**‘The Thing Lou Couldn’t Do.’– a classroom worship about perseverance.**

**Teacher Notes**

This classroom worship is based on the book [‘The Thing Lou Couldn’t Do’](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WLdAXyZ7_iQ) by Ashley Spires. The children should be able to make links between the story and any work you’ve done on growth mindset or learning values such as perseverance or resilience. The reflection uses optical illusions to introduce the idea that perspective is important; something that seems impossible could seem more manageable if you look at it another way. An important message of the story is that Lou is happy to accept that she can’t climb the tree yet, she believes that she’ll manage it one day. We don’t have to worry if we can’t do everything straight away!

For another good book on a similar theme, try [‘The Most Magnificent Thing,’](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UM8oN4yzJqw) also by Ashley Spires.

**Introduction**

Show the class the optical Illusions **(PowerPoint slides 1 - 6)** and ask them to discuss what they see.

Slide 1: The Impossible Elephant – does it have 4 or 5 legs? The answer is 4 legs and 5 feet (!) Note that the tail is not drawn correctly and that only the back left leg is drawn properly. But we expect to see four legs, so that is what our brain tells us! Try uncovering the elephant slowly from the top (4 legs) or from the bottom (5 feet)

Slide 2: There is a duck facing to the left or a rabbit facing to the right. It depends if you’re looking at the duck’s beak, or the rabbit’s ears!

Slide 3: In fact, the bar in the centre is the same all through, it’s the background that changes, giving the illusion that the left side is lighter. Try hiding the background to demonstrate this.

Slide 4: If you use a ruler, or similar, you can show that the lines are parallel.

Slide 5: They’re both the same length. Why do the children think that one looks longer?

Slide 6: There’s a young woman with dark hair looking over her shoulder and an older woman looking down with a pointy chin. The old woman’s nose is the young woman’s chin.

Tell the children that it’s all about perspective – how we see things – and that we’ll return to this idea later.

**Story**

Show the class the story of [‘The Thing Lou Couldn’t Do.’](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WLdAXyZ7_iQ)  **(PowerPoint slide 7)** What do they think the story is about?

**(PowerPoint slide 8)** What sort of person is Lou? Brave or cowardly? (Brave about some things?) When she can’t climb the tree, she says she can’t climb it yet, what does this tell you about her? Do you think it matters that Lou doesn’t climb the tree?

**(PowerPoint slide 9)** What advice would you give Lou? (They might suggest things like, ‘Don’t give up,’ ‘Try again tomorrow,’ ‘Climb a smaller tree first.’) What do you think will happen next?

At the beginning we looked at some optical illusions and talked about looking at things from different angles. How do you think this applies to the story of Lou and the tree?

E.g. Is Lou a failure, or is this an opportunity to learn something new? Is she bad at everything, or just at one thing that she’s never done before? Do her friends think badly of her, or do they encourage her to have a go? How would looking at the problem from a different angle help Lou?

**Reflection**

Show **PowerPoint slide 10.** The Bible tells us that God will help us do things that we find hard. It doesn’t mean that we can literally do impossible things, but that if we trust him, he will help us find the courage to try new things.

Think quietly about something you used to find difficult, but that you can do now.

Think about something you find challenging, that you’d like to be able to do. What might your first step be?

What have you learned from the story about how to deal with challenges?

**Closing prayer**

I am going to finish with a prayer now and if you would like to make it your own prayer, you can say Amen at the end.

Dear God,

Thank you that you promise to help us when we find things difficult.

Please help us to see things in a positive way and not give up when we find things hard.

Help us to encourage other people, like Lou’s friends did in the story.

Amen.

*Or ask for volunteers in the class to say their own prayer, based on the ideas you have discussed.*

