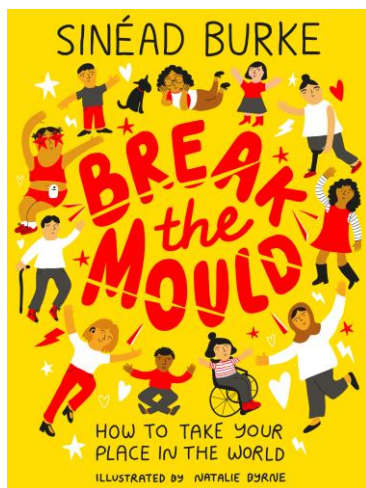


Break the Mould: How to take your place in the world

Sinéad Burke



9781526363336

£8.99 PB

Break the Mould with Sinéad Burke - teacher, activist, author and little person.

Sometimes we can feel like we are not good enough. That we don't belong. Or that we want to be more like our friends. In this empowering guide, Sinéad Burke draws on her own experiences and encourages young readers to believe in themselves, have pride in who they are and use their voice to make the world a fairer, more inclusive place.

From the power of being different, to celebrating the things you love about yourself and helping others do the same, this is a brilliantly inspirational handbook for breaking the mould and finding your place in the world.



Teaching Resource Pack

Break the Mould is suitable for teaching to students aged 9+.

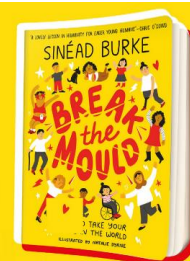
The four inspirational extracts included in this Teachers' Pack are linked to prominent themes in the book and accompanied by corresponding discussion questions and activities.

Themes:

- *Having Big Dreams*
- *Showing Empathy and Kindness*
- *Celebrating Difference*
- *Creating an Inclusive World*

These resources have been created by Shapes 4 Schools

BREAK the MOULD
SINÉAD BURKE



INSPIRATION 1: HAVING BIG DREAMS

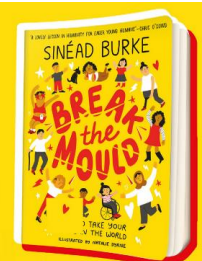
Read the first chapter of *Break the Mould* together or individually.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- In pairs, discuss why the author has chosen the title 'Break the Mould' for her book? What do you think the phrase means? How is the title aspirational and empowering?
- Why is the first paragraph in the book intriguing? How does it make you want to read on? Have you ever thought that you'd like to 'break the mould'?
- What do you think the 'mould' is? How do you interpret the mould?
- What does Sinéad suggest when she says: 'In many ways, that was my story. Or, it could have been.'
- What do you learn about Sinéad in the extract? What is her disability?
- What challenges do you think Sinéad has faced due to her disability?
- What were Sinéad's dreams?
- Why did Sinéad think her dreams were 'impossible'?
- What are your dreams? Do you face any challenges that you think might prevent you from achieving your dreams?
- Why is it important to have someone who believes that you can do anything you dream of?

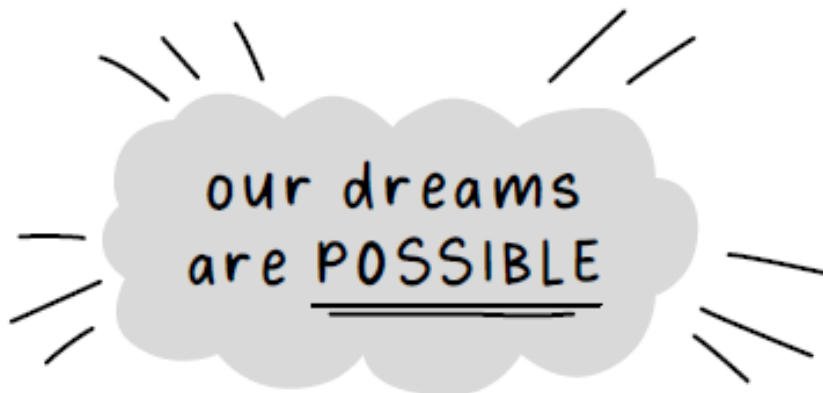


BREAK the MOULD
SINÉAD BURKE



INSPIRATION 1: HAVING BIG DREAMS

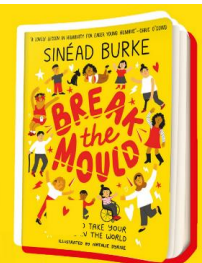
ACTIVITY: MAKE YOUR DREAMS POSSIBLE



- Why is it empowering to say that our dreams are POSSIBLE?
- Consider, what are your dreams? What is your biggest dream? What challenges might you face?
- In order to achieve our dreams it is important to have self-belief but also to set goals.
- Why is it important to set both short-term and long-term goals? Consider some examples of both with a partner and share them with your classmates.
- Set your own short-term and long-term goals in order to achieve your dreams.
- Use the star templates below to write down your dreams, big AND small! Then, cut them out and hang them from the classroom or even your bedroom ceiling to create a star-mobile – let it remind you of the dreams you have set yourself and that they are POSSIBLE.

Reach for the stars! Think about your dreams, from the small ones to the big ones!

BREAK the MOULD
SINÉAD BURKE



REACH FOR THE STARS

My dream today is:

My dream this week is:

My dream this term is:

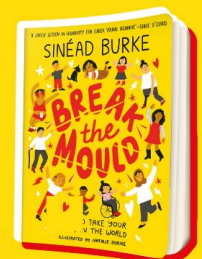
My dream this year is:

My dream in school is:

My dream in life is:

BREAK the MOULD

SINÉAD BURKE



INSPIRATION 2: CELEBRATING DIFFERENCE

Read the below extract from p62-63 of *Break the Mould*.

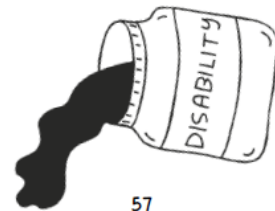
Take a second to think about your differences, and how they have shaped you. Maybe you are sensitive but those sensitivities mean that you might be able to help your friends or a brother or a sister when they are upset. You may know what to say to give them comfort and to help them feel better.

You could use your list of the things that make you YOU to guide you. Is it the way you look? The way you walk? The language you speak or how you talk? Is it your culture or religion? Is it your wheelchair or your hearing aid? Or is it something invisible - something that people can't see?

Noting what makes you different, being proud and celebrating who you are is brave and important, but not always easy. There are times when we might feel like we are alone, that we don't belong and we don't have a place in the world. But I promise you, the things that make you unique can be a very powerful tool and, when you realise this, the world is yours and you can dream and achieve the impossible.



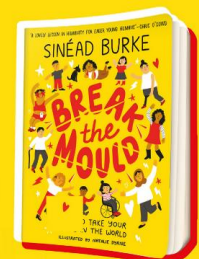
You are ENOUGH as you are. You don't need to CHANGE to make a DIFFERENCE, but EMBRACING what makes you DIFFERENT can create a CHANGE.



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BREAK the MOULD
SINÉAD BURKE



INSPIRATION 2: CELEBRATING DIFFERENCE

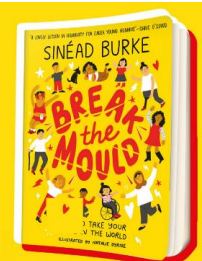
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What is identity? What differences have 'shaped' your identity?
- Sinéad uses the example of being 'sensitive' as an example of difference. What are the good things about being a sensitive person? What type of person are you?
- Think about your identity. What makes you, YOU? Write a list of all the different things that make up who you are, from the way you look, the way you walk and the way you talk, to the religion you practice and the culture you identify with.
- What does Sinéad mean when she describes 'something invisible – something that people can't see'?
- What does Sinéad say is 'not always easy'? Why not?
- Why is it important to realise that 'the things that make you unique can be a very powerful tool'?

ACTIVITY: BELIEVE IN EACH OTHER, BELIEVE IN YOURSELF

- Think about what makes you different and why this is AWESOME. Design a collage to show what makes you different and special. It might include symbols, words, or drawings relating to your heritage, hobbies, or anything else that relates to your identity. Show your collage to family and friends, explaining what each element means to you. Put it on display somewhere to show that you are proud of who you are!
- Working together as a class, create a list of the things that have a negative impact on how you view yourself and your unique identity. Create another list, this time of ways to overcome these challenges to your identity. For example, by speaking to someone who loves you, or focusing on activities that you enjoy and that tap into your unique skills and talents.
- How would your day-to-day life improve if you had more self-belief? Can you think of any examples?
- With a partner, use the prompts on the next page to celebrate each others' differences and unique identities!

BREAK the MOULD
SINÉAD BURKE



I AM GOOD ENOUGH /
YOU ARE GOOD ENOUGH.



I AM GREAT AT... /
YOU ARE GREAT AT...



I AM A GOOD FRIEND WHEN I... /
YOU ARE A GOOD FRIEND WHEN YOU...



I LIKE THAT I AM... /
I LIKE THAT YOU ARE...



I ALWAYS TRY... /
YOU ALWAYS TRY...



I AM PROUD OF... /
YOU ARE PROUD OF...



I AM ME. /
YOU ARE YOU.



I CAN BREAK THE MOULD. /
YOU CAN BREAK THE MOULD.



BREAK *the* **MOULD**

SINÉAD BURKE

INSPIRATION 3: SHOWING EMPATHY AND KINDNESS

Read this extract from p93

I remember chatting with my parents about what makes people do and say things that are hurtful and unkind. Why do people think it's okay to instil fear in others and make them feel less? We didn't have all of the answers to these big questions but talking it through helped. My parents reminded me I can't control how other people behave towards me, it's not my fault and it's not my responsibility.

'WHO DO YOU WANT
TO BE, SINÉAD?'

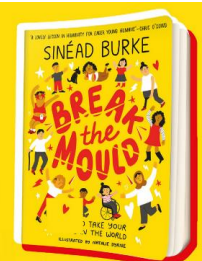
they asked.

'Do you want to be a person who chooses to make others cry, to make them feel less, in order to make yourself feel better?'

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Has anyone ever said hurtful or unkind things to you? How did it make you feel?
- Have you ever said hurtful or unkind things to someone else? Why?
- Sinéad's parents give good advice; what is it? Do you agree with Sinéad's parents?
- What is your answer to the question: 'Do you want to be a person who chooses to make others cry, to make them feel less, in order to make yourself feel better?'

BREAK the MOULD
SINÉAD BURKE



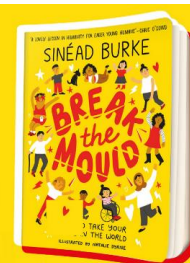
INSPIRATION 3: SHOWING EMPATHY AND KINDNESS

ACTIVITY: ACTS OF KINDNESS

- Sinéad talks about the importance of having empathy for and being kind to others. What is empathy?
- Small acts of kindness can make a big difference to other people. Make a list of ways you can be kind on a daily basis.
- Look at some of the acts of kindness included below. Rank them in order from 1–10, with 1 being the act of kindness that you carry out the most, and 10 being the act of kindness that you carry out the least. Reflect on each of the acts of kindness; what is the impact of each act? Try to carry out each act at least once in the space of a week. How does it make you feel?

| ACT OF KINDNESS | RANK 1–10 | REFLECTIONS | IMPACT |
|--|-----------|-------------|--------|
| Cleaning up after someone | | | |
| Complimenting someone | | | |
| Letting someone go ahead of you in a queue | | | |
| Saying hello to someone new | | | |
| Having a conversation with someone new | | | |
| Waving to a friend | | | |
| Inviting someone to hang out with you | | | |
| Thanking someone who has helped you | | | |
| Being patient with a classmate | | | |
| Doing something nice for a friend | | | |

BREAK the MOULD
SINÉAD BURKE

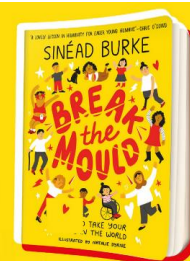


INSPIRATION 3: SHOWING EMPATHY AND KINDNESS

DO YOU WANT TO BE
A PERSON WHO LIGHTS
A ROOM, AND MAKES OTHER
PEOPLE FEEL BETTER
ABOUT THEMSELVES, SIMPLY
BY BEING YOU?

BREAK *the* **MOULD**

SINÉAD BURKE



Break the Mould: How to take your place in the world

INSPIRATION 4: CREATING AN INCLUSIVE WORLD

Read the following extract from p164-165 in the book.

Sometimes the world can feel like it is not built for you. It can make you feel alone and even allow you to believe that it will always be this way. The world was designed for a one size fits all; but it doesn't fit me, and maybe not you. But why don't we change it? Why don't we design a world where everyone feels included and connected? It's possible.



So, what could you do? If you notice that your classroom library is filled with books where the characters don't look like you, you could speak to your teacher, ask them to introduce some new stories. You could also bring in a book from home, or your local library, and read it to your class. You could learn a new language, perhaps sign language, or share the languages you do speak with your friends. If you love sport, try to be aware that not everyone might run as fast as you, and you could offer your friends a head start, or if one friend doesn't want to or can't run, you could ask them to be the referee. If you're watching a film and there are lots of loud noises and flashing lights, you could make sure that everyone is comfortable with the volume and if a friend is sensitive to the lights, you could choose to watch something else - a film or TV show that everyone can enjoy.

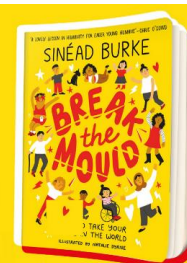
The world is sort of like clay, it has taken its current shape because of the people who have moulded it. But this design doesn't work for everyone, so we need to be brave, curious and confident that we can remould and redesign the world, to fit and accommodate you, me and everybody.

**GO ON, START TO
BREAK THE MOULD!**

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What does Sinéad mean when she describes how sometimes, it can feel like the world 'is not built for you'?
- Do you feel like the world is built for you? Why or why not?
- What would you add to the world to make it feel more like it was built for you?
- What changes does Sinéad suggest you could make to your classroom to make it a more inclusive space? Do you agree her? Write a list of other changes that you would make.
- Why is the metaphor of the world being 'like clay' an effective one?

BREAK the MOULD
SINÉAD BURKE

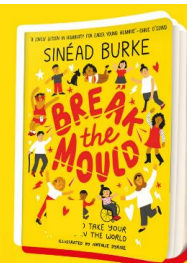


INSPIRATION 4: CREATING AN INCLUSIVE WORLD

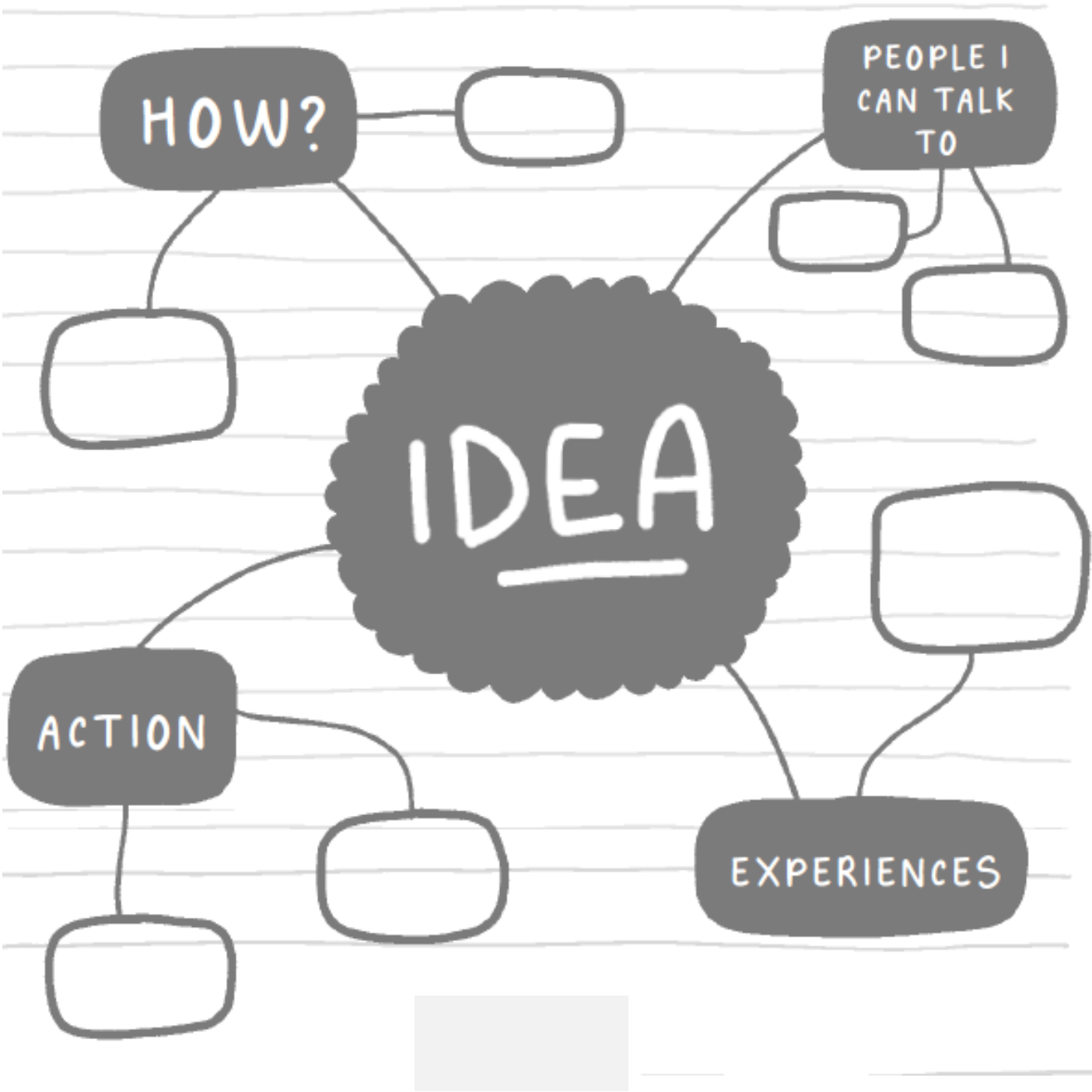
ACTIVITY: AN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM

- Work together in small groups to think about all the different people that make up your diverse classroom. Why might people feel excluded? What can you do to make sure they feel safe, respected, and valued? Why is it important in a classroom, more than anywhere, to feel valued and included?
- Moving from the classroom to the big wide world . . . what is your best idea for making it a more inclusive place?
- Fill in the template from *Break the Mould* on the next page with your notes. We can't wait to see how you change the world!

BREAK *the* **MOULD**
SINÉAD BURKE



INSPIRATION 4: CREATING AN INCLUSIVE WORLD



BREAK *the* **MOULD**

SINÉAD BURKE

