

Identifying the thought: what made that noise outside?

Soon after a *situation* (in this example, a noise outside), and shortly before *feelings* (e.g. feeling 'scared'), there are *thoughts*. It can be really hard for adults, and therefore even harder for kids, to catch those thoughts that lead to feelings of being scared. So when discussing this with children, we need to be very specific. In this example, where the situation is a noise outside, it can lead to a specific question that attempts to catch specific thoughts. To support your child to identify their thoughts it is best to ask simple questions – 'What do you think made the noise outside to make you/George feel scared?' or, 'Why do you think you/George felt scared?' Usually, the first answer that comes to children's minds is 'Burglar' or 'Robber', but sometimes it can be 'Monster' or 'Alien'.

Once you have identified your child's 'worry thought', ask them to rate how much they think that thought is true. So if they think the noise is a burglar, how strongly do they think this from not at all (0) to definitely true (10). Below is a rating scale that you can use to help your child with this.

	Worry thoughts:	How true?
Example child	<i>There is a burglar outside who is going to break in and hurt me</i>	10/10
Your child		

