

LESSON PLAN 8

Early Years
Creative Problem Solvers

Lesson Plan 8.0: Early Years

Creative Problem Solvers

Lesson Title	Creative Problem Solvers – The Bridge Builders
Lesson Summary	This lesson explores the ways creativity helps with problem-solving. Students will be inspired by real-life stories of wish kids and their Make-A-Wish teams, who use creativity, imagination and teamwork to “make the impossible possible”.
Year Level	This lesson is for Early Years: Kinder, Prep & ELC
Lesson Duration	35-45 minutes
Learning Intention	• Learn how to use creativity to solve problems and work together in groups. • Learn about the wishes that Make-A-Wish grants. • Practice fine motor skills.
Evidence of Learning	By the end of the lesson, students will be able to: • Start to understand how to problem solve. • Reflect on their activity. • Start to demonstrate creativity by generating unique solutions to the problem scenario.
Assessment Criteria	• Participation: Students engage in group work. • Creativity: Thoughtfulness with problem-solving and crafting. • Reflection: Students start to understand the power of creativity and how they solved the problem together.
Things you will need	• Whiteboard • Blocks (wooden or plastic) OR recyclable items (boxes, tubes, cartons) • Toy animals, cars, or dolls • A “river” (blue fabric, paper, or tape on the floor) • Make-A-Wish video: <u>What is it like to be a Make-A-Wish volunteer? - YouTube</u>
Teacher Preparation Notes	• Ensure craft materials are ready and organised for the activity. • Allow students to share their ideas/perspectives but ensure that sharing is optional to maintain a safe and respectful environment. • Review the video for sensitive content: <u>What is it like to be a Make-A-Wish volunteer? - YouTube</u> • Teachers should adapt this lesson to meet the diverse needs of students, including those with varying abilities and those with Special Educational Needs (SEN).



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Creative Problem Solvers - Scripted

Introduction & Icebreaker (10 minutes)

"Hello, today we are going to talk about something very exciting, creativity and problem-solving! Can we say creativity together?"

"CREATIVITY"

"Great job everyone. Today we are going to be problem solvers and creative thinkers!"

"Sometimes we have problems, and we don't always know how to fix them, and that's okay! We can try different ideas, work together, and keep trying until we find something that works."

Introduction to Make-A-Wish Australia

"Who remembers learning about Make-A-Wish?" **(Pause, wait for responses)**

"As we know, Make-A-Wish gives special wishes to sick children. Some children have wished to be superheroes, and others have wanted to go on a trip to the snow, so the WishForce must work together and be creative problem solvers to make the wishes happen. There are over 800 people who help, and they are a very important part of Make-A-Wish."

Activity: Bridge Builders (20-25 minutes)

"Today, we are going to help solve a problem together using our amazing thinking brains!"

"Oh no! Look over here... our animals/dolls/toys are stuck on one side of the river, and they want to get across. But there's no bridge!"

"What can we do to help them?"



(Pause and allow children to respond.)

“We are going to work as a team to **build something** that helps the animals get across safely.”

“We can use different materials, and we can try as many ideas as we want! Let’s start building and testing our ideas!”

Remember:

- “We can try different ways”
- “We can work together”
- “It’s okay if it doesn’t work the first time!”

Notes:

- Let the children work together to craft a bridge.
- The toys need to get across; they can’t “swim” or “jump”.
- Encourage the use of different materials
- Try different ideas (stacking, lining up objects, balancing)
- Test their bridge with toys.

While children work, prompt with:

- “What could we try next?”
- “How can we make it stronger?”
- “Can we use something different?”

Encourage the use of materials such as glue, tape, etc.

If something doesn’t work:

“Hmm... it fell down. That’s okay!”

“What do you think we could change?”

“Should we try a new idea?”

End of activity:

Once the students have successfully built the bridge for the toys, let each child test sending a toy across.



Wrap-Up and Reflection (5 minutes)

“Wow, look at all your amazing thinking!”

“You:

- Tried new ideas
- Worked together
- Didn’t give up

“That’s what great problem solvers do!”

Ask:

- “What worked well?”
- “Did you enjoy working together?” (pause for answers)

“Today you were all fantastic creative thinkers!”

“Remember, when something feels tricky, you can:”

- Try again
- Think of a new idea
- Ask for help

“That’s how we work together to solve problems and achieve something great! Just like the team at Make-A-Wish makes wishes happen!”

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Creative Problem Solvers - Unscripted

Introduction & Icebreaker (8-10 minutes)

- Introduce the concepts of **creativity** and **problem-solving**.
- Discuss that creativity means coming up with new ideas.
- Explain that problems don't always have one answer.
- Reinforce that it's okay if solutions don't work the first time.
- Emphasise teamwork, trying different ideas, and asking for help.
- Encourage children to say and recognise the word *creativity*.

Introduction to Make-A-Wish Australia

- Highlight that Make-A-Wish gives special wishes to sick children.
- Some children have wished to be superheroes, and others have wanted to go on a trip to the snow
- The WishForce must work together and be creative problem solvers to make the wishes happen. Explain that there are over 800 people who help, and they are a very important part of Make-A-Wish.

Activity: Bridge Builders (25 minutes)

Set-Up

- Create a "river" using fabric, paper, or tape.
- Place toys (animals/dolls) on one side.
- Provide building materials (blocks or recyclables).

Introduce the Problem

- Present the scenario: toys need to cross the river, but there is no bridge.
- Invite children to share initial ideas.
- Explain that they will work together to solve the problem.

Exploration and Building

- Students work in a group to design and build a bridge.
- Use available materials freely.
- Test their ideas by attempting to move toys across.

Encourage

- Trying different approaches
- Sharing ideas and materials
- Experimenting without fear of failure.

Guided Support

Prompt children's thinking by asking:

- What could we try next?
- How can we make it stronger?
- Can we use something different?

If challenges arise:

- Support children to reflect on what happened.
- Encourage modifying or changing their design.
- Reinforce that mistakes are part of learning.

End of activity:

- Allow children to test their completed bridge.
- Ensure each child has the opportunity to participate.

Wrap Up and Reflection (5 minutes)

- Discuss the experience as a group:
 - Acknowledge effort, teamwork, and persistence.
 - Highlight that trying new ideas and not giving up are important.
- Reflection questions:



- Did they like working together?
 - What worked well?
- Remind students:
 - Being creative means trying different ideas.
 - Problems can be solved in many ways.
 - It is okay if something doesn't work straight away.
- We can:
 - Try again
 - Think of a new idea
 - Ask for help.