

# The Starfish Story - Positivity

## EXPLANATION:

We all have the opportunity to help create positive change. The ‘Starfish story’ by Loren Eiseley explores the action of one young boy. This activity provides opportunities to reflect on positive change that individuals can achieve.

**YEAR LEVELS:** Years 7–10

**STUDENT GROUPING:** Group discussion and small group investigations

**ACTIVITY LENGTH:** 40–60 mins

## LINK TO CURRICULUM:

### Personal and Social Capability

#### *Social management*

This element involves students interacting effectively and respectfully with a range of adults and peers. Students learn to negotiate and communicate effectively with others; work in teams, positively contribute to groups and collaboratively make decisions; resolve conflict and reach positive outcomes. They develop the ability to initiate and manage successful personal relationships, and participate in a range of social and communal activities. Social management involves building skills associated with leadership, such as mentoring and role modelling. In developing and acting with personal and social capability, students:

- communicate effectively
- work collaboratively
- make decisions
- negotiate and resolve conflict
- develop leadership skills.

## SCOPE OF TASK:

There are many health benefits associated with positive thinking and positive action — including lower rates of depression and distress in those who embrace positivity. Positive actions make individuals feel good about themselves and support their self-esteem as well as contribute to community engagement.

1. In the whole group, activate the students' knowledge and understanding. Questions could include:
  - What is positivity?
  - What are other words that have a similar meaning to positive?
  - Why is positivity important?
  - What are positive actions?
  - Can a positive action be an influence on another person? How?
  - What type of person might they influence?
2. Share with the students the video, *The Starfish Story*:



3. Have the student recount the story.
  - What is the author's message?
  - How would you categorise the boy's actions?
  - How would you categorise the man's actions?
4. Break the students into small groups to discuss how positivity can influence not just themselves, but others.
5. Give them 10–15 mins to search the internet for a short story on positivity. Discuss with the students search terms they might use in their search — e.g. positivity, story, inspiring etc.
6. When the small groups have chosen their short stories, bring the class back together. Ask each group to share their chosen story, explaining:
  - Why it is a positive story
  - What they learnt from the story
  - How it made them feel.
7. To conclude, ask the students why they believe that positive thought and positive action might be important to their daily lives.



**Create a class blog where the students can share the links to positive stories**

## RESOURCES:

Online video: Starfish Story (aka The Star Thrower), Red Shoe Productions sourced from:  
<https://youtu.be/Z-aVMdJ3Aok>