



Youth mental health

Activity ideas to develop
resilience and promote wellbeing
for learners aged 13–16



Find out more ► [asdan.org.uk](https://www.asdan.org.uk)

Contents

| | |
|---|-----------|
| About this resource | 3 |
| ASDAN core skills | 4 |
| Skills self-assessment | 5 |
| Information and communication | 6 |
| • Analysing news stories | 8 |
| Peace and conflict | 9 |
| Emotions and wellbeing | 11 |
| • Emotions vocabulary list | 13 |
| • Activities to support wellbeing | 14 |
| Social action | 15 |
| • Letter writing template | 17 |
| • Fundraising event plan | 18 |
| Cultural appreciation and creativity | 19 |
| • Traditional foods from another country | 21 |
| Skills self-reflection | 22 |
| Personal reflection | 23 |

Links to ASDAN courses

The activities in this resource have been taken from ASDAN's Personal Development Programmes (PDP) and PSHE and Beliefs and Values Short Courses. These courses develop personal, social and work-related skills through activity-based challenges.

They are best suited to learners aged 13+ in mainstream settings, however they can be adapted to suit different ages and abilities. Find out more about ASDAN courses at: asdan.org.uk/courses



About this resource



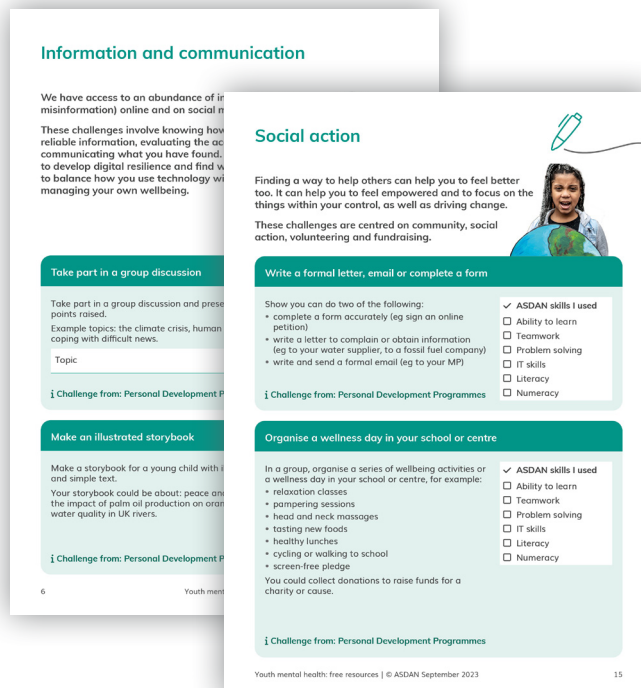
Activity ideas

This free resource booklet includes activity ideas that can help young people develop the resilience they need to protect their own wellbeing and take positive action in an increasingly turbulent world.

This booklet includes 20 challenges across five topics:

- Information and communication
- Peace and conflict
- Emotions and wellbeing
- Social action
- Cultural appreciation and creativity

The challenges include prompts and ideas for possible topics or projects.



Resource templates

This resource pack also includes six recording templates. These worksheet-style templates can be used to support the activities.

Skills development

The activities in this book provide excellent opportunities to develop the six core ASDAN skills. Find out more about the **ASDAN core skills** on page 4.

You can use the **skills self-assessment** on page 5 to rate your confidence in these skills before you start your challenges. Complete the **skills self-reflection** on page 22 after your challenges and see how you have progressed.

The **personal reflection** template on page 23 will help you to reflect on what went well, what could have gone better and what you would like to do in the future.



ASDAN core skills

These skills are useful in all aspects of life, learning and work. They can also help you to manage your emotional wellbeing.

Ability to learn

This skill is about how you manage your personal learning and development. It is about planning and working towards targets to improve your performance and reviewing your progress.

This skill will help you to set personal goals for managing your wellbeing.

Teamwork

This skill is about how you work with others when planning and carrying out activities to get things done and achieving shared objectives. This will involve working with a group of people.

This skill will help you to work with other people and develop empathy.

Problem solving

This skill is about recognising problems and doing something about them. It is about using different methods to find a solution and checking to see if they work.

This skill will help you to think creatively and develop resilience.

IT skills

This skill is about being able to make the best use of computers and other digital technology. IT skills are vitally important in the workplace and at home.

This skill will help you to use technology in a way that supports your wellbeing.

Literacy

This skill is about how you talk to people, the ways you find out information and how you share your views and opinions. It also includes all aspects of writing and reading.

This skill will help you to find accurate information and communicate your emotions.

Numeracy

This skill is about your ability to use numbers. If you've measured or calculated something you will have used numeracy skills. Being able to use numbers is a skill highly valued by employers.

This skill will help you to manage your money and cook healthy meals.

Recording core skills development

Next to each challenge is a set of tick boxes where you can record the skills you have used and developed during the activity. The skills you are most likely to use have been highlighted.



Skills self-assessment

Complete this page before you start your challenges to show how confident you are in the six core skills. Rate your confidence in each aspect from a scale of 1 (not at all confident) to 5 (very confident) and say why.

Ability to learn

- Setting targets
- Asking for and accepting advice
- Reviewing progress

How confident I feel:

1 2 3 4 5

Why?

Teamwork

- Planning with others
- Working in different roles
- Achieving a shared goal

How confident I feel:

1 2 3 4 5

Why?

Problem solving

- Recognising problems
- Comparing different options
- Checking if a solution has worked

How confident I feel:

1 2 3 4 5

Why?

IT skills

- Using different IT equipment
- Finding information
- Presenting information

How confident I feel:

1 2 3 4 5

Why?

Literacy

- Using appropriate language
- Listening to others
- Asking relevant questions

How confident I feel:

1 2 3 4 5

Why?

Numeracy

- Doing calculations
- Interpreting results
- Presenting findings

How confident I feel:

1 2 3 4 5

Why?

Information and communication

We have access to an abundance of information (and misinformation) online and on social media.

These challenges involve knowing how to access reliable information, evaluating the accuracy of this and communicating what you have found. This can help you to develop digital resilience and find ways to balance how you use technology with managing your own wellbeing.



Take part in a group discussion

Take part in a group discussion and present the main points raised.

Example topics: the climate crisis, human rights, coping with difficult news.

i Challenge from: Personal Development Programmes

✓ ASDAN skills I used

- Ability to learn
- Teamwork
- Problem solving
- IT skills
- Literacy
- Numeracy

Make an illustrated storybook

Make a storybook for a young child with illustrations and simple text.

Your storybook could be about: peace and conflict, the impact of palm oil production on orangutans, water quality in UK rivers.

i Challenge from: Personal Development Programmes

✓ ASDAN skills I used

- Ability to learn
- Teamwork
- Problem solving
- IT skills
- Literacy
- Numeracy



Understand why it is important to develop digital resilience

Digital resilience involves understanding when you are at risk online, knowing what to do if anything goes wrong, learning from your experiences and being able to recover from any difficulties.

- With a partner, investigate how going online can make people feel. Explain your findings in a short written report and include statistics to support your conclusions.
- With a partner, investigate examples of online influence having a positive and negative impact on young people aged 14–16. Explain your findings in a short written report and include statistics to support your conclusions.

✓ ASDAN skills I used

Ability to learn

Teamwork

Problem solving

IT skills

Literacy

Numeracy

i Challenge from: PSHE Short Course

Understand how to be a critical consumer of online information

Newspapers, websites or TV news programmes will often seek to make news stories attractive and interesting. They want people to buy their paper, click the link or watch their programme; one of the ways they do this is to hook people in with stories about heroes or villains.

- In a group, find two stories about the same subject or event from different sources. Read the stories and discuss the impressions that they give. Compare the two stories and highlight the differences.
- Identify the actual facts of the story and compare them with both stories. Discuss your findings with the group.

✓ ASDAN skills I used

Ability to learn

Teamwork

Problem solving

IT skills

Literacy

Numeracy

i Challenge from: PSHE Short Course



Analysing news stories



Step 1: Identify the facts of the story – things to look for

- Common facts reported across all the articles – highlighting can help
- Facts reported only in certain articles – highlighting can help
- Get information from other sources to help with this too

Notes:

Step 2: Look at the headline – questions to ask

- Does the headline fairly reflect the facts?
- Does the headline reflect what the article goes on to say?

Notes:

Step 3: Analyse language and tone – things to look for

- Sensational language used for or against anyone or anything and to what effect (eg to criticise or praise) – highlighting can help
- Other methods used to make the story more interesting or to make it appeal to people with certain views

Notes:

Peace and conflict



News coverage of international conflict and war can be overwhelming and distressing, especially if you have a personal connection to these stories.

These challenges will help you to explore and understand the current conflicts happening around the world. Understanding more about these issues can help you to feel less overwhelmed by news coverage.



Understand that some people are pacifists and are opposed to war

A pacifist is a person who believes that war and violence towards other people is wrong, and that other peaceful methods of resolving conflict must be used.

- Quakers are pacifists. Find out about Quakers and produce a poster explaining the key aspects of their religion.
- Find out about Mahatma Gandhi. Present your findings, including the methods and impact of non-violent protest.
- Write a short essay explaining why people such as Mahatma Gandhi and Quakers believe that war and violence is wrong. Explain why you agree or disagree with them.

✓ ASDAN skills I used

Ability to learn

Teamwork

Problem solving

IT skills

Literacy

Numeracy

i Challenge from: Beliefs and Values Short Course

Peace and conflict

Research a current war or conflict

Research a current war or conflict and present your findings as a TV news report. Your report should give information on why the conflict started and what it is about, as well as personal accounts of people on both sides of the conflict and the suffering of ordinary people. End your report with suggestions for a peaceful solution.

i Challenge from: Beliefs and Values Short Course

ASDAN skills I used

Ability to learn

Teamwork

Problem solving

IT skills

Literacy

Numeracy

Understand that people have different views on the necessity of war

The decision to go to war is always difficult and complex. Some people always oppose war in any circumstance, whereas other people believe it is a necessary evil to protect innocent people.

- In the First and Second World Wars young men were often keen to sign up to fight, including those that were too young. Find out about the reasons they had for wanting to go to war and the reasons their families gave to try to stop them going. Present your ideas as a comic strip or role play.
- Find out about a country experiencing conflict and present your findings in a visual format. Include the cause of the conflict, the methods being used to resolve conflict and their impact.
- Find out the meaning of the phrase 'a just war'. List three conditions of a just war.

i Challenge from: Beliefs and Values Short Course

ASDAN skills I used

Ability to learn

Teamwork

Problem solving

IT skills

Literacy

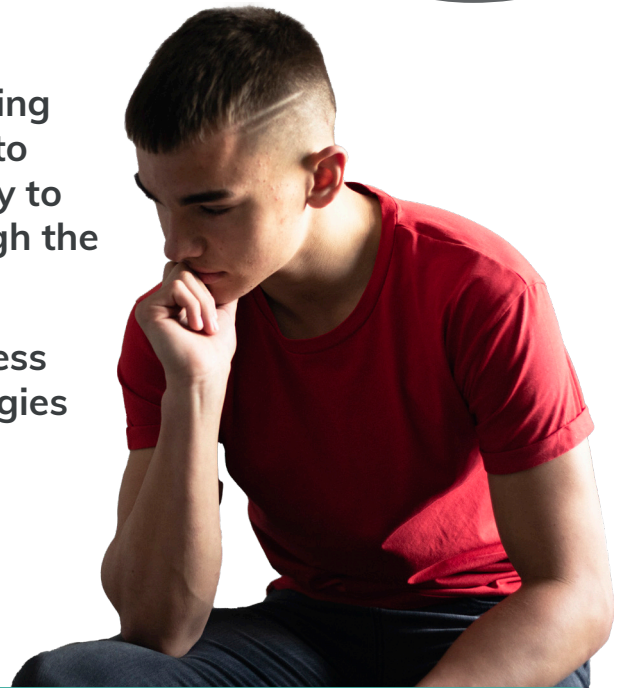
Numeracy

Emotions and wellbeing



Finding ways to manage your own wellbeing is always important, but can feel difficult to do when the world feels stressful. It is easy to fall into the habit of doom-scrolling through the news or social media.

These challenges will support you to process your emotions and develop positive strategies to help manage any worries or anxieties.



Explain activities that can promote positive emotional wellbeing

Physical and mental health are linked and there are many physical things we can do to support positive emotional wellbeing (eg exercise, time outdoors, interacting with others).

- Create a poster or a short film that promotes the benefits of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation and volunteering.

i Challenge from: PSHE Short Course

✓ ASDAN skills I used

Ability to learn

Teamwork

Problem solving

IT skills

Literacy

Numeracy

Make a list of mental health helplines

Make a list of help lines that are available to young people for support with their mental health.

i Challenge from: Personal Development Programmes

✓ ASDAN skills I used

Ability to learn

Teamwork

Problem solving

IT skills

Literacy

Numeracy

Emotions and wellbeing

Demonstrate how to talk about emotions

Talking about how we feel can make a big difference to our emotional wellbeing, particularly if we are experiencing negative emotions. It also helps our relationships with other people if we can explain how and why we feel particular emotions.

- Create a vocabulary list to describe how you feel when experiencing common emotions (eg anger, happiness, sadness).
- Create a presentation that shows how someone might feel when experiencing common emotions.

✓ ASDAN skills I used

Ability to learn

Teamwork

Problem solving

IT skills

Literacy

Numeracy

i Challenge from: PSHE Short Course

Recognise how to manage emotions in different relationships

We experience a range of emotions on a daily basis. Most of the time these are low level feelings, but often they become extreme and can have an impact on how we act and behave.

- Create a role play that shows how to react when feeling angry or celebrating success in different contexts.
- Investigate ways of managing emotion and create a brief guide for other people about **two** different approaches.

✓ ASDAN skills I used

Ability to learn

Teamwork

Problem solving

IT skills

Literacy

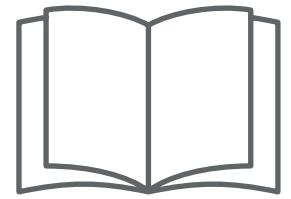
Numeracy

i Challenge from: PSHE Short Course



Emotions vocabulary list

Some research shows there are six core emotions and that the whole range of human emotion can be categorised under these six headings. Look at the lists of emotions and add some of your own.



Happy

- joy
- relieved
- amused

Sad

- lonely
- disappointed
- bored

Angry

- hostile
- irritated

Scared

- panicked
- terrified

Disgusted

- ashamed

Surprised

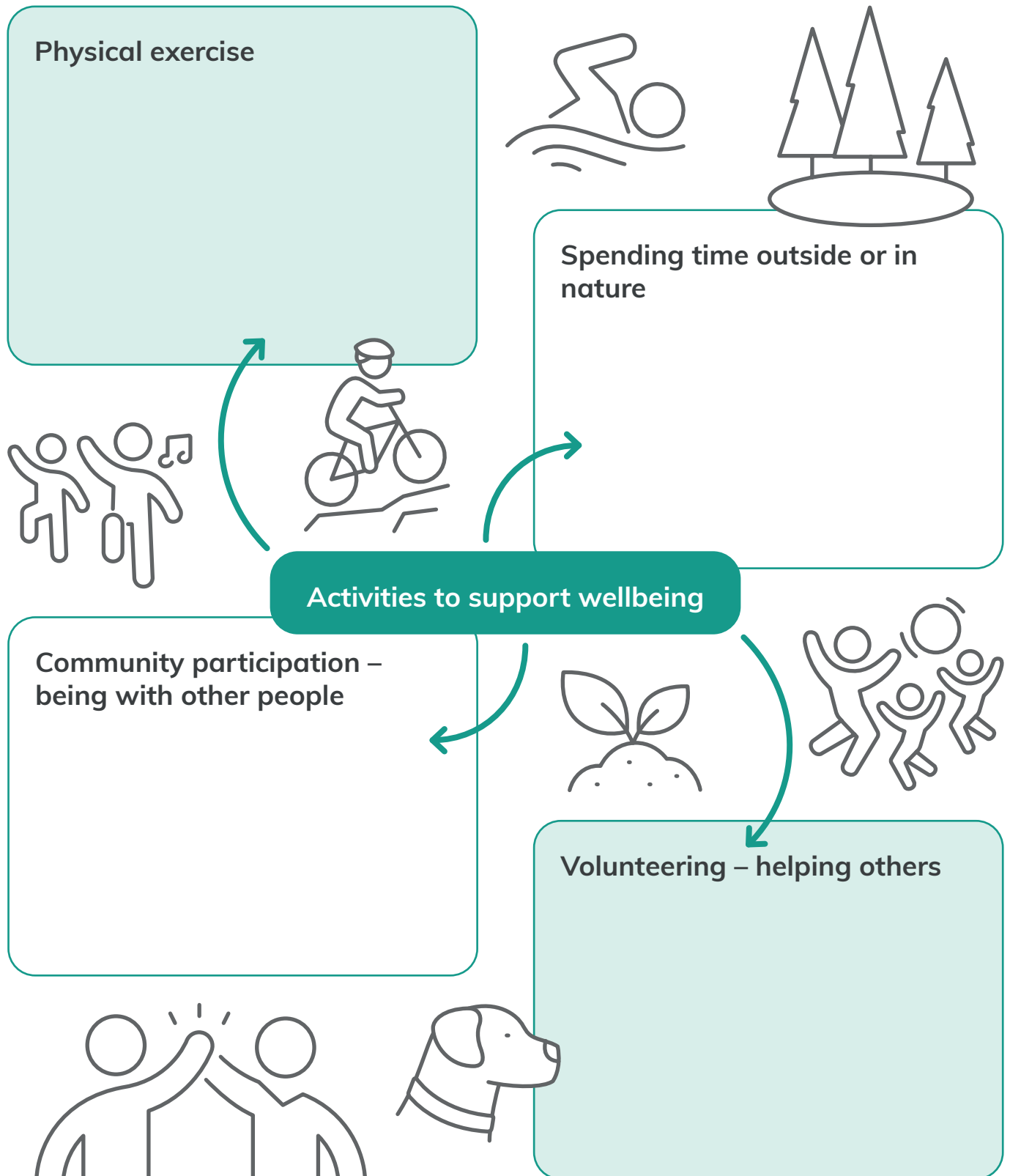
- awe-struck

 **Tip: use a dictionary or a thesaurus to try to find new words.**



Activities to support wellbeing

Complete the mind-map to show some of the different things you like to do to support your wellbeing. Add some words from your emotions vocabulary list to show how these activities make you feel.



Social action



Finding a way to help others can help you to feel better too. It can help you to feel empowered and to focus on the things within your control, as well as driving change.

These challenges are centred on community, social action, volunteering and fundraising.



Write a formal letter, email or complete a form

Show you can do two of the following:

- complete a form accurately (eg sign an online petition)
- write a letter to complain or obtain information (eg to your water supplier, to a fossil fuel company)
- write and send a formal email (eg to your MP)

i Challenge from: Personal Development Programmes

✓ ASDAN skills I used

Ability to learn

Teamwork

Problem solving

IT skills

Literacy

Numeracy

Organise a wellness day in your school or centre

In a group, organise a series of wellbeing activities or a wellness day in your school or centre, for example:

- relaxation classes
- pampering sessions
- head and neck massages
- tasting new foods
- healthy lunches
- cycling or walking to school
- screen-free pledge

You could collect donations to raise funds for a charity or cause.

i Challenge from: Personal Development Programmes

✓ ASDAN skills I used

Ability to learn

Teamwork

Problem solving

IT skills

Literacy

Numeracy

Social action

Raise funds for a charity or cause

Take part in an activity to raise funds for a charity or cause, for example:

- organise a fundraising event
- organise and take part in a sponsored event

Examples of charities: Red Cross, World Land Trust Wildfire Appeal, Surfers Against Sewage.

Charity:

Your evidence should include:

- careful planning, so that the aims and limits of your involvement are clear
- a record or diary of your experience
- a review or report of what you have learned

i Challenge from: Personal Development Programmes

✓ ASDAN skills I used

Ability to learn

Teamwork

Problem solving

IT skills

Literacy

Numeracy

Use design software to produce something

Use design software to produce one of the following:

- album cover (eg protest songs)
- poster for an event (eg fundraising event)
- newsletter (eg wellbeing newsletter)
- graphics for social media (eg for a charity or cause)
- other (eg protest signs)

i Challenge from: Personal Development Programmes

✓ ASDAN skills I used

Ability to learn

Teamwork

Problem solving

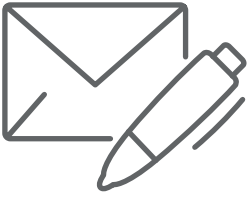
IT skills

Literacy

Numeracy



Letter writing template



Sender name and address

Date

Recipient name and address

Dear


Yours sincerely



Fundraising event plan

Use this action plan template to help plan your fundraising event.

| 📅 Event date | 🕒 Time | 📍 Location |
|--------------|--------|------------|
| | | |



Charity or cause I am fundraising for:

What I will be doing to raise money:

How much I am hoping to raise:

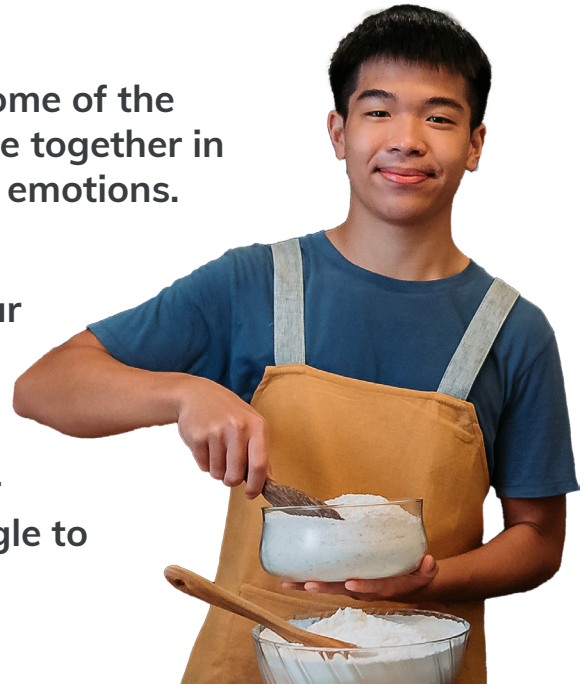
| What needs to be done? | By who? | By when? | ✓ |
|------------------------|---------|----------|---|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

Cultural appreciation and creativity



Food, art and other aspects of culture are some of the wonderful things in life that can bring people together in difficult times and help us work through our emotions.

These creative challenges help to promote personal wellbeing and can also deepen your understanding of countries and cultures that are being talked about in world news. Cultural and creative activities are a good way to show and work through your emotions, especially if you sometimes struggle to talk about your feelings.



Create a traditional meal

Create a traditional meal from another culture or country.

Meal:

Culture or country:

i Challenge from: Personal Development Programmes

✓ ASDAN skills I used

Ability to learn

Teamwork

Problem solving

IT skills

Literacy

Numeracy

Create a phrase book in a different language

Create a phrase book in a language of your choice.

Language:

i Challenge from: Personal Development Programmes

✓ ASDAN skills I used

Ability to learn

Teamwork

Problem solving

IT skills

Literacy

Numeracy

Cultural appreciation and creativity

Organise an international themed celebration

Organise a celebration with an international theme of your choice.

Base the food on typical meals from your chosen country.

Country:

i Challenge from: Personal Development Programmes

✓ ASDAN skills I used

- Ability to learn
- Teamwork
- Problem solving
- IT skills
- Literacy
- Numeracy

Write a poem, song lyrics or drama piece

Write a poem or a piece of drama, compose a piece of music or write lyrics for a song.

i Challenge from: Personal Development Programmes

✓ ASDAN skills I used

- Ability to learn
- Teamwork
- Problem solving
- IT skills
- Literacy
- Numeracy

Create a product for display

Create one of the following:

- A drawing, painting or print
- A piece of jewellery, pottery, sculpture or textile art
- A display of photography on a theme
- A short film or animation

i Challenge from: Personal Development Programmes

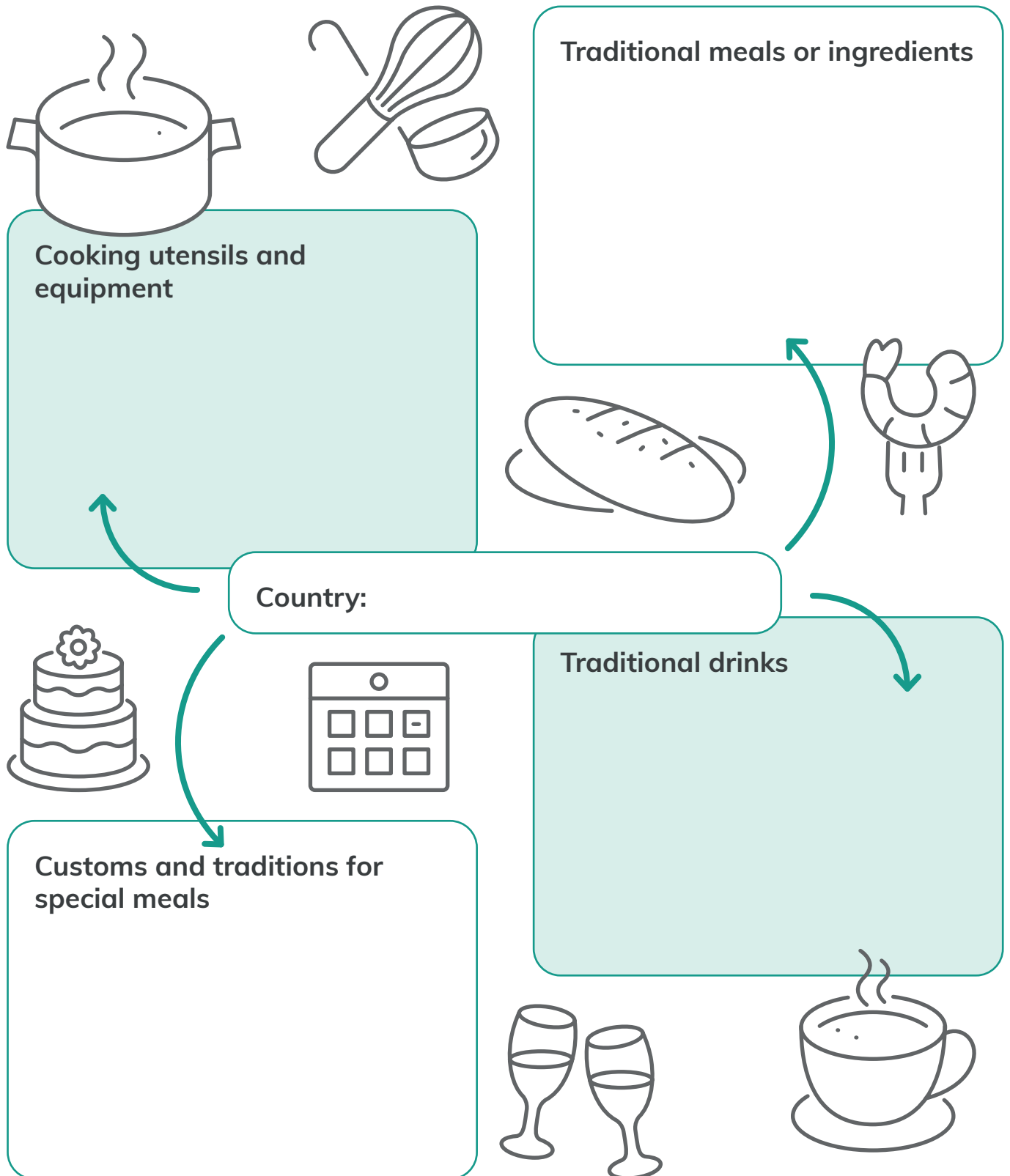
✓ ASDAN skills I used

- Ability to learn
- Teamwork
- Problem solving
- IT skills
- Literacy
- Numeracy



Traditional foods from another country

Complete the mind-map to show traditional foods from another country. Find out about traditional ingredients, meals and drinks, as well as any specialist cooking equipment and customs for special meals.





Skills self-reflection

Complete this page after your challenges to show how confident you are in the six core ASDAN skills. Rate your confidence from a scale of 1 (not at all confident) to 5 (very confident) and give an example of a challenge where you used these skills:

Ability to learn

- Setting targets
- Asking for and accepting advice
- Reviewing progress

How confident I feel:

1 2 3 4 5

Challenge:

Teamwork

- Planning with others
- Working in different roles
- Achieving a shared goal

How confident I feel:

1 2 3 4 5

Challenge:

Problem solving

- Recognising problems
- Comparing different options
- Checking if a solution has worked

How confident I feel:

1 2 3 4 5

Challenge:

IT skills

- Using different IT equipment
- Finding information
- Presenting information

How confident I feel:

1 2 3 4 5

Challenge:

Literacy

- Using appropriate language
- Listening to others
- Asking relevant questions

How confident I feel:

1 2 3 4 5

Challenge:

Numeracy

- Doing calculations
- Interpreting results
- Presenting findings

How confident I feel:

1 2 3 4 5

Challenge:



Personal reflection

After you have completed your skills self-reflection, think about what you have gained from completing these challenges and what you hope to do in the future. Ask your tutor for feedback and record your reflections here.



What did you enjoy the most?

What did you find the most difficult?

What are your strengths?

What do you need to improve?

What would you like to do in the future?

What actions and support will help you to do this?

Feedback from your tutor:



ASDAN

© ASDAN September 2023

✉ info@asdan.org.uk | 🌐 [asdan.org.uk](https://www.asdan.org.uk)