

***Worries Are Not Forever* by Elizabeth Verdick for Students in Kinder-2<sup>nd</sup> Grades**

Topic	Details
Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name your feelings of worry and sadness.</li> <li>• Identify physical changes that occur with worry and sadness.</li> <li>• Learn tools to cope with anxious thoughts, worries, and sadness.</li> </ul>
Preparing for Lesson (45 minutes)	<p>If done in the classroom:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review lesson plan, collect materials needed, and read the book at least once.</li> <li>• Contact the teacher to set time to teach the lesson virtually or in the classroom.</li> <li>• Prepare parent letter in an email for the teacher to send to parents.</li> </ul> <p>For reading at home:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purchase and review the book, <i>Worries Are Not Forever</i> by Elizabeth Verdick.</li> <li>• Review the lesson plan and parent letter.</li> </ul>

<p>Conversation Starter (5-7 minutes)</p>	<p>Today we are going to talk about worries and sadness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who can tell me what feeling sad feels like? Raise your hand if you feel or have felt sad.</li> <li>• What does it mean to be worried? Raise your other hand if you feel or have felt worried.</li> </ul> <p>We all have times when we are worried or sad. Recently we've all experienced changes in our lives. What are some of the changes we have experienced? These changes may cause us to be worried and unsure. Let's do a feeling check.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you are feeling a little sad show me 1 finger and if you feel really sad show me 5 fingers.</li> <li>• Ok, let's check in about worries. Show me 1 finger for a little worried and 5 for really worried.</li> </ul> <p>To help us with our feelings, we are going to learn a technique called <b>Belly Breathing</b>. Follow these steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Imagine a balloon on your belly. Put a hand on top of your belly.</li> <li>• Breathe in slowly through your nose. As you do, count to three, pausing between each number. Feel the imaginary balloon filling with air.</li> <li>• Breathe out slowly through your mouth. Count to five, pausing between each number. Imagine that the balloon is getting flat. Picture your negative feelings leaving your body as you breathe out.</li> <li>• Repeat belly breathing several times. Notice your muscles relaxing and your worried thoughts slowing down.</li> </ul> <p>When you are feeling sad or worried, you can do belly breathing to make yourself feel better.</p>
<p>Introduction to Book and Reading (5-7 minutes)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do the feelings check again for sadness and worries. See if students are feeling less sad or worried as a result of the belly breathing.</li> <li>• As you read, have them notice ways they can calm their worries.</li> <li>• Discuss the pictures and ask what they see on the illustrations.</li> </ul>
<p>Discussion Questions (5-10 minutes depending on grade level)</p>	<p>As you read, ask the following questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What were some of the worries the kids in the story had?</li> <li>2. What worries do you have?</li> </ol> <p>What are some tools you can use to help you with your worries?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Who can you talk to if you are worried?</li> <li>4. Think about a time you had a worry that doesn't worry you anymore. What changed?</li> </ol>

<p>Activity Option 1: (10-15 minutes)</p>	<p><b>Happy Brain, Worry Brain</b> Materials: construction paper, markers, crayons, magazines, pencils</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fold a piece of construction paper in half. Label one side “Happy Brain” and the other side “Worry Brain”.</li> <li>• Have students write, make a collage, or draw things that fit into each category.</li> <li>• This activity allows students to identify their worries. It’s also a great way to help individuals develop coping skills by identifying what makes them happy.</li> </ul>
<p>Activity Option 2: (15-20 minutes)</p>	<p><b>Worry Box</b> Materials: tissue box or other small box per student, paper, pen, pencil, markers, crayons, construction paper, stickers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use a tissue box or other small box with a slit in the top. Have students decorate the box with markers, crayons, stickers etc. Ask students to write worries on a slip of paper to “take the worries out of your head and place it in the box.”</li> <li>• It’s a powerful moment when a child can remove one of the slips, read about a specific worry, and then tear it up because the problem is gone.</li> </ul>
<p>Three Minute Huddle (3 minutes)</p>	<p>It’s important to remember that everyone has worries, but remember, you are bigger than your worries!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider a worry you are having now.</li> <li>• Think about what ideas from the book you could use to deal with this worry.</li> <li>• Share with someone what you plan to try to deal with your worry.</li> </ul>