

Choosing PSHE education resources

1. Does the resource have the flexibility to allow you to refocus the learning outcomes to meet the unique needs of your pupils? These are resources that offer open-ended questions or lines of enquiry.
2. Does it give pupils an opportunity to share their existing knowledge, understanding, skills, beliefs and attitudes with you and their peers (i.e. baseline/needs assessment)? Does it let you build from this or does it demand you follow the author's priorities?
3. Does the resource concentrate only on factual content or does it give pupils opportunities to explore and clarify their attitudes and values? Perhaps put more simply, does it allow young people to think about and if appropriate share their feelings?
4. Does it provide opportunities to develop key skills or strategies? Does it help young people enrich or expand their understanding of key concepts?
5. If the resource is 'topic driven' are these really relevant to your pupils?
6. Does it offer suggestions for baseline (see 2 above), formative and summative assessment?
7. If the resource offers content will this date? Perhaps more than almost any other subject, the content of PSHE education changes with society.
8. If there are images in the resource are they likely to date? Do they represent diversity?
9. If there are 'worksheets' look at these carefully. A great worksheet should resemble a great lesson plan. (Better yet – don't use them at all!)
10. Does the resource promote active learning and offer opportunities for paired and group discussion?
11. As the resource progresses through the age range is there an increase in the demand on the learner?
12. Does the resource offer extension activities? Does it offer relevant material for differentiation?
13. Does it have individual workbooks that pupils complete? If so can you afford them every year?
14. If it is a hard copy resource e.g. a textbook, is it physically robust, easy to clean or will you be buying another next year when it falls apart?
15. Beware of 'teachers' reviews' – many are highly selective and knowing 'my pupils enjoyed these lessons' does not mean they learnt anything.