



ACTIVITY: 'IN SUMMARY'

TIME: 15+ minutes
SIZE: Individuals
SPACE: Room for individuals to work
RESOURCES: Paper, pens

The aim is for students to bring to mind things that add value and meaning to their lives.

The result should be discussion about the many facets that make up a solid and resilient Sense of Purpose.

NB: This is a deceptively simple activity that is worth revisiting as students' understanding of the value of Sense of Purpose deepens.

1. Create a calm, introspective mood.
2. Write up the Chinese proverb: 'The journey is the reward.' Discuss how this can mean it is good to have goals, but the way you reach those goals (rather than reaching or not reaching them) is often what shapes and satisfies a person.
3. Ask students to think about themselves as they are at this point in time: studying at school, maybe working a part-time job, possibly with commitments at home (e.g. looking after a brother or sister, helping with chores), and trying to balance all those with sport, friendships and leisure. What do they enjoy most? What do they value? What activities give them a real sense of achievement? What events do they look forward to every week? What people, things and thoughts inspire them? What personal code, or ethical rules, do they believe in and live by? Ask them to jot down these thoughts as they occur to them.
4. Now ask students to picture themselves in five years' time. Where are they? What are they doing? Are they working or studying in a field that draws on their interests? Are they being challenged? Having fun? Making money? Feeling fulfilled? Making a difference to someone else? How have they changed from the person they were five years ago, sitting in a classroom, thinking about the future? What happened to them on the journey to get there? Were their beliefs and personal codes tested? Strengthened? Ask students to jot down their thoughts.
5. Ask students to think up one word that sums up where they want to be in five years' time. Examples might include happy, fulfilled, respected, generous, valued, understood, satisfied, and energised.



DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

- Ask students willing to do so to share their jottings with the rest of the class.
- Sense of Purpose is a very individual thing. How did your values (i.e. the things you find important) inform your thoughts on where you would be in five years' time?
- Did anyone find it difficult to picture things you enjoy doing now? Why might that be? What steps could you take to help find more meaning in your everyday life?
- Did anyone find it difficult to imagine where you'd be in five years? Why might that be? What mental obstacles did you find your imagination came up against? What strategies could you employ to move (or move around) those obstacles?
- Discuss the importance of flexibility and how our Sense of Purpose can change over time; it adjusts as we grow, learn, and experience life.