

LESSON 1

Strengths and interests

KEY STAGE 1

This is the first of two lessons about careers for key stage 1, designed with the support of The Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC). This lesson explores what makes us unique, including people's strengths and interests, and how these might be suited to different jobs.

No lesson should be taught in isolation, but always as part of a planned, developmental PSHE education programme. These lessons would work well as part of learning about living in the wider world, alongside topics such as economic wellbeing and money.

Learning Objective

To learn about how everyone has different strengths and interests.

Learning Outcomes

Pupils will be able to:

- explain what makes everyone unique
- identify the different strengths and interests that people can have
- describe the strengths and interests suited to different jobs

Resources Required

- Box or envelope for questions
- Strips of A4 paper [white or colour] and glue, or self-adhesive 'paper chain' strips
- Resource 1: *Adjectives word bank* [one per group]
- Resource 2: *Job examples* [one cut-up set per pupil or group]
- Resource 3: *Career pathway template* [one per pupil completing the extension activity]

Lesson Summary

Activity	Description	Timing (Total: 60mins)
1. Introduction	Introduce the learning objective and outcomes, set up the question box and revisit ground rules.	2 mins
2. Baseline assessment	Pupils demonstrate their current understanding by answering questions about strengths, interests and being unique.	10 mins
3. Strength statements	Pupils identify strengths using adjectives and create a 'circle of strengths' chain, using strips of paper.	15 mins
4. Interest interviews	Pupils carry out interviews to find out their classmates' hobbies and interests.	10 mins
5. Career pathways	Pupils match different jobs to possible career pathways.	15 mins
6. Reflection and endpoint assessment	With a partner, pupils carry out a 'Say one thing' challenge about strengths, interests and jobs, and reflect on what career could suit them.	5 mins
7. Signpost support	Remind pupils who they can talk to if they have any questions or worries about jobs.	3 mins

Climate for Learning

Make sure you have read the accompanying teacher guidance notes before teaching this lesson. These include relevant subject knowledge and guidance on creating a safe learning environment and inclusive teaching. Be aware that pupils will have different experiences of people's careers and



having a job, and that some of their families may be affected by long-term unemployment or unstable employment.

Key Words

Strength, interest, unique, job, career.

Baseline Assessment

Introduction (slide 1-2) – 2 mins

Establish ground rules with the class. Make pupils aware of the question box, which will be available throughout and after the lesson. Explain that if they have questions or worries that they do not want to raise in front of the class, they can talk to you separately, or draw/write their question on a piece of paper, with or without their name, and put it in the question box.

Introduce the learning objective and outcomes. Explain that today's lesson will explore what makes us unique, the strengths and interests someone can have, and how these might be suited to different jobs and careers.

Baseline assessment activity (slide 3) – 10 mins

Share the image of the young person (Jay) and statement on slide 3. Read the statement together as a class:

We all have different strengths and interests. This is what makes us unique.

Ask pupils, what Jay means by 'strengths', 'interests' and being 'unique'. Allow some time for pupils to discuss in pairs and then take feedback, writing their ideas on the board or flipchart paper under the headings 'strengths', 'interests' and 'being unique'.

Pupils may suggest:

Strengths: something someone can do well, being good at something, having a skill, examples such as being funny/caring/sporty etc.

Interests: hobbies such as a sport, things someone likes doing, things they are interested in, things they like reading or learning about e.g. space, dinosaurs or flowers.

Being unique: being special, what makes you 'you', being different to others, no two people are the same.

This baseline activity will help you to gauge pupils' knowledge and understanding and any misconceptions, for example, if pupils were to identify a 'strength' as being physically strong.

Core activities

Strength statements (slides 4-6) – 15 mins

Using slide 4, read Jay's 'strength statements' together as a class. Then, give pairs of pupils Resource 1: *Adjectives word bank* and ask them to discuss which adjectives they think match with Jay's strength statements. Take feedback.

Pupils may choose:

- 1) Sporty, active
- 2) Kind, friendly, helpful
- 3) Funny

Explain to pupils that these strengths describe someone's personality and the things they can do well. Highlight that having different strengths to one another adds to how we are all unique. Then, ask pupils to write some strength statements for themselves onto strips of paper and include an adjective from slide 5, or from Resource 1: *Adjectives word bank*. For example, *Creative: I like to draw*. Once completed, use slide 6 to explain how to create a 'circle of strengths' for themselves,



providing up to five strips per pupil. To make the circles, pupils connect the two ends of one of the strips of paper with glue, and then loop another strip through the ring and connect the two ends of that strip, until all the strips are used up.

Support: Pupils could represent their strengths by drawing pictures onto the strips. Alternatively, they could cut out adjectives from Resource 1 and stick these onto their strips.

Interest interviews (slides 7-8) – 10 mins

Briefly explain the meaning of an interest; a hobby or wanting to learn more about something. Using slide 7, share Jay's interests with the class: baking, dance club. In pairs, ask pupils to then carry out mini-interviews, to find out what each other's interests are. The following questions provide a scaffold:

- Do you have any hobbies, or do you go to any clubs?
- What things do you like to do at the weekend?
- What are you interested in learning more about or doing in the future?

Once completed, pupils meet up with other pairs and share their interests. Ask pupils to find out if there are any interests in common with their classmates, or if people mostly had different interests. Then, to bring the class together and take feedback, ask questions to find out about any commonalities, for example:

Who has a sport or being active as one of their hobbies?

Who has a creative hobby?

Who has an outdoor or nature-based hobby?

If time allows, create a class tally on flipchart paper. As with strengths, emphasise that having different interests is positive and part of what makes all of us unique.

Career pathways (9-10) – 15 mins

Explain that Jay has been learning about different jobs at school and thinking about what kind of job might suit their strengths and interests. Introduce pupils to the examples of different types of job 'pathways' or careers people might be interested in, on slide 10: Helping others, Nature, Creative, Building and making, Finding out new things.

Then, give small groups of pupils the set of cards from Resource 2: *Job examples* and ask them to match the different jobs to the career pathways.

Take feedback using slide 11 and the answers below:

- *Helping others* – teacher, doctor, translator
- *Nature* – gardener, vet, farmer
- *Creative* – author, chef, musician
- *Building and making* – builder, carpenter, app designer
- *Finding out new things* – scientist, journalist, archaeologist

Explain that it can take a while for someone to find a career that suits them, and that even if their interests don't match any of the pathways they have just explored, these are just examples and there are plenty of options within these pathways, and beyond, for future careers.

Challenge: Ask pupils which pathway(s) might suit Jay, based on Jay's strengths and interests? *For example, Jay might be better suited to the creative pathway as they like baking and dancing.*

Plenary/ Assessment for and of learning

Reflection and endpoint assessment (slides 11-12) – 5 mins



Check the question box and respond to any questions that have been raised that have not already been answered by the content in the lesson.

In pairs, ask pupils to carry out the 'Say one thing' challenge, by asking each other to:

- "Say one thing you learnt about strengths and interests."
- "Say one thing you learnt about different jobs and careers."

Personal reflection:

Ask pupils to respond individually to the following question in their exercise books:

- Which of the five career pathways we learnt about today do you think might suit you, and why?

As this is a personal reflection, pupils need not share their responses with the rest of the class.

Signposting support (slide 13) – 3 mins

Ensure that pupils know where they can seek help, and that if they have questions or worries about jobs, it is important that they talk to an adult they trust at home, outside the family, or at school.

Extension activity

Extension activity (slide 14)

In their exercise books, pupils create their own character and describe their strengths and interests using Resource 3: *Career pathway template*. They could also include a career pathway or a job that may suit them.

