

This Works!

A Technology Education Project

More information about the four characters

Background information:

Fun Academy's (www.funacademy.fi) four charming characters and their story have been integrated into an immersive package that will inspire children to explore, play and learn.

The characters' hilarious and funny world will support the concept of lifelong learning and identifying your own strengths.

In a faraway galaxy, there is an unknown planet called Kipinoi, whose inhabitants speak Kiplish. Kipinoi is also the new home planet of these four characters, aka the Kip crew.

Tuka, Waaba, Maco and Soca have travelled to Kipinoi from different corners of the universe in order to learn and develop together. However, education was not the lure that brought them together – they were invited to take part in an adventure and solve a problem. The Kip crew were invited to the This works! project by a message in a bottle. The message was sent by the mysterious Smeeek the Lizard.

The Kip crewmembers represent different learning styles, personalities, interests and backgrounds. Their story and world encourages students to respect diversity, maintain their natural curiosity, and understand that learning really is a lifelong voyage of exploration.

Tuka, Waaba, Maco and Soca believe that they are able to learn all kinds of new things, and also act as role models for the students to do the same. However, learning is not always easy for them either, so they often have to consider their motivation and goals.

The four crewmembers each have different strengths and weaknesses that help them to work and achieve their goals together. Some of their characteristics create challenges for cooperation that the characters need to learn to recognise.

The Kip crew understands that learning is a process, which is why they love research and experimentation, and try to learn from both their own and each others' experiences.



TUKA

Tuka is as brave and strong as a superhero. She is a natural leader and originally comes from the planet Tanaki, where they do a lot of sports and martial arts. Tuka has trained skills that will make her the favourite in all physical competitions. She is energetic, extroverted and spontaneous – sometimes even impulsive. Tuka loves action and adventure.

Sometimes Tuka seems to be a little bit black-and-white and finds it difficult to take criticism.

Her superpowers are strength, speed and fast reflexes.

Tuka's motto: *If I really want something, I can do it!*



MACO

Maco is a creative technological mastermind who enjoys inventing new things. He designs and builds all kinds of contraptions and machines to solve problems. He comes from the green planet Plunny, whose culture has an extra special respect for technology and knowledge.

Maco is witty, productive, disciplined, honest and genuine. He's often concerned about the unresolved problems that he encounters. He can sometimes be self-righteous, critical, inflexible and easily irritable.

His superpowers are creativity and strategic thinking.

Maco's motto: *If you can imagine it, I can make it!*



WAABA

Waaba is a caring, nurturing and fairy-like creature. She is highly intuitive and sensitive, and radiates joy. Waaba always wants to keep the peace, so she's a natural conflict resolver. She can often surprise people with her unusual and truly strange ideas.

Waaba is from the purple gas planet Wenn, where everyone can fly. Her home planet's culture values magic and the power of the mind.

Waaba is very positive, but can also be forgetful and a daydreamer. She finds it difficult to cope with pressure.

Her main superpowers are flying, the ability to become invisible, telepathy and telekinesis.

Waaba's motto: *Everything will be fine as long as we're all friendly!*



SOCA

Soca is everyone's friend. He can also talk to flowers and animals. He is extremely shy and often appears clumsy. Soca easily gets anxious and is constantly alert for any real or perceived danger. With the support of his friends, Soca can transform himself into a courageous team player.

Soca is the only character who is originally from the planet Kipinoi. His home is in a colony deep underground. His people can speak the languages of flowers and animals, and can sustainably harness the energy of nature.

Hiding under Soca's shyness is a funny and playful side that may sometimes get him into trouble.

Soca's special strengths are his ability to create mini hurricanes and to disappear underground. His senses are extremely sharp and he can transform, just like a chameleon.

Soca's motto: *Together everything is better!*



The characters as a learning framework

The characters have been developed as a framework for the children's own activities and to help spell out the concept of 'learning how to learn'. The story also gives tips on how to find your own learning strengths and how to accept that everyone learns at their own pace. Learning together is fun when you understand diversity; when you learn to share your experiences, work as a team and ask for help; and when you know how to support each other when required.

The characters are not intended to be used as instructors or teachers, but rather as a source of inspiration. In accordance with the Fun Learning approach, the children themselves are active agents who help to create the story. Their activity lies at the heart of learning, and their curiosity will often steer and develop learning situations in directions that may be quite surprising to adults.

The characters and TECHNOLOGY

This works! is an excellent cooperation project for young learners. It gives room for dialogue between technology and creativity, and does not isolate technology as a separate island. Although the project provides a preliminary form and framework for activity, we hope that the This works! experience will help children to get excited about the opportunities afforded by technology, as learning revolves around creativity and constructive cooperation.

