Teacher's slide

Key lesson information

Location	Classroom with no student access to internet
Recommended time	60 minutes
Objectives	By the end of the session, students should be able to: • Recognise strengths in themselves and how to develop them • Identify strengths in others • Develop self-awareness of their own strengths
Main student tasks	1. List three strengths they possess 2. Read four scenarios and answer questions in relation to identifying and developing strengths 3. Choose one person from three categories (family, school and community) and identify the strengths these people have 4. Rank how hard or easy they found identifying strengths in themselves and others 5. Summarise what they've learned as if they were explaining it to students in a younger year group
Keywords	Strengths, skills, assets, motivation, personality, growth mindset

Teacher preparation

Provide	Lined paper, exercise books or laptops to work on.
Familiarise yourself	Unifrog's **Know-how library** tool (Student side>Know-how library). Students can use this for independent research after the lesson.

Know-how library

Know-how library	Open the 'student side' of your Unifrog account and click this link: • Understanding the growth mindset Students can also search for this guide using the Know-how library tool.

Tracking progress on Unifrog

Add as an Interaction	Click Advanced view>Sort by school leaving year>[filter for specific students]>+interaction.
Track on Charts	Click Usage charts>Customise and filter> 'Know-how library: Favouriting over time'.
Tracking individual students	Advanced view>Sort by>Library profiles in Favourites

Benchmarks and standards

PSHE Association	Healthy, positive relationships
CASEL 5	Social awareness
ISCA	SE:A1:3
Skills	Reflectiveness, resilience / staying positive.

Teacher's slide – teaching about strengths

This lesson covers the topics of identifying strengths in ourselves, and others, as well as acknowledging how we can build and develop our strengths.

This topic might be more challenging for students experiencing mental health issues. According to the World Health Organization (2021), one in seven 10- to 19-year-olds experience a mental health disorder. Always work on the assumption that at least one student in the class has been affected by mental health issues discussed in lessons (either personally or through experience with a family member or friend.)

Talk to your school or college's mental health, wellbeing, pastoral, or safeguarding lead before delivering the lesson. This will flag to them that there may be students in your class seeking further help. Some students may struggle to self-reflect. This may be due to outside issues that are affecting their ability to achieve their goals, have belief in themselves and meet their academic targets.

Use ground rules for classroom discussions. This will help keep the discussion respectful. An example of a ground rule might be to remain honest and open but to not directly discuss your own personal experiences or the private lives of others (i.e. leave out names and identifying descriptions from examples).

Encourage students to contribute, but allow them the right to pass on a question or activity. Students might feel uncomfortable discussing certain issues, so never force anyone to share or contribute. There are times in the lesson where students will be asked to self reflect on themselves and those close to them. Do not force students to share these answers.

This lesson includes a task where students need to identify the strengths of others from the following groups: family, school and community. It's important to be mindful of student's home life, background and personal situations that may make this task more challenging. Encourage students to use 'people who feel like family' if they don't have good connections with family members. Don't force students to share personal answers, or whom they've picked, if they don't feel comfortable doing so.

In the class, always put the emphasis on seeking help and support. Some students might find identifying their strengths very challenging. The information and activities in this lesson are intended to be practical; they are aimed at giving students the language, information, and confidence to seek support, as needed, for themselves or others.

Teacher’s slide – FAQs

Students may have additional questions after completing this lesson. This page is intended to give you answers to questions that aren’t covered in the main lesson.

I don’t know what I’m good at or proud of? How can I find out? Everyone possesses unique talents but sometimes we can struggle to see or understand what they are. You can begin to discover what you are good at by: exploring past experiences, asking people around you (like your friends, family, teacher), getting curious and trying new things! You could also take one of the Unifrog psychometric tests. After you’ve completed them, go to the results section and look at strengths. Reflect on these relate to things you’ve already experienced or things you’d like to experience in the future.

Well, I’m rubbish at everything. I’m a massive failure! Imagine you heard your friend say to you, ‘*You’re not very good at anything. You’re sure a failure! I can’t think of one thing you good at!*’ How would it make you feel? Probably not very good. We’d be upset and hurt if we heard someone we cared about talk about us in this way. Yet, we let ourselves talk that way all the time. If you say things like this about yourself then you probably undervalue yourself and don't realise your strengths. Overcoming our negative thoughts is the first step to figuring out what we are good at and what we can offer the world.

What is the point in writing about our strengths? A clear understanding of yourself including your skills, strengths, and assets will help you increase self-awareness. This will increase your ability to make decisions that align with who you are, what you’re good at and what you want out of life. In the future, it will also help with your ‘personal brand’ when you come to apply to your next steps such as college, university, internships, work experience and jobs.

What is a growth mindset? Growth mindset describes a way of viewing challenges and setbacks. People who have a growth mindset believe that even if they struggle with certain skills, their abilities aren't set in stone. They think that with work, their skills can improve over time. This means that we can develop strengths and skills in areas that might not come naturally to us, unlike a fixed mindset, where we might feel our strengths are set in stone and we can’t do anything to change them.

Are skills and strengths the same thing? Strengths are a quality that people possess. Some of these may come naturally, while some strengths may develop over time. A skill is the learned ability to do something well. We can develop skills related to our strengths. For example, if one of our strengths is feeling confident in large groups, we could develop a skill in networking or public speaking.

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Recognising strengths in ourselves and others

What are my strengths? (5 mins)

Strengths are our positive qualities. This includes **knowledge**, **skills**, **talents**, and **positive behaviours**. Strengths can come naturally to us. Other times, our strengths grow over time.

Write down at least three strengths you possess.
To help work out what these are, ask yourself:

1. What things comes **naturally** to me?

2. What are my **default** positive behaviours?

3. What am I doing when I feel my **best**?

Top tip: If you've already completed the **Personality profile** or **Skills profile**on Unifrog, think back to what they listed as your strengths.

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Why is it important to recognise our strengths?

Developing our strengths (30 mins)

Being naturally good at something isn't enough; we need to **actively develop** our strengths.

Scenario 1

Jamie loves music. He's played the piano since he was three, he's always tapping a rhythm, humming a song and has 'perfect pitch'. His friends joke that he could pick up any instrument and work out how to play it! Jamie uses GarageBand to produce music and often loses track of time when he's working on a track. Lately, he hasn't been turning in his music homework. His teacher says he could get a very high mark if he did the work required. He is also falling behind in other subjects. Jamie's teacher asked him what his strengths were. He said he only had weaknesses - he's disorganised, he can't prioritise tasks, he's failing all of his subjects at school, even the ones that he's good at, and he's frequently overwhelmed by tasks others seem to find simple!

Read the scenario and answer the questions:

1. What are Jamie's strengths?

2. What areas could Jamie get help with to maximise his strengths?

Developing our strengths

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1. What are Jamie's strengths?

Natural musical ability

2. What areas could Jamie get help with to maximise his strengths?

Being more resilient

Being more organised

Being more confident

Developing our strengths

We can also **develop strengths** in areas that **don't come naturally** to us.

Scenario 2

Nancy used to hate public speaking. She was good at explaining thoughts and ideas to her colleagues but would get very anxious before a presentation in front of large audiences. On stage, she spoke too quietly, lost focus, and struggled to answer questions. Nancy realised her fear was holding her back at work, so she took a public speaking course. She prepared for her next talk in a different way. When she asked for feedback, people said she was knowledgeable, engaging, and confident!

Read the scenario and answer the questions:

1. What strength didn't come naturally to Nancy?

2. What other strengths can you identify in Nancy?

Developing our strengths

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Scenario 2

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1. What strength didn't come naturally to Nancy?

Public speaking

2. What other strengths can you identify in Nancy?

Adaptability

Initiative

Resilience

Developing our strengths

Identifying and developing our strengths is helpful to decide what to do in the **future**.

Scenario 3

Bea can speak fluent German and English. She grew up speaking both languages from a young age as her father is German and her mother is English. Bea attended an international school where she also learned Spanish. Outside of school, Bea is casually teaching herself beginner Korean and watches K-Dramas. She finds languages so easy to pick up. She's getting topic marks in German and Spanish and her teacher said she should apply to languages at university.

Read the scenario and answer the questions:

1. What are Bea's strengths?

2. How could Bea make the most of these strengths in her adult life?

Developing our strengths

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1. What are Bea's strengths?

Language ability

Self-motivated

2. How could Bea make the most of these strengths in her adult life?

Attend university

Turn it into a career

Travel, work, or live abroad

Developing our strengths

Strengths are developed over time through **practice and hard work**. Sometimes, if strengths **don't align** with our personality or preferences, we can feel **drained and unmotivated**.

Scenario 4

Jenny is super organised and is a high-performing project manager. She is a whizz at using Excel. However, she always feels drained at the end of a workday. She feels most relaxed when she's painting at home, designing her new kitchen or creating a scrapbook from her holiday. There's another position opened at her company which will involve brand design. She wants to go for it but her manager said her skill set is in project management.

Read the scenario and answer the questions:

1. What are Jenny's strengths?

2. Should Jenny consider a career change to align with her natural strengths?

Developing our strengths

Strengths are developed over time through **practice and hard work**. Sometimes, if strengths **don't align** with our personality or preferences, we can feel **drained and unmotivated**.

Scenario 4

Jenny is super organised and is a high-performing project manager. She is a whizz at using Excel. However, she always feels drained at the end of a workday. She feels most relaxed when she's painting at home, designing her new kitchen or creating a scrapbook from her holiday. There's another position opened at her company which will involve brand design. She wants to go for it but her manager said her skill set is in project management.

1. What are Jenny's strengths?

Organisation

Planning

Creativity

2. Could Jenny consider a career change to align with her natural strengths?

Yes, but it might initially involve further training or a salary drop.

Developing our strengths

We can develop skills in areas where we perform well but are not enjoyable. It's important to recognise this so we can identify what opportunities are best for us.

Write down the top <u>three</u> strengths you want to develop.
Consider the questions below when coming up with your strengths.

1. Which of the strengths are the most natural fit for your personality and preferences?

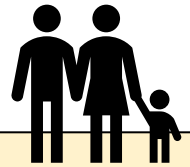
2. Which of the strengths make you feel energised and motivated when you engage with them?

Top tip: If you've already completed the **Skills profile** on Unifrog, think back to what it listed as your areas for development.

Recognising strengths in others (10 mins)

We've looked at your strengths and how to develop them. Now it's time to identify strengths in the people you know and care about.

Pick **one** person from each of the **categories** below:



Your family

This could be a parent, guardian, sibling, aunt, cousin or someone that feels like family to you.

Your school

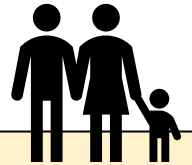
This could be your favourite teacher, your sports coach, your tutor, or a friend.

Your community

This could be anyone outside of family or school: a club leader, a childminder or friend you know outside of school.

Recognising strengths in others

We've look at your strengths and how to develop them. Now it's time to identify strengths in the people you know and care about.



Your family

Your school

Your community

A. Write down at least <u>one</u> strength for each person.

Remember, to help work out what these are, ask yourself:

1. What things come **naturally** to them?

2. What are their **default** positive behaviours?

3. What are they doing when they feel their **best**?

Recognising strengths in others

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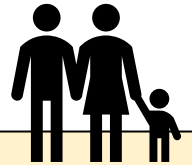


Your family

Your school

Your community

B. Why is it important to notice other people's strengths?

Explain your answer

When we see the best in others, and tell them, our relationships improve.

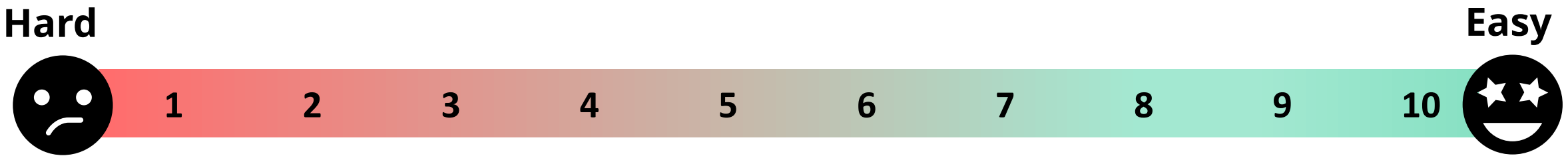
In a workplace context, when leaders focus on spotting and appreciating strengths (rather than weaknesses) people work and perform better.

Reflection (10 mins)

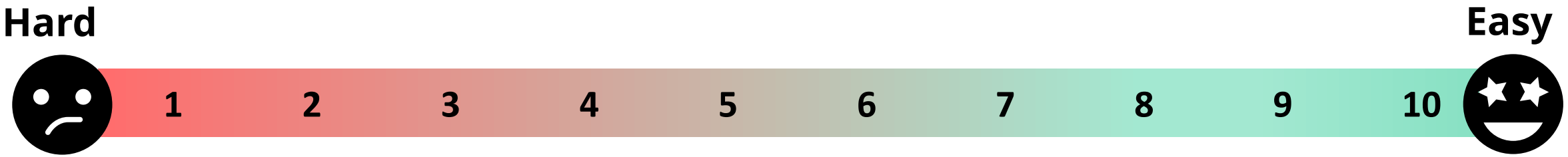
On the scale below, rank how hard or easy you found:

1. Recognising and identifying strengths in **yourself**
2. Recognising and identifying strengths in **people you know**

You can keep these numbers to yourself.



Reflection



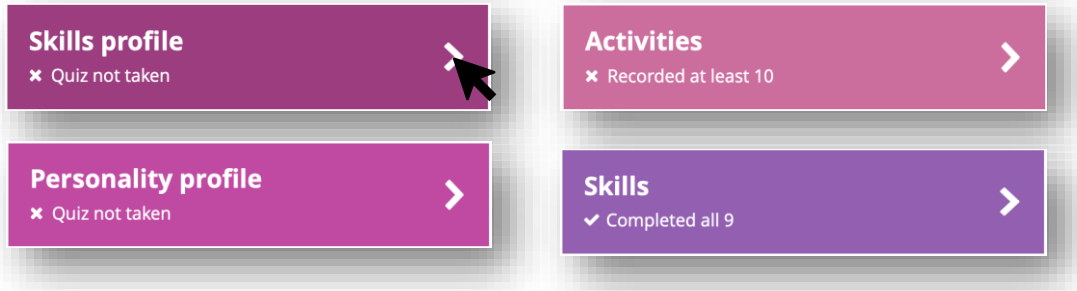
1. Why might some people find it **hard** to find strengths in themselves?

2. Why might some people find it **hard** to find strengths in others?

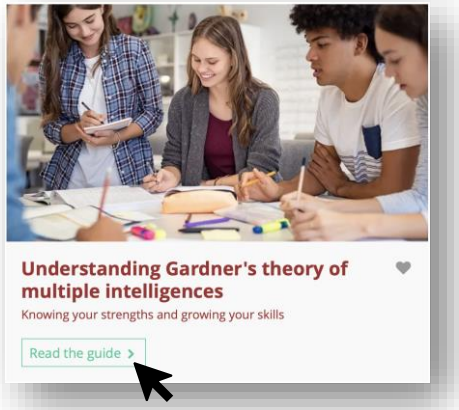
Sometimes, people find it hard to notice strengths in themselves. They might have low self-confidence or have deep-rooted insecurities. This can make it harder for them to find positive things to say about themselves and others.

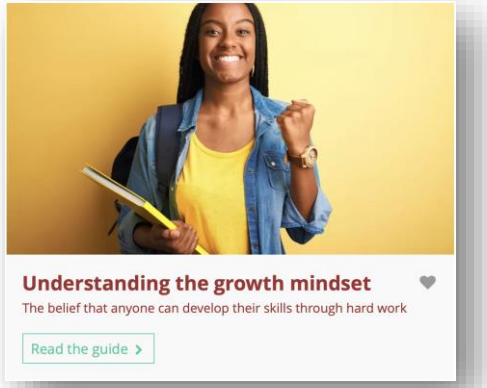
Independent learning

You can use the following Unifrog tools to help identity and record your strengths:



1. **Take the personality and skills profile** quizzes to identify your strengths.
2. **Read the Know-how library guides** on growth mindset and growing your skills.
3. **Record your strengths** via activities you've done and skills you have developed.





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Advising others (5 mins)

Imagine you're talking to a younger student.

They need help with their homework and ask you **four** questions:

1. **How can I identify my strengths?**
2. **How can I identify strengths in others?**
3. **Why is knowing our strengths important?**
4. **Why is knowing others' strengths important?**

Write down how you would respond to their questions.

Organisations

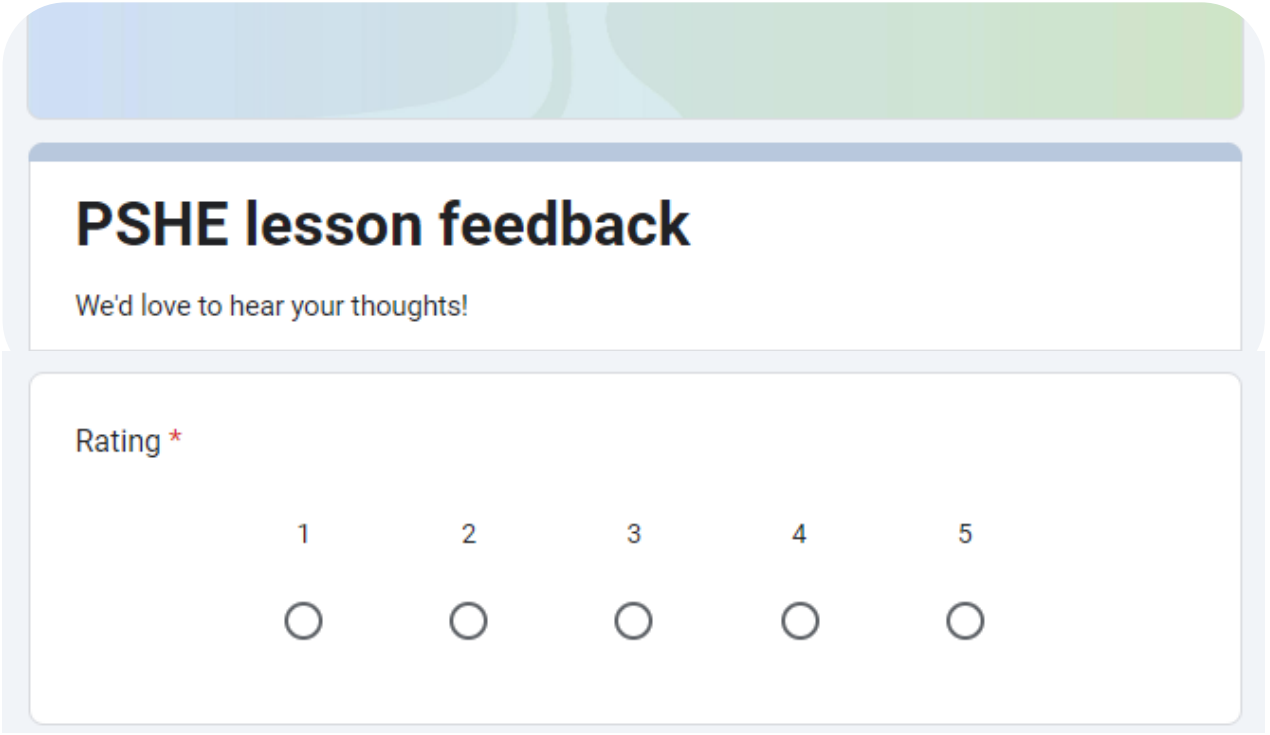
Here are some organisations to support with identifying and building on your personal strengths and assets:

- **Positive Psychology** (Advice on increasing self efficacy) - positivepsychology.com/3-ways-build-self-efficacy
- **Big Life Journey** (Confidence building activities for teens) - biglifejournal.com/blogs/blog/self-confidence-building-activities
- **Global Nomads Group** (Connecting youth across difference and distances) gng.org
- **World Federation for Mental Health** (International mental health promotion) - wfmh.global
- **United for Global Mental Health** (Global mental health organisation) - unitedgmh.org
- **Calm Zone** (List of country-specific services) - thecalmzone.net/international-mental-health-charities

We’d love your feedback!

What did you think of this lesson? We’d love to hear from you!

Click here to rate this lesson out of 5. You can also add a comment if you have time!



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