
CLASS EXERCISE

Helping students to belong

This is a new exercise and researchers are still studying why it works and for whom. Use your own professional judgement to decide if it's appropriate for you and your students. You might even want to take just one aspect of it to try. It's thought to be most effective when students are going through transition periods, so you could do it near the beginning of a term when things are still 'new'.

Instructions – Read aloud to your class

Many students struggle to fit in when they first arrive at a new school. Some worry that they are somehow different to others; some are concerned that teachers and students will judge them. Still others feel anxious that they won't be able to keep up in class.

With time however, most students become more comfortable with their new surroundings – they make new friends, they realise that differences are what make us unique and they gain confidence in the material they are covering in class.

This activity is from [Behavioral Insights for Education](#), Pearson.

Step 1:

Take a few moments now to write about why some students feel like they don't belong when they first arrive in school. Reflect on your own experience. Did you feel worried that you wouldn't fit in, or that you wouldn't be able to keep up in class?

Step 2:

Now, write about how your experience at school has changed. Do you feel more 'at home' now than you did at the beginning of the year? Why is that? Did you make friends, did you find out where to get help from if you need it?