

The Mind Garden: Cultivating Positive Mental Health

Learning objective: To identify strategies for maintaining positive mental health and understand that everyone experiences a range of emotions.

Imagine your mind is a garden. Just like flowers need water, sunlight, and care, our mental health needs positive habits to thrive. Look at the 'Mind Garden' scenario cards below. For each situation, decide if the action is a 'Healthy Bloom' (helps your garden grow) or a 'Weed' (something that might make you feel worried or overwhelmed). Sort each action and explain why it affects your mental garden.

Word bank: Resilience · Mindfulness · Perspective · Well-being · Communication · Self-compassion · Support

1. Leo the Lion feels overwhelmed because he has a lot of homework. He decides to take a deep breath, break the work into smaller chunks, and ask for help. Is this a 'Healthy Bloom' or a 'Weed'? Explain why this strategy is effective for mental well-being. (2 marks)

2. Zara the Zebra makes a mistake in her art project and decides to stop trying altogether, telling herself she is 'no good at anything'. Compare this reaction to a 'Healthy Bloom' mindset. What might happen if Zara decided to view the mistake as a learning opportunity instead? (2 marks)

3. Pip the Caterpillar is worried about a change in his routine. He keeps his feelings hidden inside so he doesn't 'bother anyone'. Justify why sharing feelings with a trusted adult is a vital part of maintaining a healthy mind. (2 marks)

4. Nova the Owl suggests that spending time in nature and stargazing helps calm the mind. Explain why connecting with the natural world might act as a 'Healthy Bloom' for your mental health. (2 marks)

5. If a friend is feeling 'wilted' like a flower without water, what specific, kind actions could you take to help them feel supported? List three ways to show empathy. (3 marks)

6. Reflect on your own 'Mind Garden'. What is one activity you do every week that acts as 'sunlight' for your mood? Why does this specific activity make you feel positive? (2 marks)

Draw: Draw your own 'Mind Garden'. In the centre, draw a large flower representing your 'Happy Self'. Around it, draw different objects or symbols that represent the things that help your mental health (e.g., a book for reading, a ball for playing sport, a speech bubble for talking to friends).



Extension challenge: Create a 'Mental Health First Aid Kit' list. If you were advising a Year 3 student who felt sad or anxious, what five items or 'mental tools' would you put in their kit to help them feel better? Write a short paragraph justifying why each tool is essential.