



FREE CLASSROOM RESOURCE · KS2 & KS3

5 resilience activities for your classroom

Quick, low-prep activities from our RCC workshops that help pupils bounce back from setbacks, try new things and think for themselves. Each takes 10–20 minutes and needs little or no equipment.

- 1 Mistake Celebrations
- 2 Yes, And...
- 3 Story Circle: Bouncing Back
- 4 What Happens Next?
- 5 The Compliment Circle

Before you start: agree two ground rules with the class: *we cheer each other on* and *there are no wrong answers*. Join in yourself where you can; pupils take more risks when the adult does too.

1 Mistake Celebrations

Time 10–15 min **Group** whole class, in a circle **You need** nothing

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Start by sharing a mistake of your own and what you learned from it.
2. Invite pupils to share a mistake, big or small, and one thing it taught them.
3. After each one, the whole group cheers and claps.
4. Nobody has to share: "pass" is always allowed.

WHY IT WORKS

It normalises failure as part of learning and reduces the fear of getting things wrong.

TALK ABOUT IT

- How did it feel to be cheered for a mistake?
- What would you try if you knew you couldn't fail?

KS2: use a "mistake of the week" jar and celebrate on Fridays. **KS3:** link it to a subject, e.g. a maths method that went wrong and how it was fixed.

2 Yes, And...

Time 10 min **Group** circle, or groups of 5–6 **You need** nothing

HOW TO RUN IT

1. One pupil starts a story with a single sentence.
2. The next pupil adds a sentence that begins "Yes, and...", accepting what came before.
3. Keep going round. No blocking ("No, but...") and no going back.
4. Finish when the story reaches an ending, or after two rounds.

WHY IT WORKS

Removes the fear of mistakes, encourages creativity and practises building on ideas without judgement.

TALK ABOUT IT

- What happened when an idea surprised you?
- Where else could "yes, and" help: group work, friendships?

KS2: give a starting line ("One morning, the school hamster could talk..."). **KS3:** run it as a problem-solving round: plan a school event, one idea at a time.

3 Story Circle: Bouncing Back

Time 15 min **Group** circle, or groups of 5–6 **You need** nothing

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Introduce a character with a goal (e.g. "Sam wants to make the football team").
2. Pupils add one sentence each. Every third sentence must add a setback.
3. The next pupil has to show the character trying again, or a new way round it.
4. End with how the character has changed.

WHY IT WORKS

Rehearses a growth mindset: setbacks become part of the story rather than the end of it.

TALK ABOUT IT

- Which setback was hardest for the character?
- What helped them keep going? Who helped them?

KS2: use a picture-book character the class knows. **KS3:** write it up afterwards as a short story or comic strip.

4 What Happens Next?

Time 15–20 min **Group** groups of 3–4 **You need** twist cards (optional)

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Groups start acting out a short, everyday scene (a picnic, a school trip, a bake sale).
2. After a minute, call out a twist: "It starts to pour with rain!"
3. Groups must carry on, adapting the scene in real time.
4. Add one or two more twists, then let each group show its ending.

WHY IT WORKS

Adapting a story in the moment teaches flexibility and creative thinking when plans change.

TALK ABOUT IT

- How did your group decide what to do?
- When has a plan changed for you in real life?

KS2: keep twists playful (the dog runs off with the sandwiches). **KS3:** use twists that need a decision (a friend is left out; the bus is cancelled).

5 The Compliment Circle

Time 15 min **Group** circle, or groups of 6–8 **You need** a chair for the "hot seat"

HOW TO RUN IT

1. One pupil sits in the hot seat.
2. Others take turns to say one specific positive thing about them ("You always...", "I liked it when you...").
3. The pupil in the hot seat just says "thank you", with no arguing back.
4. Rotate until everyone who wants a turn has had one.

WHY IT WORKS

Helps pupils internalise their strengths and feel valued by their peers.

TALK ABOUT IT

- Was it easier to give or to receive a compliment? Why?
- Which compliment will you remember?

KS2: model a few specific compliments first and pre-pair kind classmates. **KS3:** do it in friendship-neutral groups, or as anonymous written notes.

WANT MORE?

Bring an RCC workshop to your school

Our drama-based workshops build resilience, confidence and critical thinking in KS2 and KS3 pupils, with activities like these and many more, led by an experienced facilitator.

Book a workshop: schoolresilienceworkshop.com/book

Questions? Email rccworkshopsuk@gmail.com