



In my family ...

my mum was an English teacher, and we were always encouraged in the arts, not so much in maths and science. My dad was apparently 'amazing at maths', but never found a use for it after school.

Jane, let's read some stories about women scientists and engineers!

As a kid I was encouraged to ...

build with Lego, play with trucks and do puzzles. I was encouraged to be a 'tomboy' and to get dirty, but I also knew this was different from a lot of other girls.

Jane, I love your passion for engineering and designing solutions!

At primary school ...

I was a teacher-pleaser and a perfectionist. I enjoyed problem-solving in maths, and studying animals and plants in science. I was hopeless at building things though, and no-one at home could really help with those types of projects.

Jane, you've got some great designs, do you need some extra help making them?

Outside of school I was encouraged to ...

explore nature and collect rocks. A big part of my identity was anchored in going camping and fossicking for gems.

Jane, you're a natural geologist! Tell me more about these different rocks and minerals.

At secondary school ...

I was great at biology and chemistry, but hit a wall with maths and physics. I just couldn't understand it and couldn't understand why. I thought I was just good at things that were more 'artsy'. I liked history and English because they focused on people, and I could be creative as well as critical.

Jane, nobody has innate ability. You've hit some challenges, but you need to persist!

In _____ maths _____ class I always felt ...

stupid, and resentful that my teacher never seemed to care that I had absolutely no idea what was going on. I felt like all I could do was memorise the steps, but I had no real understanding ... I hated it!

Jane, you can understand this! Try working through these resources ...

A key person once said ...

some people have brains that are suited to music and mathematics and languages, and others are better at arts and creativity.

and I felt ...

I should probably just give up on music, maths and languages then.

Jane, you can learn anything you want if you are curious and persistent.

At university ...

I discovered that you can't be a great ecologist unless you embrace maths, but then I fell in love with the idea of computer models of rainforests, and suddenly all the maths started to make sense!

Jane, I love your persistence and growth mindset!

When I teach _____ physics _____ I feel ...

nervous. When I teach biology I know that I can make it all come alive and share my enthusiasm, but in physics I have to work hard to overcome my fear of being 'found out' as not knowing it all. I still feel anxious whenever we have to do hands-on stuff too.

Jane, it's okay to not know everything. Just keep learning!