Building resilience

Supporting learners to thrive in a changing world

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Housekeeping

Health and safety

Fire safety

Washrooms

Agenda

In this session, participants will:

- understand what resilience is and why it matters

- explore how the Cambridge learner attributes support resilience

- discover practical strategies to build resilience in your school and across the curriculum.

What words do we associate with resilience?

Join at menti.com | use code **2686 2883**
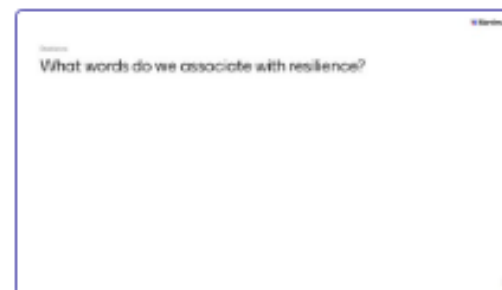
How do we define resilience?

- The ability to bounce back from challenges or adversity

- Resilience empowers you to grow and improve

- Resilience is closely linked to wellbeing

- A resilient learner keeps going even when it's hard

- It's a skill that can be taught and nurtured

'Resilience is creating a mind that is strong and ready, and undamaged, strengthened for the future'

Nicola Morgan

Author

Why is resilience important?

Good mental health and wellbeing

Adaptability

Perseverance

Self-esteem and confidence

Healthy relationships

Preparing for adulthood

"Our job is not to get them to the finish line, but to prepare them with the character strengths that will launch them into the future."

Kenneth R Ginsburg

Professor of Paediatrics at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia

Activity

What does a resilient learner look like?

What does a non-resilient learner look like?

Activity

Characteristics of a resilient learner…

Perseverance

Growth mindset

Self-regulation

Reflectiveness

Adaptability

Confidence

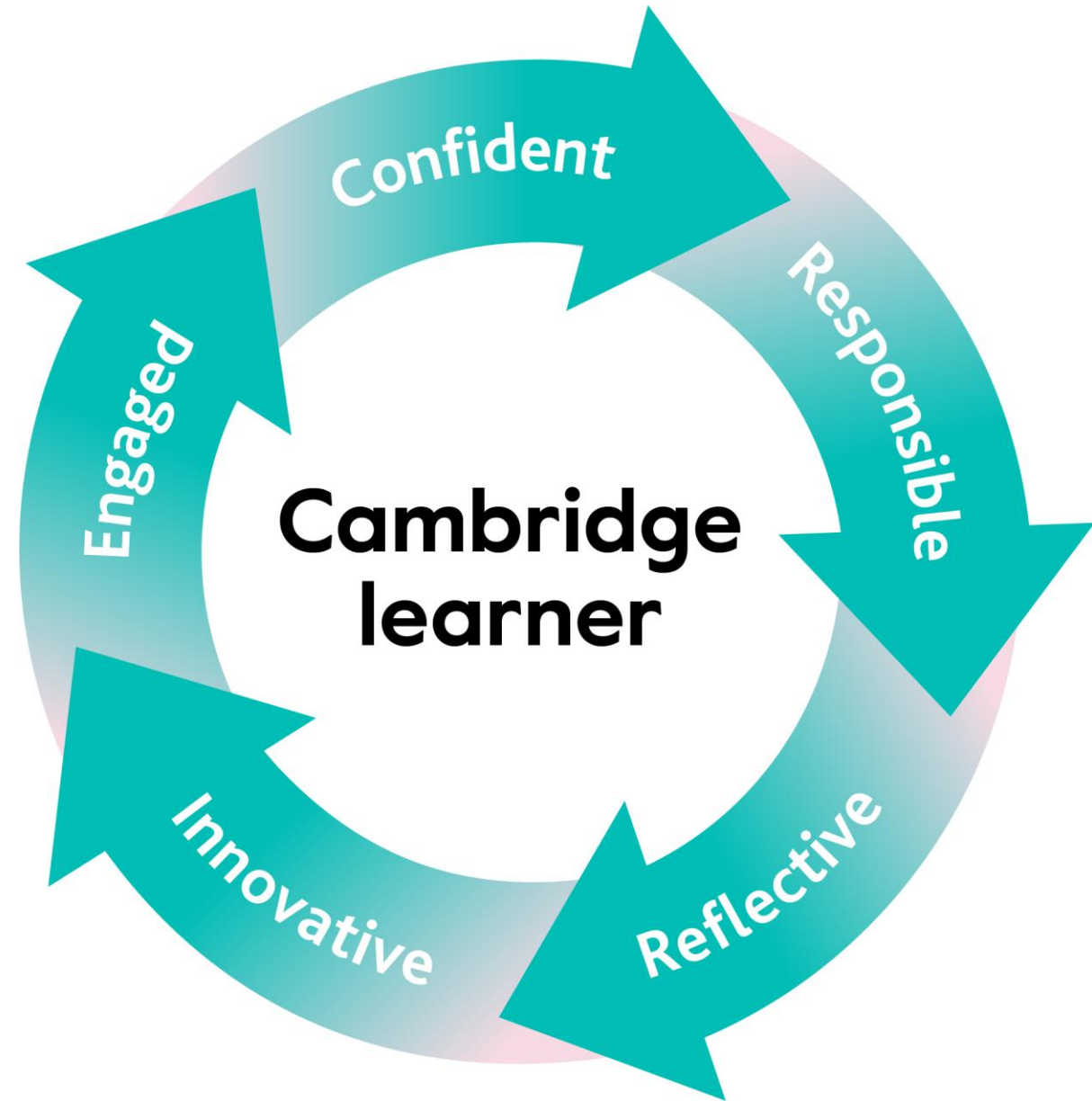Characteristics of a non-resilient learner…

Give up easily

Fixed mindset "I'm no good at this"

Avoids challenges

Fear of failure

Lack confidence

Negative

Poor emotional regulation

Reluctant to ask for help

Cambridge learner attributes

How do the learner attributes support students to develop resilience?

Science of resilience

- The teen brain is a work in progress!

- The brain is not fully formed until the age of 25.

- The emotional centre of the brain (amygdala) develops more rapidly than the thinking centre (cerebral cortex) that regulates emotions.

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Is stress good or bad?

- Stress is a positive biological process

- It helps us to stay safe when facing threats

- It help us to perform well in exams, win a race or give a great performance on the stage.

- Too much stress can have a negative impact

- Feeling anxious

- Can't switch off

- Affects mood

- Affects ability to focus and concentrate

- Can affect health

The seven Cs of resilience

Confidence

Connection

Character

Contribution

Coping

Control

Competence

Resilience

Source: Kenneth R Ginsburg, Building Resilience in Children and Teens

Strategies and pedagogical approaches for the classroom

Confidence and Competence

Classroom culture

- Support children to know their individual strengths

- Foster a growth mindset – '"I can't do this yet"

- It's ok to make mistakes, it's how we learn and get better at something

- Praise effort rather than focusing on achievements

- Set realistic goals

- Avoid comparisons

Coping strategies

Reflective practices:

- Journaling
- Discussion
- Feedback

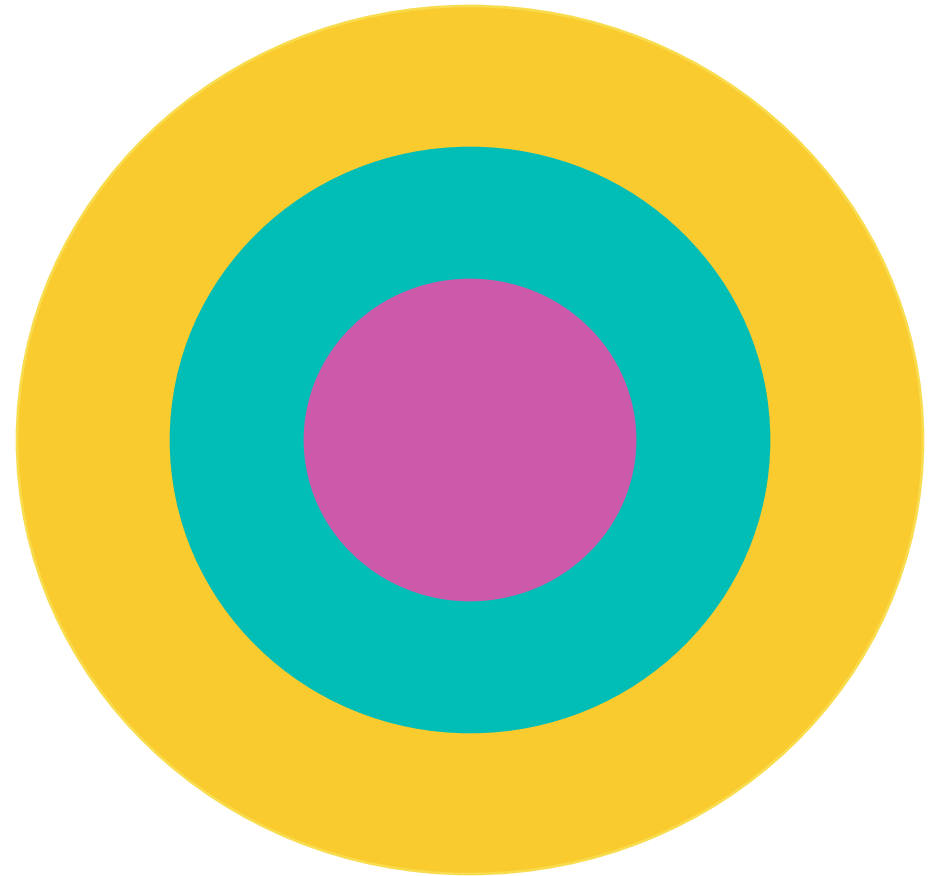| Sleep	Exercise
Self-care	
Relaxation	Nutrition

Connection

Help young people to understand their support networks.

Activity:

- <mark>Inner circle</mark>
- <mark>Middle circle</mark>
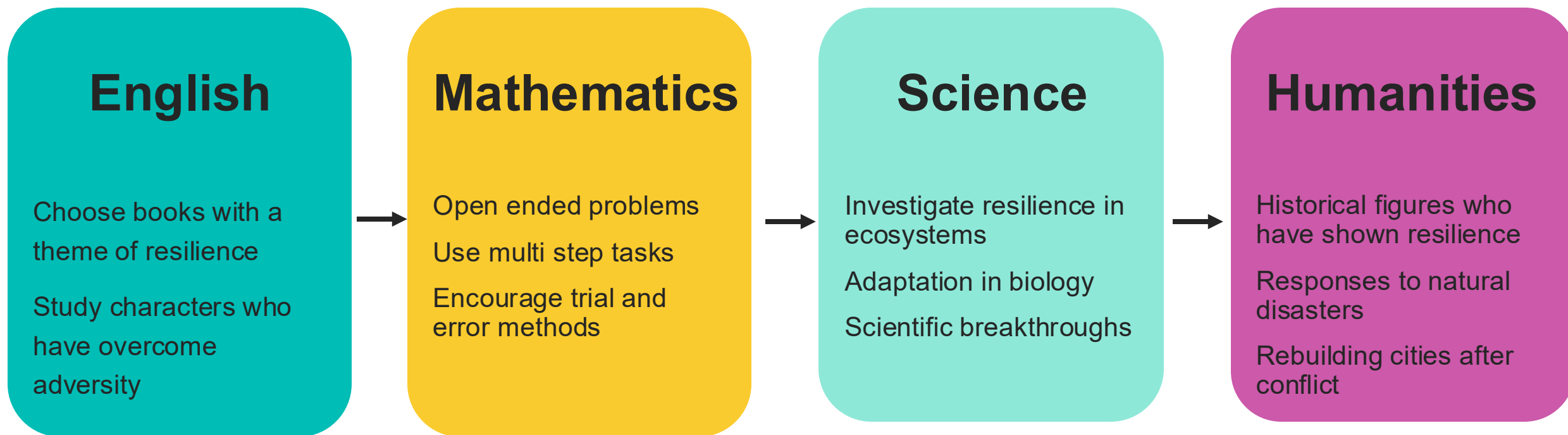- <mark>Outer circle</mark>

Contribution

- When young people work to improve their communities, they develop a meaningful sense of purpose.

- They need to see beyond themselves and recognise they are part of a larger community.
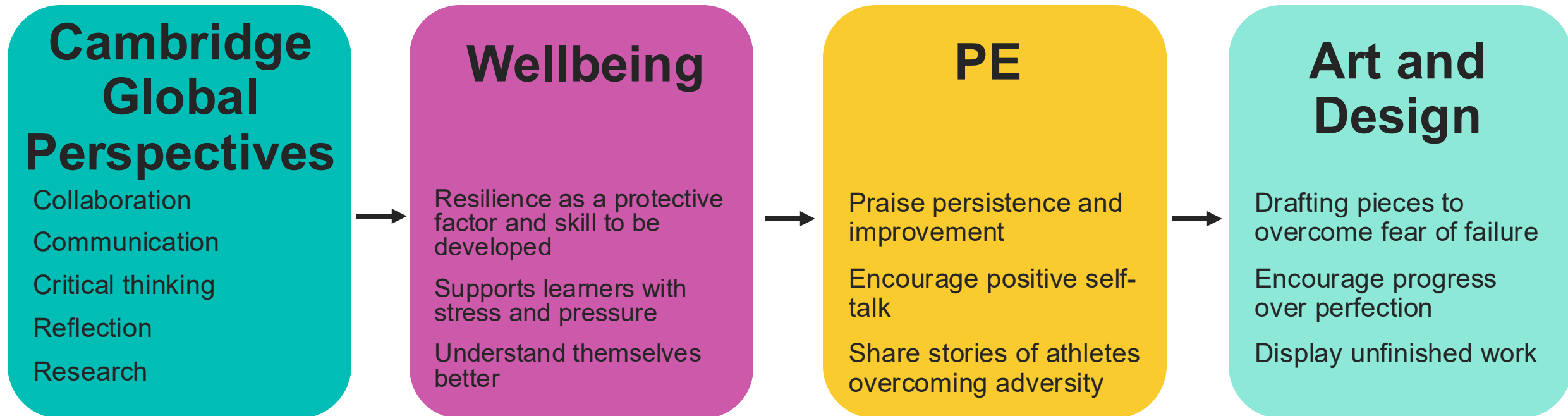
Resilience in the curriculum

Resilience in the curriculum

English

Choose books with a theme of resilience

Study characters who have overcome adversity

Mathematics

Open ended problems

Use multi step tasks

Encourage trial and error methods

Science

Investigate resilience in ecosystems

Adaptation in biology

Scientific breakthroughs

Humanities

Historical figures who have shown resilience

Responses to natural disasters

Rebuilding cities after conflict

Resilience in the wider curriculum

Music

Normalise mistakes

Ensemble work for collaboration

Encourage improvisation

Languages

Practise speaking with peers

Share own learning journey

Celebrate small steps

Inquiry based learning

Let students explore complex problems and find solutions

Persist through challenges and setbacks

Promotes growth mindset

Collaborative learning

Think-pair-share

Debate teams

Collaborative projects or competitions

Activity

Discuss

- What do you already do in your school which contributes to building resilience?

Choose one area to focus on

- What could you do?

- What are the barriers?

How can we overcome the barriers?

- The fear of failure

- Time

- Training need

- Outside factors

- Cultural attitudes

Exit ticket

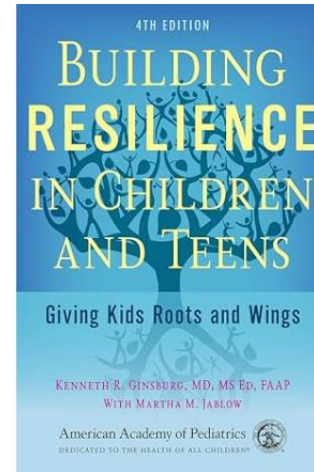What will you takeaway from today's session?

Share one action you'll try in school.

Future-ready: preparing learners to thrive

Resources

Nicola Morgan – Author, Speaker, Supporter

Fostering Resilience - Empowering Young People and Families | Home

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Any questions?

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Thank you!

Cambridge Schools Conference, December 2025
Future-ready: preparing learners to thrive

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Get in touch!

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