



Transition to secondary school

In this lesson, pupils explore the transition to secondary school and identify some of the challenges that can arise and where to get support if needed.



Recommended age group: 9-11 (KS2)

Learning outcomes

Pupils can:

- identify the differences between primary and secondary school
- describe how it might feel to move to secondary school
- explain different ways of managing change.

Preparation

Before delivering the lesson:

- consider cross-curricular links and how this could be related to other subjects (*This lesson has been designed to be part of the planned programme for PSHE education and should be taught within the context of other PSHE education lessons. Pupils might be learning about growing up and managing change in a variety of contexts, with moving on to secondary school being one part of this*)
- read through [Introduction to Rise Above](#)
- read through [Guidance for learning in a safe environment](#)
- read through the **classroom tips** included in the download pack.

Learning objectives

We are learning about the transition from primary to secondary school and how to manage the changes that can arise.

>> Resources

- [Let's talk about Change!](#) video (3:06)
- Blank A4 paper and pens
- Sticky notes

>> Time

- 45 minutes approximately

>> Key vocabulary

- Change, new, relationships, transition, routine, unknown, difference, support and guidance



Lesson stimulus (3-4 mins)

Create a list of words you associate with the picture.

Put an image of a secondary school on the board. Pupils can complete this initial activity on their own, in pairs or in groups. They can either write down or discuss their ideas.

Baseline assessment



How do you feel? (3-4 mins)

You can choose how to conduct this activity. Pupils can complete it individually on paper, or verbally in pairs or groups. You could also use 'traffic lights' (red/amber/green) or self-assessment statements.

Pupils should answer the three baseline statements below on a confidence scale (0 = not confident, 10 = extremely confident):

- A) I can identify the differences between primary and secondary school
- B) I can describe how it might feel to move to secondary school
- C) I can explain some ways to manage this change.



Core activity 1

Making the move! (10 mins)

1. Watch the first part of the [Let's talk about Change!](#) video (00:00-00:45)

Explain to pupils that in this lesson they will be exploring change in relation to moving on to secondary school - what they think the transition to secondary school will be like, how it will feel and what they can do to prepare.

2. Ask the class to discuss the following questions:

Questions for discussion:

What will the similarities be between primary school and secondary school?

What will the differences be between primary school and secondary school?

What are the most important things a Year 6 pupil needs to know about secondary school? (e.g. structure of the day, how many teachers they will have, how many people in a class, etc).

This activity can be done in pairs or small groups.

Give pupils an A3 sheet and ask them to draw a stick person with a head, heart and hands.

HEAD - What might a new pupil starting secondary school be thinking?

Ask pupils to write down thoughts near the head showing what new Year 7 students might be thinking on their first day.

HEART - How might it feel to start a new school?

Ask pupils to add to the heart feelings that pupils might have about starting secondary school and add their ideas to the sheets.

Core activity 2

Changes (15 mins)

1. Watch the second part of the [Let's talk about Change!](#) video (1:20-3:05)

2. Ask the class to discuss the following questions:

Questions for discussion:

What do you think are the most exciting things about starting secondary school?

What do you think someone might be nervous about when starting secondary school?

How do you think a person's feelings might change over the first year at secondary school?

3. MATCH - Strategies to help manage the move to secondary school.

This can be done in pairs or small groups. Different groups could be given different scenarios.

Show pupils the following five scenarios/viewpoints about starting secondary school and the list of strategies to manage change. Ask them to match up suitable strategies to each of the scenarios/viewpoints (these can be projected on the board or printed out).

Scenarios

- 'I can't wait to join the clubs. I love sports!'
- 'Sometimes I think I could do better in school. I'm looking forward to a new start.'
- 'My new school will be a bus ride away. I hope I don't get lost.'
- 'I've heard you have lots of teachers and the work is much harder.'
- 'I'm going to a different school than most of my friends but my sister loves her new friends from secondary school, so maybe this will be the same for me.'

Strategies

1. Learn your route to school
2. Find out who you can speak to in school if you're finding it difficult
3. Writes the names of your teachers on your timetable
4. Take your time getting to know people
5. Ask teachers for help if you are finding the work difficult
6. Keep a school map in your pocket
7. Learn the school rules
8. Ask someone you trust to do the journey to school with you before doing it alone
9. Talk to an adult at home about your worries
10. Make a homework timetable
11. Make a photo album of all your friends at primary school, remember what you are good at
12. Find out where and when school clubs run
13. Think positively (I can do this!)

Further Challenge: Ask pupils to think up other strategies that could help in each of the scenarios and explain why.

Core activity 3

Handy advice (5 mins)

1. **HANDS** - What actions can pupils take to manage the changes in secondary school?

Ask pupils to go back to their sheets with the stick person and add information to the hands of the body about what **ACTIONS** or **STRATEGIES** pupils could take to manage changes when moving to secondary school.

2. Ask pairs or small groups to move around the classroom and find a different group's body sheet. They should discuss their comments, adding any additional information to the sheet they see fit.

Plenary

Transition backpack (3-4 mins)

Ask pupils to complete this activity.

What could a pupil pack on their first day of secondary school to help them manage the change ahead? They can be real or imaginary things.

Remind pupils that it is really normal to experience different feelings during times of change. If things become difficult, they should speak to a trusted adult in school, at home or contact Childline (0800 1111 or <https://www.childline.org.uk/>)



Assessment for learning

(3-4 mins)

Pupils think back to the confidence line that they shared at the start of the session and consider the statements again:

- A) I can identify the differences between primary and secondary school
- B) I can describe how it might feel to move to secondary school
- C) I can explain some ways to manage this change.

Ask pupils to consider why their scores have changed and give an example of something new they have learned or thought about.

Extended learning projects



1. Dear diary...

Ask pupils to write 3 diary entries from a pupil on the night before their first day at school, half way through the year and the end of the year.

2. Create a class 'change collage'.

Everyone in the class is given a torn piece of paper (roughly A5 size) and they have to decorate it with an image that represents a strength they bring to the class that they can take forward with them to secondary school. The pieces can then be stuck down to make a large class collage.

3. Letter for the end of the year.

Pupils write themselves a letter with all the things that they would like to achieve in their first year of secondary school. Pupils can seal the letters and open them later in the year to see if they have achieved their aims and goals.

4. Create a board game for secondary school.

How would the board look? How do you succeed in the game? What are the challenges in the game? Which year group would it be suitable for?

5. Create an assembly presentation.

Aim it at Year 6 pupils about their transition into secondary school. Pupils should include:

- one thing you know will change in secondary school
- two challenges that may occur as a result of this change
- three ways to manage this change and seek support.

SUCCESS CRITERIA:

No longer than five minutes

Use pictures, a PowerPoint, or create a role play, rap or song

Groups of five or less

Everyone in the group should contribute

If time allows, pupils can present their assembly ideas to each other and feedback 'P's and I's' - positive things they have learnt or ideas they thought were interesting. (NOTE: you can provide a list for pupils to choose from for their change, or allocate the changes to specific groups, such as: Friendship, Workload, Rules, Orientation, Teachers, Routines.)

6. Write a letter to a Year 7 class in a local secondary school.

Invite them to write to you about their experiences of moving to secondary school and ask them any questions you might have. You could also ask if they could come and do a presentation on transition in your school.