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BOOK
DAY

AGES
9-11

AUTHOR AND ILLUSTRATOR MASTERCLASSES

NOTES FOR TEACHERS & LIBRARIANS

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EmpathyLab

MATTHEW SYED GROWTH MINDSET



BEFORE WATCHING THE VIDEO AND READING THE EXTRACT:

GET IN THE ZONE!

In his film, Matthew says that one of the most important skills you can develop to improve your growth mindset is to be 'resilient' and to 'keep fighting'. This means not giving up, even when things get tough!

To get children into the right frame of mind for creating their own Awesome Research Project, ask pupils to get into threes and give them a table tennis ball and a bin or box. First of all, give each pupil one chance to throw the ball into the bin. How many of them get it in first time? If they didn't – which is more likely – why would it be easy to just give up now?

Next, give pupils three more chances each.

Is anyone successful the second or third time round? Talk about the different challenges and techniques pupils use to overcome their feelings – perhaps of frustration or anger. How can we support each other through these feelings?

Finally, ask pupils what they have learned about practise, resilience, and teamwork in this exercise? How does this game link to other challenges in life?

AFTER WATCHING THE VIDEO AND READING THE EXTRACT:

Taken from pages 147–152 of You are Awesome (you can download the extract at worldbookday.com/online-masterclasses/growth-mindset).

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Which sport did Matthew play when he was growing up? Why did he want to go to Bergen?
2. What does Matthew mean when he says he 'needed to stretch' himself on page 147?
3. What mistake did Matthew's mother make? Why did this seem to be a disaster? Pages 148–149.
4. Why does Matthew say that 'sometimes life throws you a curve ball' on page 150?
5. What advice does Matthew give about how to deal with these 'curve balls'?
6. Which Albert Einstein quote is used on page 151? Why is this relevant to Matthew's story?
7. What is Matthew's message about becoming successful on page 152? Highlight key words.
8. How does Matthew's story inspire you? What have you taken away from reading the extract?

FUN ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY 1: EMPATHISING WITH OTHER PEOPLE'S SETBACKS

Matthew explains that 'when we have empathy it can make a real difference' because this helps us to 'build strong relationships'.

- Think of a time you were really tested or had a setback. Remember, this is something that everyone experiences! Get into pairs. Tell your partner about your experience, but note, it's really important you don't tell them about your feelings or emotions at the time! Your partner then has a couple of minutes to write down a few notes and key words about; why was this a setback? How do you think your partner felt at the time? What might your partner have learnt from this experience?
- Then, swap roles. Discuss the notes you have made afterwards and think about why it is good to share our setbacks and difficult feelings, and how this helps to build stronger relationships with each other.

ACTIVITY 2: CONFIDENCE MATTERS

Matthew explains that in order to develop confidence, we need 'grit, determination and a refusal to give up'. Confidence also helps you to get through those 'what on earth am I going to do now?' moments, which we all have!

- In small groups, discuss and note down a few ideas about feelings, facial expressions, things we say, and bodily movements that we associate with confidence. Try acting them out in your groups!
- Then, individually, write down at least three things you could do to try and feel more confident when you face a challenge or are worried about something. For example, it might be talking to someone about your feelings, or telling yourself in the mirror: 'YOU GOT THIS!'

ACTIVITY 3: 'YOU ARE AWESOME' MEDALS

Matthew explains 'how you can build the skills to really make a go of life', but that being 'good

at stuff' takes time and hard work, it doesn't just happen overnight!

- Being 'awesome' isn't necessarily about being the best at something. Instead, it is about recognising all the different brilliant qualities and skills you have, helping others achieve their goals, and not giving up if you don't get things right first time.
- Think about all the things that make you awesome and sketch at least three 'Awesome Medals' to celebrate them. For example, supporting your brother when he finds his homework difficult or helping your coach to get the equipment in after a training session. Share these medals as a class.

SHARE A STORY

Consider the importance of non-fiction. How is it different to reading fiction, and why is it great to have the choice of both? Think about your favourite non-fiction books. What did you learn from them? Take ten minutes to create posters showcasing the best non-fiction books for your age range. Design the posters together as a class and put them up around your classroom or in the school library!

SPARK YOUR IMAGINATION...

AN INSPIRING SHARE A STORY CHALLENGE FOR YOU from Matthew Syed...

Pick someone that you really admire and who inspires you; it could be someone in the public eye, a family member, or friend. Research how they achieved success and all the setbacks they faced along the way.

Write a story about how they overcame their setbacks and what you have learned from your Awesome Research Project.

DID YOU KNOW?

There are more brilliant Masterclass films and resources featuring amazing authors and illustrators over at worldbookday.com/online-masterclasses. Don't miss out, download them today!