



Anxiety and Resilience Resource Pack

Contents

Introduction.....	p3
Overview.....	p4-5
Identifying Physical and Behavioural Symptoms of Anxiety..	p6
Resources – Books.....	p7
Resources – Internet.....	p8
Appendices.....	p9

Introduction

This resource pack has been created as a means of support for schools should someone in your community be suffering with anxiety . It has been drafted from some resources used to support training delivered by CASY for our counsellors and other professionals. It is purely an introduction and by no means an exhaustive list of resources, but we hope it will serve as a guide to be used as and when you need to.

Overview

Feeling anxious is a fact of life and very few of us can say we have not experienced anxiety in a variety of different scenarios. Sometimes anxiety can be a normal response to a stressful situation, such as diving off a high board at the local swimming pool, but sometimes our feelings of anxiety become overwhelming and start to take over our thought processes and our lives and make it difficult for us to function.

“I wake up in the morning worrying; I go to sleep at night worrying. I feel like my head is going to explode!”

So, what is the function of anxiety? Experiencing anxiety and worry is a perfectly normal emotion and reaction to a stressful event. Anxiety is a very ancient response to threat which activates our flight, fight, freeze response to perceived immediate threat. This response originates deep in our brains and causes a chain reaction that temporarily shuts down our pre-frontal cortex, or thinking brain, and releases hormones such as cortisol and adrenaline. (See Appendix 1) Essentially to help us survive. However, you may find that you become anxious there is no danger, but to you it seems there is or your anxiety is more marked when other people are just nervous.

One of the lasting effects of anxiety and trauma is a feeling of powerlessness. This feeling is amplified in children and young people as essentially, they are dependent on the adults around them to keep them safe and to help them to moderate their emotions. Whilst it is important to help children process unwelcome thoughts it is also important to help them build resilience in order to face adverse experiences in a more balanced way in the future. (See Appendix 2)

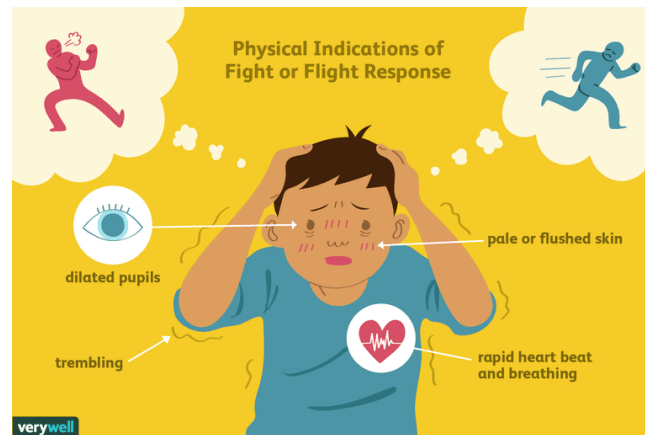
Ideas for processing:

- Sitting in a safe space with the child and allowing them to control the interaction
- Taking time to listen to the child's worries
- Narrative therapy. Allowing the child to create a story or character to externalise their worries
- Normalising worries, being careful not to minimise their reality
- Creative activities – drawing, colouring, painting
- Keeping a worry journal – writing worries down

Ideas for building resilience:

- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- Asking questions such as “What do you think would help you to change this?”, “How would you like us to support you?” What did you think might happen? Was this as bad as you thought?”
- Identifying trusted adults, friends who you can share your worries with in the future
- Reality checking – challenging unhelpful thoughts
- Mindfulness
- FEAR -facing everything and recover

Identifying Physical and Behavioural Symptoms of Anxiety



- Feeling vulnerable
- Tiredness
- Headaches
- Change in sleep patterns
- Intrusive and unwanted thoughts
- “What if.....thinking
- Guilty feelings
- Hypervigilance
- More dreaming than usual
- Feeling sick
- Shaking
- Feeling Hot
- Increased heart rate
- Avoidance – deflecting conversation that are scary/uncomfortable
- Denial
- Regression in behaviour – resorting to babyish behaviour
- Repression – repressing painful emotions
- Projection – in order to distance themselves from the worries children may project their feelings onto other people or objects
- Expressing worries as anger or taking risky behaviours

Resources

Books

Kari Dunn Burron “When my worries get too big”

Davida Hartman “Beating Anxiety. What Young People on the Autistic Spectrum Need to Know”

Dawn Heubner “What to Do When You Worry Too Much: A kid’s Guide to Overcome Anxiety”

Joshua Fletcher “Anxiety Panicking about Panic”

Mike Gordon “I feel frightened”

Margot Sunderland “Willy and The Wobbly House.”

Margot Sunderland “Helping Children Who are Anxious or Obsessional: A Guidebook (Helping Children with Feelings)

Virginia Ironside “The Huge Bag of Worries” (See Appendix 3)

Resources

Internet

<https://www.anxietyuk.org.uk>

<https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/.../anxiety>

<https://www.childline.org.uk/.../managing-your-anxiety>

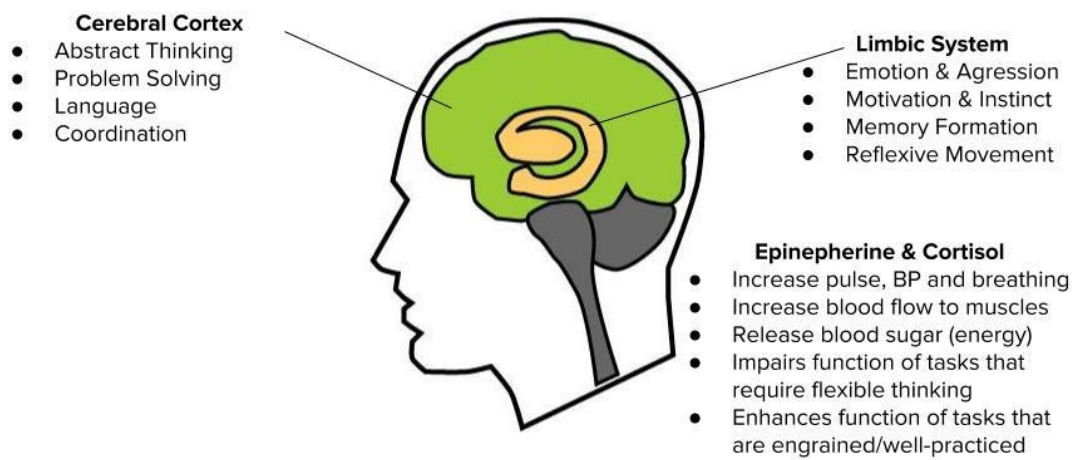
<https://www.giveusashout.org/> (Text crisis support)

<https://www.mind.org.uk/.../self-care-for-anxiety>

<https://www.priorygroup.com>

<https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/conditions/anxiety>

The Neuroscience Of Stress



Appendix 2

AFTER A CRISIS: HOW YOUNG CHILDREN HEAL

Young children, toddlers, and preschoolers know when bad things happen, and they remember what they have been through. After a scary event, we often see changes in their behavior. They may cry more, become clingy and not want us to leave, have temper tantrums, hit others, have problems sleeping, become afraid of things that didn't bother them before, and lose skills they previously mastered. Changes like these are a sign that they need help. Here are some ways you can help them.

S SAFETY FIRST—YOUR YOUNG CHILD FEELS SAFE WHEN YOU

- ☐ Hold your child or let them stay close to you.
- ☐ Tell your child you will take care of them when things are scary or difficult. With children who are learning to talk, use simple words, like saying "Daddy's here."
- ☐ Keep them away from frightening TV images and scary conversations.
- ☐ Do familiar things, like singing a song you both like or telling a story.
- ☐ Let them know what will happen next (to the degree that you know).
- ☐ Have a predictable routine, at least for bedtime: a story, a prayer, cuddle time.
- ☐ Leave them with familiar people when you have to be away.
- ☐ Tell them where you are going and when you will come back.

A ALLOW EXPRESSION OF FEELINGS

- ☐ Young children often "behave badly" when they are worried or scared. Children can "act out" as a way of asking for help. Remember! Difficult feelings=Difficult behavior.
- ☐ Help your child name how they feel: "scared," "happy," "angry," "sad." Tell them it's OK to feel that way.
- ☐ Show your child the right way to behave, like saying "It's OK to be angry but it's not OK to hit me."
- ☐ Help your child express anger in ways that won't hurt, using words, play, or drawings.
- ☐ Talk about the things that are going well to help you and your child feel good.

F FOLLOW YOUR CHILD'S LEAD

- ☐ Different children need different things. Some children need to run around, others need to be held.
- ☐ Listen to your child and watch their behavior to figure out what they need.

E ENABLE YOUR CHILD TO TELL THE STORY OF WHAT HAPPENED DURING & AFTER

- ☐ Having a story helps your child make sense of what happened and cope better with it.
- ☐ Children use play to tell their story. For example, they may make popping sounds to show what they experienced. They may hide in the closet to show what it was like to shelter-in-place.
- ☐ Join your child in showing and telling not only what happened, step by step, but also how you both felt.
- ☐ As you tell the story, follow your child's lead. When the story is difficult, your young child may need breaks: running around, being held, playing something else. This is OK. They will come back to the story when they are ready.
- ☐ It can be hard to watch your children's play or listen to their stories of what happened. Get support if it is too hard for you to listen without becoming upset.

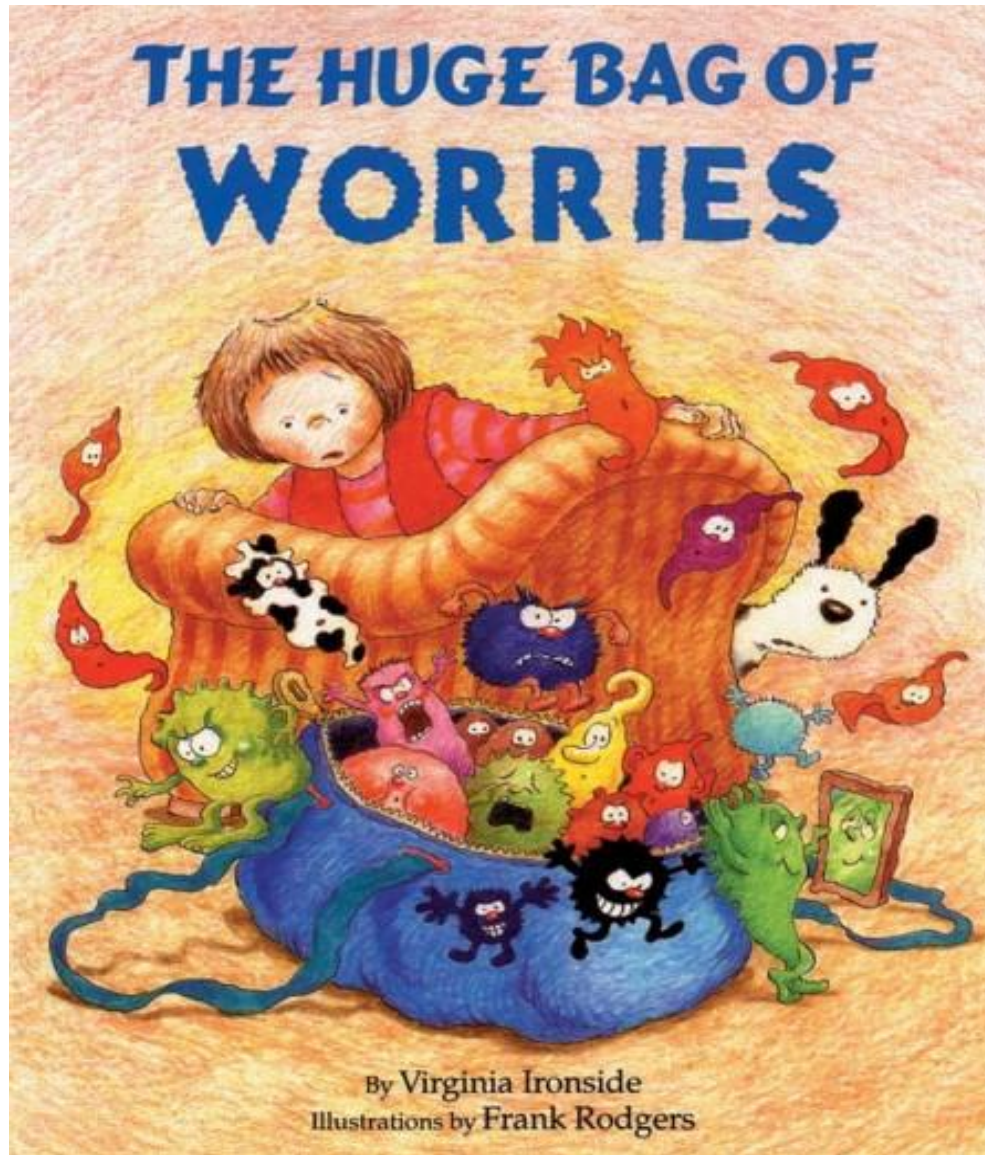
T TIES—RECONNECT WITH SUPPORTIVE PEOPLE, COMMUNITY, CULTURE & RITUALS

- ☐ Simple things like a familiar bedtime story, a song, a prayer, or family traditions remind you and your child of your way of life and offer hope.
- ☐ If you belong to a group, like a church, try to find ways of reconnecting with them.
- ☐ You can help your child best when you take care of yourself. Get support from others when you need it.

Y YOUR CHILD NEEDS YOU

- ☐ Reassure your child that you will be together.
- ☐ It is common for children to be clingy and worried about being away from you.
- ☐ Just being with your child, even when you can't fix things, helps your child.
- ☐ If you need to leave your child, let them know for how long and when you are coming back. If possible, leave something that belongs to you, or a picture that your child can have.

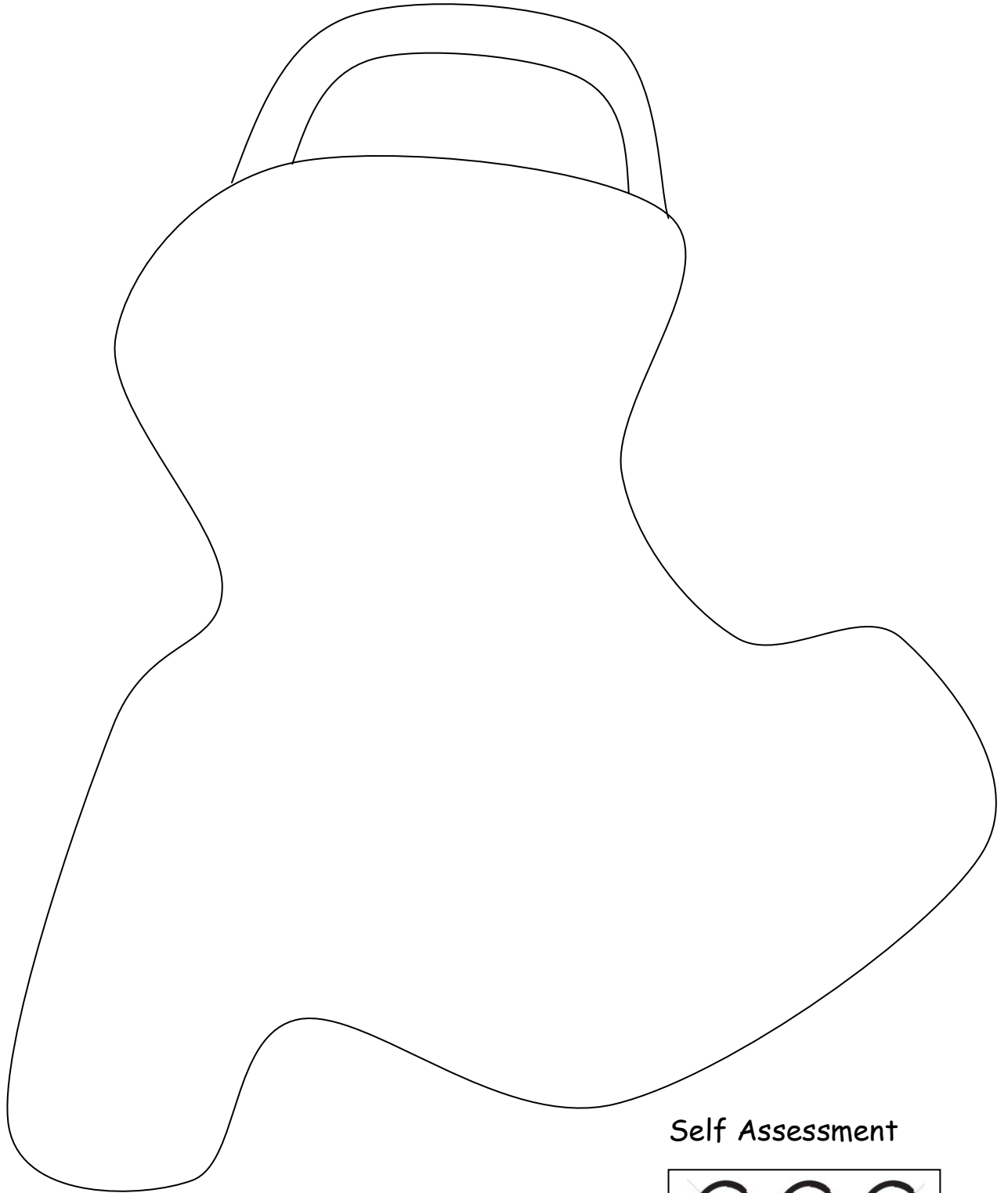
The Huge Bag Of Worries



Name:

Class:

What is in your bag of worries?



Self Assessment



Colour in the Adjectives.

Old

Huge

Cat

Table

small

best

Bigger

Talk

late

Pencil

Lucky

Worse

Busy

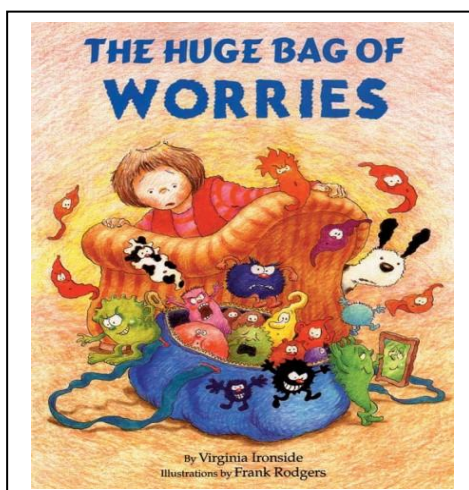
Self Assessment



The Huge Bag of Worries.

True or False?

	True	False
The author writes the story.		
The illustrator draws the pictures.		
Jenny lived with her mum and sister.		
Jenny had a pet dog called Loftus.		
Jenny did not like going to school.		
Jenny's worries built up into a HUGE bag.		
Only Jenny worries about things.		
An old man helped Jenny with her worries.		
An old lady sorted Jenny's worries out into groups.		
Jenny's bag of worries was blue.		
It was raining in the story.		
The author of this book is Virginia Ironside.		



Self Assessment

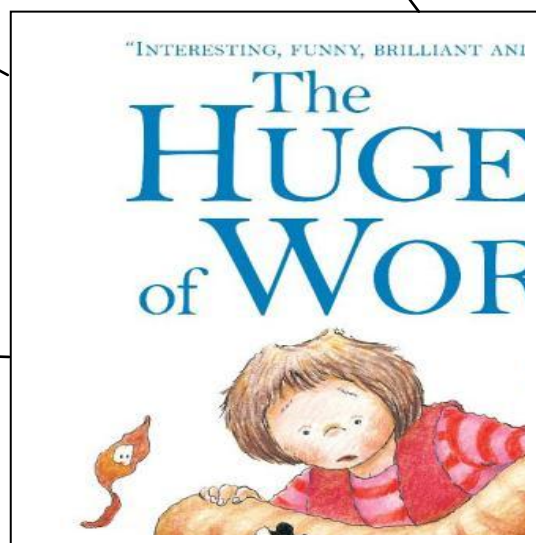


Describe the characters and objects

With as many adjectives as you can!!

Add more arrows if you need to...

Brown hair



Full



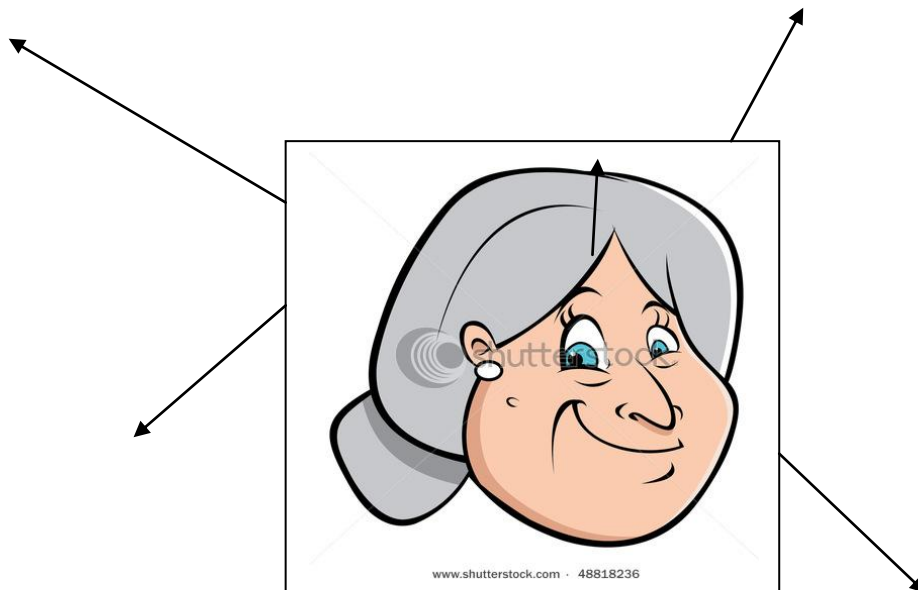
Self Assessment



Multi-coloured



Elderly



Self Assessment



Colour in the Nouns.

Big

Bad

Loftus

Bag

Noisy

Cross

Teacher

Claire

Alone

Just

House

Playground

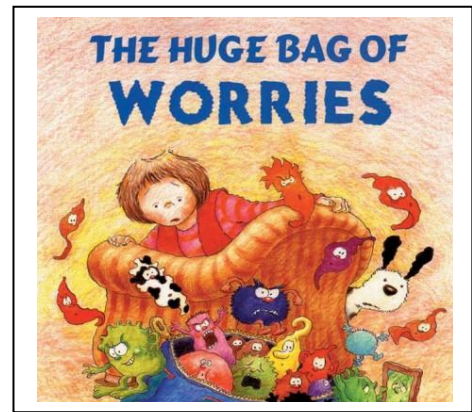
Great

Self Assessment



The Huge Bag of Worries

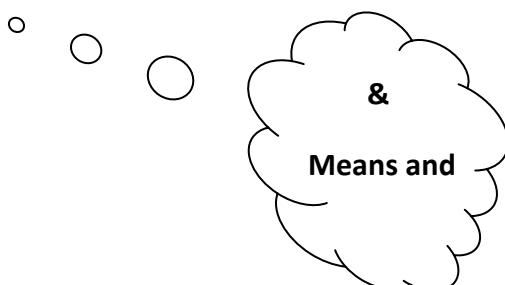
Reading Comprehension.



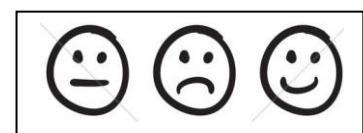
Tick the right box:

Who was the main character in the story?	<input type="checkbox"/> Jenny <input type="checkbox"/> Sam
Did Jenny like her school teacher?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
What sport does Jenny do?	<input type="checkbox"/> Tennis <input type="checkbox"/> Swimming
Did Jenny have a brother or sister or both?	<input type="checkbox"/> Brother <input type="checkbox"/> Sister <input type="checkbox"/> Both
Who helped jenny with her worries?	<input type="checkbox"/> Old lady <input type="checkbox"/> Old man
How were the worries making jenny feel?	<input type="checkbox"/> Happy <input type="checkbox"/> Gloomy <input type="checkbox"/> Angry
Jenny described the worries as a horrible shadow she couldn't get rid of.	<input type="checkbox"/> True <input type="checkbox"/> False
Jenny was very happy at the end of the story.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Helpful hints:



Self Assessment



The Huge Bad of Worries Wordsearch.

W	O	R	R	I	E	S	F	T	B
B	L	M	Z	X	R	A	R	Y	A
R	D	K	W	C	E	P	I	U	G
O	N	L	Q	V	Q	O	E	J	L
T	B	L	A	I	S	L	N	K	J
H	E	A	L	T	H	M	D	M	E
E	D	D	G	A	D	B	G	D	N
R	D	Y	F	E	F	C	D	F	N
A	S	D	S	C	H	O	O	L	Y
H	U	G	E	F	D	A	S	A	E

Words to find:

WORRIES

BAG

HUGE

JENNY

FRIEND

SCHOOL

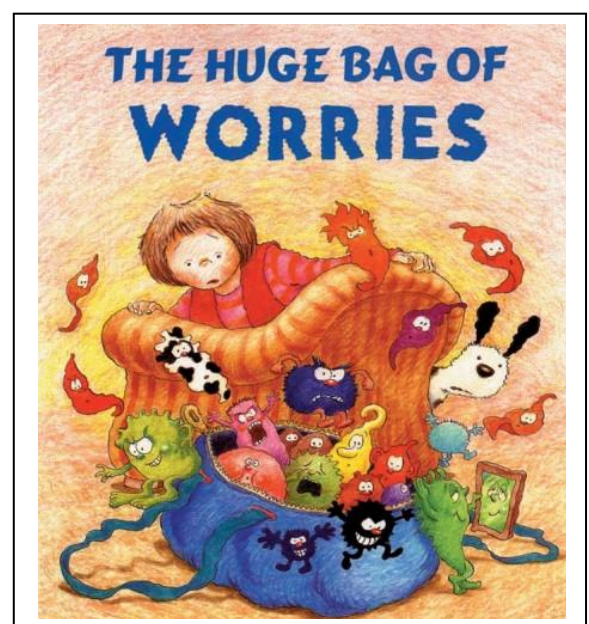
BROTHER

HEALTH

LADY

OLD

Self Assessment



Colour in the Verbs.

Big

Bad

Chat

Worry

Talk

Cross

Frown

Cry

Alone

Just

Run

Hide

Great

Self Assessment



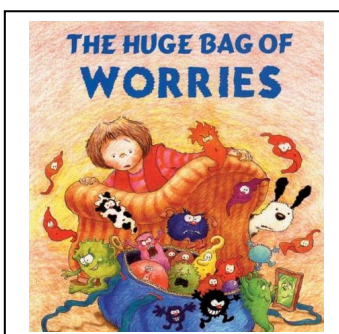
Book Review

The Huge Bag of Worries

In your own words, what was the book about?

Who was the main character? What was he/she like?

Did you like the book? Why was this?



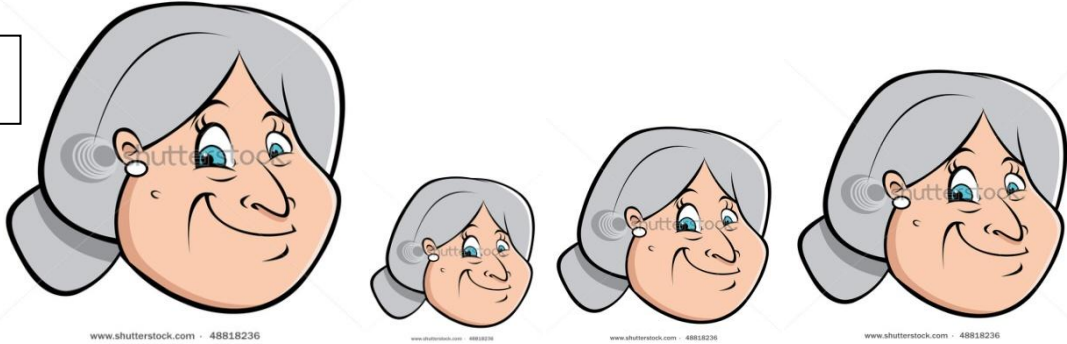
Self Assessment

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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Order the characters

Cut out the characters and order them by putting the smallest first...

1



2



3



Dictionary Definitions

The Huge bag of worries

Worries _____

Huge _____

Lovely _____

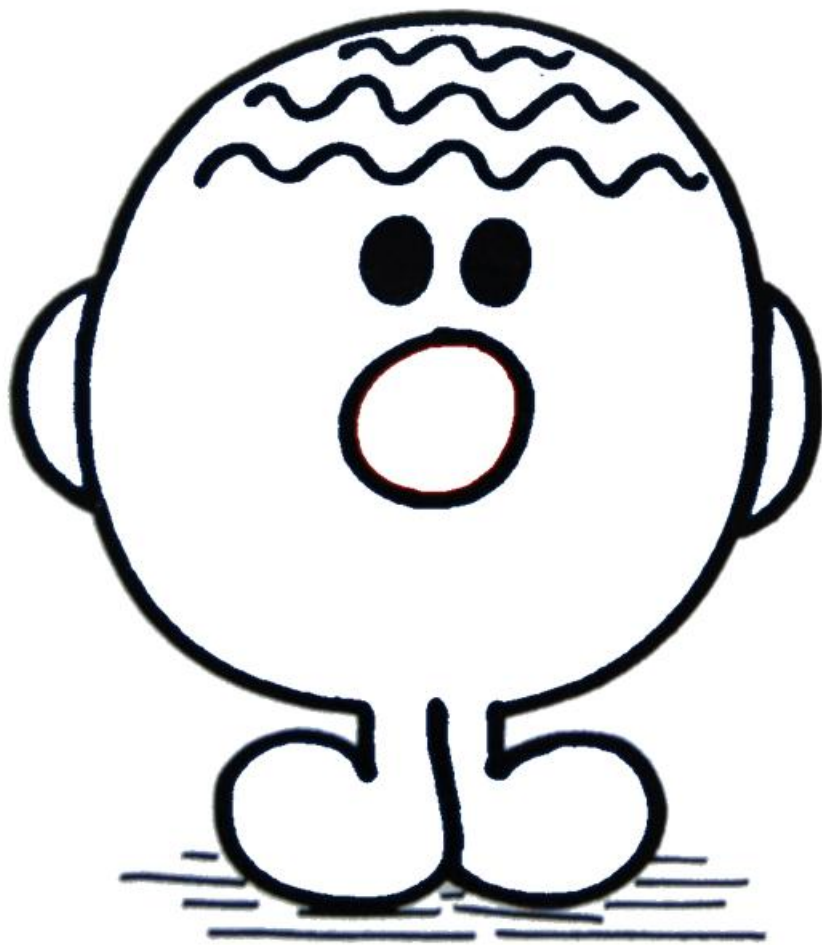
Gloomy _____

Argument _____

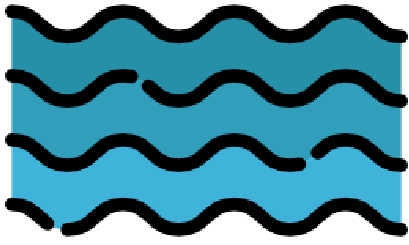
Horrible _____

Author _____

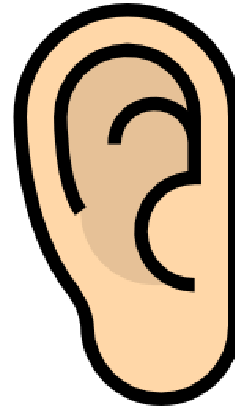
MR. WORRY



Worry Coping Cards



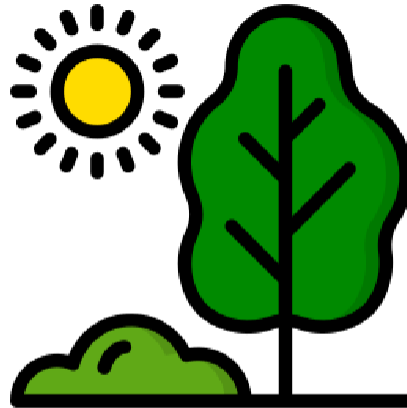
Take Deep Breaths



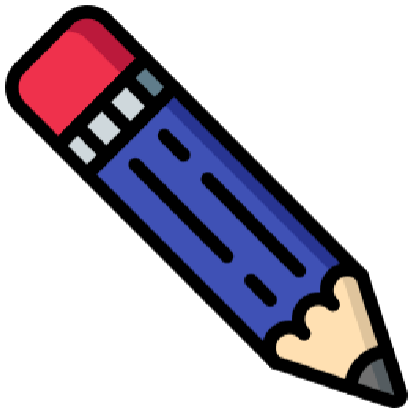
Stop and Listen



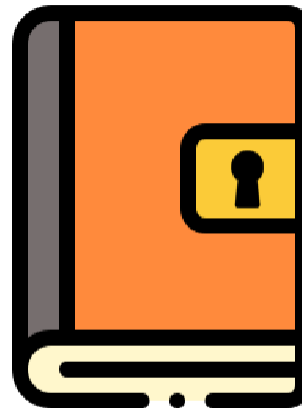
Draw Your Worry



Favorite Place



Write a Happy Ending



Journal

Worry Coping Cards

Stop and Listen

Spend a few minutes just listening to the sounds around you. What sounds do you hear? Are they loud or soft? Pay special attention to interesting sounds you've never noticed before.

Take Deep Breaths

Breathe in slowly through your nose and hold the air in your lungs. When you are ready to release the air, put your lips together and pretend like you are blowing through a straw. Do this 20 times.

Favorite Place

Think of a place where you feel calm, comfortable, and happy. It may be a beach, a forest, your bedroom, or somewhere else. Imagine what this place looks and sounds like and imagine how good you feel when you're there.

Draw Your Worry

Draw a picture about your worry. Here are some ideas:

- What you look like when you're worried and when you're calm.
- What you can do to stop worrying.
- Something you are worrying about.

Journal

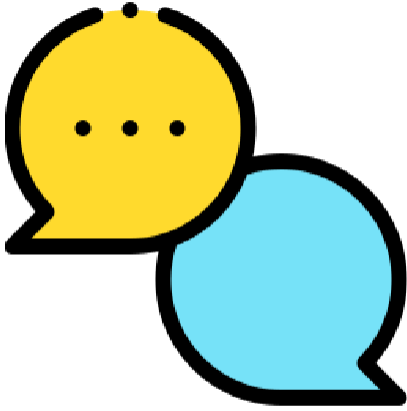
Write about your worries. Use these questions to get started:

- What are you worried about?
- What do you do when you're worried?
- What happened the last time you worried about something similar?

Write a Happy Ending

Usually when you worry, you imagine things ending badly. Try writing about your worry, but make the ending positive. Write about how you solve a problem, relax, start feeling better, or handle your worry.

Worry Coping Cards



Talk About It



Think About What Is



Get Moving



Listen to Music



Practice a Hobby



Worry Coping Cards

Think About What Is

When you worry, you probably think of bad things that *could* happen. Instead, try thinking of what *actually* happens most of the time. For example, instead of thinking, “I’m worried I will miss my school bus”, try thinking “I’ve never missed my bus before.”

Talk About It

Talking about your feelings is one of the most powerful ways to control them. Tell a trusted person, like a parent, friend, teacher, or counselor what you’re worried about. Try using this sentence to get started:

“I feel worried when _____.”

Listen to Music

Enjoying your favorite music can take your mind off what’s worrying you. Focus your attention on the instruments, lyrics, and voices in the song.

Get Moving

Get your energy out by being active. Play a sport, ride your bike, dance, swim, go for a walk, or run around until you’re tired.

Practice a Hobby

Do any hobby that you think might distract you from your worry. Play an instrument, paint, practice a new skill, play a game, or do anything else that you enjoy.

Coping Skills

Anxiety

Deep Breathing

Deep breathing is a simple technique that's excellent for managing emotions. Not only is deep breathing effective, it's also discreet and easy to use at any time or place.

Sit comfortably and place one hand on your abdomen. Breathe in through your nose, deeply enough that the hand on your abdomen rises. Hold the air in your lungs, and then exhale slowly through your mouth, with your lips puckered as if you are blowing through a straw. The secret is to go slow: Time the inhalation (4s), pause (4s), and exhalation (6s). Practice for 3 to 5 minutes.



Progressive Muscle Relaxation

By tensing and relaxing the muscles throughout your body, you can achieve a powerful feeling of relaxation. Additionally, progressive muscle relaxation will help you spot anxiety by teaching you to recognize feelings of muscle tension.

Sit back or lie down in a comfortable position. For each area of the body listed below, you will tense your muscles tightly, but not to the point of strain. Hold the tension for 10 seconds, and pay close attention to how it feels. Then, release the tension, and notice how the feeling of relaxation differs from the feeling of tension.

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| Feet | Curl your toes tightly into your feet, then release them. |
| Calves | Point or flex your feet, then let them relax. |
| Thighs | Squeeze your thighs together tightly, then let them relax. |
| Torso | Suck in your abdomen, then release the tension and let it fall. |
| Back | Squeeze your shoulder blades together, then release them. |
| Shoulders | Lift and squeeze your shoulders toward your ears, then let them drop. |
| Arms | Make fists and squeeze them toward your shoulders, then let them drop. |
| Hands | Make a fist by curling your fingers into your palm, then relax your fingers. |
| Face | Scrunch your facial features to the center of your face, then relax. |
| Full Body | Squeeze all muscles together, then release all tension. |

What is anxiety?

1.

Why do we get anxious?

Our bodies have a built-in survival instinct from over 50,000 years ago, when we might have been living in the jungle. Let's go back to those days. Imagine you are walking through the jungle and a tiger jumps out in front of you.

Your life is in danger, so you need to run.



Our brain focuses on getting away

Our body starts to sweat

Our heart beats faster and our breathing gets quicker

We might get butterflies in our stomach, feel slightly sick or even be sick

2.

What happens when we get anxious?

When we see something scary, we tell our brains something frightening is about to happen.

Our brain then gives our body instructions so that it is ready to run fast.

3.

These changes are useful when you're in danger

These changes can save our lives when a tiger is chasing us in the jungle, as they help us to react quickly and run away.

4.

When do you feel anxious?

You may be seeing 'tigers' where they do not exist. For example, do you get these anxious feelings at the thought of starting the school day, going to the playground, attending birthday parties or getting lost?

When you get these feelings, you may want to try and stay away from the place that makes you feel like this, because you believe that something scary will happen.

5.

Do you feel anxious at night?

You may get these feelings at night, and struggle with nightmares.

Anxiety can leave you lying awake at night, worrying about what you could have done differently that day and what frightening things might happen the next day. You may also worry about the future and possible frightening things that could happen.

6.

It is important to let someone know

If you feel anxious, it is important to talk to your parents, guardians or teachers. Let them know how you feel so that they know how they can support you.

Don't worry - they will be able to help so that you don't have to deal with these feelings all the time.

Coping Skills

Anxiety

Challenging Irrational Thoughts

Anxiety can be magnified by irrational thoughts. For example, the thoughts that “something bad will happen” or “I will make a mistake” might lack evidence, but still have an impact on how you feel. By examining the evidence and challenging these thoughts, you can reduce anxiety.

Put thoughts on trial. Choose a thought that has contributed to your anxiety. Gather evidence in support of your thought (*verifiable facts only*), and against your thought. Compare the evidence and determine whether your thought is accurate or not.

Use Socratic questioning. Question the thoughts that contribute to your anxiety. Ask yourself:

“Is my thought based on facts or feelings?”

“How would my best friend see this situation?”

“How likely is it that my fear will come true?”

“What’s *most likely* to happen?”

“If my fear comes true, will it still matter in a week? A month? A year?”

Imagery

Your thoughts have the power to change how you feel. If you think of something sad, it’s likely you’ll start to feel sad. The opposite is also true: When you think of something positive and calming, you feel relaxed. The imagery technique harnesses this power to reduce anxiety.

Think of a place that you find comforting. It could be a secluded beach, your bedroom, a quiet mountaintop, or even a loud concert. For 5 to 10 minutes, use all your senses to imagine this setting in great detail. Don’t just think fleetingly about this place--really imagine it.



What do you see around you? What do you notice in the distance? Look all around to take in all your surroundings. Look for small details you would usually miss.



What sounds can you hear? Are they soft or loud? Listen closely to everything around you. Keep listening to see if you notice any distant sounds.



Are you eating or drinking something enjoyable? What is the flavor like? How does it taste? Savor all the tastes of the food or drink.



What can you feel? What is the temperature like? Think of how the air feels on your skin, and how your clothes feel on your body. Soak in all these sensations.



What scents are present? Are they strong or faint? What does the air smell like? Take some time to appreciate the scents.