



11: The Magic of Adaptability

A PK-6 Lesson on Adjusting, Staying Calm, and Growing Through Change



Introduction for the Facilitator

This lesson introduces students to the professional skill of **adaptability**, defined as the ability to adjust to changes, unexpected challenges, or new environments with flexibility and a growth mindset.

Whether a student is facing a surprise change in routine, learning something new that feels tough, or managing disappointment, adaptability gives them the power to choose how to respond. It teaches them that they **don't have to control everything to move forward**—they just have to stay open and try their best.

Adaptability strengthens a student's **personal competitive advantage** by helping them become more resilient, calm, and capable under pressure. And it helps them build the kind of **lifestyle** they want, where they can stay steady through changes, bounce back from setbacks, and keep growing no matter what life brings.

This lesson includes:

- A relatable Social Story
- 8 Group Discussion Questions with follow-ups
- 8 Journal Prompts (draw or write)
- 10 engaging classroom Activities
- A printable Worksheet to explore adaptability in action

Let's help students understand that flexibility is a strength and adapting is a superpower that can carry us through anything.



Social Story: *Noah's Not-So-Planned Day*

Noah liked things to go a certain way. He liked his usual breakfast, his usual desk, and his usual plan. So when the class arrived to find their room was being painted—and they had to learn in the library instead—Noah frowned.

“This is going to ruin everything,” he said.

Ms. Rhodes knelt beside him. “You’re right, it’s different. But different can still work. What if we try adapting today?”



Noah asked, “What does adapting mean?”

“It means we take a breath, smile, and find new ways forward,” she said.

So Noah took a breath. He found a new seat. He used his backpack as a desk. When the projector didn’t work, he helped pass out papers. When the noise in the library got loud, he put on his headphones. And when the plan changed again after lunch, he didn’t love it, but he kept going.

At the end of the day, Ms. Rhodes said, “You didn’t just make it through, you adapted like a pro.”

Noah smiled. He still liked his routines. But he also liked this new strength: the ability to adjust. That was now part of his **personal competitive advantage**. It would help him grow, solve problems, and live the **lifestyle** he wanted: calm, creative, and ready for anything.



Group Discussion Questions

1. What does adaptability mean to you?

Follow-up: Why is it important to be flexible sometimes?

2. How do you feel when something doesn’t go the way you expected?

Follow-up: What helps you stay calm in that moment?

3. Can you think of a time when you had to change your plan?

Follow-up: How did it go? What helped?

4. What’s the difference between giving up and adapting?

Follow-up: How can small adjustments help us keep going?

5. What helps you shift your mindset when things feel frustrating?

Follow-up: What words or thoughts help you adapt?

6. How do adaptable people help a team or group?

Follow-up: Why is that a valuable trait?

7. How does adaptability help you grow your personal competitive advantage?

Follow-up: What’s one adaptive strength you’ve built so far?

8. What kind of lifestyle do you want to live?

Follow-up: How does being adaptable help you live that kind of life?



Journal Prompts

(Students can write or draw their answers based on age and ability.)

1. **Draw or write about a time your day didn't go as planned. What did you do?**
2. **What's one small thing that helps you stay calm when plans change?**
3. **Describe or draw a moment when you were proud of yourself for adapting.**
4. **What does flexibility mean to you? How does it feel in your body?**
5. **If adaptability were your superpower, what would your superhero name be? How would you use your power?**
6. **What would you say to a friend who was struggling with a big change?**
7. **How can being adaptable help you at school, at home, or with friends?**
8. **How does adaptability help you grow your personal competitive advantage?**



Activities

1. **Switch It Up Game**
During a routine activity, change something small (seating, materials, order). Reflect on how students adapted.
2. **Plan A/Plan B**
Students brainstorm two ways to solve a simple challenge: Plan A and a flexible Plan B. Discuss both.
3. **Change Story Builder**
Start a story and switch the setting halfway through. Students adapt the story and share outcomes.
4. **Obstacle Course Remix**
Create a simple obstacle course, then change the rules mid-way. Reflect on how students adjusted.
5. **Feelings Flip Chart**
Make a flip chart showing how we feel when things change and what helps us adapt.
6. **Change Cards**
Give out cards with small challenges (e.g., "No pencil," "Different partner"). Students find creative solutions.
7. **"What Now?" Scenarios**
Role-play common change scenarios (e.g., indoor recess, missing materials). Practice adaptive thinking.
8. **Adaptable Animals**
Learn about animals that adapt to their environment. Create a drawing or puppet showing how humans adapt, too.
9. **Flexibility Pledge**
Students write or draw one thing they'll try to be more flexible about this week.
10. **Adaptability Awards**
Celebrate students who adapted during the week with creativity, kindness, or calm thinking.



My Adaptability Superpower

Name: _____

Helpful Words:

- **Adaptability** = adjusting when things change or don't go as planned
- **Lifestyle Goal** = the kind of life I want to live
- **Personal Competitive Advantage** = my special strengths and habits that help me grow

Directions:

Write or draw your answers. Flexibility is your strength!

Use the back of this sheet if you need more space.

1. A time I had to adapt was:

4. My Adaptability Superpower helps me do these things:

2. Something that helped me was:

5. Adaptability helps me grow my personal competitive advantage by:

3. This is how adaptability makes me stronger:

6. This is how being flexible helps me live the lifestyle I want: