



Activity 5

My School

Lockdown created many challenges, especially for schools! Suddenly, school as we all know it... changed, overnight.

This has been a major, dramatic event and we know that YOU have been at the centre of it! Only YOU the children of those schools can truly tell us what this experience has really been like.

So... it's over to YOU.

We want to find out more about you and your school.

We want to know every little detail!

We would like to start by asking you a question which you might not be expecting...

Question 1

What are the ingredients of a good friendship? Have a think and jot down five ingredients!

For Example: Honesty, loyalty, kindness....

Activity: Friendagram

Take a look at your five ingredients and make a **Friendagram**! Not heard of a Friendagram? Just follow these instructions:

1. Get a blank piece of paper and draw a small circle in the centre. Write the word **Friendship** in this small circle.
2. Draw 5 spacious circles around the existing circle.

3. Take a look at your five ingredients. Now this is the tricky bit... you now need to rank your ingredients in order of importance by putting each one into a different circle. The circle closest to the **Friendship Circle** is the ingredient you value most in a friend. The ingredient you value least should go in the outside circle. Take a look at our example, then draw your own. Take your time because it's actually quite difficult and there is no correct answer as everyone will have their own opinion!



Show your Friendagram to a family member, teacher or friend. This is a great conversation starter! Does anyone agree with you or would they put your ingredients in a different order? Have a conversation or even a debate!

Let's keep thinking about these ingredients...

Question 2

Do you need these ingredients in your school? If so, why? Make a list of your ingredients and write down why you might need all or some of those ingredients in your school.

For example: Kindness - so that we all enjoy going to school and feel safe

Question 3

Can you give examples of when your school has demonstrated one or more of these ingredients?

If you found that you do need some of these ingredients in a school, perhaps that means your school is... **your friend!** That might be a new thought for some of you! But if you look closely, perhaps there are signs of friendship there which you hadn't noticed before...

However, this relationship has experienced some HUGE changes and pressures recently as a result of Coronavirus. Some schools may have felt quite empty and lonely over the last four months. Perhaps you have too.

Our next two activities give you the opportunity to really connect with your school again.

Activity: Let's write a letter

Write a letter or email to your school! Imagine your school is a person with feelings.

Begin your letter:



Dear School,

Then, you might like to use the following ideas to structure your letter into three paragraphs!

Think about the past. Remind your school of some special memories - things you experienced together.

Paragraph Tip: You may want to start your sentence with either:

1

I remember... Do you remember... We used to...

For example: Do you remember the school play when I got to dance and everyone cheered?

Confront things head on! Be strong, be bold - tell the school about why you miss them, tell them what you wish was different.

Tell them anything new that has happened to you during lockdown!

Paragraph

2

Ask the school questions too... how might they have changed? Has lockdown had an impact on your friendship?

For example: I miss you and I miss my routine, my reason for getting up in the mornings. I actually miss my school uniform and I've finally learnt how to knot my tie all on my own! I used to see you every day, now the weeks pass and we hardly talk. Do you remember me?

Tell your school how you are feeling about returning in September. What do you hope your school will be like? Do you worry what your school may be like?

Paragraph

3

Leave a special parting message to your school about your friendship. You might want to tell them how you will be a good friend to the school in September. You may want to thank them for something. There may be lots of changes but do you think your friendship will still be strong? Let them know!

For example: September may be strange, I don't know what to expect. But, I trust you and don't worry I'll be there! I'm coming back! I know you are trying your best and we'll get through this difficult time together.

We hope these examples help! Now it's over to you - go ahead and write your letter or email. Write freely, honestly and from the heart. Most importantly... don't forget to post your letter or send your email as your school is sitting there waiting to receive it!

If you are in Year 4, 5 or 6 this extra activity is for you!

Activity: An Ode to My School

Using all of the ideas in your letter, your next task is to write: **An Ode to My School.**

What is an Ode?

An Ode is a poem which exists to celebrate someone or something. When we write odes, we show how the ordinary can become extraordinary and we celebrate this! Look at our example to see how we celebrate the humble strawberry!

For example:

Oh strawberries, so bright and full of life
You bring a smile to everyone you meet

Task

Based on the ideas from your letter, we would like you to write an Ode to your school.

- As you write your ode, remember your school is much, much more than bricks and cement.
- Think about what makes your school special or unique. Think about your relationship with your school and how this personal connection has an impact on your life.
- Perhaps your school listens, protects and fights your corners just like a good friend.

Our Ode Rules

- We are going to write 3 verses
- Each line must be 10 syllables long
- There must be 8 lines in each verse

Tip!

While an Ode doesn't need to rhyme... if you are feeling ambitious, you might like to have a go at using this rhyme scheme for your 8 lines. This rhyme scheme will make your Ode very special indeed!

A
B
A
B
C
D
C
D

Challenge accepted? Let's go! Fear not, we are going to help you with this, line by line!

Verse One

In your first verse, focus on your positive memories of school, just like you did in your letter. If it helps, close your eyes and try to picture those moments, events or even conversations.

Begin line 1, 3 and 5 with the words: **I remember** (This clearly puts your first verse in the past tense!)

Use the rest of your line to tell us about something positive that happened at school that was important or special to you. This could be a really big moment or a very small moment... but one that still made you happy. Remember the qualities of friendship that we looked at before. Perhaps these may help you think about a memory, such as when your school did something to make you feel safe.

Line 1,
Line 3
and
Line 5

For example:

I remember playing tag in the grass

I remember the day I won a prize

I remember the school trip to the farm

Tip:

I remember... is made up of 4 syllables. This means you only need 6 more syllables to complete your line.

Line 2,

Use lines 2, 4 and 6 to tell us more about that memory and to paint a picture of that memory. It might help to try and squeeze several images into one line!

Line 4

and

For example:

Baby chicks, cows mooing, me eating crisps

Line 6

My heart beating, the class cheering my name

Arms outstretched, laughter hanging in the air

Line 7

and

Look back at your memories and how you've described them. Now use the last two lines of verse one to reflect on these memories and what it says about your relationship with your school. It could be a question or it could be a statement about your relationship.

Line 8

For example:

Many great moments we shared together

You always pick me up when I am down

What happens after I finish year six?

What will our friendship be, in one year's time?

That's it! Verse one complete! Check your syllables, check your rhymes and then read it out loud to hear how it sounds.

Onwards to verse two...

Verse Two

Reflect on:

- the special memories you have included in your Ode
- your school rituals (for example: assemblies, school lunch, choir practice)
- your weekly routine
- the people you are used to seeing at school

Which of these do you want most in your life right now?! Does your answer surprise you? Did you ever think you would miss school assemblies?

Or, which friends or teachers do you wish you could see, but now because of coronavirus and lockdown, you can't?

Once you've done this... you are ready to start verse two!

Line 1, Choose the three things about school that you most want back in your life! Put one in each line.

Line 3 For example:
and I want to play hide and seek with my friends
I long to dive into the swimming pool

Line 5 My teacher's dreadful jokes now seem funny

Line 2, In each of these lines, explain why you can't.

Line 4 For example:
But there are new rules: 2 metres apart
and But the pool is closed due to corona

Line 6 Downloading my work doesn't make me laugh

Now you can put lines 1-6 together!

For example, this is how our first two lines look:

I want to play hide and seek with my friends
But there are new rules: 2 metres apart

Look back at your six lines. Lots of things may be different but what has your school done to help keep your relationship with them alive? Use line 7 to tell us and remember to write in the second person!

Line 7

For example:

You took the time to call me whilst at home

You set great homework for me to download

Use this final line to reflect on how this has made you feel about your relationship with your school... has it helped, has it not?

Line 8

For example:

You showed me that you cared, you made me smile

It's not the same but you still get in touch

That's it! Verse two complete! Check your syllables, check your rhymes and then read it out loud to hear how it sounds.

Onwards to verse three...

Verse Three

In our final verse, we are looking ahead... we are looking ahead to the Autumn Term and returning to school.

What questions would you like to ask your school about the Autumn Term and returning in September?

Line 1

Write those questions down in line 1 and 2!

and

Line 2

For example:

Will we be two metres apart in class?

Will masks be compulsory in the class?

Will school dinners suddenly taste better?

Line 3

What personal questions would you like to ask your school about your friendship with the school now?

and

For example:

Will you remember me and my nickname?

Line 4

Will my teacher be the same as year five?

How will I catch up on the things I've missed?

There is lots of change. There is lots of uncertainty. You probably have lots and lots of questions. But... what do you know? What things are you sure of about your school and your relationship with your school? What things are certain?

Line 5

and

Tip: look back at your ingredients for a friendship... these might give you some ideas!

Line 6

For example:

I know you have had a hard time as well

I know you will never give up on me

Our friendship has been tested recently

But you never stopped caring, you were kind

In these final lines, say something important to your school.

You may want to...

Make your school a promise about your relationship.

For example:

I promise to be the best I can be

I promise to try to make my school proud

I promise to share what I feel inside

OR

**Line 7
and**

Make a statement about your school and your relationship. Is your relationship weaker or stronger now?

Line 8

For example:

Our history shows we make a good team

Working as one we can rise to the top

We are more than friends, we are family

OR

Send a special, personal message to your school.

For example:

You gave me a voice when no one listened.

You picked me up when my whole world collapsed.

Thanks for hanging my picture on the wall.

You did it!! Have a good look at your Ode... can you make any improvements?
Read it out loud and find out what it sounds like.

Did you know?

An Ode is traditionally set to music! Very fitting for this project as we want to include an **Ode to Schools** in our song cycle. So please make sure that you send us your Ode as soon as you've finished writing it!