

**Dementia
Friends**

An Alzheimer's Society initiative



Memories with Grandma Elf

Animation activities
for 5-11 year olds



**Elf
Day**



Introduction

Why is dementia relevant to young people?

Nearly a third of young people know someone with dementia. As the population ages and the number of people living with dementia increases, more and more young people are likely to be affected through family and friends. Alzheimer's Society is creating a dementia-friendly generation, supporting young people to understand and take positive action on dementia today.

Changing attitudes and building knowledge can help to reduce the loneliness and social isolation that many people with dementia experience. Educating young people about dementia means they can learn about protecting their own wellbeing and the importance of a healthy lifestyle, including diet and exercise which have been shown to be risk factors for dementia. Through learning, young people will become more aware of the importance of care roles, ethical issues and challenges connected with an ageing population. It will also encourage them to become active and responsible citizens.

What is dementia?

- Dementia describes a set of symptoms that may include memory loss and difficulties with thinking, problem-solving or language.
- Dementia is caused when the brain is damaged by diseases such as Alzheimer's disease or a series of strokes.
- It is progressive, which means the symptoms will get worse over time.
- Although dementia mainly affects older people, it is not a natural part of ageing.
- It is possible to live well with dementia.
- There are 850,000 people living with dementia in the UK, with this figure predicted to reach 2 million by 2051 if no action is taken.
- Nearly one third of young people know someone with dementia.

Information for teachers and youth leaders

How to use these resources

These resources have been developed as part of Alzheimer's Society's efforts to create a dementia-friendly generation globally. They will help young people understand what dementia is, what it's like to live with dementia and how they might support someone living with the condition.

The animation and activities within this book are designed to be used flexibly. You can use them as a standalone session, as an introduction to dementia, or part of a scheme of work involving Alzheimer's Society's Creating a dementia-friendly generation teaching packs (Key stage 1-4), which are accredited by the PSHE Association and available for free on alzheimers.org.uk/youngpeople.

Supporting young people who are affected by dementia

The activities in this resource pack provide an insight into living with dementia and require learners to feed back their ideas. Please remind the class that there may be people in your school who know someone living with dementia or have potentially lost someone who had dementia. It is important that everyone feels respected and that the classroom is a secure environment.

Ensure that you have a strategy to listen, reassure and support children who may become upset. Please remind learners that if the content of the lessons causes them to feel upset, worried or frightened, they can share their personal feelings with their teacher, a member of the pastoral team within the school or speak to another adult that they know.

If you, your pupil's parent or guardian would like further information, advice or support on dementia, please contact the [National Dementia Helpline](https://www.nationaldementiahelpline.org) 0300 222 1122 or visit alzheimers.org.uk.



60-90 minutes

Animation Activities

Learning objectives

These activities will help young people learn about:

- How dementia affects someone's ability to do day-to-day tasks
- The Dementia Friends five key messages

Learning outcomes

Learners will understand:

- The types of difficulties people with dementia may experience
- Ways in which they can support someone living with dementia

Understand the 5 key messages:

- Dementia is not a natural part of ageing.
- Dementia is caused by diseases of the brain.
- Dementia is not just about losing your memory.
- It is possible to live well with dementia.
- There is more to the person than the dementia.

Session materials

- Copies of 'Grandma Elf worksheet' (Appendix 1)
- Copies of 'Storyboard worksheet' (Appendix 3)
- Copies of 'Elf-less act' colouring sheets (Appendix 4)
- Plain paper
- Colouring pens/ pencils

 15 minutes

What do you already know about dementia?

This activity will introduce the word 'dementia' and the character of 'Grandma Elf'. It will also establish a baseline of learning for the session.

Give each young person a copy of the Grandma Elf worksheet (Appendix 1) and tell them that Grandma Elf has dementia. Ask each young person to use a coloured pen or pencil to write what they know about dementia around the picture of Grandma Elf. You may like to use the following prompts:

- What part of the body does dementia affect?
- What does someone with dementia look like?
- What age is someone with dementia?
- What things does someone with dementia do?
- What words do you associate with dementia?

Make sure they put names on their worksheets! Once finished, put the Grandma Elf worksheets to one side to come back to later in the session.

 10 minutes

Play the 'Memories with Grandma' animation

Play the animation video to the class/group. You may choose to watch it more than once. Subtitles are available in English, French, Spanish, Chinese and Arabic if relevant.

The animation can be viewed using this link: alzheimers.org.uk/youngpeople

A storyboard of the key points in the animation can be found in Appendix 2 for your reference.



30 minutes

What happens next?

This activity uses creative writing to embed the new information about dementia.

Give each young person a copy of the Storyboard worksheet (Appendix 3). Ask them to draw and write the next part of the story by completing the four story boxes. Prompt the young people with the following questions:

- What happens next with the family?
- What else might Grandma Elf struggle with?
- How could Mo, Mum and Grandad help support her?
- Remember the spotty rug that looked like ants, what other objects in her house might Grandma Elf see differently? (Examples could include a swirly carpet looking like snakes or a black mat looking like a hole)
- How does Grandma Elf feel?

You can invite the young people to share their stories with the rest of the class.



15 minutes

What do you now know about dementia?

This activity will encourage young people to reflect on their learning. You can also use the output to review their level of comprehension for the subject.

Give young people their own worksheets of Grandma Elf. Ask them to use a different coloured pen or pencil and write what they know about dementia around the picture of Grandma. You may like to use the same prompts again:

- What part of the body does dementia affect?
- What does someone with dementia look like?
- What age is someone with dementia?
- What things does someone with dementia do?
- What words do you associate with dementia?



What will your 'Elf-less act' be?

This activity is a vital part of our Dementia Friends programme to show young people that we all can do something, whether it is big or small, to help those around us feel happier, more included and enable people with dementia to live well in their community.

This can be done as a group activity discussing what you can all do, or as a reflective task.

Give each young person a copy of the Elf-less acts colour sheet and some colouring in pencils. In this activity we ask each person to write down what they will go away and do to help those around them and help make a more friendly community for those people.

Prompts that you could use-

- What is an Elf-less Act? It is a selfless action that you can do to help those around you, particularly those living with dementia. Just like elves are Santa's little helpers, what could you do to help those around you?
- For example you could:
 - Make more time to visit your grandparents or someone that you know living with dementia
 - Be more patient with people
 - Be kind and friendly to those around you
 - Tell your family about what you have learnt today

After they have chosen and written down their acts, they can then use the colouring in pencils to personalise them and, if they are allowed to, cut these out so they can be used to create a display. Alternatively they could take them home to their parents to show what they have learnt.

If you do create a display, please do take a photo and send this to us at elfday@alzheimers.org.uk as we would love to see them, and don't forget to fill in the survey at www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/ElfDayDementia-Friends to receive your Dementia Friends badges for the whole group.

Grandma Elf Worksheet



Memories with Grandma Elf Storyboard



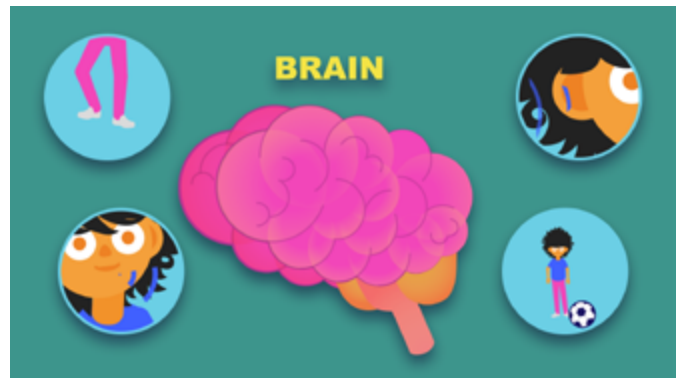
1. Mo is the main character of our story. He loves spending time with his Grandma Elf, Mary, and his Grandad, David.



2. Mo has noticed that his Grandma Elf has started to act a bit differently. She says things she wouldn't normally say and forgets where she's put things.



3. Mo's Grandad reassures him that his Grandma Elf is fine; it's just that she has dementia.



4. Mo isn't sure what dementia is, so Grandad explains that it is caused by diseases of the brain. Depending on where the dementia is in the brain, it can stop some functions from working properly and make things difficult to do.

Memories with Grandma Elf Storyboard



5. Grandma Elf tells Mo that she used to think the spots on their old rug were ants. Grandma Elf is a lot happier now that they've got a new rug.



6. Mo asks Granddad if Grandma Elf has dementia because she is a girl or if it is because she is old. Is dementia something you can catch? None of these things cause dementia, Granddad explains. It is because of diseases of the brain.



7. Mo says that his Grandma Elf really loves to bake cakes. She can sometimes forget the order to use the ingredients so Mo and Granddad read her the recipes. This means that Grandma Elf can continue baking great cakes and share them with her friends at the dementia care centre!



8. Grandma Elf shows Mo a photo album of her as a young woman. Grandma Elf used to be a writer and you can still buy her books in the shops! She read books to Mo when he was younger too.

Memories with Grandma Elf Storyboard



9. Grandma Elf now finds it a bit difficult to write new stories so Mo and Grandad help out. They play music and make sounds to bring the stories to life. Grandma Elf loves to sing although she doesn't always join in with Mo and Grandad.



10. Even though Mo's Grandma Elf has dementia, she is still the same person who likes baking cakes, telling stories and singing. Mo realises that dementia is not scary and offers to give his Grandma Elf a little bit more help and support when she needs it.



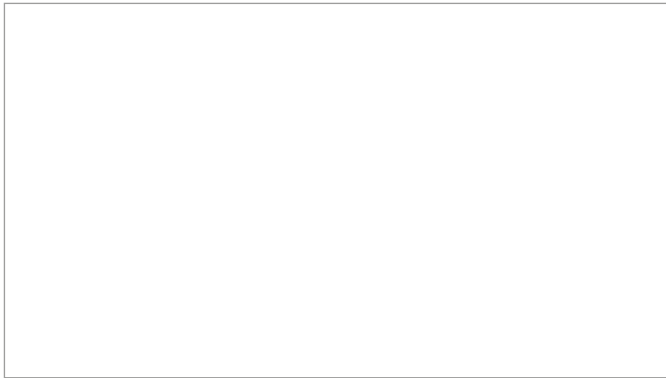
11. On his way home, Mo explains what he has learnt about dementia to his Mum. They remind us of the Dementia Friends five key messages:

- Dementia is not a natural part of ageing.
- Dementia is caused by diseases of the brain.
- Dementia is not just about losing your memory.
- It is possible to live well with dementia.
- There is more to the person than the dementia.

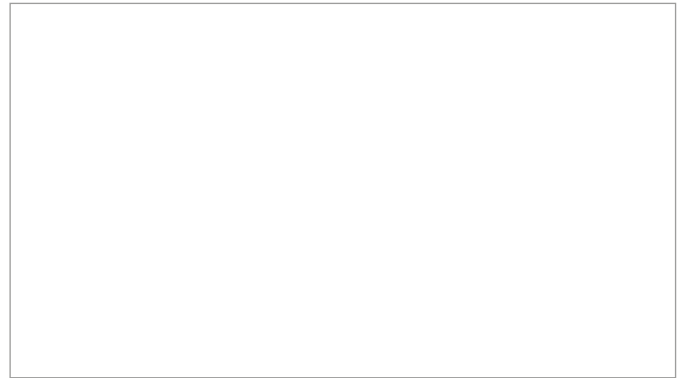


12. Mo tells us that there are lots of things we can do to help people like his Grandma Elf, from talking to your family about what you've learnt today to being more patient. If you know someone with dementia, it's nice to make them feel loved and respected as we all like to feel.

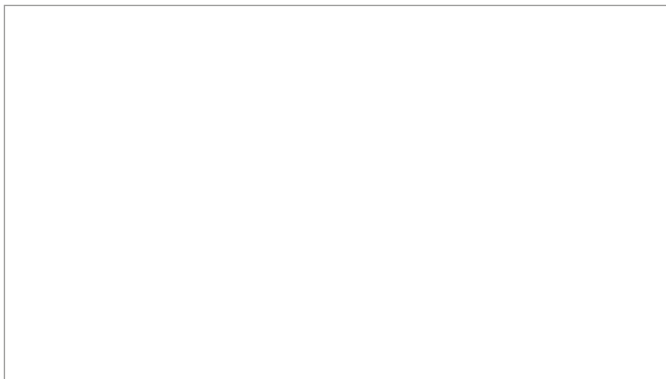
Storyboard Worksheet



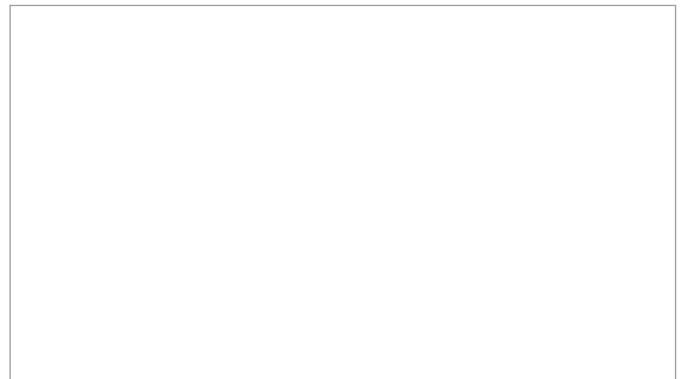
1.



2.



3.



4.

Elf-less acts

Cut out your elf hat, colour it in and write down your elf-less act for everyone to see.

My elf-less act is...

alzheimers.org.uk/elfschools



Alzheimer's Society operates in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Registered charity no. 296645

