



## **Activity: Bouncing Back**

**Purpose:** Understanding the idea of resilience

**Age level:** 9-13

**Time needed:** 40 minutes (5 minutes demonstrating 'bouncing back'; 15 minutes in pairs; 10 minutes brainstorming; 10 minutes explaining resilience and discussing the concluding question).

### **Resources:**

- ✓ A bendy stick, a rubber band, a rubber ball, an eraser and/or any other everyday object that if bent, pulled or squeezed out of shape return to its original shape when released
- ✓ Blackboard and chalk

### **Procedure**

#### ***Stage 1***

The teacher uses the bendy/stretchable/squeezable objects to demonstrate the capacity to 'bounce back' by bending them, stretching them and squeezing them. Pupils have a try too!

#### ***Stage 2***

Joining together in pairs sitting on the floor or on chairs facing each other, students are asked to sit quietly for a few moments thinking about times when they have 'bounced back' after experiencing some difficulty or setback. It may be, for example, after a sports defeat. It may be after someone has said something unkind. They are also asked to think about the qualities they showed in 'bouncing back'.

#### ***Stage 3***

The teacher asks each pair to nominate person 'A' and person 'B'. 'B' is asked to tell 'A' those personal 'bouncing back' stories they feel happy to share, with 'A' listening carefully



to what is said. After two minutes the process is reversed and 'A' tells 'B' their stories, with 'B' listening carefully.

#### **Stage 4**

The teacher then asks pairs to discuss the 'bouncing back' qualities revealed by their respective stories. Were they similar? Or were different qualities shown in different circumstances?

#### **Stage 5**

A whole class brainstorming session follows focusing on 'bouncing back' qualities thrown up by the stories, all ideas being written on the blackboard.

#### **Stage 6**

In closing, the teacher explains that the ability to 'bounce back' from a difficult time is called 'resilience'. Ask the class to think about whether the same qualities of resilience are needed in a community if it is struck by a natural or other disaster.

#### **Extension**

Pairs form into fours to prepare small dramas about their 'bouncing back' experiences and the groups of four each present their drama. The class discusses whether there are lessons about community resilience in what is enacted.

#### **Potential/Facilitation Guidance**

This activity will help students internalize the concept of resilience. The teacher needs to be sensitive to the fact that the sharing of stories can be very emotional in its revelation of both strengths and vulnerabilities. For the closing whole group discussion, a critical question to pose concerns the degree to which personal 'bouncing back' qualities are the same qualities that schools, communities and other social groupings (city, province, etc.) need during and after experiencing difficult times and crises.

*Source:* Adapted from Selby, D. and Kagawa, F. 2013. *Climate Change in the Classroom: UNESCO Course for Secondary Teachers on Climate Change Education for Sustainable Development*. Paris: UNESCO.