



## Activity sheet

# Let's talk about dementia

Here is a list of suggested activities to support the **Let's talk about dementia presentation and the animation.**

Please select the activities you think will be most appropriate for the children you are working with and the time you have available for the session (we suggest one or two activities from the list below).

### Activity 1



Before showing slide two of the presentation (**Let's talk about dementia animation**) ask the children in small groups or as a whole class to think about one or all of the following questions. You could ask them to write down some ideas on paper in small groups.

- What is dementia?
- Do you know anyone who has dementia?
- What might you notice about someone with dementia (ie what are the symptoms?)
- What causes dementia?
- How do you think it might feel to have dementia?

### Activity 2

Watch the **Let's talk about dementia animation.**



### Activity 3

Ask the children to think about who they might talk to if they had worries or questions (parents, grandparents, other relatives, guardian, friends or teacher).



### Activity 4: memory game

Place 10 small objects on a tray. Ask one of the children to volunteer. Give the volunteer a minute to memorise them and then ask them to turn their back while one or two are removed. Can they work out which ones are gone? This can also be carried out in small groups.



Alternatively, place 10 small objects on a tray for each small group and give them a minute or so to memorise the objects. Then cover the objects and see how many they can recall. This can be made more challenging by using background noise (music, laughing or chatting). Ask them how they felt about it. Was it easy? Frustrating when they couldn't remember? Were they distracted by background noises?

**Aim:** to demonstrate that we can all struggle to remember, especially when distracted by noises or under pressure. People with dementia can forget things, which can cause them to be frustrated and worried. This shows us to give the person with dementia more time to remember, and not expect them to remember too many things at the same time.

## Activity 5: drawing a star

**You will need a small mirror, a pen and a blank sheet of paper; or an empty shoe box with both ends cut out.**

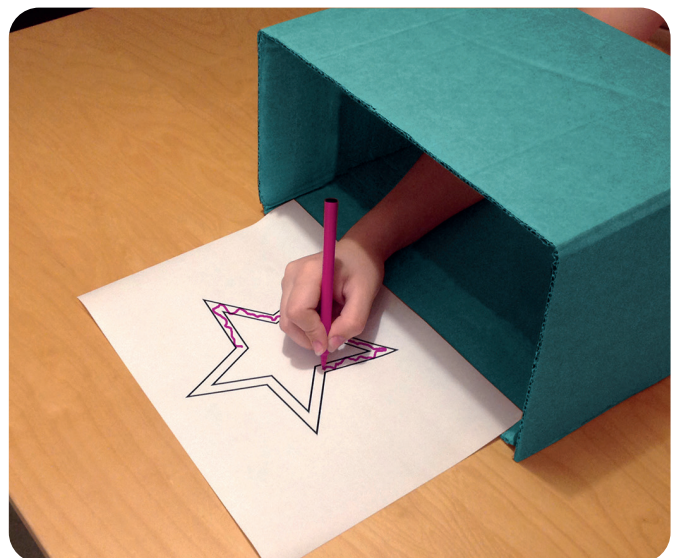
In pairs, ask one of the children to hold the mirror so it is upright on the table, on the edge of the paper, facing the other child. Ask this child who the mirror is facing to draw a star but **only looking at the mirror**, NOT at the piece of paper, or their hand.



Alternatively, put the sheet of paper on the table at one end of the shoe box, then ask the child to put their arm through the other end and draw a star on the paper without looking.

Ask them how they felt:  
Did they feel frustrated?  
Did they feel silly?

**Aim:** to demonstrate the difficulty in moving normally when the way you understand the world changes. Some people with dementia have changes in a particular part of the brain that affect their movements in this way. This helps us to understand how people might feel when they cannot carry out what feels like a simple task.



## Activity 6



Ask the children to remember when they needed help with something (eg riding a bicycle, swimming, homework, reading) and then ask them to think about activities they do not need help with anymore, and can now do on their own (eg getting dressed, eating, skipping, cycling, swimming).

How do they feel when they have achieved something: clever, independent, proud?

How would they feel if someone said they could not do it and wanted to interfere or help them? Would they feel frustrated, annoyed, or want to show the person that they can?

**Aim:** to help them appreciate the importance of achieving things on our own. This helps us think about supporting someone with dementia to do something – instead of doing it for them. Sometimes people with dementia do not think they need help to do something they used to do easily but now find harder. They can forget the condition affects their abilities to do those tasks we take for granted. It can be kind to offer to help, and then do the task together.

## Activity 7

Think about some of the things the children might do with parents or grandparents (reading, gardening, baking, games). They can write them down or discuss. Ask them how doing some of those activities might affect the person if they had dementia.

Get them to think about and discuss ways that they could still enjoy doing activities together eg:

- giving them more time to read or reading to them
- baking cakes with simple instructions to follow
- watching cooking programmes together or looking through old cookery books
- doing small jobs in the garden together or looking through colourful gardening books
- making a scrap book with them of their memories and hobbies



## Further information

If you would like more information and advice about activities for children or any other aspect of dementia, you can speak to a dementia specialist Admiral Nurse on our free Helpline.

Call **0800 888 6678** (Monday-Friday 9am-9pm; Saturday, Sunday and bank holidays 9am-5pm) or email [helpline@dementiauk.org](mailto:helpline@dementiauk.org)

You can also find information about all aspects of dementia at [dementiauk.org/information-and-support](https://dementiauk.org/information-and-support)