



IMAGINE Program

Teacher Guide

Creating change through art, imagination and empathy.





Teacher Guide

The program is inspired by the life-changing wishes granted by Make-A-Wish Australia and is designed to be age-appropriate, flexible and easy to deliver during early years. Lesson's introduce students to a Make-A-Wish story or theme in a gentle, hopeful way, then guides them through a practical creative activity that helps them express their ideas, emotions and understanding.

Teachers may deliver the full 8-lesson sequence over a term, select individual lessons that best suit their students, or adapt the activities as part of an existing visual arts, wellbeing, social-emotional learning or community action program. Each lesson is episodic, meaning schools do not need to complete every lesson for students to benefit.

The IMAGINE lesson plans support educators by including both scripted and unscripted options. Scripted introductions provide ready-to-use language for introducing themes such as empathy, resilience, kindness, imagination and problem-solving, while unscripted notes give teachers the flexibility to use their own voice and adjust the delivery for their students.

This makes the program suitable for different teaching styles, confidence levels and classroom contexts.

Recommended use: Teachers may use the full program as an 8-week classroom sequence, run selected lessons as stand-alone activities, or combine the creative projects into a school display, classroom showcase or IMAGINE Art Show.

Activities can be adapted for different ages, abilities and support needs, including students who may benefit from additional scaffolding, visual prompts, pre-cut templates, smaller group work or extra time for reflection.

Lesson Program Outline

Lesson	Focus/summary	Make-A-Wish story	Creative activity	Reflection
1. Empathy in Focus	Introduce/highlight the concept of empathy and introduce Make-A-Wish Australia.	Through the story of a Make-A-Wish Australia's wish child, students will reflect on emotions and develop an understanding of empathy.	K-2: Creating empathy glasses 3-4: Painting a world beyond my window	Reflect on how empathy can guide their actions in everyday life and in the classroom.
2. Building Hope	This lesson introduces students to the transformative power of hope. Students will explore the concept of hope and its role in overcoming challenges.	Draw inspiration from Make-A-Wish Australia's wish story and recognise the power of hope and positivity.	K-2: Creating a Hope Jar 3-4: Creating a Hope Lantern	Reflect on how hope can be used in everyday life and the classroom.

3. The Importance of Working Together	Students will be introduced to working collaboratively and how small acts of kindness can have a big impact, and how we can support each other.	Students will learn how Make-A-Wish work together to deliver wishes to critically ill children.	All ages: Decorating and creating a tree as a classroom.	Reflect on how working together in the classroom can be beneficial, and to recognise how each action can have a big impact.
4. Strengthening Our Resilience	This lesson introduces students to the concepts of strength and resilience. Students will reflect on how these qualities help them face challenges and identify sources of hope in their own lives.	Students will learn about the strength and hope through a wish story and see how it can be beneficial.	All ages: decorating and creating their own superhero resilience mask.	Reflect on inner strength and think about how the mask can be used during challenging moments.
5. The Art of Kindness	This lesson will explore the importance of kindness, and working together. Students will be introduced to the importance of kindness and how small acts of kindness can have a big impact in their community.	Learn about Clancy's wish and recognise the kindness and positivity shown in the wish.	All ages: Students to create their own patch of kindness for the kindness mural.	Reflect on how they can use acts of kindness in their classroom.

Learning Outcomes

- Children explore how imagination, colour, shape, symbols, stories and materials can help express ideas about kindness, courage, hope and empathy.
- Children make age-appropriate connections between Make-A-Wish Australia's mission and the idea that imagination, community and kindness can help bring joy to wish kids and families.
- Children participate in hands-on creative activities, including drawing, craft, collage, group making, storytelling and guided reflection.
- Children create individual or group projects that can be shared in the classroom, sent home to families or included in an optional IMAGINE Art Show, showcase or community display.
- Where a preschool, early learning centre or school chooses to extend the program, children may help share, display or celebrate their projects with families and the wider community.

Introducing Make-A-Wish Australia

Each lesson includes a short storytelling moment connected to the Make-A-Wish journey. Teachers can use approved Make-A-Wish Australia stories, videos or student-safe case studies to introduce the idea that every wish begins with imagination and is strengthened by community. Students are not asked to focus on illness or sadness; instead, they are guided to explore hope, courage, joy, possibility and the people who help make wishes possible.



Suggested narrative arc: Lessons begin with the idea that every wish starts with imagination. Children then explore simple themes such as empathy, kindness, courage, resilience, teamwork and hope through stories, discussion, movement, craft and hands-on creative activities. The program can end with classroom reflection and celebration, or be extended into an optional classroom display or IMAGINE Art Show.

Creative Outcomes: Classroom Projects and Optional IMAGINE Art Show

Primary creative outcome: Children create age-appropriate individual or group projects during the program. These may include drawings, collage pieces, craft activities, masks, glasses, wishing wands, kindness patches, simple constructions, shared classroom displays or reflection pieces connected to imagination, empathy, kindness, courage and hope.

Optional extension: Preschools, early learning centres and schools may choose to extend the program by creating an IMAGINE Art Show, classroom showcase or community display. This gives families and the wider community the opportunity to see the projects created during the activation and, where appropriate, support Make-A-Wish Australia through approved giving or fundraising channels.

How the outcomes work together: The classroom activities remain the heart of the IMAGINE Program. Any art show or display should be treated as an optional extension that celebrates children's creativity, shares their learning with families and offers a gentle way for the community to give back to Make-A-Wish Australia.

Evidence of Learning for the IMAGINE Program

Assessment focus	Evidence of learning
Engagement in the IMAGINE program	Children participate in storytelling, discussion, creative play, artmaking and reflection in ways that are appropriate to their age and stage. Evidence may include joining group conversations, responding to story prompts, attempting each activity, making choices about materials or contributing to shared class projects.
Imagination and creative expression	Children use colour, shape, line, texture, symbols, movement, storytelling or simple construction to express ideas connected to imagination, hope, courage, kindness and wishes. Evidence may include completed or in-progress artworks, educator observations, student explanations, drawings, craft pieces or group-made creations.
Understanding of program themes	Children begin to recognise and communicate simple ideas about empathy, kindness, resilience, teamwork, hope, community and helping others. Evidence may be verbal, visual or educator-scribed, including circle-time comments, responses to prompts, choice of symbols, classroom conversations or reflections connected to each lesson theme.
Connection to Make-A-Wish Australia	Children make gentle, age-appropriate connections between Make-A-Wish Australia's mission and the idea that imagination, kindness and community can help bring joy to wish kids and families. Evidence may include comments about wishes, drawings of hope or helping, responses to approved stories or videos, or participation in class discussions about how people work together to make wishes possible.

Collaboration and social learning	Children practise taking turns, listening to others, sharing materials, contributing to group artworks and recognising that many small actions can create something meaningful together. Evidence may include teacher observations, group project contributions, peer discussion, classroom routines, role-play, collaborative construction or shared reflection.
Reflection and communication	Children share what they made, what they noticed, how they felt or what they learned through spoken responses, drawing, gesture, movement, educator-scribed comments or simple reflection templates. Evidence may include reflection sheets, student voice notes, photos of work samples, educator annotations or end-of-lesson class discussions.

Reflection Prompts

Use these prompts as short verbal check-ins, circle-time questions, drawing prompts or simple worksheet starters. For younger children, educators may scribe responses or invite children to point, draw, colour, act out or choose from feeling cards.

- Before I began: The idea I wanted to explore was...
- My Make-A-Wish connection: My artwork connects to hope, imagination or resilience because...
- Creative choices: I used these colours, symbols, materials or techniques because...
- Challenge and persistence: Something difficult during the making process was... I responded by...
- Empathy: This activity helped me think about others by...
- Teamwork: My contribution helped the group artwork by...
- Audience impact: I hope visitors to the IMAGINE Art Show will feel or do...
- After the exhibition: One way our class made a difference was...

Note: These prompts can be used in conjunction with Reflection Worksheets in Teacher Resource Pack.

Optional IMAGINE Art Show or Community Display

An optional extension for preschools, early learning centres and schools that would like to invite families or the wider community to view the art-based activities created by children during the program and, where appropriate, give back to Make-A-Wish Australia through approved fundraising channels.

- **Child-friendly roles:** sharing artwork, helping set up a display, welcoming families, adding to a wish wall or talking about what they created with educator support.
- **Giving options:** gold coin entry, family donation station, wish star wall, artwork-inspired cards, simple craft stall or another approved school or centre fundraising activity.
- **Awareness moment:** students share a short explanation of how wishes can bring hope, joy and lasting positive impact to children and families.
- **Visitor engagement:** guests write a message of hope, add a paper star to the wish wall or respond to the question, "What can imagination make possible?"

Evidence of Learning for IMAGINE Art Show

Criteria	Evidence
Participation and engagement	Children participate in the art show, classroom or community display in an age-appropriate way, such as sharing artwork, helping set up a display, welcoming families, adding to a wish wall or talking about what they created with educator support.
Connection to program themes	Children can show or explain, verbally, visually or through educator-scribed reflection, how their creative work connects to imagination, kindness, empathy, courage, resilience, hope, teamwork or helping others.
Creative expression	Children use colour, shape, line, texture, symbols, materials, storytelling or simple construction to express ideas from the program, with emphasis on personal meaning, effort and experimentation rather than a polished final product.
Reflection and communication	Children share simple reflections about what they made, what they learned or how imagination and kindness can help bring joy to others. Responses may be spoken, drawn, acted out, selected from visual prompts or recorded by an educator.
Collaboration and community	Children contribute to a shared classroom display, group artwork, wish wall or community celebration by working alongside peers, listening to others, taking turns and recognising that many small contributions can create something meaningful together.
Awareness and giving back	Where included, children demonstrate a simple, age-appropriate understanding that the display can help families and the community learn about Make-A-Wish Australia and, where appropriate, support wish kids through approved school or centre giving activities.

Suggested Materials for IMAGINE Program and Art Show

- Printed IMAGINE activity templates, reflection prompts or educator-scribed response sheets
- A4 or A3 paper, coloured card, paper plates, cardboard shapes and pre-cut templates for younger children
- Crayons, pencils, markers, washable paint, water colours, paint sticks or oil pastels
- Collage papers, tissue paper, pom-poms, pipe cleaners, stickers, fabric scraps, recycled materials and textured craft materials
- Child-safe scissors, glue sticks, tape, string, paddle-pop sticks, split pins and other basic classroom craft supplies
- Optional display materials such as wish stars, labels, bunting, backing paper, table signs or a simple classroom wish wall

Teacher Notes and Safeguarding Considerations

- Use only approved Make-A-Wish Australia stories, images and videos suitable for school audiences.
- Focus on hope, joy, imagination, courage, community and support rather than medical detail.
- Give students choice in how they respond creatively, particularly when exploring emotional themes.
- Encourage respectful language when discussing wish kids and families.
- Ensure fundraising activities follow the school's policies and Make-A-Wish Australia guidance.
- If including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, consult appropriate local guidance and avoid using cultural symbols, stories or designs without permission.



Program Extension Ideas

- Create a student exhibition catalogue with artwork images, artist statements and reflections.
- Invite families to sponsor a star, panel or message of hope.
- Pair older students involved in the IMAGINE Academy program with younger classes involved in the IMAGINE program to support peer learning, creativity and classroom confidence.
- Develop a short student-led presentation for assembly about the power of imagination and wishes.
- Use the artwork as a travelling display across the school library, office, local community centre or a partner venue.
- Invite local businesses, cafés or community spaces to support the program by displaying children's IMAGINE artworks, kindness messages, wish stars or class-created project pieces. Schools or centres could create a simple community art trail, where families visit participating locations to view the work, learn about Make-A-Wish Australia and, where appropriate, donate or take part in an approved fundraising activity. This extension helps children see how their creativity can travel beyond the classroom, bring people together and inspire the wider community to help make wishes come true.