



# Lesson plan

## Making a memory tree

Having happy memories is something that can see us through the hardest of times. One of the most important things we do at Children's Hospice South West (CHSW) is give families time to make memories together. We do this by taking on the daily responsibilities of providing full time care for their child during their stay with us. We also try to relieve some of the stress and worry their situations can sometimes create. Our aim is to make the most of short and precious lives in all we do, and we are very proud of supporting families to make happy memories together.

### Warm up activity

The accompanying PowerPoint presentation includes a fun memory game which uses a story to generate questions for the children.

- ☺ How much can your class remember?
- ☺ Use questions such as "What colour was the ball?" or "What day was the market?". This could be done in teams or as individuals.
- ☺ Encourage discussion about memories and the part they play in our lives.

### Required resources

- ☺ PowerPoint presentation
- ☺ Example of a memory tree
- ☺ Memory tree templates

### Main input

During this part of the lesson, please use the accompanying PowerPoint presentation to briefly introduce our charity. Sharing the 'Understanding the connections' section will help to link the content of this lesson to the work CHSW does.

### Understanding the connections

In our 'Doves' chapel at Little Bridge House, we have a life-sized memory tree where families have written down special memories of their loved ones onto the leaves hanging from the tree. This is an important symbol and place of remembrance for people and often they will have written down a happy memory or moment onto these leaves.

As a charity, our tagline is 'Making the most of short and precious lives'; the care and support we offer to families gives them the chance to make their own treasured memories. Our memory tree, and the reason for it, forms the basis of a lesson looking at the importance of memories and could be an excellent starting point for several activities detailed further on in this lesson plan.

### Activities

Using the image of our memory tree, which is found in the Doves room at Little Bridge House, talk through what a memory tree is and why we have created one at CHSW.

The main activity will be to construct leaves for a memory tree. However, it could also include making the tree in many different forms and this could work well for older age groups. This will need to be modelled using a prepared example of your own memory tree, but there are lots of different possible formats and styles to consider using for this. For example, there could be one large memory tree which could either be a paper cut-out on a working wall, or a 3D model made from a range of materials. Children would then add their leaves to this large model. Alternatively, the memory tree could be drawn into books, or it could be a 3D model, either made individually or in groups.

### Making memory leaves:

#### Reception / Key Stage 1

Children will draw a simple picture of their memory onto a leaf template. They could then cut these out into their own shapes or have a line to follow. You could also have them choose what colour they would like or have them decorate their leaf. Make sure to ask questions such as "What colours are you using?" and "Why that colour?"





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### Key Stage 2/Upper Key Stage 2

This part of the lesson could also involve the optional construction of the memory tree.

Ask children to choose their happiest memory. Ask follow-up questions such as "How does it make you feel?" and "What do you see when you think of the memory?". There could be more discussion about why memories are important and the differences between happy and sad memories. There will need to be sensitivity if these topics arise, and they could perhaps be the catalyst for dealing with other themes in PHSE.

Ask children to design a shape for the leaf, thinking about the colour and shape they choose and if this links to their memory. Children could then write about their memory in one short sentence or using sentence starters such as "My happiest memory is...". What other sentence starters can they think of? These could become ribbons attached to the leaves or tree. Alternatively, children could create multiple leaves, but they need to think about which one their favourite is and why. Have them share this with the class.

### Plenary

Recap the activity and how it links to CHSW. Discuss with children the importance of happy memories and all the different ways we can help others to make them. Some children could share the thinking behind their leaves with the class, or they could all take turns to do this and then add their leaf to the tree.

**Going further:** Your class could write a short story about the memory tree using their work as a stimulus or an image of our tree in Doves as a starting point.

An art lesson for older children could be based around their interpretation of how the actual tree would look: shapes, colours and patterns; and thinking about why it would look this way.

Children could discuss how sad memories affect them and how we support each other to make happy memories.

### Thank you

Thank you for using this lesson resource. Every download helps to raise awareness of CHSW and the work we do.

