8 strength-based activities to uncover and tap into the strengths and interests of students.

1. **“Business Card.”** Have kids create their own “business card” with their name, images, and lists of hobbies, interests, favorite things, curiosities, values, etc. Then invite them to present these to their classmates and display them so that everyone can have a sense of one another’s strengths and interests. (Adapted from Susan Baum, 2021.)
2. [**My Way Expression Style Inventory**](https://gifted.uconn.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/961/2015/10/myway.pdf). 2e expert and strength-based leader Dr. Robin Schader noted in a recent teacher workshop that four choices in exit points can cover a wide range of talents: building, drawing, performing, and writing. Explore student preferences and strengths for showing their mastery with this worksheet from the University of Connecticut that gives students a tool to identify their favorite ways to express themselves, including written, oral, artistic, computer, audio/visual, dramatization, musical, commercial (entrepreneurial), and service.
3. **Visualization Board.** Provide a wide range of materials (such as posters, glue, magazines, photos, markers, crayons, pencils, paint, access to a computer to complete the project if desired) and have every student create a display of what their vision is for their year, including up to three goals. The board can also include representations of their interests and curiosities.
4. **3eMe Join the Dots.** Create a document or [use this template](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1b3-rq8-motrZB4V8C1U6ZHvIGEv-eZhNkcGv8ylkiDU/edit?usp=sharing) with three words in a triangular shape: “Excel”; “Excited”; “Enjoy”. Ask students to create their own lists of subjects, activities, and interests for each of the three categories. Any one item can and should be included in each of the columns if the category applies. Then, ask students to look for common items and draw lines between them—those with the most connections are the highest areas of strength and interest. (Adapted from Galloway et al., 2020.)
5. **Body Tracings.** Use large pieces of paper and pens or chalk and sidewalks to trace each student’s body. Have them decorate their outlines with their strengths using images and words that resonate for them. Then do a gallery walk to see each other’s work. (Adapted from Rawana et al., 2014.)
6. **Strengths Journal/Notebook.** Taking time to notice when we are at our best, happiest, and in a state of flow, can help to build resilience and a growth mindset, as well as understand what to advocate for in our learning and work environment. Each student creates a journal (in a written notebook OR an online tool) to be used throughout the year to capture new strengths and interests, complete strength-based activities, and reflect on what they’re learning about their own strengths and talents.
7. **Treasure Chests.** Have everyone create a personal Treasure Chest or create a class Treasure Chest that includes mementoes, pictures, drawings, objects, positive and uplifting quotes, and anything else that reminds students of their own strengths, flow, creativity, and/or positive experiences. Add to the Treasure Chest throughout the year. Revisit the Treasure Chest at the start of a lesson, before a quiz/test/creative project, or when the day has been more difficult than expected. (Adapted from Eades, 2005)
8. **Mood Boosters.** Identifying strengths and interests across a group builds community as well. Work together with your children to create a list of all the books they love, the songs they like to sing or listen to, etc. UK educator and author of the book Celebrating Strengths: Building Strengths-Based Schools advises to “Build this resource throughout the year as you notice what they particularly enjoy, what calms them down, what cheers them up. You invite them to choose one for the start of a lesson, to prepare for learning or after a bad lesson, to repair everybody’s mood.” (Adapted from Eades, 2005)