

Problem Solver



Ben, you approached Fenella and I with a problem today. Your paper aeroplane had come undone and wasn't flying to your satisfaction anymore and you wanted us to sort out the problem for you. We knew that there were many learning opportunities for you if you worked on this problem yourself and so we encouraged you to think of possible solutions. After some encouragement from us you said "Maybe I could do this" adjusting the wings a little and sending it off for a test flight. It hadn't worked and the plane sunk to the ground very quickly. You were not deterred as I heard you say "Maybe if I use some strong sellotape, it holds things together." I explained that we were outside and I wasn't sure where the tape was. "Maybe if I tuck it this way" you said making further adjustments to the wings once again. It was fabulous to hear you pondering the possibilities and making slight adjustments, open to the possibilities of solving this problem yourself, which you eventually did!

What I learnt about you today Ben: Guy Claxton's Learning-Power Dispositions came to mind as I watched you work through your problem today Ben. The **resilience** you demonstrated as you persevered with the problem, keeping going even when the problem continued, until you were happy with the outcome. You showed **resourcefulness** as you called up your logical and rational skills to work things out. Your **reflective** capabilities came to the fore as you revisited the problem, open to changing your plans in light of the results of your last test run and **reciprocity** as you constructively adopted design ideas and methods offered to you by the other pilots nearby. Tamariki need opportunities to problem solve on their own so by stepping back Fenella and I provided Ben with an opportunity to step up into the role of problem solver. When tamariki learn to problem solving skills they gain confidence in their ability to make good decisions for themselves.

How can we support this learning further: His teachers will continue to offer Ben opportunities to practice puzzling over issues, cope with the uncertainty that comes along and ensure that he has the time and space needed to work things through.

Educational Leadership Project: Gillian Fitzgerald