

# SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

## SOCIAL SKILLS LESSON PLAN

### CASEL COMPETENCY: SELF-MANAGEMENT

### SOCIAL SKILL: STRESS MANAGEMENT

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#### BOOK INFORMATION

Book title: *Wemberly Worried*

Author: Kevin Henkes

Publisher and date of publication: Greenwillow Books, 2010

ISBN: 978-0061857768

Number of pages: 32

Reading level: 1-2

Interest level: K-2

#### BOOK SYNOPSIS

Every day, Wemberly worried about all kinds of things. Her parents and grandma were worried about Wemberly worrying. She worried about things at home that could break and things at school that could go wrong. She worried about her favorite doll and would rub the doll's ears to calm herself down. Then, she worried about wearing down the ears so much that there wouldn't be any ears left at all. Although she worried that nobody would come to her party on her birthday, everyone came. Then she worried that there would not be enough cake for everyone. On the first day of school, Wemberly had a long list of worries. The teacher introduced Wemberly to a girl name Jewel. At first they just looked at each other, then they introduced their dolls. They sat next to each other all day. Wemberly said she would come back to school tomorrow, and not to worry about it.

The book could be used to help students manage their stress. Students need to understand that everyone has worries, but we cannot let worries take up too much space in our life. We can find calming self-soothing activities and people who support us. This makes it easier to handle our worries.

#### LESSON OBJECTIVE

The goal of this lesson is for students to understand that worrying is natural and common. Students will learn ways to handle their worries through mindfulness and self-soothing strategies and building connections with others.

#### LESSON MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION

Pre reading activity:

- A jar
- Pieces of paper
- Pencil

## K-2 Lesson Materials

- A small stone (one that fits in their pocket) for each child
- Acrylic paint of different colors for each child
- Paintbrushes

## 3-6 Lesson Materials:

- Jars (or clear plastic cups) for each child and teacher
- Strip of paper for each child and teacher
- A pencil for each child
- Markers for each child

## KEY VOCABULARY AND CONCEPTS

**Worry:** To feel or show fear and concern because we remember something bad that happened in the past or that we fear something bad could happen.

**Self-soothing strategies:** Ways you can calm yourself; possibly humming a song, thinking of a safe and relaxing place, hugging someone you trust and know will take care of you, telling yourself (self-talk) that things will be OK, taking a deep breath and letting the breath out slowly.

## PRE-READING ACTIVITY

Show the students your jar. Explain that this is your worry jar and that you have some worries. Write down a few of your worries on a piece of paper and put it in the jar. Explain that when you want to worry you do not have to because it is in the jar. Explain that it can be helpful to pick a time during the day- and only that time-where you are allowed to go back into the jar and worry about these thoughts. When the time is up, you put the worry back in the jar. Model this.

Explain that you will be reading a book about a girl who worries **all** the time. Ask the students to pay attention to what she does to help manage her worries.

## READ THE BOOK

## POST READING DISCUSSION

In this story Wemberley worries, but other people have worries too.

- Who else worries?

Explain that often people worry—some more than others—and that we can be affected by others' worries.

Ask the class,

- What did Wemberley do before school started to help her with her worries?
- Did it work?

Explain that there may be no perfect solution, but we can try different strategies until we find one that works.

Ask the students,

- Have you ever had worries like Wemberley's?
- What do you do to help yourself feel better?

In the book there are people who care about Wemberley and want her to feel better.

- Who cares about you?
- How does it feel when you know that others care about you?

Wemberly meets a friend.

- What do they have in common?
- How might this friendship help Wemberly with her worries?

Explain that sometimes it helps when we have friends who understand how we feel.

Ask the students,

- What they do together?

Explain that when we are fearful it helps to have the support of another person who understands how we are feeling. With the support of another person, we are better able to face our fears.

## POST READING ACTIVITY

K-2:

Ask students to make relaxation stones. Explain that just as Wemberly rubbed her doll's ears, we can rub a relaxation stone when we are worrying. Explain that we can keep them in our pockets and rub them when needed. Show the students how you use your relaxation stone. Use an example of what you are worried about, then rub your worry stone. Explain that when you focus on what the stone feels like, you are not focusing on your worry.

Pass out a stone to each students (or, if possible, have the students go outside and find their own stones). Divide students into small groups. Give each group of students cups with different colors of acrylic paints and a paint brush for each color. Ask the students to paint their initials on the side of the rock and then paint the rest of their stone. After the paint is dried, ask the students to take their stone home with them and then to bring the stone to school the next day. Discuss how they used their stones. Remind the students about focusing on the smooth surface of the stone and letting go of their worry while they concentrate on the stone.

3-6:

Ask students to make their own worry jars. Explain that when they feel worried about something, they can write down the worry and put it in the jar so the worry has a place to go. Pass out a jar and a piece of paper to each student. Ask the students to cut the paper to fit on the jar as a label. Then ask them to write "My Worry Jar." Ask the students to think of one time a day or week (whatever you deem appropriate) when they can open the jar, pull out their worry, and spend a few minutes thinking about their worry. Explain that they have the option of thinking about their worry (if they chose to do so), but only during that specific time. When the worry jar is not open, remind the students that they do not need to worry about it, because the worry is inside the jar. Ask students to write one of their worries on the strip of paper, then place the strip of paper in the worry jar. Tell the students to put the jar in a safe place at home.

## CLOSURE

Remind the students that worrying is natural. Many people have worries. Explain that we can handle our worries by either rubbing the worry stone or putting the worry in the "worry jar."

Explain that we can manage our worries by spending time with people who care about us, talking about our worries, doing things we enjoy, taking deep breaths and letting our breath out slowly, listening to relaxing music, and by looking around us and seeing and noticing things that are beautiful and interesting. We can do things to help us manage our worries.



Worry is like a rocking chair:  
it gives you something to do but  
never gets you anywhere.

*– Erma Bombeck*