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# Foundations for Wellbeing

## Year 1, lesson 2: Distraction



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# Distraction

This is the second of five lessons on self-regulation, mental health and wellbeing, for year 1. This lesson focuses on how to direct attention and manage distractions.

To encourage pupils to use the self-regulation strategies taught in these lessons more automatically, autonomously and effectively, it is important to revisit and reinforce them regularly, as part of a whole-school approach to promoting mental health and wellbeing. The extension activities are designed to support this (for more information, see the Teacher Handbook). To learn more, please visit our self-guided online courses, which are available to all School Plus members.

The lesson plan is based on a 45-minute lesson. The timings given are the minimum required to deliver the activities, but you may wish to spend longer exploring each activity.

## Learning objective and outcomes

To learn about distraction.

Pupils will be able to:

- explain what is meant by distraction
- identify different types of distraction
- identify what could help when someone is distracted

## Resources required

- Box or envelope for questions
- Flipchart paper and pens
- Resource 1: *Different distractions* [one per pair]
- Resource 2: *Help cards* [one per small group]

## Climate for learning

Make sure you have read the accompanying teacher handbook notes before teaching this lesson. They include guidance on establishing a safe learning environment, supporting pupils with additional vulnerabilities, using assessment and personal reflection effectively, and embedding the learning. They also outline useful subject knowledge on the theory and evidence informing these lessons, self-regulation strategies and relevant neuroscience.

The lesson plans should be used flexibly, and you are encouraged to adapt them to meet the specific needs and abilities of your pupils. It is also important to consider sensitivities and prior knowledge about specific pupils' circumstances. If safeguarding concerns arise during this lesson, these should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, in line with your school policy.

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## Baseline assessment

### Introduction (Slides 9-11, 2 mins)

Establish or revisit ground rules. Explain that if pupils have worries or questions during or after the lesson that they do not want to raise in front of the class, they can speak to you individually or write their question on a piece of paper, anonymously or with their name, and put it in the question box.

Using slide 10, begin by briefly recapping the learning from last lesson.

Introduce today's learning objective and outcomes. Explain that this lesson will be about distraction, and what might help someone when they are distracted.

### Baseline assessment activity (Slides 12-13, 5 mins)

Share the scenario on slide 12:
*Tao is painting a picture at home, but he's finding it tricky to finish. He says, 'I keep getting distracted'.*
In pairs, ask pupils the following questions:

- What does Tao mean by 'distracted'?
- What might be distracting Tao?
- What could Tao do to help himself when he is distracted?

Take feedback and write their responses onto the flipchart or whiteboard.

Use their responses to gain a sense of their starting points and consider any gaps or misconceptions that might need addressing in the lesson. For example, you may want to spend more time on the first core activity if pupils need further support in understanding what it means to be distracted.

## Core activities

### Different distractions (Slide 14, 10 mins)

Give pairs **Resource 1: Different distractions** and ask them to identify what could distract Tao from finishing his painting by circling the things in the picture.
*Pupils may identify: radio/music playing; children playing outside the window; someone else talking to him; TV; Tao noticing he is hungry.*

Then, ask the class, what might happen if Tao is distracted? Take feedback.
*Pupils might say: he won't be able to concentrate on the painting; he'll find it difficult to finish the painting; he might pay more attention to the things that are distracting him, e.g. listening to the music, going to play outside, watching TV, talking to his brother, going to get a snack.*

Explain that, just like Tao, everyone gets distracted sometimes, and that different things might distract different people. For example, some people are more likely to be distracted by things they see, some more by sounds they hear.

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**Challenge:** Ask pupils to suggest other things that could distract someone. *For example, a phone ringing/phone calls, interruptions from others, a more fun/exciting activity than the one someone is doing.*

### What can Tao do? (Slides 15-17, 15 mins)

Explain that Tao wants to finish his painting as he is giving it as a gift to his grandpa, but the distractions are making it difficult. Ask pupils, how might Tao be feeling? *Annoyed; angry; frustrated; upset.*

Then, give small groups **Resource 2: Help cards** and ask them to choose the top three cards they think might help Tao the most. Take feedback, asking pupils to explain their choices.
*Pupils may choose any three of the following:*

- *turning off the TV and radio*
- *moving somewhere quieter*
- *using headphones for the noise*
- *taking a 5-minute break*
- *having a snack*
- *remembering why he wants to finish the painting*

Once completed, highlight that a quiet space away from distractions would work well for Tao, but that if that's not possible, he could manage the distractions by taking some deep breaths. Explain that this can help our brains to relax and help us to feel calmer, making it easier for us to focus again if we are distracted.

Next, ask pupils, once Tao has found some ways to help with the distraction and he has finished the painting, how might he feel? *Pupils might say: he'll feel better; he'll feel happier; he'll feel proud of being able to finish the painting; he'll be looking forward to giving the painting to Grandpa; he'll feel excited about giving the painting to Grandpa.*

Finally, using slide 17, explain that our brains notice distractions when they happen. Everyone can find ways to manage distractions, but different people might find different things more, or less, helpful. For example, Tao might find it distracting to have music playing, but someone else might find that listening to music helps them concentrate rather than distracting them. What is important is that we find ways to help us manage our distractions, so that it's easier for us to focus on activities that we enjoy or care about.

**Support:** Set up a sensory carousel activity for pupils, where they explore different techniques to help them when feeling distracted. Suggestions for different activities:

- a cosy area with some pillows or blankets
- a quiet space in the corner of the classroom/away from the classroom
- calming smells to choose from (candles or essential oils)
- calming sounds (relaxing music or nature sounds)

**Challenge:** Ask pupils to identify which of the 'Help cards' might be better suited to the different distractions e.g. *TV – using headphones.*

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## Reflection and Endpoint assessment

### Reflection and Endpoint assessment (Slides 18-19, 10 mins)

Ask pupils to think about some of the things that distract them and what might help them manage this in future. Ask them to choose a card from **Resource 2: Help cards** and use this idea when they next feel distracted.

As this is a personal reflection, they do not need to share their responses with the class.

Share a new scenario about Tao using slide 19:
*Tao is trying to do his work in class but keeps getting distracted.*

Ask pupils to discuss in pairs:

- What does 'distracted' mean'?
- What distractions might there be in the classroom?
- What could help Tao?

Take feedback and write pupils' responses on the flipchart or whiteboard. This can be used as evidence of progression and to inform future teaching.

Check the question box and respond to any remaining questions.

## Signposting support

### Signposting support (Slide 20, 3 mins)

Remind pupils that everyone gets distracted sometimes, but that they can speak to a trusted adult if they want help with distractions. Pupils can also contact Childline: 0800 1111.

### Closing the lesson (Slide 21)

Finally, using slide 21, reinforce the key learning by summing up for the class what they have achieved in today's lesson.

## Activities to extend and embed the learning

### Movement break (Slide 22)

Explain that taking a short break for physical activity can often help when feeling distracted and improve concentration. Lead the class in two to three minutes of different exercises, such as jumping jacks, stretches or even a quick dance!

### What could help? (Slide 23)

Ask pupils to think of a task they want to complete - this could be something small such as reading a story or doing a craft activity. How might they try to stay focused on the task? If they do get distracted, what could help them to focus again?

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**Distraction free zone (Slide 24)**

Create a ‘distraction-free zone’ in the classroom; a designated space for activities where distractions are minimised. This could be a quiet corner for reading or an area for drawing.

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