

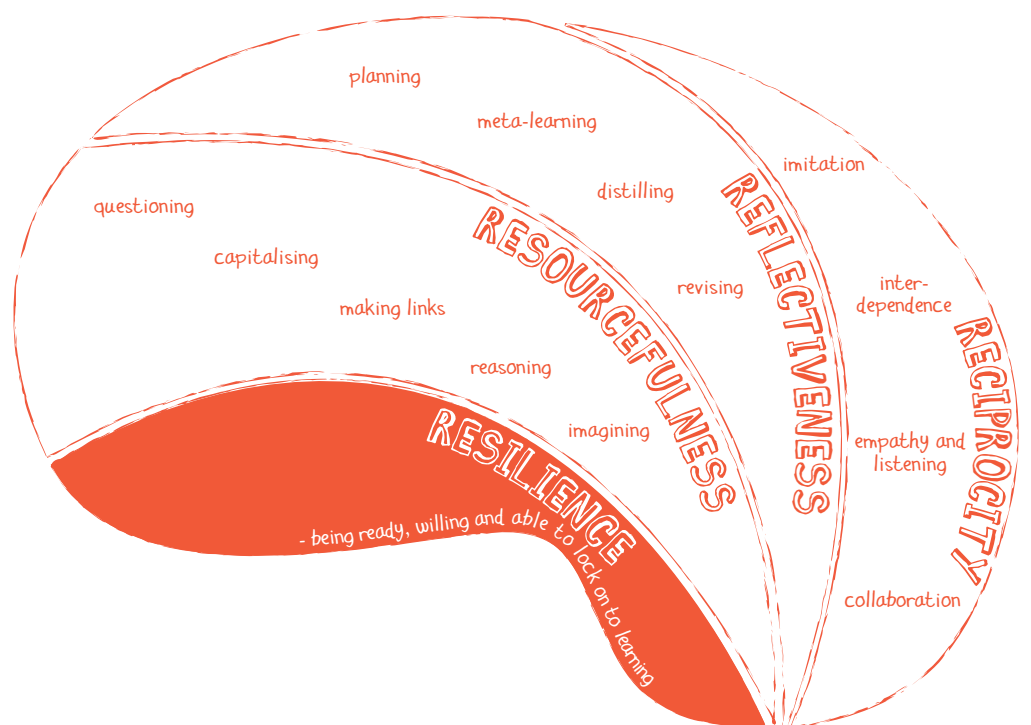
RESILIENCE:

The emotional aspects of learning; 'feeling'
The capacities that make up this disposition are:

Absorption Managing Distractions Noticing Perseverance

Managing Distractions

Recognising and reducing distractions;
knowing when to walk away and refresh yourself.
Creating your own best environment for learning.



How to make the most of the story;

PEACE AND QUIET

In this story Soli discovers how things often get in the way and stop us from getting on. He eventually finds his own way of dealing with his distractions.

The discussion linked to the story is an opportunity to introduce the idea of distractions. Whether you use the word itself is for you to decide. The key is to open up talk about those circumstances that get in the way, when we are trying to remain focused on an activity or task.

If the story is introduced to the whole class, then the discussion prompt questions provide opportunities for 'talking partners' to share their experiences and thoughts on the subject.



After the story

Connecting questions

- What did Soli really want to get on with?
- What were the things that happened that stopped Soli from doing what he wanted to do?
- Why did Soli find it difficult to get on with making his potato person when grandma was singing?
- What did Soli do after his little sister fell over?
- Soli tried to find somewhere else to go to get on with his models. Can you think of anything different that Soli could have done?

Transferring questions

- Can you remember a time when you were distracted from something you wanted to do?
- What did you do?
- Do you ever get distracted in school? What sort of things stop you from getting on?
- What does it feel like when you are distracted?
- What do you do about it?
- Do you ever do things that distract other people?
- What will you do the next time someone distracts you?
- What could you remember to do so that you don't distract other people?

PEACE AND QUIET

A story to introduce: Managing Distractions

Soli always liked it when grandma came to stay. Grandma wasn't always in a rush like mum and dad. She liked to play games with him or read him stories and she didn't mind sitting down and watching a video with him sometimes. The other good thing was that she always brought a present when she came. Mum always told him that he shouldn't expect to have a present every time, and he tried not to, but still grandma always brought one. He knew that he'd like having grandma to stay even if she didn't bring a present, but it was nice that she did.

But today the present was a very strange one! Grandma handed him a brown paper bag. It was quite heavy.

"I think you'd better have this tray before you open the bag," she said and she put the wooden tray down on the table. "Now you can empty the bag onto that."

And that's what Soli did. He carefully tipped the bag upside down and was rather surprised to see four potatoes come rolling out onto the tray; two large ones and two small ones. Grandma was laughing;

"You look a bit surprised."

"Thank - you grandma." (His mum and dad were always telling him that he must remember to say 'thank-you' when he was given something) but he was a bit puzzled. What was he supposed to do with four potatoes?

"It's alright," said grandma, "there's something else to go with it." And this time she handed him a brightly coloured tin box.

"It's not a new present to-day," said grandma. "These used to belong to your dad when he was a little boy. I came across them when I was clearing out an old cupboard. Your dad used to have a lot of fun with these."

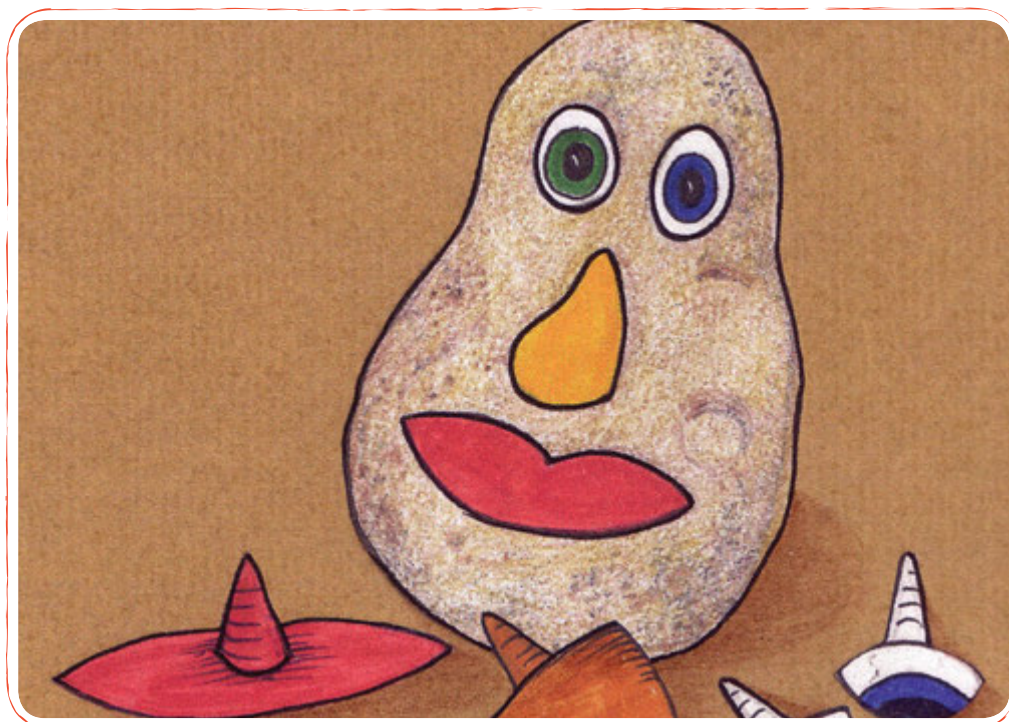
Soli opened the box and, staring up at him were lots of eyes! They were small plastic eyes, and there were noses too, and mouths and ears.

"They're for making potato people. Look, the eyes and ears and noses all have little spikes on them. You can stick them into the potatoes to make faces."

Now Soli was smiling too. "Hey that's really good grandma. I haven't seen them before!"

"Well you sit at the kitchen table and see what you can make while I get on with some baking. That should keep you quiet!"

So while grandma started getting all her baking things together Soli began to empty the box. He lined up



all the eyes first of all. There were lots of different eyes but he knew that he would have to put them in pairs. He didn't want his potato people to have odd eyes.

Then grandma started singing. "One potato, two potatoes, three potatoes, four...Do you know that song Soli?"

Soli looked up. What was grandma doing? She seemed to be waving her hands in mid air.

"It's a little game we used to play. Look. Make your hands into fists then put one on top of the other. Like this."

But Soli didn't want to play grandma's game, he wanted to get on sorting the ears, and the noses. When grandma baked she always sang songs. Mostly he liked listening to grandma's funny songs, but now he did want to play with his potato people.

"Grandma can I take the tray into the garden please?"

"Yes of course you can if you want to." Grandma stopped singing. "I'm disturbing you aren't I? Go on then."

So Soli picked up the tray and went out into the garden. First of all he put the tray down on the blanket mum had put on the grass for his little sister Tasha. But Tasha wasn't there, she was sitting on her little car watching dad weed the vegetable patch. Soli chose two matching eyes to make the first face with one of the large potatoes. He pushed the little plastic eyes into the potato – it was more difficult than he expected. Potatoes are quite hard until they're cooked. He didn't get them quite level, but it looked alright; this potato man was looking rather puzzled. Then Soli started on the noses, and that's when Tasha spotted him. She got off her bike and toddled over to the blanket with her arms outstretched. Just as she got near she wobbled on her chubby little legs, she lost her balance and tumbled over, straight on top of Soli's tray. She wasn't very tall and she was quite used to falling over as she was still learning to walk. Tasha didn't hurt herself, but it wasn't good for Soli's potato people. Eyes and noses scattered all over the blanket.

“Tasha!” Soli yelled. “Look what you’ve done.”

Tasha looked surprised to hear Soli shout, but she thought it was just a game and she laughed and at the same time reached out to grab a handful of eyes.

“No Tasha! You can’t have those.” Soli realised that she might put them in her mouth, and that wouldn’t be a very good thing. Soli was quicker than his little sister and soon he had gathered up all the little plastic pieces, now all muddled up again. This was not going to be a good place to work with Tasha around.

Once again Soli picked up the tray and went back into the kitchen, where grandma was now singing about raindrops on roses.

“I’m going in the other room.” Soli announced.

“Tasha likes potato people too does she?” asked grandma. “You’re probably better out of her way.”

Soli put the tray down on the floor. He left the eyes in a heap, after all he had one potato head with a pair of eyes. He lined up the noses, eight of them. Which nose would look right on the biggest potato head with the puzzled looking eyes? He chose a long, straight nose and was just about to push it into the potato, underneath the eyes when in strolled the cat!

“Shoo!” Soli called out. “Go out in the garden and play with Tasha,” but the cat was far more interested in all the little bits and pieces on Soli’s tray. First she sniffed them, then she stretched out a paw to touch them. Perhaps the floor wasn’t the best place to be when there’s a cat wandering about. Soli decided he’d better find a table, but the kitchen table was by now covered with cake tins and rolling pins, and grandma was still singing. He wasn’t allowed to play on the dining room table without a special cloth and he didn’t know where that was and everyone else was too busy to be bothered. Carefully he carried the tray of potato people upstairs but to-day he couldn’t even play in his own bedroom; mum had started decorating and was up a ladder painting the ceiling. That was when he had his good idea. Perhaps it was the smallest place in the house, but he wasn’t likely to be disturbed here – not for some time anyway.