



# AN EXPLORER'S GUIDE



Holding a curious mind-set is a great starting point for learning in life. Having an open mind allows you to venture into the unknown, explore new ideas, trust in uncertainty and embrace difference and diversity.

The *ThoughtBox Learning Journey* invites you to delve into a wide range of topics and perspectives that are shaping our planet and future, deepening your relationships with yourself, others and the natural world, whilst exploring your own beliefs and values and developing as an engaged and empowered citizens of the world.

This 'Explorer's Guide' introduces key skills needed to help you explore life's big questions, broaden your perspectives, question conventional thinking, empathise and show compassion and find connections within the changing world around you.

# An Explorer's Guide

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# Strengthening your Skillsometer

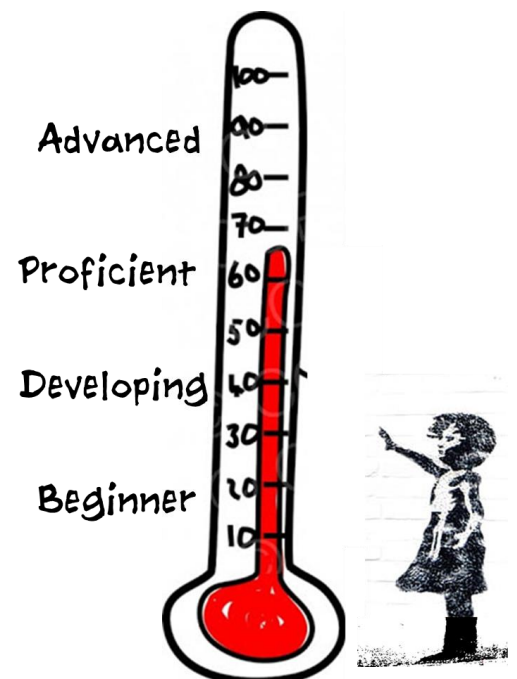
Whilst we're all learning from home, there's plenty of time to strengthen some of those vital life skills to help you take giant leaps forward in life.

On the *ThoughtBox Learning Journey* you will learn to practice and develop:

- Critical thinking and questioning skills
- Empathy and compassion
- Linking thinking
- Relationship building for triple wellbeing
- Strengthening beliefs and values
- Broadening knowledge and deepening curiosity
- Dialogue and debate
- Exploring different perspectives
- Emotional intelligence
- Global citizenship

Plus a whole lot of activities and ideas to help you develop healthy relationships in your life.

**HOW'S YOUR SKILLSOMETER  
LOOKING TODAY?**



# How (and why) to become a Critical thinker

Learning how to think (not what to think) is perhaps one of the most useful skills you can gain. If you are a critical thinker, you are someone who thinks carefully about new ideas - someone who asks questions, feels curious, thinks outside the box and understands that there is rarely just one way to look at a problem or issue. A critical thinker knows that oftentimes the most important question to ask in life is simply “Why...?”

Critical thinking offers you:

- the time to pause, reflect and consider
- the ability to grow and shape your own thoughts, opinions and ideas
- the ability to understand that there is often no "right way" to see something
- the opportunity for self-reflection and self-development

## 3 WAYS TO SHARPEN YOUR THINKING SKILLS:

1. Ask questions
2. Question assumptions
3. Reflect and evaluate



# How (and why) to build Empathy

We believe that empathy is an innate characteristic which, just like a muscle, is something that can be strengthened over time through practice and effort.

Empathy is 'feeling with people' or in other words **paying attention** to what is happening around us, and to the feelings and actions of others, which helps us to become more compassionate and connected human-beings.

Empathy is a really important skill to develop because:

- It strengthens our ability to have positive relationships with other people
- It supports an awareness of the needs and emotions of other people
- It helps us understand how to motivate & encourage people around us
- It is a key ingredient of emotional intelligence

## 3 WAYS TO DEVELOP YOUR EMPATHY SKILLS:

1. Pay attention
2. Listen actively
3. BE aware of others



# How (and why) to become A linking thinker

Linking thinking helps you to see the connections and relationships between things happening around you. It is sometimes called **systems thinking** or **holistic thinking** and is a way of seeing and understanding how everything connects together.

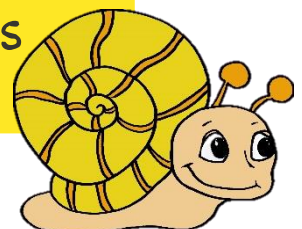
Linking thinking invites you to step back from a situation or idea and look more widely at how it may be connected to other ideas, issues and situations, and what the links, connections and relationships may be.

Linking thinking helps to:

- Widen your awareness
- Generate new perspectives
- Develop understanding about how things interrelate
- Extend and expand critical thinking skills
- Approach ideas with wider levels of understanding


## 3 WAYS TO DEVELOP YOUR LINKING THINKING SKILLS:

1. Look for patterns & connections
2. Stand back to see the big picture
3. Ask deep and curious questions



# To help you navigate your journey

## 5 USEFUL RESOURCES



### Five ways to improve your critical thinking

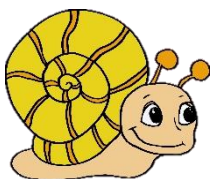
A short video from Ted-Ed

### How to be curious

An article from The School of Life

### What is empathy?

A cartoon from Brené Brown



### Learning about linking thinking

A comprehensive guide and simple activities from WWF

### How to spot fake news

Resources and ideas from BBC Teach



ThoughtBox is all about making connections. Our programmes for 5-18 year olds offer the space, the skills and the opportunities to deepen relationships with ourselves, society and the natural world. We call this ***triple wellbeing***, as nourishing these three relationships is essential for whole-person health and wellbeing.



#### CONNECTING TO **OURSELVES**

Our programmes help young people to develop a more reflective self awareness, strengthening emotional intelligence and self resilience whilst understanding the meaning and practice of self care in their daily lives.



#### CONNECTING TO **SOCIETY**

Our programmes explore diverse social issues, developing empathy and broadening perspectives to help young people understand and appreciate the links between their own lives and those of others around the world.



#### CONNECTING TO THE **NATURAL WORLD**

Our programmes encourage an appreciation of our intrinsic relationship to nature, developing linking thinking skills to help young people to engage with and relate to the natural world and their place within it.

All of our Learning journeys encourages young people to learn more about themselves, their communities and other cultures whilst developing a deeper connection with the natural world and valuing the importance of dignity and respect for all living beings.

Visit our website to explore our free daily inquiries, global-thinking curricular and wider programmes:

[THOUGHTBOXEDUCATION.COM](https://www.thoughtboxeducation.com)



