

# Preparing for the future

This document is separated into a session plan for 11-14 year olds and another for 14-18 year olds with alternative activities. Educators are encouraged to adapt all activities to the needs of their specific learners.

Preparing for the future is difficult when things change often and we aren't sure what challenges we will face. We can still do many things to prepare ourselves by recognising feelings and creating ways to help us cope with these feelings. Use the three activities below to explore feelings about the future and learn how to feel prepared for it.

Recommended ages: 11-14



Suggested timing: 45 minutes



## Learning objectives

Learners will:

- identify and recognise feelings about the future
- learn how to manage negative feelings
- think about preparedness and resilience
- learn how to break future plans down into manageable steps

## Starter activity: Future feelings



Ask learners to think about how they feel about the future. Create a word cloud on the board of words and phrases they associate with their feelings when they think about 'the future'.

Discuss the words they come up with and why they chose them.

## Core activity: Traffic lights



Now think about how we can help to manage some of these feelings. Some of the feelings we have about the future, such as worry or confusion, can be difficult to deal with. One way to manage is to turn a 'red' thought into a 'green' one.

Tell learners to pick one of the negative feelings they have about the future. Ask them to think about why it's negative. Encourage learners to turn that "red" overwhelming problem into an "amber" one by remembering that it is normal to feel that way and to focus on the parts of the problem they can control and solve.

Encourage the learners to think about the problem again and see if they can turn it "green". What are the positive things about the feeling? Maybe it is good to be worried about this thing, because it shows they understand it might be a challenge. What skills or ideas do learners already have to deal with this challenge? Can they ask for help or take steps to improve it?

Encourage learners to go through each worry and see if they can follow this process. They can even draw the process if it helps them, starting with the problem in a red circle, then breaking it down in an amber circle, and writing the positives in a green circle.

## Extension activity: Future steps

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Breaking things down into smaller steps can help us deal with challenges and can help us plan and prepare for the future.

Encourage learners to think about how they can help themselves prepare for something in the future one step at a time. Have learners think about a challenge they foresee in the future, or maybe something they've dealt with in the past but may happen again.

On [the footsteps template](#), have them write out what they would do to manage this challenge in the future. It can be broken down into as many small steps as they like.

You could ask learners to focus on a specific event, such as if the class had to return to home-learning. How would they individually and collectively support each other to deal with this challenge?

Educators could use the footsteps they have created over all these resources to create a visual display of their journey back to better and their learning.

Finally, encourage learners to fill out the [back to better journal](#) to track what they have learnt about preparing and coping with the future. Encourage them to continue using the journal system for as long as they need to.



## Preparing for the future

This document is separated into a session plan for 11-14 year olds and another for 14-18 year olds with alternative activities. Educators are encouraged to adapt all activities to the needs of their specific learners.

Recommended ages: 14-18



Suggested timing: 45 minutes



### Learning objectives

Learners will:

- identify and recognise feelings about the future
- learn how to manage negative feelings
- think about preparedness and resilience
- learn how to break future plans down into manageable steps

### Starter activity: Traffic lighting future feelings



Ask learners to think about how they feel about the future. Create a word cloud on the board of words and phrases they associate with their feelings when they think about 'the future'.

Discuss the words they come up with and why they chose them.

Are there any feelings that learners have about the future which may be negative? Ask them if they can work through the thoughts to turn "red" thoughts "green".

Ask them to think about why it's negative. Encourage learners to turn that "red" overwhelming problem into an "amber" one by remembering that it is normal to feel that way and to focus on the parts of the problem they can control and solve.

Encourage the learners to think about the problem again and see if they can turn it "green". What are the positive things about the feeling? Maybe it is good to be worried about this thing, because it shows they understand it might be a challenge. What skills or ideas do learners already have to deal with this challenge? Can they ask for help or take steps to improve it?

They can even draw the process if it helps them, starting with the problem in a red circle, then breaking it down in an amber circle, and writing the positives in a green circle.

### Core activity: Future steps



Breaking things down into smaller steps can help us deal with challenges and can help us plan and prepare for the future.

Encourage learners to think about how they can help yourself prepare for something in the future one step at a time. Have learners think about a challenge they foresee in the future, or maybe something they've dealt with in the past but may happen again.

On [the footsteps template](#), have them write out what they would do to manage this challenge in the future. It can be broken down into as many small steps as they like.

You could ask learners to focus on a specific event, such as if the class had to return to home-

learning. How would they individually and collectively support each other to deal with this challenge?

Educators could use the footsteps they have created over all these resources to create a visual display of their journey back to better and their learning.

### **Extension activity: Preparedness plan**

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Including young people in preparedness and future planning has shown to be beneficial to emergency response and to young people's sense of wellbeing. Think about how you can include your young people in preparing for challenges your whole class or school may face.

With learners, create a class preparedness plan for the event that you must all return to home-learning. What steps will you all take to help yourselves and others?

- think about what resources you made need to prepare? Think about schoolwork but also wellbeing. Look at our what do I have video for an activity evaluating what resources you have around you to support you in a challenge.
- what coping mechanisms you need to have? Look at our recovery cards for some tips.
- what supportive and positive things you can do to help each other and your community? Look at our kindness resources for ideas about messages of kindness and kind acts.

Create the preparedness plan and ensure everyone has a copy of it for future use.

Finally, encourage learners to fill out the [back to better journal](#) to evaluate what you have learnt about preparing and coping with the future. Encourage them to keep using the journal system to reflect and learn as long as they need to.