Which teenager

1 explains how admiring another person led to him accepting his own personality?

2 mentions how acquiring a new skill has made him approach other things in a similar way?

3 shared their hopes with someone else?

4 has had a positive impact on other people's lives?

5 admits to still having the same wishes for the future?

6 felt frustrated that he hadn't done something he felt he should have done?

7 made efforts to fit in with his classmates?

8 took note of someone else's experiences of life?

9 admits to struggling with something that is expected of him?

10 acted on some advice he was given?

Lessons for life

A Ben

Making mistakes is something I've always tried to avoid. I used to feel pretty terrible if I thought I'd offended someone by saying the wrong thing, or if I messed up some schoolwork because I'd rushed it. If you do something wrong, you know you're meant to acknowledge it, and I do, even though I find that tough! Anyway, last month I started going to a Chinese class in the village where I live. I don't find Chinese easy to learn quickly; for a start, there's a whole new writing system to memorise, as well as unfamiliar pronunciation and grammar. If I'd sat in the classes and not said anything because I was afraid to make mistakes, I wouldn't have learnt anything. I've also realised I can apply that to other parts of my life, too, and I do.

B Ali

I've always been ambitious – I want to be top of every class, captain of the football team, get a great job and earn loads of money when I finish school. I told my grandma about my plans one day and she said, 'What if that doesn't happen? Does that mean you'll never be happy?' That made me think. My grandparents don't like in a big house and they don't have a car. They don't have a ton of money either. Yet, they love life. I asked Grandma her secret. 'Well, I'm not interested in material things,' she said. 'Look around

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you. Smell those beautiful flowers, feel that sunshine on your back, laugh at Grandad's silly jokes. Don't let go of your dreams,' she advised me, 'but don't be disappointed if things don't quite work out the way you want them to.' I'm still just as ambitious and tough on myself. My character hasn't changed, but now I appreciate the smaller things in life too.

C Nathan

Being shy, like I was as a little kid, isn't great. You see the confident kids at school happy to speak up in class, taking all the best roles in school plays and just generally not being too worried by what other people think of them. I used to think being shy meant I was boring, or didn't have anything very interesting to say. I wished I could be different and tried so hard to be more outgoing or think of stuff to talk about, that I'd come home from school feeling exhausted every day. Then a new boy joined our class. He was quiet and didn't contribute much to conversations, but when he did speak, he was full of amazing ideas and didn't seem bothered by anyone disagreeing with him. That was great. He wasn't in the least concerned about whether people liked him or not either, and I learnt an important life lesson from him: just be yourself.

D Jan

The greatest lesson I've learnt is not to be afraid to ask for help. If you're struggling with something at school and everyone else seems to get it, it can be hard to ask the teacher to explain it again. I used to worry everyone would tease me about it. Then I got a bad mark for a project I did and I knew that if I'd just asked for clarification on what we were supposed to do, I could've done well. Next time there was something I didn't understand, I waited till the end of the class and asked the teacher about it. He said he wished I'd ask in class and then he could explain things better if necessary. He said maybe other students got confused too. So, next time, I spoke up. No one laughed and afterwards one or two people even thanked me – they'd been worried about asking too.

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