

The Boys

Activity 1 - Where is your special place?

Read 'The Boys' with the children. Discuss the themes of the book with the children and what they noticed about the story. In 'The Boys', the boys have a special place that makes them feel safe and happy. Explain to the children that a place can make us feel safe for lots of different reasons. It might be because it is quiet, or because it is fun, or maybe because of the people who are there with us.

Ask the children to think of a place where they feel safe and happy. Give them some suggestions to support, such as home, library, classroom or football pitch. Ensure the children understand that there is no wrong or silly answer.

Model drawing a picture of your 'special place' that makes you feel safe and happy and write underneath what makes it special. Ask the children to have a go at their own. When the children have finished the activity, ask if anybody would like to share where their special place is and why.

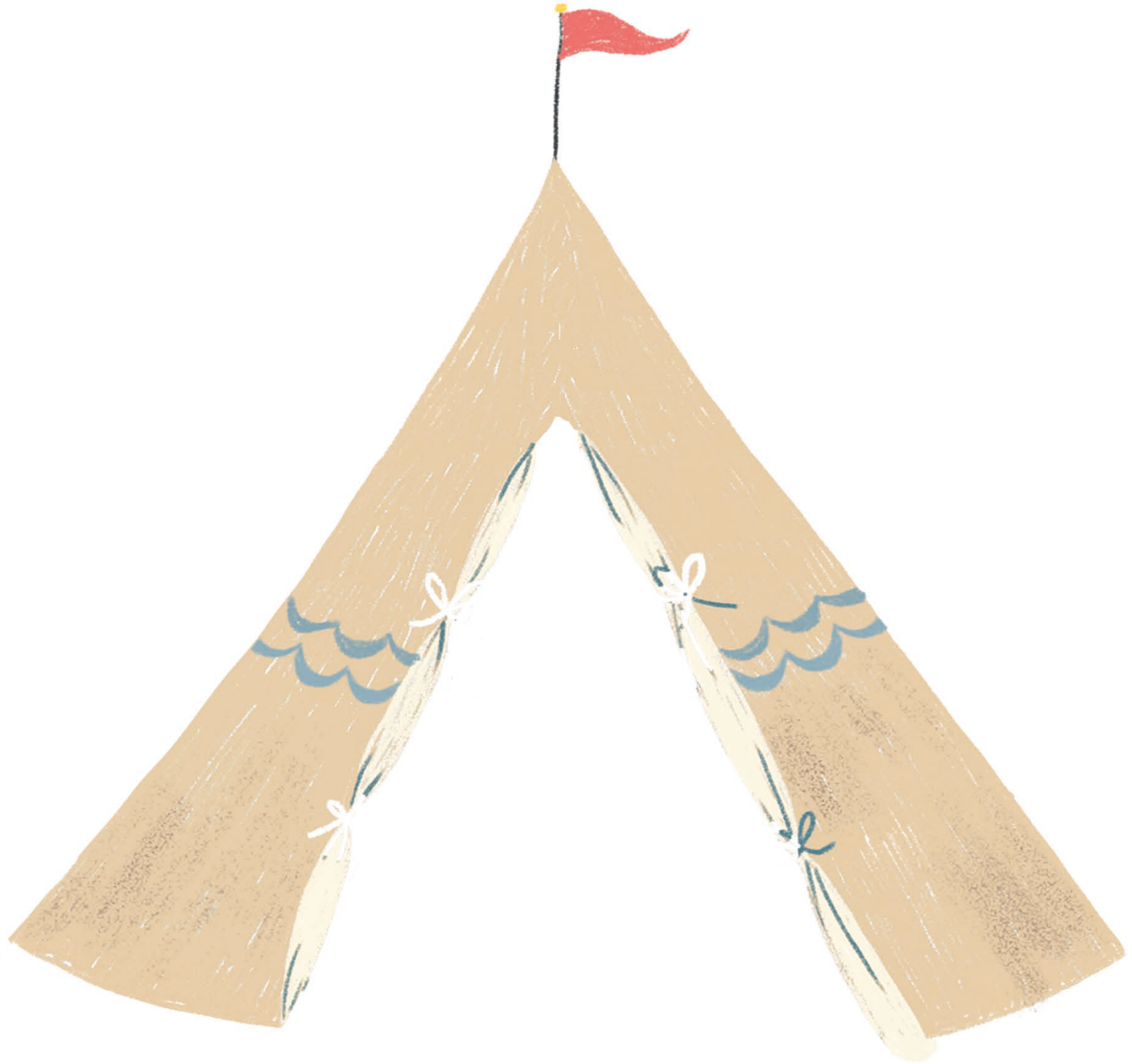


Differentiation:
For KS1 children, you may want to display key spellings on the board

Resources:
Activity sheet template

The Boys

Activity 1 - Where is your special place?



The Boys

Activity 2 - Families come in all shapes and sizes!

In the story, as the boys grow up some of them start families of their own. Look at the families in the story with the children. Ask them: what do you notice about the families? Encourage the children to think about how they are all different. Ask the children: do families need to look the same to still be called a family?



Encourage the children to think about their own families. Are they all the same? Ask children to share how many siblings they have and encourage the children to reflect on how all families look a little different, and that this is completely normal and actually a really wonderful thing. When asking children to share, be sensitive towards any children struggling with a difficult home life.

Model drawing a picture of yourself with your family around you. Talk to the children about the members of your family as you draw them and label them. Try to add details to your drawing, for example if your son loves to cook, draw him with a wok in his hand. If your partner loves reading, draw him curled up with his favourite book. Give the children time to do the same activity and encourage them to add as many details about their family as possible.



At the end of the lesson, come together and compare some of the pictures. Highlight to the children how different all our families look, and yet all our families give us love and stability.

Differentiation:
By support within classroom

Resources:
Pencils and paper or exercise books

The Boys

Activity 3 - How can you lift somebody up?

Read the page in the story that says:

*When one of them was weighed down by sadness,
the others would always be there to lift him up.*

Ask the children, what does it mean to lift someone up? Does it mean to pick them up and throw them in the air? Explain that we can lift up someone's spirits by doing things to make them feel better.

Ask the class for some ideas for how they could make a friend feel better if they are down. Record some of these on the board. Then, put the children into pairs. Give them 5 minutes to take turns to say a way to lift someone up. The only rule is you can't offer the same idea twice! After this activity, give the children a chance to share more of their ideas.

Model using some of the ideas the children have generated to write in the balloon template an idea for how to lift someone up when they are down.

After modelling this, let the children write their ideas on their own balloon and create a class display or allow children to stick near their tray or peg as a reminder.



Differentiation:

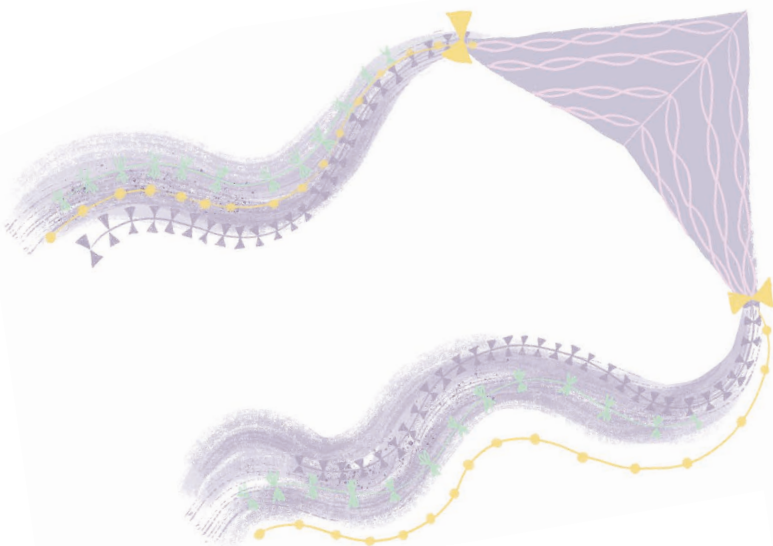
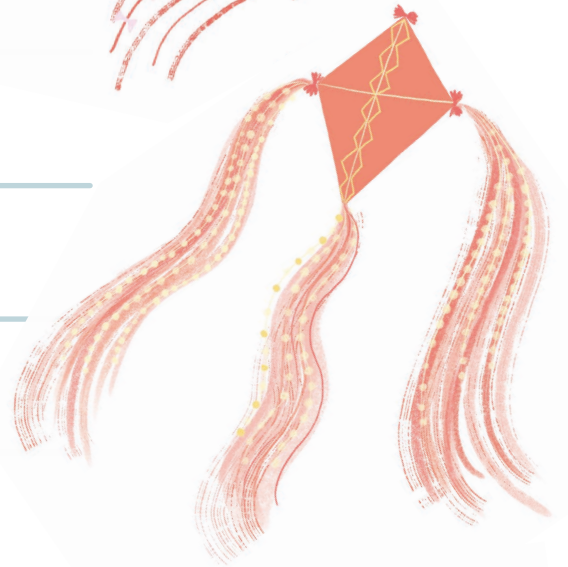
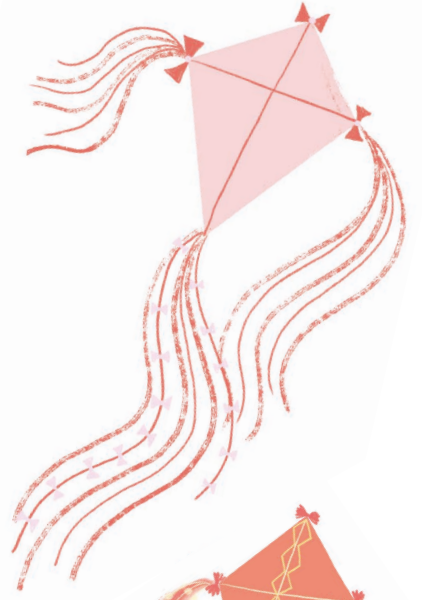
Keep annotations of ideas within lesson and teacher model on the board for children who may need support with ideas or spellings.

Resources:

Interactive board or whiteboard
Activity sheet template

The Boys

Activity 3 - How can you lift somebody up?



The Boys

Activity 4 - Find your courage!

Re-read the part of the story that says

'They came to realise that no boy is an island and the bravest way to face problems is to talk and to listen.'

Ask the children why they think it could be brave to talk and to listen? Point out that often the word brave describes something like jumping off a high diving board or riding a bike for the first time. Encourage the children to consider that it can be very difficult to talk about something that makes you worried or upset. Sometimes, we fear the reactions of other people.

Ask if any of the children can think of a time they have been brave and if they are willing to share these experiences. Write some of these on the board for children to refer back to.

Have template with letters COURAGE down the side to create an acrostic poem.

Model an example for the children:

Choosing to share your feelings

Overcoming fears

Understanding and listening to another point of view

Role modelling empathy

Always being who you are

Guiding others to make kind choices

Empowering others



Differentiation:

KS1 children create a class acrostic poem together
KS2 children create their own

Resources:

Interactive board or whiteboard
Activity sheet template

The Boys

Activity 4 - Find your courage!

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The Boys

Activity 5 - Gratitude attitude!

Direct children to the part of the story that says:

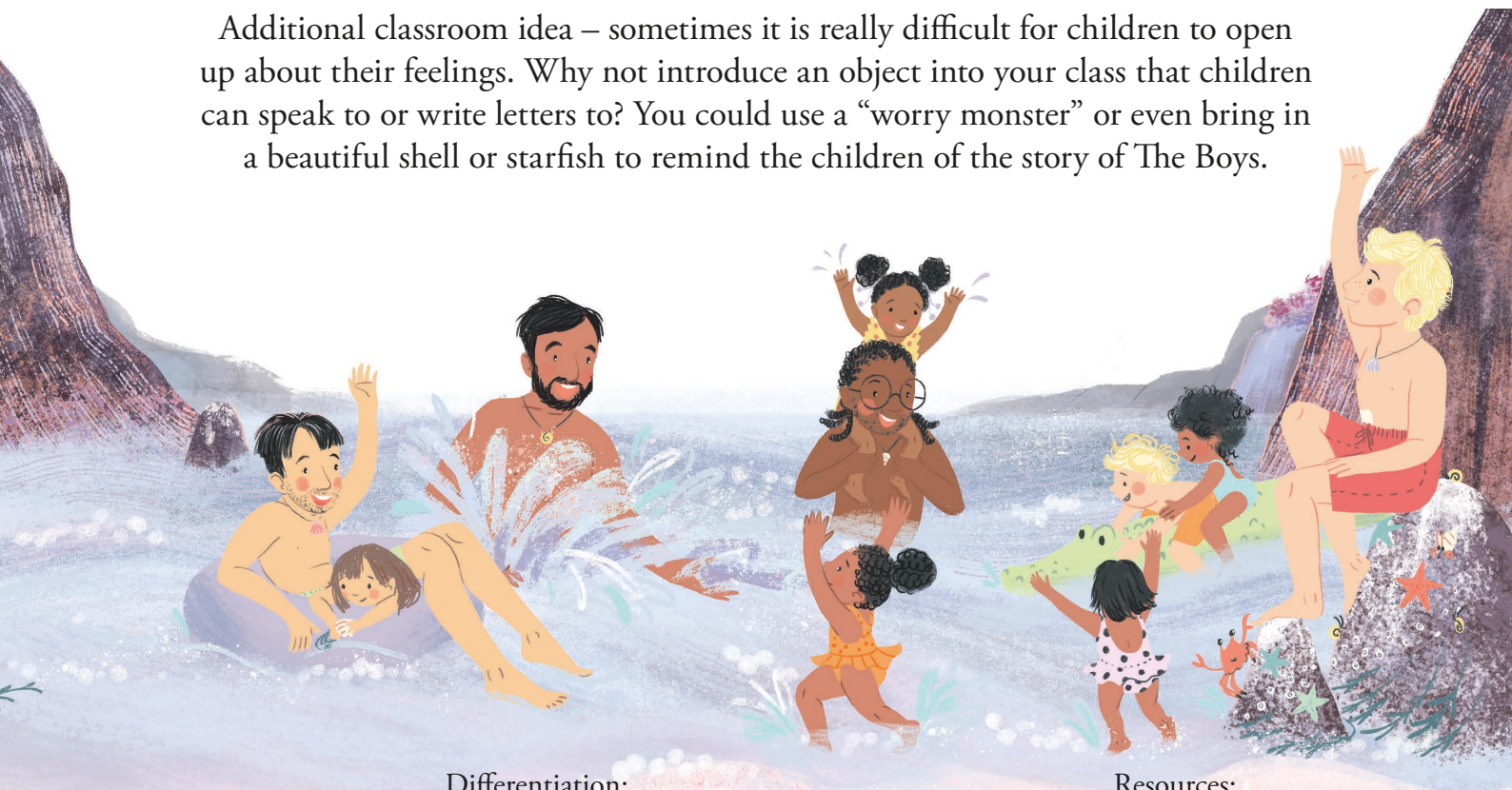
‘The older the boys grew, the less the men took their brotherhood for granted. They knew that their friendship would always bring them back together, just like waves returning to the shore.’

The boys are thankful and grateful for their friendship. It is important to spend some time to think about what we have to be thankful for in our own lives. There might be things you don't even notice in your day to day life that somebody else might be missing. Discuss with the children what they are thankful for – remind them that even things that seem basic to us like our houses and school lunches are things not everybody has.

Ask the children to share their ideas. Encourage them to reflect on their own lives and things that are particularly important to them.

Model to the children using the ideas they have generated during the lesson how to complete the activity template by writing something you are grateful for.

Additional classroom idea – sometimes it is really difficult for children to open up about their feelings. Why not introduce an object into your class that children can speak to or write letters to? You could use a “worry monster” or even bring in a beautiful shell or starfish to remind the children of the story of The Boys.



Differentiation:

KS1 children use template with no lines and draw a picture
KS2 children use lined template to write ideas

Resources:

Activity sheet template

The Boys

Activity 5 - Gratitude attitude!
