



Lesson plan

My dream room/my special place

At Children's Hospice South West (CHSW), we believe it is a priority to give the children in our care a 'home from home': their own 'Dream Room' where they can put aside their illness and worries, and relax in a safe, comfortable space, full of things which are important to them. Indeed, every child should have somewhere special to them; somewhere they feel safe, nurtured and free to express their creativity. This lesson explores what this space could be and why it is important, not just for the children in your class, but also the children at CHSW.

Warm up activity

Ask the children in your class to imagine they are going on a journey. Get the class to imagine where this could be to, and make it part of the discussion. Aside from the basics, such as food, water and any other practical needs, what would they take as luxury or sentimental things just for themselves? Think, pair, share and then have children share ideas. The idea of special things links well to introducing special places or dream rooms.

Main input

For this part of the lesson, please use the provided PowerPoint to briefly introduce our charity. The section below will also help you to communicate to your class how this lesson links with the work we do at CHSW.

Understanding the connections

When a child stays with us, we make sure the room we give them becomes their special space. There are practical considerations, such as equipment for comfort or access, but we also try our best to store away any medical equipment which might make the room feel more like a hospital, instead filling the room with things which are important to them. This might include their favourite posters, toys and books, or for older children, this might mean a large TV with a console connected. When they enter the room, they are also greeted by a personalised message board to welcome them; it literally becomes their room and we do everything possible to provide this. We hope by encouraging your class to design their own dream rooms or special places, they are not only learning about the amazing work we do at CHSW, but they will also appreciate how important this must also be to the children we care for in our hospices.

Activities

The main activity involves designing a dream room or special space. There are lots of different ways to approach this part of the lesson. However you tackle it, set clear constraints to the task and share these with the class. For instance, consider how real and/or practical these constraints and expectations are. This could after all be a complete fantasy room, or something that perhaps has a budget?

Further ideas could include designing a bird's eye view of the space with dimensions and layout. Children could add labels and captions underneath to describe the room and what is in it. They could design a mood board, such as the ones used by designers to pitch a room to a client (this could work well with older children). This would need to include colour schemes, magazine clippings, furniture designs and key pieces of content. The design process could even include making physical models of the room, depending on how much time you allow for this and if you want to use multiple lessons or link to DT activities.

Plenary

This depends on the main activity you have chosen to do. However, there is lots of questioning that can be done around the children's designs. For instance, you could ask:

- 😊 What is the most important part of your special place or dream room?
- 😊 Why did you decide on a certain part of your design?

Children could share their design process and thinking with the class and explain their choices. To end the lesson, please recap the work we do at CHSW and how this links to 'dream rooms and special places'.

Thank you

Thank you for using this lesson resource. Every download helps to raise awareness of CHSW and the work we do.

