

KEEPING AN OPEN MIND

ACTIVITY 2 - Light Up Your Brain with New Ideas

BRITTANY BRUNELL, M.S. CCC-SLP
CARRIE DRISCOLL, M.A. CCC-SLP



KEEPING AN OPEN MIND

BRITTANY BRUNELL, M.S. CCC-SLP
CARRIE DRISCOLL, M.A. CCC-SLP

This **Activity Packet** allows students to consider a new thought that is different from the one they might be insisting upon that doesn't work well with the present situation. Use with the following video lessons to reinforce these skills:

- Keeping an Open Mind Introduction
- Keeping an Open Mind in School
- Keeping an Open Mind with Friends

WHY TEACH THIS SKILL

Keeping an Open Mind is more than just a phrase; it's a practice and a habit. To battle rigid thinking, Keeping an Open Mind develops a willingness to consider a variety of perspectives, values, opinions, or beliefs—especially ones that are contradictory to the individual's opinion.

This is a next step in a child's theory of mind skills, to know what others' thoughts are, and also to **consider them as possibilities for themselves**. Students who need to improve this skill often obsess on one single thought or way of doing things, have difficulty taking directions from others, especially peers, and can perceive they're being bullied when others don't do things their way.

INTRODUCE TO STUDENTS

Think of your brain like an empty box (use props as an object lesson or draw it out). We don't want our brains to be closed. Nothing will go in it. We want our brain to be open so it can be filled with lots of new information, new experiences, other people's thoughts, and new feelings. We want it to stay open and fill it with learning from all different areas so that we're smart in all ways, especially when someone suggests an idea that might help us.

Today we're practicing **Keeping an Open Mind**. This is going to keep our brain open like a box to let in new ideas. An Open Mind will help us picture a new way. This might be a way that our teacher or parents suggest we try. We might not want to at first, but if we use an Open Mind, we can stay calm about the idea, consider it, picture ourselves doing the new way, and agree to try it.

Let's think about the opposite of an Open Mind. It's a Closed Mind. A Closed Mind doesn't let in any new ideas. Our own ideas can sometimes be the best ideas, but sometimes they aren't. Sometimes people who are older than we are have a better idea because they know more than we do and have been in similar situations before. Sometimes we may like an idea, but we're afraid to try something new.

Discuss how you feel about other people's suggestions to these things:

- A breakfast food you've never had
- A change in your schedule
- A change in a seating chart
- A party at a house that you and your family have never been to
- Being matched with a new class partner for a project or lesson



KEEPING AN OPEN MIND - PICTURE THE STEPS



Pick a calming strategy. Open Minds think best when we are calm.



Use self-talk to tell yourself you can think about a new idea or try something new.



Use your Open Mind to **picture the new way** in your head.



Agree to trying the new idea.

You've got this! These signs show you're improving:

- You can be around someone you refused to be around before.
- You can say good things about a new experience that you thought was going to be a bad experience.
- When someone suggests a better way, you can try it.

Remember, It's okay to feel uncomfortable when you try something new. Just keep using your Open Mind. It's a new way of thinking, so it takes practice.

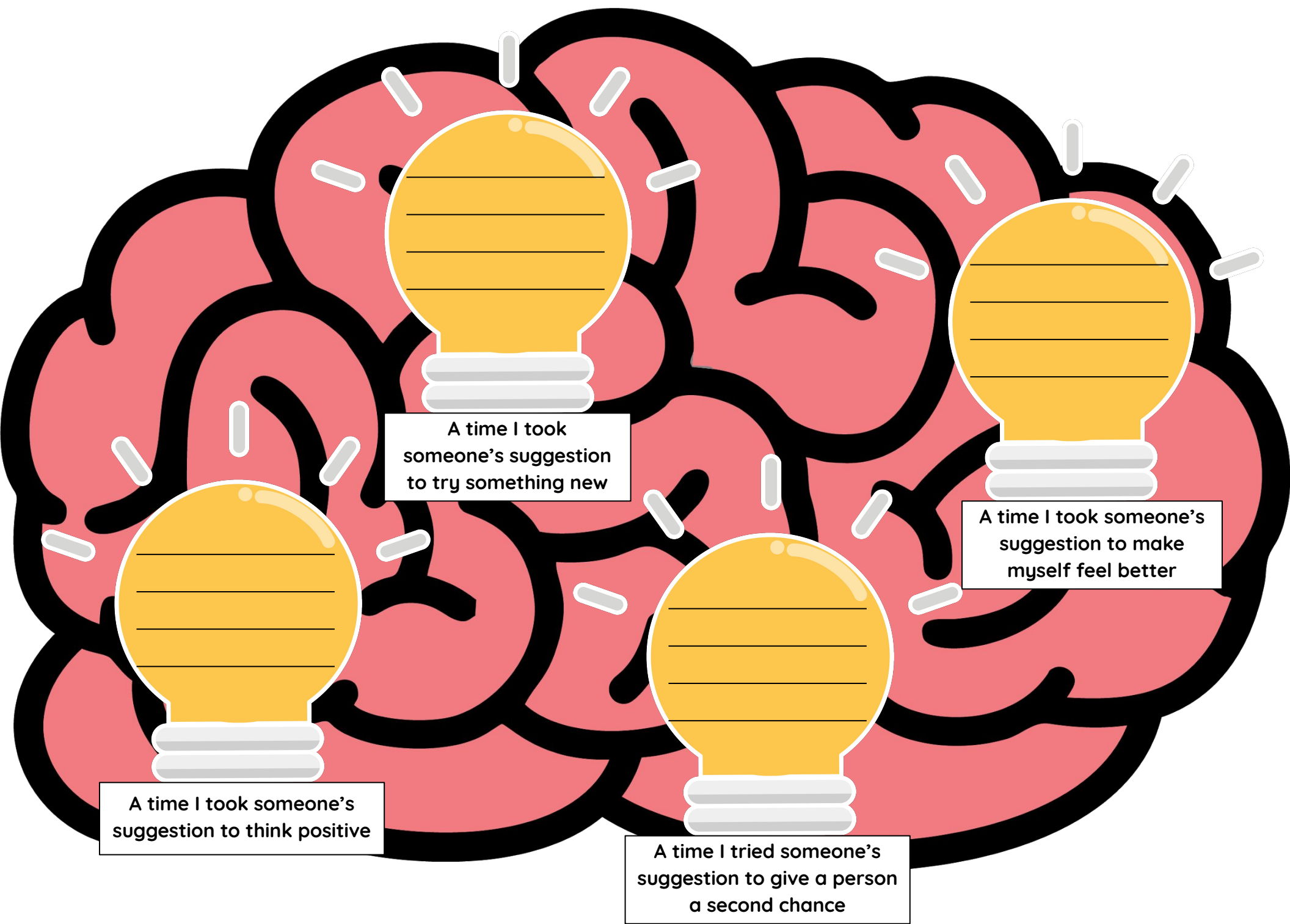
KEEPING AN OPEN MIND ACTIVITY 2 - LIGHT UP YOUR BRAIN WITH NEW IDEAS

Object:

At the end of this activity, each student will have a poster of their brain filled with light bulbs describing moments they benefited from having an Open Mind.

Directions:

1. Students write real-life moments they kept an Open Mind in their light bulbs.
2. If there's time, allow students to take turns telling stories about their Open Mind moments.



Times I've Had an Open Mind