

Supporting Notes for the “I Can” Resource

The “*I Can*” sheet is a simple yet powerful confidence-building tool designed to help children recognise and celebrate their progress—especially in areas where they feel they’re struggling or “can’t do it.”

It works by providing space for them to record each new thing they *can* do, no matter how small. Over time, this builds a visible, tangible list of achievements, boosting their belief in their own ability and creating momentum to keep going.

Why use this?

Children often internalise a single moment of struggle as a defining truth: “*I can’t do maths,*” “*I’m bad at reading,*” or “*I’m not good at making friends.*” This resource gently challenges that narrative by shining a light on the *small wins* that add up to big changes.

By helping children track their progress in a concrete way, we’re reinforcing the idea that **success is possible**—and that effort is worth celebrating.

A Personal Note from Pooky:

I first created this resource while home educating my daughter Ellie, who told me she couldn’t do maths. Rather than argue, we began listing every new skill she *could* do, no matter how simple. Each one was a win she wrote down herself. It gave her ownership, pride, and proof that she *could* do maths—and she began to believe it. She especially loved picking a reward at the end, usually a new book or a bubble tea date with me.

How to Use It

- **Start small**
Focus on *tiny*, achievable wins: “I can count to 10,” “I can read a word problem,” “I can ask for help.”
- **Use the child’s own words**
Let them write or dictate each entry. This helps make the achievement feel real and personally meaningful.
- **Celebrate effort, not perfection**
Mastery doesn’t mean flawless. If they tried something tricky, that counts too
- **Choose a meaningful reward**
At the end of the list, there’s a space for a reward. This can be a treat, time with a trusted adult, a sticker, or anything that fits your setting.
Note: For many children—especially those who are more vulnerable—**quality time with a trusted adult** is the most powerful motivator.
- **Use regularly or as needed**
You might use this as a short-term boost after a dip in confidence, or build it into regular routines for children who need extra encouragement.

What's Included

You'll find a few different versions of the sheet:

- Versions with 8 or 15 spaces
- Variants with different titles (e.g., *"Things I Can Do Now"*, *"Look What I've Learned"*)
- Blank-title versions so you can create your own focus (e.g., *"I Can Be Brave"*, *"I Can Speak Up"*, *"I Can Work With Others"*)

This flexibility makes it suitable for use:

- At home or school
- With individuals or small groups
- Across all ages and stages (even secondary pupils respond well when it's framed respectfully)

Final Thoughts

The *"I Can"* sheet is a small resource with a big heart. It's about rewriting the inner voice that says *"I can't"* and helping children to see themselves as capable, resilient learners. Sometimes, that starts with just one thing.

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