

# LESSON 3 - CATCH YOUR THOUGHTS

**Social and Emotional Competency:** Self-awareness

**Learning Intent:**

- Distinguish the difference between thoughts and feelings
- Identify I Can Thoughts and I Can't Thoughts
- Recognise how two people have different thoughts in the same situation
- Recognise how our thoughts affect our feelings
- Understand the power of our internal dialogue



Lesson three teaches children the difference between our thoughts and our feelings and how changing the way you think and learning how to talk to yourself in a helpful way can change the way you feel. The aim of the lesson is to develop children's awareness of their inner critic and how their internal dialogue influences their feelings. By encouraging children to pay attention and become more self-aware of their inner voice, children can begin to understand that their thoughts, feelings and actions are connected and can change any component for a better outcome. Teaching children that they are in control of their thoughts is empowering and can improve self-esteem, increase motivation, improve self-control and emotional regulation, lead to a growth mindset and improve overall mental health and wellbeing.

We often think our feelings precede our thoughts. However, our thoughts and feelings affect one another. For example, imagine you have a driving test and it is raining. You may think to yourself, 'Oh no, it's raining. I'm not used to driving in the rain'. These thoughts will cause you to feel anxious. As your anxiety increases, your worried thoughts increase and the cycle continues. How do you think your performance will be affected?

The lesson begins by teaching children what thoughts are and the difference between their thoughts and their feelings. Children are introduced to 'I Can' thoughts and 'I Can't' thoughts. Students will learn that 'I Can't' thoughts are unhelpful, negative thoughts that stop them from taking on challenges, giving things a go, enjoying their day and living their life to the fullest. Whereas, 'I Can' thoughts are helpful, positive thoughts that allow them to give things a go, be positive, and enjoy their day. They will learn that an 'I Can' thought makes them feel confident, happy and brave. The children are encouraged to 'catch' their thoughts and decide if they are positive or negative messages. Teaching children how to change their internal dialogue from 'I Can't' to 'I Can' is a valuable life skill. This is not easy, but with practice this skill can be mastered over time.

**Home Activities to Encourage Discussion about the Concepts in Lesson 3**

1. Watch 'Piper' a short YouTube clip with your child. Type into your search engine – Disney Pixar short film Piper. It is about a baby bird finding a way to survive a big wave. After watching the clip, watch it again but this time pause the video when the bird is sitting in his nest and too afraid to approach the wave.

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Ask your child:

- What do you think the little bird is thinking?
- How do you think the little bird is feeling?
- Is this thought an 'I Can' thought or an 'I Can't' thought?
- Did the bird change its 'I Can't' thought to an 'I Can' thought?
- What happened when the bird changed its thinking?
- How do you think the little bird felt after changing its thinking?

2. Talk with your child about his or her day. Guide the discussion by asking questions like...

- Did you make a mistake today?
- What did you learn?
- What did you do that was different today?
- What was the best part of your day?
- What was the funniest things you saw today?
- What made you feel happy today? (Sad, confused, bored)?
- What was the hardest part of your day?

3. Help your child change his or her internal dialogue. Open your child's eyes to their potential by helping them change the way they think and view the world and their place in it. Pay attention to negative thoughts and guide your child through the process of changing negative thoughts to positive thoughts. If he says, 'This is too hard', help him change his 'I Can't' thought to an 'I Can' thought. Most importantly, model positive thinking. If your child is surrounded by positive people, they will hear positive outlooks, positive stories and positive affirmations. Your words will influence their own line of thinking.

