is moving house and James is worried that the move will affect their friendship. He thinks about it loads, especially at night time.

The worry tree

Can you help the Year 6 pupil to work their way through the worry tree?

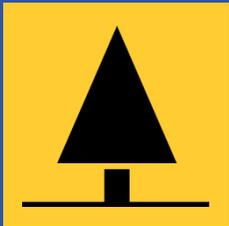


“I’m worried that my friend, Nathan, is angry with me.”

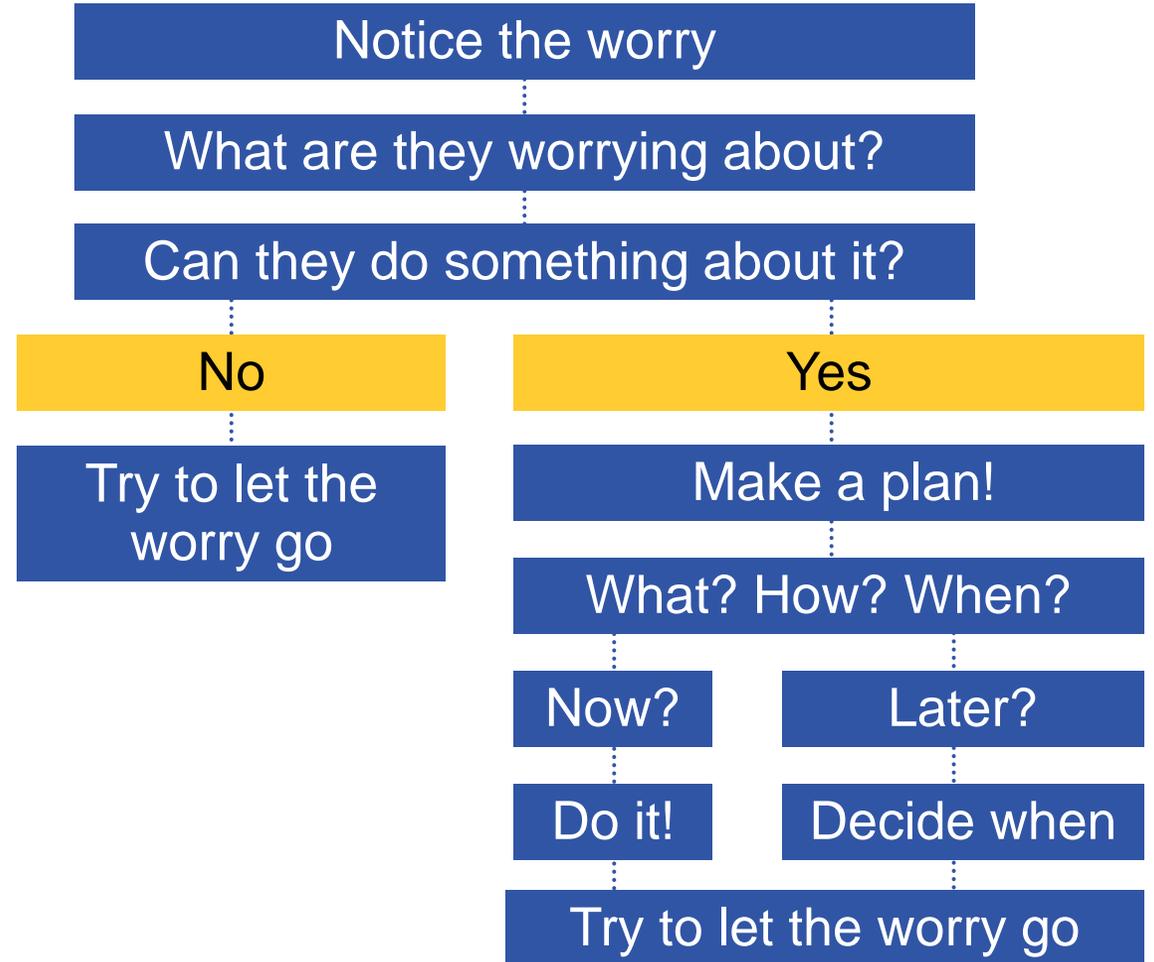


The worry tree

Can you help the Year 6 pupil to work their way through the worry tree?



“I’m worried about the things I read in the news.”



Relaxation station

Petal breathing

Look at your hand. Imagine it is a flower and your fingers are the petals. As you breathe in, close the petals so they touch and as you breathe out open the petals as wide as you can.

Repeat 20-30 times.



Relaxation station

Imagination

Use your imagination to create a place of total relaxation!

You might want to use paper or pens or words to create a calm, relaxing place.



Extended learning projects

Class un-scrunching!

Come up with a list of things that might make a Year 6 class feel 'scrunched-up'. Then come up with relaxation images, positive words and actions or breathing activities that the whole class can do. Create a display and that can be used throughout the year.

Say it with words

Create a poem for someone to read to work through a time when they are feeling uneasy.

Worry Tree

Complete the worry tree at home, as a personal reflection task. You could also use the worry tree to form a classroom display to remind pupils of this strategy for addressing worries. Note that pupils should not be encouraged to publicise their worries or add them to the class display. The worry tree is available as a print-out PDF.