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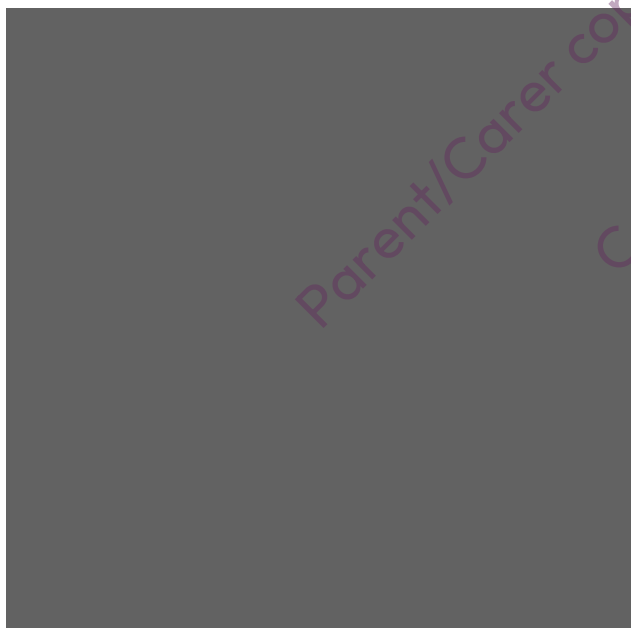
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Change, loss and grief

KS1, years 1-2: What happens when things change?



What happens when things change?

This lesson for pupils in years 1-2 explores different kinds of change, how change can affect people, and who can help them when managing change and loss.

No lesson should be taught in isolation, but always as part of a planned, developmental PSHE education programme. This lesson is best used within the context of a unit of work on managing change, or as part of wider learning about mental health and emotional wellbeing.

Learning objective

To learn about different kinds of change and how change can affect people.

Learning outcomes

Pupils will be able to:

- recognise what change means
- identify different changes that people might experience
- recognise the relationship between change and loss
- describe how change and loss might affect people and who can help them

Climate for learning

Make sure you have read the accompanying teacher guidance notes before teaching this lesson. These include guidance on creating a safe learning environment, curriculum links, and additional advice on teaching about change, loss and grief safely.

Resources required

- Box or envelope for questions
- Flipchart paper and pens
- Resource 1: *Feelings buddy* [one per pair]
- Resource 2: *Change scenarios* [one per pair]
- Resource 2a: *Feelings cards* [support option – as required]
- Resource 2b: *People who can help* [support option – as required]

Key words

change

loss

feelings

emotion

permanent

temporary

Baseline assessment

Introduction (Slides 9-10, 5 mins)

Establish or revisit ground rules. Make sure pupils know that they have the right to pass and that there should be no personal stories. Explain where they can go to talk to someone after the lesson, should the need arise. Remind pupils that if they have worries or questions during or after the lesson that they do not want to raise in front of the class, they can speak to you individually. You could also provide a question box for them to post a question, anonymously or with their name, if appropriate for your pupils.

Introduce the learning objective and outcomes. Explain that the lesson will focus on different types of change and how change can affect people. Explain that change and loss can sometimes feel like a challenging topic to discuss, but that pupils will also learn about who can help when someone experiences change.

Baseline assessment activity (Slides 11-12, 15 mins)

Introduce the activity by giving pupils an example of a change (e.g. pupils had a different teacher last year) and explain that change means that something is different to how it was before.

Draw or display a spider diagram on the board/flipchart with the word 'changes' in the middle section. In pairs, ask pupils to discuss some of the changes they have seen, noticed or experienced in their lives over the past year. Use the image prompts on **slide 11** to help pupils think of ideas. Take feedback and note ideas on the spider diagram.

Responses from pupils might include:

- *Seasons changing – leaves changing colour, temperature changing, etc.*
- *Wearing different clothes throughout the year*
- *Wearing different shoes and clothes for school and PE*
- *Changing the table they sit at in class*
- *Moving to a new year group*
- *Changing teachers*
- *Changing hairstyles*
- *Making new friends*
- *Starting a new club or activity*
- *Changing routine during school holidays*
- *A parent going back to work (so a different person dropping them off and collecting them from school)*

Pick up on any commonalities or misconceptions, and draw out that everyone experiences change and that change is a normal part of life and growing up. Acknowledge that some changes feel good, some feel less good and some might feel difficult and upsetting. Explain that some changes are temporary – they will only last for a little while – while others are permanent – the change will last forever.

Give each pair a copy of **Resource 1: Feelings buddy**. Ask them to draw and write about how these changes may have made the child in the resource feel and who might be able to give the child help and support.

The purpose of this baseline activity is to help you find out the pupils' existing knowledge, understanding and feelings about change. As pupils record their responses, circulate to see what ideas they are adding. This will help to inform and adapt your teaching for the coming lesson. For example, if pupils have limited examples of how someone might feel about change, or believe that everyone might feel the same way, it could help to spend more time exploring feelings and responses in the 'Different changes' activity. Keep these copies of **Resource 1: Feelings buddy** to hand, as pupils will return to them at the end of the lesson.

Briefly discuss with the class who could help the child when they are experiencing a change or a loss, for example family members or adults in school.

Core activities

Different changes (Slide 13, 15 mins)

In pairs, ask pupils to read (or read to pupils) the three scenarios about different changes in **Resource 2: Change scenarios**.

Ask pairs to discuss:

- What has changed in each scenario?
- Is the change temporary or permanent?
- How did the character feel about the change?
- How did the character respond to the change?

Take feedback from the class:

- **Scenario 1:** *Mateo's cat has gone missing; he feels sad at night when his cat is more noticeably not there; he tries to cheer up his mum, so he may be more worried about her and concerned about her feelings, and not paying so much attention to his own; Mateo's change is also a loss, and may be temporary or permanent – this might also be causing him to have feelings of uncertainty and worry.*
- **Scenario 2:** *Jessica has moved house; she has permanently left her old house, but may not live in the new house forever; to Jessica, this change may feel like a loss – although the move has brought positive changes such as a new garden, and this might make her feel happy or excited, she is also feeling sadness at losing her old home; she is struggling to sleep in her new house but is worried about telling her family because she isn't sure how they will react.*
- **Scenario 3:** *Jude's grandma has died – this is a loss and a permanent change. You may need to explain that 'when someone dies, their body stops working, and this means that they don't need anything to eat or to drink and they can't feel anything. Because their body has stopped working, they can't come back to life, even though others may really want them to.'¹ Jude really misses his grandma and all the special things they used to do together; he is unhappy about going to his grandma and grandad's house as she is no longer there, and he might be worried about things being different or be nervous about seeing his grandad upset.*

¹ <https://www.childbereavementuk.org/explaining-to-a-child-that-someone-has-died>



Support: Ask pupils to match the change and emotion cards in **Resource 2a: Feelings cards** to each scenario.



Challenge: Ask pupils to consider how the other characters in each scenario might be feeling (e.g. Mateo's mum, Jessica's parents, Jude's grandad).

Giving advice (Slide 14, 10 mins)

Assign each pair one of the three scenarios and ask them to come up with one piece of advice to help the character manage the change or loss. They should also consider who might help the character. Take feedback.

Pupils might suggest:

- **Scenario 1:** *Mateo might speak to his mum, or a teacher or family friend if he is worried about upsetting his mum. He might tell his mum or another adult that he gets a bit sad at night. He could write down how he is feeling, or ask if he can have a photo or picture of his cat that he could put by his bed at night when he misses her.*
- **Scenario 2:** *Jessica might speak to her parents or an adult at school about how she is feeling. She could ask what the noises at night are so that she feels less worried about them. She could spend more time in the garden and doing the things at the new house that make her happy or excited about the move.*
- **Scenario 3:** *Jude could speak to his family or a teacher at school about his worries. He could ask to see his grandad at his own house at first, or ask a family member to stay with him when he visits his grandad so that someone is there if his grandad gets upset. He could ask to do something to remember his grandma, for example make a photo album or collage of his favourite photos of grandma and him together.*

Explain to pupils that the feelings associated with a change, especially after a permanent loss (like Jude has experienced), can be very difficult and can make someone feel really sad, or angry, guilty or moody, but that these feelings will change over time and will often get better. However, it is really important to tell an adult if they or someone they know is struggling to manage their feelings, so that appropriate help and support can be put in place.



Support: Give pupils **Resource 2b: People who can help** and ask them to decide who their character could talk to.



Challenge: Ask pupils to create a conversation starter for one of the characters – what could they say to someone when asking for help?

Signposting support

Signposting support (Slide 15, 5 mins)

It is important to reassure pupils that change is a normal part of life and even adults can sometimes find change difficult too. Emphasise that if they are finding change difficult or upsetting they should speak to a trusted adult at home or in school.

Reflection and endpoint assessment

Reflection and endpoint assessment (Slide 16, 10 mins)

Return pairs their copy of **Resource 1: Feelings buddy**. Ask pupils to tell their partner at least one new thing they have learnt, as well as any questions that they have or anything that they would still like to find out/be able to do. Take feedback from the class. This is an opportunity to gather evidence of the learning that has taken place and to inform planning for future lessons.

Extension activity

Note that this extension activity is to be used in the classroom only, and not set as a homework task.

Poster (Slide 16)

Ask pupils to create a poster or collage with pictures showing the different things someone might do if they are feeling sad about a change or loss. This could also include who they could go to for help and support.