

FOR HUMANITY NOW

Curriculum Plan KIDS

Topic: **Brain power in the age of AI: Critical thinking for kids**

Five modules: Know your brain, The ABC of critical thinking, Personality, Social media hijacks and Habits.

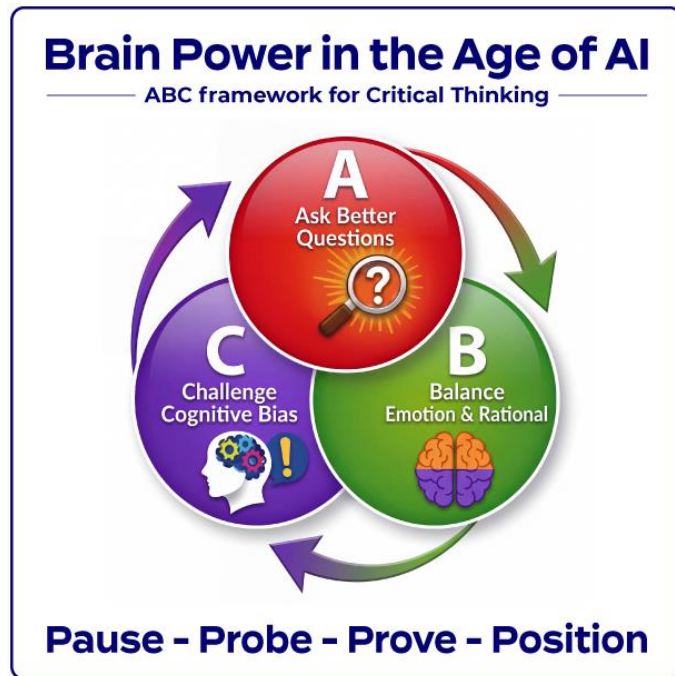
Rationale: We are experiencing a once in a species moment. For the first time there is more information coming in, than our prefrontal cortex can handle to sift through what is real and what is not. In an uncertain world with incoming misinformation and disinformation we need critical thinking skills. Critical thinking can be viewed through a lens that addresses how human bias evolved to protect us, to ensure our safety first and should incorporate what we know about how the brain rewires. To shift bias, we need an understanding of how to rewire the brain and create habits for critical thinking. There is limited behaviour change or learning without neuroplastic changes over time. With this in mind, FOR HUMANITY NOW brings the world a new way to view critical thinking skill development to benefit mankind for a more hopeful, peaceful and united world ahead.

“Thinking is difficult, that’s why most people judge.” Carl Jung



BRAIN POWER IN THE AGE OF AI

Conceptual framework



Key resources

Gordon, E. (2025). The brain way: Brain, self, habits, AI and humanity, Franklin Publishing

Newman, J. (2025). Influence: How Educational Leaders transform thinking to inspire, unite and deliver, Amba Press.

Ferando, C. (2026). Unapologetically human, How the science of being human is the future of work.

Humanity Now Web site: ForHumanityNow.Org

Key concepts

What do we want the learner to know and do?

Deep understanding: There is limited behaviour change or learning without neuroplastic changes over time. To shift bias in an uncertain world of mis/disinformation we need an understanding of how to rewire the brain by improving critical thinking.

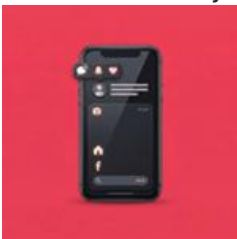
What will the learner walk out with after they complete the course?

CONTENT (Knowledge)	PROCESSES (Thinking skills)	SKILLS (Doing skills)	MINDSETS (Attitude)
Everything we read is not always true? What is fake or real? What is helpful thinking? Why critical thinking is so important. What is AI and can it help or harm thinking? The building blocks of early development of critical thinking. How to make good habits. My personality colours.	Name: What is this called? Notice: What did you see? What do you feel? Describe: Tell me about it? Explain: Tell me what you understand about that? Sort: Can you group these? Compare: How are these the same or different? Ask: What questions do you have? Choose: Which one do you pick? Check: Is that right and how do you know? Justify: Why do you think that? Discern: Is this real or fake?	Self-regulation Emotional regulation Pause before you act Attention and focus Questioning Listening Curiosity Persistence Empathy Kindness Gratefulness Play Awe	Bunny thoughts I ask questions and stay curious. I am open to learning. I pause before I react. I may not know everything. I get smarter as I learn. I can change my mind with new information. I listen to learn. I may have missed something. Shark thoughts I know everything. I want to be right and win all the time. I am not smart enough to learn. I can't admit I don't know. I make quick assumptions. Rage and loud voices must be right.

KEY QUESTIONS: Are the students able to:	PRACTICAL HABITS I Can
Explain the difference between real and fake? Notice what is happening around you before making immediate judgements? Stay curious and ask more questions. Understand that others have different views. Know that we are all different because we have different brain maps and behaviour preferences Regulate their emotions. Realise that AI can change what you see. Realise that AI is a source of unfiltered information. Ask an adult for help or guidance when unsure on social media.	Pause before you respond. Be kind and fair. (Show empathy) Use reflective thinking. Calm myself. Pay attention and take notice. Identify real from fake. Consider the ideas of others and keep learning. Use AI in a smart way. Be mindful of the traps on social media. Look for the source. Check with a grown up if uncertain. Don't believe everything I see. Ask what might be missing. I don't have to agree with all my friends if something is wrong.

5 Modules: Brain power in the age of AI

	Topic	Key meaning and questions
1	Know your brain 	Understand how a young brain develops and learns. Students who learn about the brain achieve better outcomes (Willis, 2020). Children haven't learnt self regulation as yet and tend to jump into a quick decision or action. They need to learn how to slow down their thinking for more reasoned responses rather than rely on their instinctive reactions. They may require help to identify their emotions and to learn that experiencing a range of emotions is normal. Learning strategies to keep calm will help them be better critical thinkers. Purposeful play, role play and role modelling are effective ways to teach critical thinking skills for the early years.
2	The ABC of critical thinking Real or fake 	Critical thinking can be viewed through the ABC lens. The ABC of critical thinking needs to be broken down for age appropriate learning. It incorporates: A. Ask better questions. Use bottom up and top down thinking. Top down is about the higher principles and purpose and bottom up is about noticing the detail of the reality. B. Balance unconscious emotion and intuition with conscious rational thinking. Both emotion and logic play a role in sound decision making. Children who have yet to learn control of their emotions when stressed need to be shown that rage and anger is not a strength or makes someone right. C: Challenge our cognitive biases. Biases are unconscious shortcuts that act before rational thought. They evolved to protect us to ensure our “Safety first” survival, but they often distort judgment and lead to poor decisions. They feel true even when they are false. Bias weakens critical thinking, polarizes people, and erodes humanity. There are over 100 documented biases. Your best decisions, behaviours and habits emerge when your emotional instincts, intuitive insights and rational analysis work in harmony.

3	Personality 	Every brain is unique. While the way we store information is broadly similar, what we store differs profoundly, shaped by our individual experiences. These experiences sculpt the brain over time, creating distinct neural maps—reflected in our strengths, preferences, and learning gaps. Understanding our behaviour, personality preferences, and traits is therefore fundamental to effective decision-making and meaningful relationships. Explore the BRAIN snapshot and identify your colour to reveal your behavioural preferences. Before children identify their personality profile, it is recommended that the teacher take them through the terms and meanings of each category. Children tend to think that everyone thinks like them so the first step is to show how we all think differently and that is OK. It is also the reason we sometimes have conflict with our friends. We get along with ease with people who think and look like us but we learn more when we network and connect with different people.
4	Social media hijacks 	Social media for young people should be restricted to an appropriate level in regard to what they are exposed to and the time they spend on-screens. This is about building digital literacy for navigating the continuous flow of information. Not all information is grounded in truth or real. The click bait distractions provide a dopamine hit for a child and can be addictive. Children need to be taught boundaries and self regulation around its use. How to filter the continuous information on-line and how to identify mis and disinformation and create antidotes to achieve constructive outcomes. The advance of AI has brought opportunities to access information on social media and the internet at large but it also comes with risks we need to manage. How to use AI in a smart empowering way as a tool to make our life easier and more effective without losing our ability to empathize, make reasoned decisions and not lose the benefits of our humanity.
5	Habits. 	Sustainable change begins with a single, intentional act—repeated until it becomes instinctive. Lasting habits are not forged through bursts of effort, but through the quiet discipline of small, consistent actions that gradually rewire the brain. In this process, consistency outweighs intensity; meaningful transformation occurs one step at a time. As each behaviour becomes embedded, another can be gently added, building momentum without overwhelm. The path to success does not depend on fleeting motivation or sheer willpower. Rather, it is shaped by thoughtful design—clear prompts, purposeful actions, and reinforcing rewards that guide behaviour and make progress both natural and enduring.

References: Drawings and scenario's by Chat GPT

Introductory module

To develop critical thinking in young people, there are early building blocks that act as the foundation platform to build early skills, habits and mindsets. Teaching young people to recognise an emotion, regulate their emotion, differentiate between real and fake, remain open to learning by being curious, the role of fast and slow thinking and recognise that AI can change what is real or true, are some of the building blocks.

Young people have a superpower to choose how they think and with practice can rewire the brain to develop critical thinking habits. Neuroplasticity is the brain's ability to rewire. Our attention, emotion, mindset and behaviours changes the brain each day.

The brain also has two special helpers. The first helper is very fast. It watches for danger and exciting things. It helps you jump out of the way of a moving bike or feel happy when you see someone you love. It moves into action when you see a snake, protecting you by allowing you to jump out of the way before you have had time to think.

But this fast helper sometimes guesses too quickly. It might think something is scary when it is not or think it already knows the answer without checking.

The second helper is the thinking helper. This helper asks questions and looks for clues. It might say things like: Let's look again. What really happened? Is there another answer? What did I miss?

One way to help the brain practice good habits for critical thinking is to use the **4P Tool** to slow down thinking to check for evidence before a judgement or decision is made. This is, Pause, Probe, Prove and Position. Another is to practice using bunny thoughts not shark thoughts.

Early building blocks for critical thinking for KIDS:

- Inquire and wonder
- Real or fake
- Emotional regulation
- Pause and think before acting
- Identifying emotions
- AI can change what is real
- Fast and slow thinking
- Bunny and Shark thoughts
- Paying attention to notice the details
- Independent thinking in uncertainty (not learnt helplessness)

Using the ABC 4P model, an example of a scenario.

The Missing Teddy Story

Lily came into class crying. “Someone stole my teddy from my bag!” she said. “I know Max did it because he was near my bag at playtime and he was staring at me this morning before school.”

Mia wanted to yell at Max, but she stopped first. “Let’s find out what really happened,” Mia said. Mia slowed down her thinking to reflect on what made Lily so certain so quickly.

PAUSE - A: Ask better questions before you judge or act

“Why were you staring at me Max, said Lily, you looked angry this morning?” Max replied, I wasn’t looking at you, I was worried about what my mother was going to do when she found out I had lost another good hat. I was totally distracted. I am sorry I scared you.”

“Did anyone actually see Max take the teddy?” said Mia. “What else do we know?” said the teacher. No one had seen anything so the teacher suggested they have a look together.

The teacher helped the children look carefully to search for Lily’s teddy. They noticed the classroom window was open and the curtain has blown out the window. Then Mia spotted fluffy teddy fur near the reading corner.

Max looked worried. “I didn’t take it,” he said quietly. “I was looking for my hat.” Mia remembered Max was usually kind and helpful.

PROBE - B: Balance feelings and facts

Mia liked Max, but she still wanted proof. Lily didn’t trust Max because he had small eyes but she knew this did not mean he took her teddy. She could now see that teddy had fallen out of Lily’s bag when the wind blew the bag over.

PROOF – C: Challenge bias and find real evidence.

“See,” Mia said, “We needed to check before blaming someone.” It is clear that the wind is the issue here. They now saw other things which had blown over. Lily smiled at Max. “Sorry I blamed you. I thought you were lying because you look like my neighbour who has been stealing our mail each day. Just because you look like him does not make you act like him.

POSITION – (change your thinking when new facts appear). Mia thought about what she learned.

The class also learned an important lesson: Good thinkers do not guess first. They pause to ask questions, probe for the detail and big picture, look for evidence so they have proof, and then take a position to decide. They have all learnt to slow down their thinking before they act or judge.



MODULE 1

Know Your Brain

This module provides a focus on the key principles of how your brain works, including Safety First and the ongoing interaction between Unconscious and Conscious processing.

Module 1: Know your brain

Objective/bottom line: Your brain has two helpers, fast thinking and slow thinking and you are in control.

Learning intent	Success criteria (Look fors)	What you want them to know (content)	What you want them to do (Application)
There are two types of thinking, slow and fast. Fast and slow thinking both have a purpose. You are in control of your brain power.	Slow down thinking for better decisions. Learn self control to gain your power.	You are in control of your superpower Your brain is the most amazing machine in the universe that we know about. It weighs about as much as a small pineapple, yet it lets you run, laugh, solve puzzles, remember friends, and imagine things that have never existed before. Inside your brain are billions of tiny cells called neurons. They send messages to each other so fast that they can help you catch a	Fast and slow thinking What is your first reaction to this sign? How could this sign be misinterpreted? Why?

ball or recognize your best friend in a split second.

Your brain also has two special helpers.

The first helper is very fast. It watches for danger and exciting things. It helps you jump out of the way of a moving bike or feel happy when you see someone you love. It moves into action when you see a snake, protecting you by jumping you out of the way.

But this fast helper sometimes guesses too quickly. It might think something is scary when it is not or think it already knows the answer without checking.

The second helper is the thinking helper. This helper asks questions and looks for clues. It might say things like:

Let's look again.

What really happened?

Is there another answer?

Is this fake or real?

Here is something cool about your brain.

Every time you learn something new or practice a skill, the connections between brain cells get stronger. Your brain is building new pathways.



See picture below. How could this sign be confusing? Why?

If you slow down your thinking you may see things that you missed.



Activity: Fast thinking is not always the full picture

	That means every time you think carefully, solve a problem, or check the facts, your brain becomes stronger. So, remember something very important. Your brain has fast safety helpers and thinking checking helpers. But you are the boss of your brain. And the best brain bosses always think for a moment before deciding what to say or do. You have a super power and that is think before you act. You are in control. When you are stressed, you are unable to use your superpower very well. Use this conversation framework with students who have made an error to teach them to slow down their reactions and respond in a more productive way.	Sometimes what we notice is not always the full picture. Let me explain. What do you see in this picture in the first couple of seconds? Now have a longer look and see if you can see the face and the vase.  Some people see a face and say it is a face. Some people see a vase and argue it is a vase. Why? When you see a face it is your brain's facial recognition area that is active. When you see a vase it is your brain's object recognition area that is active. Scenario 1: Slow and fast thinking Luca saw the shiny red button on the kitchen bench. Mum had said, "Don't touch," but it looked important—maybe it made something fun happen. Before his brain could catch up, his finger pressed it. The blender roared to life. Smoothie splashed everywhere—on the walls, the floor, even Luca's face. He froze, eyes wide, heart racing. Mum rushed in. "Luca! What happened?" "I just... I didn't think," he whispered. Mum knelt beside him. "That's okay. Your brain went too fast. Next time, let's use slow thinking—pause, ask, check first and consider an action." Luca nodded, wiping strawberry from his
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		I have the power to choose. I will rewire my brain with practice. R React: How did you react? E Emotion: How did you feel? What did you fear? (show empathy) W Wise: Was the consequence helpful? Did you pause to check the facts? I Improve: What is a better way to respond? R Reflect: What are you going to do? (Ownership) E Encourage: How can I support that decision? We aim to take responsibility for our actions. Choose a more reasoned response rather than a faster instinctive reaction.	cheek. Next time, he told himself, I'll stop... and think. If Luca had used the 4P Tool what would he be thinking and what would be different? The 4P Tool Pause: Stop, reflect and ask questions Probe: Notice the detail and the big picture. Prove: Identify the evidence. Separate fact from opinion. Position: Take a view or action.
Understand how emotion can work with your superpower.	Be able to name an emotion. Name the emotion to calm yourself for clarity of thought.	What is an emotion? First, we need to know the range of emotions. You will experience many emotions and they are all a part of growing up. There are six emotions people show no matter what country they come from. These are called universal emotions. • Joy • Fear • Anger • Disgust • Surprise • Sad Emotions are quick to reveal themselves. These basic emotions can transform into feelings and set your mood. There are	Draw a weather poster (to show feelings) Draw up a table showing 8 different emotions/feelings using the weather to find a symbol for each mood. For example: Happy = sunshine Angry = storm Awe = snow 

		hundreds of feelings. You may feel tired, disappointed, excited or inspired. The feelings that make it easier to think clearly and put us in the right state for learnings are listed below. Notice they are all positive emotions. When did you last have these feelings: 1. Hope 2. Delight 3. Interested 4. Curious 5. Awe 6. Grateful 7. Hope 8. Awe 9. Pride 10. Joy 11. Love 12. Compassion What do they feel like? There is no bad or good emotions. They all have a purpose. These feelings help prepare you for what is happening and can help you make decisions. Sometimes you need to listen to your emotions and then consider what is real before you make a decision or take action. This calls for blending your emotion with	Name three ways you can switch from fear, anger or tired to feeling more inspired. Learning readiness When you start a lesson you need to be learning ready. If you are stressed or too tired you are not going to be able to use your critical thinking powers. Next time you are learning, say how you feel out loud and take three deep breaths. Inhale in your thinking power and exhale longer breaths to allow the stress to flow out. Now you may be able to use your critical thinking powers. Match the picture with the feeling/emotion Look at the pictures of people's faces. Match them with the correct feeling or emotion. Assess if these are emotions or feelings (Teacher the difference between an emotion and a feeling) • Joy • Anger • Tired • Inspired • Fear • Surprise • Humiliated
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		logic. Logic refers to the facts – what is true and feelings relate to your mood.	
	Balance emotion and logic when making judgements.	Emotion and logic for judgments When you are swimming and you see a shark in the distance you automatically get out of the water before you stop to think. This is your fast brain helping you make a good decision to keep you safe. When you meet a new friend and you notice that they have eyes like a person you don't like or can't trust, you decide from the first moment that they are not to be trusted. This is your fast brain getting in the way of an opportunity. In this later situation, you need to call on your slow brain and ask yourself is there evidence that shows that the new friend can't be trusted. This is where your slow brain is helpful.	Using fast and slow brain for making decisions Answer, fast, slow or both brains to the following situations to show which brain (fast or slow) is dominant: 1. I step out of the way of a snake before I think. 2. I decide I don't like someone I met today because they sound like a person who was mean to me years ago. 3. I see smoke coming out of the kitchen window and I call the fire brigade. 4. I am playing chess with a friend. 5. I read a nasty rumor about a teacher on social media and post back a like.

			6. I see a person who has different coloured skin from me and I am frightened. Using emotion and logic for thinking Think about a time you have used emotions and logic to make a decision. • Name a time you got so angry you made a bad decision. • Name a time you made a decision based on facts but ignored what your emotion was trying to tell you. • Name a time when you used both emotion and logic to make a very good decision. • Name a time when you only used logic and put how you felt aside to make a good decision. All of these combinations have a role in decision making. It is about knowing the balance at the right time.
Emotional regulation is essential for critical thinking.	You can regulate your emotions and calm yourself. You have the power over your brain to change mood.	Emotional regulation Sometimes we get overemotional and in this heightened state, you use a lot of brain energy. When we are overexcited or over stressed, we find it hard to think straight. So, we need to find ways to calm ourselves. When you are stressed our thinking gets cloudy or stuck and we don't make very good decisions. When you are feeling angry or stressed you have the power to calm yourself. In fact, you can't use	Calming strategies Look at the following ways you can choose to calm yourself when you are feeling stressed. Choose which one you would like to try. Remember you have the power to calm myself. • Three long slow breaths: Breath in for 4, and out for 6. • Listen to music that relaxes me. • Watch a fish tank and think about three things I am grateful for.

		your thinking brain well unless you are calm. In order to problem solve or see another person's point of view we need to be calm.	• Hug a warm furry ball of cuteness - puppy, kitten or soft toy • Craft activity to use all my senses (sight, smell, touch and sound). • Hold a superman or superwomen pose for 15 seconds. • Try a clapping routine with a friend
Understand that empathy is an important emotion for developing critical thinking skills	Show empathy towards others.	Empathy is an important feeling to help us mature as a critical thinker Empathy is our ability to understand how another person is feeling. We may notice that someone is upset or sad so we are respectful of their feelings. We show we care and we try to see it from their point of view if we can. Empathy doesn't always mean we agree with that person, it shows that we care about what they are feeling and understand why they are feeling that particular way. If we can empathise, we are better able to practice critical thinking because we are pausing to reflect on how situations impact on others, not just ourselves. Slowing down our thinking improves our ability to empathise. When we empathise, we are more likely to learn how someone else feels and why. We may find that the other person was right all along.	Scenario 2: How did Tom show empathy Tom found his friend Jack sitting alone at lunch, staring at the ground. "Hey, what's wrong?" Tom asked softly. Jack shrugged. "I forgot my homework because I stayed at my Aunties house last night. The teacher will be upset." Tom sat beside him. "Everyone forgets sometimes." Jack looked up a little. "Really?" "Yeah," Tom smiled. "I forgot mine last week. Want me to help you do your homework now?" Jack nodded, feeling better. Tom shared his sandwich and said, "We're a team, okay?" Jack smiled for the first time that day. How did Tom show empathy? Answer: Tom noticed Jack was upset. Tom enquired to what was wrong. Tom listened. Tom commented how he had a similar experience and that is was a common issue. Tom offered to help. Tom offered his friendship and company. Tom showed he understood why he was worried.

			Scenario 3: How to show empathy At recess, Tracey saw Sam sitting alone and thought, “He’s rude. He never plays with us.” She was about to walk away, but her teacher’s words popped into her head: Pause, Probe, Prove, Position. <i>Tracey</i> slowed down. “Hey Sam, do you want to play?” Sam shook his head. “I’d like to... but I’m still learning English. I don’t always understand the rules.” Tracey paused. Her first thought had been wrong. “Oh! I can show you,” she said kindly. Soon, they were laughing together on the field. Tracey realised that when she stopped and questioned her first thought, she understood Sam better. And when she understood him, it was easier to be kind. Activity 1. Think of one thing you did today that you are proud of. 2. Think of three things that you are grateful for?
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MODULE 2

ABC Critical Thinking

"Critical Thinking provides a pathway to build the capacity for optimal decision making, and assessing social media and AI for accuracy, bias, relevance, and risk" - Judy Newman.

Module 2: Some information is **real and some is fake**. (ABC framework)

Objective/bottom line: We need to be able to tell the difference between what is real and what is fake.

Learning intent	Success criteria	What you want them to know (Content)	What you want them to do (Application)
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Not all information you read or hear is true.	Know the difference between real and fake.	Real or fake What is the difference between the words true and untrue. Asking questions and remaining open to learning will help spot the difference between a truth and a lie or real or fake. Fake means not real. It is not genuine or it is an imitation. For example, the modern water bottle is fake in this photograph as plastic bottles were not made in 1880 and the man is wearing an iwatch. As you learn about the world it is good to be curious and ask questions before you decide to do something or believe everything. To avoid the fake, slow your brain down. It is your brain's natural instinct to keep you safe so it likes to make fast decisions. The red brain is fast and keeps you safe. This is helpful when you have to run away from a tiger but there are not many tigers hanging around anymore. You find your superpower by slowing your brain down because the green brain is where your problem solving and better thinking is found.	Game (to learn true or false) Say true or false. Snakes live in Australia. A day is 24 hours long. Earth has two moons. The Opera House is in Sydney. Brisbane is in South Australia. Some fish can fly. Boys are smarter than girls. Mammals feed their babies milk. Cars come in a lot of colours. Picture: (To learn fake or real) Study the series of pictures taken in 1880 (one example given here). Can you spot anything that might indicate that this picture is fake. How do you know?  Stop light activity
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		Is it real or fake? 	Name one time you used your red and green brain. What did you do in your yellow brain to calm yourself so you could problem-solve and be more logical in your thinking?
Inquire and wonder Bias can distort truth.	Ask questions Understand the concept of bias.	Teach the value of curiosity and wonder. Questions come before answers. When you hear something ask yourself, is there something missing? Do I need more information? Can I learn more? Is it true? What questions do I need to ask? Remain curious. Reducing bias Sometimes our thinking gets confused. Our super power will help us detect clues when this may happen. This is called bias and bias is like kryptonite for superman. A bias is when our beliefs are incorrect because of what we have learnt in the past. As we grow older we keep	Activity to experience inquire and wonder Show a picture of people in the street. Ask, what do you think happens next? What makes you think that? Is your answer the same as your classmates? TEST your bias Read the following table and work out where the Z goes. Top or bottom? AEFHIKLMNTVWXY BCDGJOPQRSU Answer: The top as Z uses straight lines not curves. This is an example of the ‘adult bias or the overthinking bias’ named so because as we gain more experience we tend to over think things. Young people often solve it faster than

		learning and try to reduce bias in our thinking. These are some simple rules to help you avoid bias. 1. Stop and pause: Don't react instantly. 2. Ask real or fake?: Could this be made up or changed? 3. Look for the source. Who made this and can they be trusted. 4. Check with a grown up if uncertain. 5. Notice feelings. Is this trying to make me feel something strong? 6. Don't believe everything you see. Pictures, headlines and statements can be shown out of context. 7. Ask what is missing. 8. Be kind and fair when making judgements. 9. Look with open eyes not just for what you want to see. 10. Are my beliefs distorting how I see this?	adults because they are learning the letters and don't overthink things. Scenario 4 (showing confirmation bias) Lily saw a big dog at the park and felt scared. "Dogs are mean," she thought. The next day, she only noticed dogs that barked or jumped. "See! I was right," she said. But she didn't notice the quiet dog sitting gently beside a boy, or the wagging tail of a friendly puppy. One day, her friend Sam said, "Let's watch carefully." They sat and looked at <i>all</i> the dogs. Lily saw some loud dogs—but also many calm, kind ones. "Oh," Lily said, "I was only looking for dogs that proved my idea." Sam smiled. "That's called a bias. Your brain was picking what it wanted to see." Lily nodded. "Next time, I'll look for <i>all</i> the clues—not just the ones that match my thoughts." 10 question activity Work through the 10 questions after reading a social media story that is of high interest. Teach the terms in the questions.
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Seeing another perspective will help understand view points and reduce errors.	Being able to listen and understand other points of view before they judge.	What is critical thinking? Critical thinking means using your brain to think carefully about things. It helps you work out what is true and what might not be true. A good thinker doesn't guess or rush. They stop, look, and ask questions like: "Is this real?" or "How do I know?" They take their time before deciding. Using early cognitive verbs Use the mystery bag detective activity to teach the verbs. Name: What is this called? Notice: What did you see? What do you feel? What details do you notice? What is its purpose? Describe: Tell me about it? Explain: Why do you think that? Sort: Can you group these? Compare: How are these the same or different? Question: What questions do you have? Choose: Which one do you pick? Check: Is that right and how do you know? Seeing perspectives Sometimes we think that everyone thinks like us. Sometimes there are several views about the same thing. This is called viewing all the perspectives. When we can see another person's point of view, we may better understand what is happening and look upon the situation with less bias and more empathy.	Mystery Bag Detectives Place several items in a box or bag. Ask a student to put their hand in and describe what they think is there. Is it soft or hard, big or small. Describe the item to class. The class then asks yes and no questions only. The class is then invited to predict what the objects may be. I think it is abecause it Reveal the contents. Ask the class what was different and the same as their guesses. How do you know this? What clues helped us? Role reversal (To teach perspective taking) You are watching a football game. One player Simon, whispers something in the ear of another player, Andrew and that Andrew pushes him in anger. The referee immediately sends Andrew off the field and suspends him from playing the rest of the game. Andrew's Mum is watching and she knows that Andrew is being called stupid by Simon and Simon has been spreading disrespectful rumors about his mother. Mrs. Smith is watching and she
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		Pay attention to notice evidence Observe before deciding Notice the details and don't assume you know in the first few seconds. Teach children to look carefully, describe what you see and separate what you see vs what you think. Separate opinion from facts.	notices attempts to tell the referee that she doesn't agree with fighting but Andrew is usually a very well behaved and mature students. The other boy has been suspended from school several times for fighting. What would you be feeling and thinking if you were: The mother Andrew, Simon Teacher Referee Pictures and questions A Is this a toy that should be sold here? What makes you say that? Talk about how we judge very quickly and it is not always correct. B Do you love this fluffy kitten on the soap. Does that make it good soap? What makes you say that? Talk about sometimes how we feel about something will effect our decisions. C What do you know about a good lunch box? What makes you say that? Talk about it would depend on what we believe a good food is. Is it something healthful or tasty. Chinese whispers (teaching check the source) Ask the children to line up. Wisper in the ear of the first child "Three mice who lived in a large house, ran to the pantry to search for a block of cheese and found nothing but rice and canned food." Ask each child to whisper the story into the ear of the next child. Once it is carried all the way to the end, invite the last child to tell the story to the class out
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loud. Does the final words match the original message or has it changed significantly as it was passed along.

Guess what game (teaching it is good to ask questions)
Find a collection of unusual objects. Pull them out of a bag and ask “What could this be?” Why do you think that?”

Flash cards

Picture of groups of people

In judging bias we often ask ourselves questions. Show a series of pictures of groups of people and ask:
Is the women in the hat helping or frightened?
Is the boy playing or stealing?
Is the man lazy or being careful?

What are these

Picture	Name & Use
	Bug Vacuum: Used to catch and safely remove insects.
	Shoe Sandal: A shoe turned into a sandal. A fashion novelty.
	UFO Detector: Detects potential UFO activity. (For UFO enthusiasts!)

Critical thinking takes independence, problem solving and flexible thinking.	A child moves away from learnt helplessness and does not follow a friend blindly.	Building confidence for critical thinking Young children have difficulty with coping with changes, moving on from a mishap, switching focus, seeing something from someone else's perspective. Encourage problem solving, play based learning, independent thinking starters, exploration of new experiences and perspective taking. Students need to be given the opportunity to learn to think for themselves in a very supportive caring setting. Don't allow kids to fall into the learnt helplessness habit. Some students will need more support and scaffolding than others. When a child is dependent and stuck When a child continually comes to you to save them from the same problem, they are playing small because they fear failure. They are looking to the adult for strength. This is necessary at times but sometimes it robs the child of their own learning and critical thinking development. The professional teacher will know the difference. Repeated cycles of being saved may lead to learnt helplessness. These are some things you could try to make them more independent critical thinkers. Try asking questions before you do it for them. • Listen to the problem and say what they could you try?	Change the ending to a familiar story (Teaching flexible thinking) Choose one story you know and tell the story with a different ending. The ugly duckling Three little pigs A story of your own. Scenario 6 (Teaching a flexible and growth mindset) You have had a setback. You have lost your pocket money. Question and encourage students to keep a flexible mindset. Where is the opportunity here? What if..... What could you seek feedback on so it doesn't happen again. How could you embrace that mistake and learn from it? Scenario 5 (Teaching a flexible and growth mindset) A teacher is away for a few days and the class has a temporary teacher. The routine changes unexpectedly. The students are unsettled. Explain to students what flexible thinking is and why it is important to be able to adjust and change thinking. Promote bunny thoughts for a growth mindset. Help students reframe a negative experiences.
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		• What do you think will happen? • How can you help yourself? • What would your Dad do? • Could there be more than one reason? • How could we work together to solve this? • What else could you do? • What are you going to do? • How did you do it last time?	
A learning mindset is important to critical thinking	Students can use bunny thoughts and are thoughtful and fair.	Shark thoughts and bunny thoughts Adopting bunny thoughts, not shark thoughts, will be very helpful to you. Bunny thoughts will help bring you more joy and help build your critical thinking skills. Shark thoughts <i>Is your thinking unhelpful?</i> I know everything. I pretend I understand. Asking questions is shameful. My beliefs are the only way. I choose to be negative. I believe everything I hear and read. 	Venn diagram (To teach bunny and shark thoughts) Draw a Venn diagram on your paper. Draw a shark on the left side and a bunny on the right side. In the middle section write a problem you have. Fill in the Venn diagram to show the difference between the way a shark thinks and the way the bunny thinks. View the phrases (to teach bunny and shark mindset) Identify which is a bunny thought and which one is shark thought. What were the clues? 1. I can learn and get smarter. (Bunny) 2. I know everything. (Shark) 3. I am always right (Shark) 4. I will never be good at that (Shark) 5. Errors are part of learning (Bunny) 6. I choose to have a go (Bunny) 7. I believe everything I read (Shark) 8. I check if something is correct (Bunny) 9. I believe everything I see (Shark) 10. I ask an adult if I am unsure (Bunny) Question

		Bunny thoughts Is your thinking helpful? I choose to be positive. I am curious and ask questions. I am open to the possibilities. I get smarter every time I learn something new. I look for facts. 	What is something you are finding really hard to do? How will you approach this difficult task if you were a shark or bunny? What would the bunny say? What would the shark say?
Attention is required before cognition is deepened.	Can pay attention to notice what is going on to recall a more accurate detailed picture without bias.	Pay attention We only remember what we pay attention to. It is amazing what we don't notice. This is a normal part of the way our brain works. The brain filters out much of what we see and hear so we need to focus on what is important at the time. We can practice our focus to improve our attention skills.	What was he wearing activity, to teach attention Organise for another teacher to come into the class, dressed in some interesting ways and talk to you about a private matter. Ask the students for a few minutes and to go on with their work. When the visitor exits. Ask the students to describe what he was wearing. Write down a list for all to see. This shows how easy it is to miss something when it was right in front of you only a minute ago. We often miss the detail Watch the video: "how many times did the ball get passed to the people in the white T shirts". What did you notice? What does this show? (put link of video here)/ Court case activity A boy who is 10 is a witness to a car accident. Luckily no one was hurt but the owners of the cars that were badly damaged

			are arguing over money matters. They are blaming each other and the fight has ended up in court. The witnesses are called and asked what did you see just before the cars crashed. This is what they said. 10 year old boy: The big car was blue the same colour as my Dads. I helped a dog that was frightened and can't remember anything else. Adult 1: The big car was light blue and the small car was white. There was two dogs in the blue car which took right away off the small car. Adult 2: The light green car was at fault. He was going too slow. I can't remember the other colour of the car but the number plate was zxc 123. What is wrong with this picture? How could this be? How close were they to the scene? Would they each tell the truth? Have they any loyalty or friendships or grudges against either driver? Did they make reports immediately or was it some time ago? Did they see it first hand?
Know the difference between relevance or irrelevant information.	Can identify relevant and irrelevant information	Knowing how to identify relevant information and irrelevant information in a blog or picture or conversation will help you find bias. Relevancy is a filter. Once we know what is relevant, we can put aside the other information and narrow our focus.	What if game: Imagine you are going to be a TV show and you and your parents are going to an island. On the island is fresh water, trees, and rabbits. The ocean and reef surrounds the island. If you could take only three things what would you take with you: Why? Compare your response with others. Fresh water Pillow

			Fishing line Tent Knife Torch Teddy bear Books Pen and paper Dried food Plastic sheet 
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MODULE 3

Personality

Personality is your brain's behavioral preferences. It's how you show up. It's your thinking style. Assess your preferences using Your Personality Snapshot Color.

Module 3: Personality

Objective/bottom line: We all have different behaviour preferences.

Learning intent Be able to:	Success criteria (Look fors)	What you want them to know (Content)	What you want them to do (Application)
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We all have different behaviour preferences based on our traits and learnt behaviours.

Identify their own behaviour preferences

Everyone is a little bit different—and that’s a wonderful thing! Some children love to talk and play with lots of friends. Others like quiet time and thinking. Some like to be the leader. Others like to help and care for people. Some like plans and order. Others like surprises and new ideas. These are called our **personality traits**—they help explain how we like to think, feel, and act. There is no “best” way to be. All types are important! When we understand that people are different, we can be kinder. If a friend is quiet, we can give them space. If someone is excited and loud, we can understand they are just full of energy. Knowing about our differences helps us get along, work together, and be good friends. Understanding our own behaviour preferences makes us better critical thinkers.

Explain the terms in the brain test

For young students the terms will need to be broken down and taught. Give students the opportunity to ask questions before they do the test. Give examples.

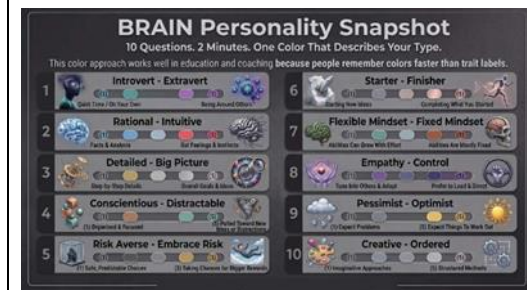
10 Personality preferences

Extrovert

You get energy from being with people. You enjoy talking, playing games, and being around lots of friends.

Use the link on line to complete the brain test.

Identify your colour



10 Questions in 2 minutes
One Colour that describes your type.

How to answer

For each question, choose:

1=strongly prefer the first option

3=in the middle

5=strongly prefer the second option

Your score

Add your 10 answers. Total the scores.

Your BRAIN colour

10-20 Blue The Architect

21-30 Purple The Connector

		Introvert You get energy from quiet time or being by yourself. You like calm spaces and spending time with one or two close friends.	31-40 Yellow The Visionary 41-50 Red The Spark Blue You lean toward structure, accuracy and reliability. You can over focus on safety and details and miss new opportunities.
		Detailed You notice little things that other people might miss. You like step-by-step instructions and paying attention to facts. Big Picture You think about the whole idea instead of tiny details. You notice the mood, feelings, colours, and vibes before facts.	Purple You balance thinking styles and adapt to people and situations. You can hesitate or delay decisions when multiple options feel equally valid. Yellow You are driven by ideas, curiosity and possibilities. You may start more than you finish or lose interest once structure is needed.
		Conscientious You are organised, careful, and try to finish your work. You stay focused and like doing your best. Distractable New ideas, sounds, or fun things can easily pull your attention away. You may jump from one thing to another quickly.	Red You move fast, take action and push things forward. You can overlook details, risks or other people's input.
		Risk Averse You like safe and predictable choices. You think carefully before trying something new. Embrace Risk You enjoy trying new things and taking chances. You are willing to be brave for a bigger reward or adventure.	Every brain map is different activity Give each learner a paper doll cut out. Provide a range of craft items, glue and colour pens. Ask a question about what they like and don't like and each time it applied to their individual preference, they add the following item to their doll. After the

		Starter You love beginning new ideas, games, or projects. Starting exciting things makes you happy. Finisher You like completing jobs and seeing things through to the end. You feel proud when something is finished.	activity the students will see that each doll is very different, both in personality preferences, talents, skills, knowledge and what was chosen to decorate them. This is a symbol to show that we all have very different brains and that is OK. Display all the dolls on the wall.
		Flexible Mindset You believe your brain can grow stronger when you practise, learn, and keep trying. Mistakes help you improve. Fixed Mindset You may believe people are either “good at something” or not. You might think abilities cannot change very much.	1. You play a musical instrument. If so, add a necklace. 2. You love puppies and kittens. If so, add a pair of glasses. 3. You can speak a second language. If so, add shirt. 4. You can do a hand stand. If so, add a pair of shoes. 5. You have travelled to another country. If so, add a pair of earrings or sunglasses. 6. You love maths. If so, add a pair of trousers. 7. You have more than six living in your home. If so, add an apron or helmet. 8. You like to sing. If so, add some buttons. 9. You play a sport in a team each weekend. If so, add a hat. 10. You don't like fried food. If so, add a hair style. 11. You love vegetables. If so, add a belt. 12. You can play chess. If so, add a ring. 13. You like some time on your own. If so, add a tattoo.
		Empathy You notice how other people are feeling and care about their emotions. You try to help others feel included and happy. Control You like leading, making decisions, and helping organise people. You enjoy taking charge and getting things done.	
		Pessimist You often expect problems or think things might go wrong. You may notice the bad side first. You worry about things. Optimist	

		You usually expect good things to happen. You look for the bright side and believe things can work out.	14. You read a book each month. If so, add a bag. 15. You don't like small spaces such as a lift. If so, add a watch.
		Creative You enjoy using your imagination and trying new ways of doing things. You like drawing, inventing, storytelling, or freestyle ideas. Ordered You like routines, structure, and clear steps. You enjoy knowing the plan and keeping things neat and organised.	Decorate your doll with felt, colours and sparkles to finish it and pin it on the wall.



MODULE 4

Social Media Hijacks

SOCIAL MEDIA ALGORITHMS HIJACK YOUR BRAIN. They target brain networks that evolved to keep you safe and interested, not to keep you wise. They reward quick reactions over careful thought.

Module 4: Social media hijacks

Objective/bottom line: Using social media needs your superpower.

Learning intent Be able to:	Success criteria (Look for)	What you want them to know (Content)	What you want them to do (Application)
Pause before you post when using social media	They will know when to stop, check or share. Make time for play and sport and limiting time on social media.	Pause before you post Pause before you post. You don't have to write or say everything that comes into your head. You also need to consider the impact of what you say on other's feelings. Check if what you post is true. Question how you know that. Check if what you are reading is real or not.	Create a simple slide game with colourful "posts" (pictures, messages, emojis). Each slide shows something a child might see online: • A silly rumour ("School is closed forever!") • A kind message ("You did great today!") • A mean comment • A "Click here to win a puppy!" ad • A caring lesson: Look after our dogs and cats. • An unrealistic statement: Free lollies at tuckshop tomorrow • A scary post: Come to my house for a party, no adults here

Be comfortable with uncertainty.

Sometimes things online or around us can feel confusing, unsafe or a bit uncomfortable—and that is something you can problem solve. You can take a deep breath, pause, and tell a safe grown-up how you feel. Ask questions like, “Is this real?” or “What does this mean?” or Is this safe for me? It’s okay not to know everything right away. Your brain is learning.

Each time you stay calm and curious, you get braver. Being a little uncomfortable can help you grow stronger and help us learn.

- A scary post: Give me your home address

Children vote using traffic light reactions:

-  Stop
-  Check
-  Share

Maybe Meter (Teaching comfort in discomfort)

Place a scale on the wall including True, Maybe, Not sure, Not safe and False. Present statements with incomplete information . Student stand where they think the statement belongs. Discuss why it is OK to say I don’t know, I haven’t learnt that yet or I am unsure so far. Resist the urge to rush in to certainty and tolerate the discomfort of slowing down and being uncertain. Try these:

- The earth is flat
- A tidal wave will hit your local coast tomorrow
- Your best friend is a bully
- All people kind and you can trust them
- It is no OK to get in a car with a stranger
- All our clocks will explode tomorrow at 2pm
- You can give me your private address and phone number
- You have won \$1000. I will need your bank account details.

Critical thinking and AI

Objective/bottom line: Understand the risks and benefits of AI.

Learning intent Be able to:	Success criteria (Look fors)	What you want them to know (Content)	What you want them to do (Application)
See the risk of errors in using AI tools without smart practices. Know that some information generated by AI is not real.	They will not always believe everything instantly from AI. They will check.	AI can make errors AI is man made. It only has information fed into it by a human so it can make mistakes. If that material is incomplete, it can't answer you well. AI cannot feel like a person. It cannot empathise or care for you so we need to be careful with how we use it.	Pretend there is a very smart robot (AI) in the room. He can answer questions. Draw the robot and name him. Answer the following questions with "Sounds right or Let's check": Sounds right or Let's check. This is what the robot says: • Most birds can fly. • A bunny has big ears. • The sun comes out at night. • Dogs have six legs. • A cat barks. • A kitten is cute and fluffy. • A fish can swim on land. • A elephant can climb a tree. • A bear cub can climb a tree. Look at the following picture and story. Has this been produced by AI and how do you know?

			 Lioness saves a man This week a lioness, pictured on the left, stepped in front of a hyena who was about to attack a man at a tourist camp while he was having a meal around the camp fire. This photograph was taken of the lioness called Gloria at 9pm that night. She has been hand-reared. What is wrong with this story in the local newspaper.
	Students write their original ideas together and only use AI as a tool to improve it or extend ideas.	Don't outsource your thinking If you don't use your brain and invest effort in your thinking, focus and memory, your brain will not develop well and you will not be as smart. You can increase your IQ by exercising your intelligence but this takes thinking for yourself. Don't outsource all your thinking to AI. Learn how to use it to make things easier. AI is just a tool. AI can do amazing things Recent times has shown us that AI can help us problem solve disease, create robots, warn us about the coming	Which are the best things you can use AI for? • Check your spelling (Yes) • Correct your grammar (Yes) • Improve or extend my original work (Yes) • Draw me a diagram with the info I give it (yes) • Research a topic (yes) • Define terms (Yes) • Write my assignment (no) • Tell me the truth 100% of the time (no) • Be kind to my friend (no) • Know how I am feeling (no) • Do all my thinking for me (no) Story making (using original thought first and then AI to improve it) The teacher starts a story by giving this interesting opening to hook the attention of the class. "Once upon a time"

		storms and earth quakes and so much more.	Ask everyone in the class to continue the story by using a framework to build an engaging story. Put the finished story into AI and ask AI to polish, check grammar and make more engaging. Appreciating the hopeful opportunities with AI (teaching young people not to be scared of AI) Find a true story in your local community or country to show the advancement of AI and how it is problem solving an important issue or being helpful as a tool.
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MODULE 5

Habits

What you repeatedly do rewires your brain. Neurons that fire together wire together. The biggest gap in behavior change is between knowing and doing.

Module 5: Habits

Objective/bottom line: Create new and better habits one behaviour at a time.

Learning intent Be able to:	Success criteria (Look fors)	What you want them to know (Content)	What you want them to do (Application)
New habits take tiny steps so your brain can rewire.	Habits get easier as you practice.	What is a habit A habit is something you do repeatedly over time. The more you practice, the easier the habit becomes. Habits change your brain map. New habits take tiny steps Learning a new habit is like teaching your brain a new path. Imagine your habits are like a little track in the grass. The first time you walk on it, it's hard to see. But if you walk the same way every day, the path gets clearer and easier. We	Rate your habit for success The following activities develop new habits over time. Rate them out of 10 according to your skill set. 10 I am masterful. I have a superhighway in my brain. 8 -9 I am good at this because I have practiced. I have a bitumen road in my brain. 5 I am developing this habit. It is like a dirt track in my brain. 3 I am still learning and a little rusty. I have cow pathways in my brain.

		do this with tiny steps. Just one small step at a time. If you want to pack your school bag, start with one thing—putting your book inside. Do that every day. When it feels easy, add the next step. Each time you practice, your brain gets better and faster. It's like your brain is saying, "Oh, I know this way now!" You don't need to rush. Small steps + practice = strong habits. Over time, what was hard becomes easy—and your brain has learned something new! When you learn something new it may feel hard. It may even feel like you will never be able to do it. However, you will get there with practice over time. You are just not there yet. New habits takes persistence and consistency to rewire you brain.	1 I have never tried it. I have very little pathways for this habit in my brain. 1. Walking 2. Skipping 3. Playing the piano 4. Juggling 5. Exercising each day 6. Using the 4P Tool 7. Paying attention when learning 8. Noticing the small details 9. Packing your bag for school 10. Playing your nominated sport 11. Pausing before you judge 12. Pausing before you act 13. Checking if something is true 14. Use bunny thoughts 15. Being kind to your parents 16. Being respectful of your teacher 17. Being a good friend 18. Organising your school materials daily 19. Listening without interrupting 20. Being calm when stressed
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The bias bank

Bias	What it does	Example	Safety story	Antidote question	Micro action
Confirmation bias	You only see what supports your current belief.	You only watch clips that agree with your take on a school rumor.	I stay certain. I avoid the discomfort of being wrong.	What would change my mind?	List one credible sources that disagrees and read it first. Talk to someone who saw it.
Bandwagon effect	You copy what others do	You pile on a chat thread because everyone else is	If I do what the group does, I am protected in the group.	If everyone else was wrong would I still do it?	Pause before you post.
Authority bias	You over trust people who seem famous, powerful or expert.	An famous actor sells a product so it must be good.	If they know better I can stop thinking and feel safe.	What is the evidence to support their claim?	Check independent source before you buy.
Projection	Arguing against an issue because it unconsciously reflects something you fear or like yourself but maybe quite reasonable for another person.	You tell your friend they are stupid for dancing on stage at parade when everyone is watching.	You would feel embarrassed and lack the confidence to dance in front of people.	Is this about my fear or supporting my friend in what they are good at.	Don't project your own fears on others. Ask yourself show is this hurting?
Halo effect	One positive trait makes you assume other positives.	A popular athlete seems automatically smart and trustworthy.	I can decide fast and reduce uncertainty about people.	What evidence do I have for that specific trait?	Rate two traits separately.
Them and us bias	You favor people like you or are on 'your side'.	You excuse rude behaviour from your friends but not from others.	My group protects me and I owe them loyalty.	Would I judge this the same way if the roles were reversed.	Think of three reasons why the other side is not as equal or right before you take sides.
Availability bias	Vivid or real examples feel more common than they are.	A shark attack on your beach makes a rare shark bite more likely.	If I can picture it, I can prepare for it.	What do the statistics say about the frequency of attacks?	Reflect on the probability of a shark attack right now.
Negativity bias	One negative event outweighs several positives	A tourist died of heat stress in the desert on the news and it is on your mind.	Bad things might mean danger so I should focus there to keep safe.	What are three facts that show the full picture.	Think of the 20 desert walks you have experienced safely.

Anchoring bias	The first idea sticks and pulls your choices.	First friend that comes to you with a story about you and you believe it.	A starting point give me quick certainty.	What if I asked the person concerned what would they say.	Compare at least three options before deciding.
Sunk cost fallacy	You keep going because you've already invested time, money and effort.	You stay in a club you hate because you already joined.	Quitting feels like loss and failure so you avoid it at all costs.	If I could choose fresh what would I do?	Make decisions based on future value not past effort.
IKEA bias	Things you make yourself seem to have more value to you.	I broke my pottery cup I made and I am upset all day.	I can control what I have made and control makes me feel safe.	What are my options to get a similar cup?	Let go of emotional decisions when you can't do anything about it.
Social identify bias	Automatic associations can influence judgement without awareness	You assume someone is not smart because they have tiny eyes.	Fast categorizing feels efficient and safe but can be unfair.	What objective evidence am I using right now?	Replace labels with observed facts.