



Dragons Can't Spell

Lesson Plans Aligned to the Alberta Program of Studies

Lesson #: 1

Grade Level: 2

Lesson Title: Comprehension Questions & Talking about Anxiety

Subject: English Language Arts

Expected Length: Approximately 50-65 minutes

Learning Objectives:

1. Students will orally answer comprehension questions related to “Dragons Can’t Spell”
2. Students will begin to think about anxiety and how it affects their thoughts and bodies
3. Students will begin to think about the differences between nervous feelings and anxious feelings

Materials Needed:

- “Dragons Can’t Spell” picture book
- Chart paper or board to write on
- Assessment Check Sheet (See Appendix 1)
- Venn Diagram (See Appendix 2)

Specific Outcome Statements: ELA

1

- 1.1 (a) contribute relevant ideas and information from personal experiences to group language activities
- 1.1 (c) express or represent ideas and feelings resulting from activities or experiences with oral, print and other media texts
- 1.2 (a) connect own ideas and experiences with those shared by others

2

- 2.1 (e) apply a variety of strategies, such as asking questions, making predictions, recognizing relationships among story elements and drawing conclusions
- 2.2 (e) connect situations portrayed in oral, print and other media texts to personal and classroom experiences
- 2.2 (i) express thoughts or feelings related to the events and characters in oral, print and other media texts

Introduction (Before You Read “Dragons Can’t Spell”):

Approx. Time Needed (10 minutes)

- Before you begin reading the story, ask the students a variety of questions that are related to the story’s themes and ideas. These introductory questions will help the students to connect prior knowledge and experiences to the plot points and character dilemma. Here are some ideas of questions you can ask:
 - Have you ever had a silly dream?*
 - Have you ever had a nightmare? How did you feel after you woke up? Did you tell someone about your nightmare?*
 - Have you ever felt nervous about doing something new? How did you get those nervous feelings to go away? (If the students are having trouble thinking of new experiences, give a few examples of situations that might cause nervousness at their age): a new baby entering the family, participating in a play, or competing in a Track & Field event.*

Reading the Story: Comprehension Questions

Approx. Time Needed (15-20 minutes)

- As you begin reading through “Dragons Can’t Spell”, keep the students engaged and thinking by asking open-ended questions. Here are some ideas of questions you can ask:
 - Why was Jimmy having a nightmare? What was his nightmare about?*
 - How would you feel if you had forgotten how to spell?*
 - What do you think of Jimmy’s plan to send Fire Breath to school in his place?*
 - Why doesn’t Jimmy want to go to school? Have you ever felt like not coming to school? What helped you decide to come to school?*
 - (As Fire Breath is walking down the sidewalk) How do you think Fire Breath is feeling?*
 - (As Fire Breath is looking up at the school and as he’s sitting in Jimmy’s seat) What kind of emotion/s is Fire Breath feeling? What clues are given to show you how he feels?*
 - Is Fire Breath really at school or is this happening in Jimmy’s imagination?*
 - What do you think the word “anxious” means?*
 - Jimmy thinks that something bad is going to happen when he says “oh no...” What do you think is going to happen?*
 - What made Jimmy decide to go to the spelling bee after all?*

- *What prize does Jimmy win? Why is he giving it to Fire Breath? Is it okay that Jimmy didn't win 1st place? How do you feel when you win second place instead of first?*
- *How do you think Jimmy was able to overcome his anxious feelings?*

**Depending on the energy levels of your students in this moment, you may want to complete the next portion of the lesson at their desks. However, if they are still sitting and paying attention, feel free to complete it as a whole group activity.*

Venn Diagram & Nervousness vs Anxiousness:

Approx. Time Needed (25-35 minutes)

3. After reading “Dragons Can’t Spell”, create a Venn Diagram of Jimmy and Fire Breath’s feelings and anxious symptoms. Discuss the bodily feelings of anxiousness: Ask:
 - *What does your body feel like when you’re feeling anxious or nervous?*
 - *Can you think of a time you were anxious and your body started to feel different? What happened and how did your body feel?*
4. Explain that Jimmy and Fire Breath both felt anxious, but they felt anxiety in different ways. For this next question, feel free to display their answers in a large Venn diagram (as a whole group activity) comparing the two different reactions (refer to the chart below). You can also hand out a small Venn diagram to each student, if you want the students to complete it individually.
 - *Ask: How does Jimmy’s body show anxiety, and how does Jimmy imagine Fire Breath’s body showing anxiety? Do they react differently?*

How the Characters Reacted to Anxiety

Jimmy's Reactions	Same Reactions	Fire Breath’s Reactions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Woke up worried • Had nightmares • Wanted to avoid the spelling bee, and thought of excuses • Forgetfulness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worried expressions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • His stomach started to gurgle • His mouth felt dry • He was sweating • He felt gassy and needed to burp

A Discussion about Nervousness vs Anxiousness:

- At your student's age level, it's not crucial that they fully grasp the differences between anxiety and nervousness. Rather, it's more important for them to learn coping skills when dealing with either feeling (anxiousness or nervousness). Coping skills will be addressed in Lesson 2. However, it's still a good idea to begin the conversation as to the differences so that as they mature they can start to recognize the various feelings.
- Feeling anxious is like feeling nervous, but the main difference is that a person often feels nervous towards something specific - like having to try something new, and anxiety doesn't always happen with something specific. Anxiety can happen at any time, even if there's nothing to feel anxious about. Anxious feelings often last longer than nervous feelings.

Assessment: Check Sheet

**Check Sheet Tips: Obviously you can't be in two places at once, so if it's just you in the classroom, and you need someone to check whether the students are engaging with questions and personal experiences, record your story time with a video camera and play it back later. If you have a teaching partner or educational assistant, he/she could complete the Check Sheet recording.*

Assessment Check Sheet

- Choose 1-3 specific outcomes (from the outcome chart on the first page of this lesson) that you'd like to assess. Write the outcome number on the left-hand side and the student names in the diagonal boxes. Then, assess away!



Dragons Can't Spell

Lesson Plans Aligned to the Alberta Program of Studies

Lesson #: 2

Grade Level: 2

Lesson Title: How Can We Overcome Anxiety?

Subject: Health & Life Skills

Expected Length: Approximately 50-70 minutes

Learning Objectives:

1. Students will orally answer comprehension questions related to “Dragons Can’t Spell”
2. Students will begin to think about anxiety and how it affects their thoughts and bodies
3. Students will begin to think about (and use) strategies to overcome anxiety

Materials Needed:

- Chart Paper or Whiteboard
- Assessment Check Sheet (See Appendix 1)
- YouTube Video: Jessica's "Daily Affirmation"
- Journal Entry Sheet (See Appendix 3)

Specific Outcome Statements: Health & Life Skills

W2.3

- demonstrate appreciation for own body; e.g., make positive statements about activities one can do

R2.3

- identify possible psychological and physiological responses to stress

Introduction – Recap of “Dragons Can’t Spell”:

Approx. Time Needed (5 minutes)

1. Pick a student to begin a retelling of “Dragons Can’t Spell”. Then pick more students to continue the recap until the entire story has been retold.

Connecting Anxiety to the Concept of Stress:

Approx. Time Needed (5-10 minutes)

2. Ask: *Does anyone remember what the word anxiety means?* Feel free to remind the students that anxiety is very much like nervousness, but you might feel more things happening inside your body, and you might feel it at different times throughout the day. Ask:
 - *Can anyone give an example of a time you felt anxious?*
 - *How did Jimmy and Fire Breath react to anxiety? What things happened inside their bodies?*
3. Explain that when we experience stress in our life we might start to feel anxious feelings. You might feel stressed if you got up late and had to rush to school. You might feel stressed if you have to write a test or complete a large science project. There are many examples of things that can make a person feel stress.
 - Ask the students: can anyone give an example of something that might make you feel stressed? (Again, it’s not crucial that students at this age fully understand anxiety, nervousness, and stress. It is more important to introduce the language so that they know how to express their feelings.)

Brainstorming ways to Reduce Anxiety:

Approx. Time Needed (10-15 minutes)

4. Students will brainstorm ways to help reduce feelings of anxiousness, especially when they are feeling stressed. Write down their answers on chart paper, or on the whiteboard, so they can refer to them during the last portion of the lesson. Here are some questions to help get the conversation started:
 - Jimmy was able to defeat his anxious feelings. Ask: *How was he able to overcome, or defeat, his anxious feelings and go to the spelling bee after all?* Here are some ideas to get the students thinking:
 - Jimmy had practiced for the spelling bee, and he didn’t want all that practicing to go to waste.
 - Jimmy didn’t want the spelling bee to be ruined because he knew he could do it. He just needed to be brave.

- Jimmy thought about his fears, but then reminded himself that he could do it: (“He had practiced, memorized, and studied the words for too long!”)
5. Ask the students (and write down their answers on chart paper): *How can you overcome anxious feelings when you’re feeling like Jimmy? How can you help yourself feel less anxious when you’re feeling stressed?*

Practicing Ways to Reduce Anxiety:

Approx. Time Needed (15-20 minutes)

6. Now you will get the students to try out some anxiety-reducing methods. Explain that all these methods help you to feel better when you’re feeling anxious.
- Before you practice these methods, add them to the list of ways we can reduce anxiety.
 - Have the students stand up and find a space all their own. Have them extend their arms, and if they aren’t touching anyone else, then they have enough space.
- To defeat anxiety, you can:
7. **Stretch!** Practice a few stretches:
- Reach your hands to the ceiling, and then slowly wave your arms from side to side as if you’re a tree blowing in the wind.
 - Touch your toes and hold your position for 5 seconds.
 - Lie down on your back and extend your limbs as far as they can stretch.
8. **Dance!** Dancing helps your body feel great!
- Play a fun song for the students and have them dance in their own ways.
9. **Breathe Deep!** Practice deep breathing exercises with the students:
- 1 large breath in through the nose, and then slowly let it out through the mouth. Do this 3 times.
10. **Think Positively!** Thinking positive thoughts about yourself and what you can accomplish will help you feel great! Being positive and kind to yourself is very important to your health.
- You can tell yourself: I’m brave! I can do it! I’m smart!
 - Play this amazing YouTube video: Jessica's "Daily Affirmation" (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qR3rK0kZFkg>)
11. **Talk it Out!** When you’re feeling anxious you can talk to someone about your feelings. For example, you can talk to your parents or a teacher – or even a stuffed animal! Talking to someone always helps!

Journal Entry:

Approx. Time Needed (15-20 minutes)

12. Have the students go back to their desks to complete this next portion of the lesson.

Students will complete a journal entry in which they respond to the following prompts on a fun journal template (Appendix 3):

- Write about a time you felt anxious or nervous.
- How did your body feel?
- Did you do anything to help make yourself feel better?
- Out of all the things you practiced today (stretching, dancing, breathing, being kind to yourself, and talking to someone), which strategy made you feel the best?
- Write 3 positive things about yourself.

Assessment:

- Use the journal page to determine whether your students are beginning to understand the concept of anxiety and that doing certain things can help them feel better.
- Use the accompanying Assessment Check Sheet to determine whether your students can demonstrate an appreciation for their bodies (through participating in the movement instructions), and whether they can identify possible psychological and physiological responses to stress during the discussion portion of the lesson.



Dragons Can't Spell

Lesson Plans Aligned to the Alberta Program of Studies

Lesson #: 3

Grade Level: 2

Lesson Title: Telling a Wordless Story Through Pictures

Subject: Art

Expected Length: Approximately 110-180 minutes

Learning Objectives:

1. Students will plan and create a three-page, wordless story that tells about a time they felt nervous or anxious.
2. Students will draw out their story using a 3-panel storyboard, using a first, next, then method.
3. Students will practice their drawing and colouring skills when creating their good copy.
4. Students will evaluate their own story using a self-evaluation rubric.
5. Students will share their 3-page story with a classmate to assist in determining whether the wordless story makes sense and accomplishes what the student envisioned.
6. Students will present their completed work with the class.

Materials Needed:

- “Dragons Can’t Spell” picture book
- Assessment Check Sheet (See Appendix 1)
- “First, Next, Then” worksheet (See Appendix 4)
- Wordless Story Rubric (optional) (See Appendix 7)
- How to Draw books (optional for reluctant drawers)
- “Planning the Drawings” worksheet (See Appendix 5)
- Self-evaluation rubric (See Appendix 6)
- 3 sheets of 8.5” by 11” white paper for each student
- Pencil Crayons, Crayons, or Markers

Specific Outcome Statements: Art

Component
8

- (D) - A composition should develop the setting or supporting forms, as well as the subject matter.

Component
9

- Stepping back from a work helps in judging how it can be improved.

Purpose
2

- (B) - An original story can be created visually.

Component
10ii

- Students will develop themes, with an emphasis on personal concerns, based on: (E) People.

Introduction – Reviewing the Wordless Pages in “Dragons Can’t Spell”:

Approx. Time Needed (10-15 minutes)

1. Flip to the three back-to-back, double-page, wordless images in “Dragon’s Can’t Spell”: (Image of Fire Breath walking down the sidewalk, staring up at the school, and of him sitting in Jimmy’s desk.)
 - Ask the students what part of the story is being told in each image.
 - Image 1: Fire Breath is walking to school to take part in the spelling bee.
 - Image 2: Fire Breath is beginning to feel anxious as he’s looking up at the “Spelling Bee” banner.
 - Image 3: Fire Breath is feeling very alone and afraid at having to be in the spelling bee.
 - You can also show the other wordless images in the book and have a discussion about what is happening in those images.
 - Explain that even though the images don’t have any words, the reader can still understand what is happening based on the illustrations.
 - Ask: *What is the setting of each image?* The students may need to be reminded what a setting is: where the story takes place.

Planning Your Own 3-Page Wordless Story:

Approx. Time Needed (30-45 minutes)

2. Students are now going to get a chance to begin planning out their own 3-page wordless story. Their first step is to think about what they want to express in their story.
 - Prompt: Think about a time you were feeling anxious. What happened?
 - Allow many students to share their ideas for a story based off the prompt. This will help spark ideas for students who have a hard time planning.
 - Show the students the “First, Next, Then” planning worksheet (Appendix 4) and model how to fill it in. Example: First: I felt anxious when I had to go get a cavity fixed at the dentist office. Next: I told the dentist I was feeling anxious and he helped calm me down by putting on my favourite TV show. Then: Suddenly it was all done, and my cavity was fixed! It didn’t even hurt! I even got to pick out a new toothbrush!
 - Hand out the “First, Next, Then” planning sheet to the students and help them write down three separate sentences about what they would like to express in their wordless story.

Planning the Drawings:

Approx. Time Needed (15-20 minutes)

3. Students will now get the opportunity to plan out the drawings that will tell their story, in place of the sentences.
 - Hand out the “Planning the Drawings” worksheet (Appendix 5). This worksheet will go hand-in-hand with the “First, Next, Then” worksheet, as they will have to refer to their 3 sentences.
 - Explain that in the first box, they will be drawing a rough-copy illustration of their “First” sentence. Secondly, they will draw a rough-copy illustration of their “Next” sentence. Thirdly, they will draw a rough-copy illustration of their “Then” sentence.
 - Make sure that the story still fits the theme of expressed anxiety. Each student should be expressing a time he/she felt anxious. It doesn’t necessarily need a resolution, as they may not have had a good experience which lead to a positive resolution.
 - After the drawings are completed, have the students look over their drawings to see if they make sense without any words. Have them share their rough copies with a partner to see if their partner can figure out what’s going on in the pictures.
 - You may have some reluctant drawers in your class. If this is the case, try to have a few “How to Draw” books available for them to copy or trace from. Explain that it’s okay to trace because as grade 2 students they’re still learning drawing skills, and may need some ideas to look at, and get help from.

Creating the Good Copy:

Approx. Time Needed (30-45 minutes)

4. Now that the students have created their rough copies they are ready to move on to their good copies.
 - Give each student one 8.5” by 11” sheet of paper. Explain that they can start working on their first illustration. Repeat this process until they have completed all three drawings. Giving out all three at one time might seem overwhelming for some students, so it’s best to hand out one at a time.

Completing a Self-Evaluation:

Approx. Time Needed (10 minutes)

5. Students will get to evaluate their work by filling out a self-evaluation rubric.
 - Before they complete the book by stapling the pages together, have them arrange their 3 illustrations on their desks so that they can clearly see all three. The students are to then take a step back to see if their 3 images make sense as a whole. At this point they can also check to see that they've done their best colouring.
 - Hand out the self-evaluation rubric (Appendix 6) and have the students fill out each section based on their work.
 - Do your illustrations make sense together?
 - Is the setting of your story clear?
 - Did you do your best when drawing and colouring your illustrations?
 - Have them staple the pages together to make a book. They can even glue the first and second together (back to back) to create the effect of a book with no blank pages in between.
 - Have them staple their self-evaluation to the back of the book.

Sharing the Stories:

Approx. Time Needed (15-45 minutes)

6. The students will now get a chance to share their stories with their classmates. You can choose to have them share within partnerships, small groups, or in front of the class.
 - First, have them slowly flip through their pictures so that the classmates can see all three together. Then, have them ask their classmates what they think is happening in the story. Lastly, the student who is sharing can explain what he/she intended for each picture – verbally telling the story while showing the illustrations.

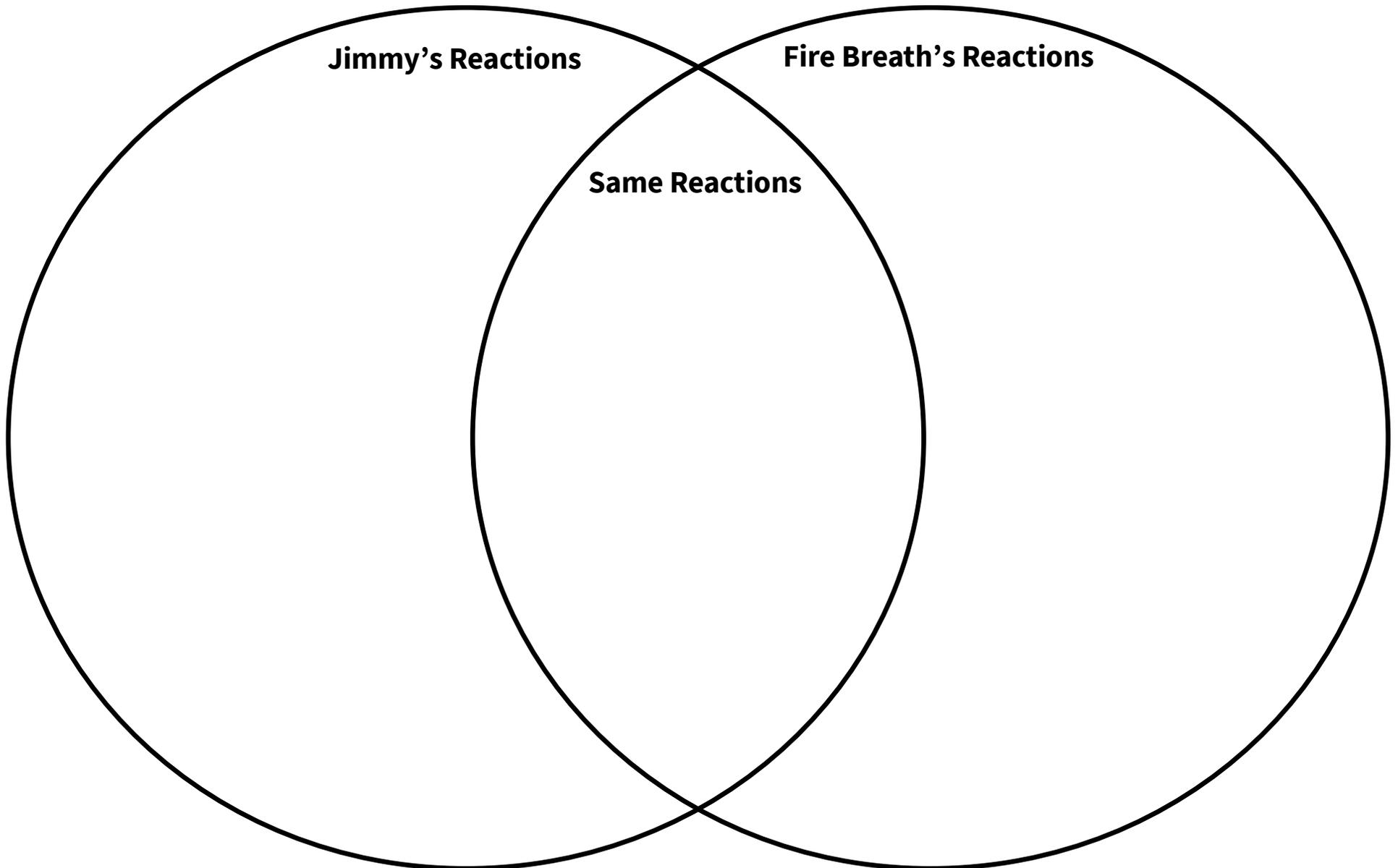
Assessment:

- Use the accompanying Assessment Check Sheet to determine whether your students can demonstrate the specific outcome statements for this lesson.
- You can also use the accompanying rubric evaluation (Appendix 7).

Name:

Date:

How do the Characters React to Anxious Feelings?



Name:

Date:

Journal Entry

Write about a time you felt anxious or nervous. What happened and how did your body feel?

Did you do anything to make yourself feel better?

**Circle the strategy
that made you feel best!**

Stretching

Dancing

Deep breathing

Thinking positive thoughts

Being kind to yourself

Talking to someone

Write 3 positive things about yourself!

1.

2.

3.

Name:

Date:

First, Next, Then

Think about a time when you felt anxious.

What happened **first**?

What happened **next**?

Then what happened?

Name:

Date:

Planning the Drawings

Draw a rough-copy illustration of your “first”, “next”, “then” sentences.

Draw what happened **first**:

Draw what happened **next**:

Then what happened? Draw it here!

Self-Evaluation Rubric for Wordless Story

Name: _____ Date: _____

How did I do?

Do your illustrations
make sense together?



Is the setting of
Your story clear?



Did you do your best
when drawing and
colouring your
illustrations?



Name: _____ Date: _____

How did I do?

Do your illustrations
make sense together?



Is the setting of
Your story clear?



Did you do your best
when drawing and
colouring your
illustrations?



Rubric Evaluation

Telling a Wordless Story Through Pictures

Level / Criteria	Excellent (4)	Proficient (3)	Adequate (2)	Limited (1)
Planning the Story (First, Next, Then) Worksheet	The student creates 3 skillful sentences that follow a “First, Next, Then” sequence.	The student creates 3 effective sentences that follow a “First, Next, Then” sequence.	The student creates 3 simplistic sentences that mostly follow a “First, Next, Then” sequence.	The student creates 3 or less ineffective sentences that do not follow a “First, Next, Then” sequence.
Story Follows Theme of Anxiety	The story is able to skillfully tell of a time the student felt anxiety.	The story is able to effectively tell of a time the student felt anxiety.	The story is simplistically able to tell of a time the student felt anxiety.	The story is ineffective in telling of a time the student felt anxiety.
Story Makes Sense & Setting is clear	The student is skillfully able to tell a story that makes sense, using many details in the pictures. The setting is clear.	The student is effectively able to tell a story that makes sense, using several details in the pictures. The setting is mostly clear.	The student is able to tell a story that makes sense, using few details in the pictures. The setting is vague.	The student is ineffective in telling a story that makes sense, and has not added details in the pictures to help propel the story. It is difficult to tell where the setting is.
Drawing & Colouring Effort	It is clear that the student has put forth great effort in achieving excellent drawings and colouring.	The student has put forth a proficient effort in achieving good-quality drawings and colouring.	The student has put forth an adequate effort in achieving acceptable drawings and colouring.	The student did not put forth an adequate effort in achieving good-quality drawings and colouring.

Total Score: _____

Name of Student: _____

Date: _____