

WORRY MONSTER

Mindfulness Skill Overview

Hello Teacher,

Welcome to your *first* of many Mindful Wellness Classroom skills! This free activity is a fun and creative way to introduce skill learning to your classroom. The Worry Monster is a great activity that teaches children to notice their own experience and be curious about the experiences of others. It creates a common language for your classroom, with a shared experience of emotional sharing.

As you start this activity, it important to help kids understand *everyone has a Worry Monster!* AND, when we can share this language we can learn to ask for help and even help others!

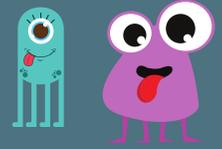


THANK YOU AND ENJOY LEARNING,

Mindful Wellness Classroom



WORRY MONSTER



HELPING CHILDREN UNDERSTAND MINDFULNESS CAN START BY RECOGNIZING WE ALL HAVE A WORRY MONSTER: THE URGE TO AVOID THE PRESENT MOMENT. THIS LESSON HELPS STUDENTS UNDERSTAND THAT URGE, NORMALIZE THAT IT IS A SHARED EXPERIENCE FOR EVERYONE, AND INTRODUCES THE IDEA THAT MINDFULNESS CAN START BY PAYING ATTENTION TO OUR WORRY MONSTER. PRACTICE BEING CURIOUS WITH YOUR CLASSROOM ABOUT WHEN YOU (THE TEACHER) IS EXPERIENCING YOUR WORRY MONSTER, AND WHEN YOUR STUDENTS MAY BE EXPERIENCING THEIR WORRY MONSTER!

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Students will be able to practice observing their worry monster.
2. Students will be able to use coloring and drawing to describe their worry monster.

MATERIALS & PREP

1. Coloring Materials
2. PDF: Worry Monster
3. PDF: Worry Monster Coloring Sheet
4. PDF Worry Monster Drawing Sheet

INTRODUCTION

1. Hold up PDF: Worry Monster and ask students to describe what they see. Some prompting questions might be: *“What do you notice about this picture? What do you like? What do you not like? How do you think they are feeling?”*
2. Introduce the Worry Monster to students. *“This is a Worry Monster. The Worry Monster is what we feel when we want to run away or avoid hard things.”*
3. Point to Worry Monster’s cape and tell students that Worry Monsters are superheroes (powerful, magical, super-powers) because they teach us when to be **curious** about what we are experiencing (what is happening in and around us).
4. Tell students that today they are going to learn about (get to know) their worry monster.
5. Ask students to predict if they think everyone has a worry monster.

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INSTRUCTION & INTEGRATED MODELING

1. Expanding on students' predictions or promoting a new connection, explain that everyone has a worry monster, but theirs might look different than this one (pointing to image).
 2. Explain to students that the class is going to do a fun activity to get to know our "Worry Monsters."
 3. Ask students to think of the last time they felt the urge to run away or avoid something in the classroom. Some prompting ideas might be: *"Maybe when we had to end recess before you finished playing a game? Or when you thought you forgot your lunch?"*
 4. Ask the students to point to where they feel the urge to run away in their body. Teacher points as well. Wait until entire class can identify a location in their body.
 - Ask the class to look around and notice that everyone just felt their worry monster. Make the connection that *"we were (and are) okay."*
 - Highlight to students that we all have a worry monster, and noticing when we feel our Worry Monster will help us be curious about what is happening inside of us, and around us.
 - Draw awareness to how students felt it in similar and different places in their body. Use yourself as an example by sharing the thought you had and where you felt the urge to run away in your body.
- Optional:** Prompt students' curiosity about their worry monster with some or all of these questions while self-disclosing your own answers:
- What color is the feeling you are pointing to (in your arm, stomach, head, etc)? *"Mine is in my belly, and it is blue."*
 - What shape is the feeling in your body (hearts, rocks, circles, squares)? *"It feels like heavy rocks in my belly."*
 - If it was a temperature, what temperature would it be (cold, hot, freezing, burning)? *"I feel cold all over when I notice my worry monster."*
5. Provide students with PDF: Worry Monster Coloring Sheet and coloring materials. Explain to students they can learn more about their worry monster just by noticing where they feel it what it feels like.
 6. Prompt students to think about a previous time they felt their worry monster (same time as above) and provide independent work time with image. *Younger children can color the Worry Monster Image, older children are welcome to free-draw their own Worry Monster on PDF: Worry Monster Drawing Sheet.*
 7. Walk around the room and support students with their work.



REVIEW & CLOSING

1. Have students return to circle with their pictures.
2. Have students hold up their pictures and look around at each others pictures in gallery style.
3. Ask students to share any reflections about this exercise. Example prompts might be: Looking at the classroom pictures, how are they the same and how are they different? What was is like to connect colors to our feelings?
4. Review with students: We all have a worry monster, and it is a superpower because it encourages us to be curious about what is happening inside of us and around us.
 - **We NOW have a shared language, we ALL know what a Worry Monster is, AND that we all have one!**
 - **You can tell others when you feel your Worry Monster as a way to ask for help!**
 - **We can also ask others if they are feeling their Worry Monster as a way to slow-down and help others too!**
5. Hang the worry monster image up on the wall and tell students we are going to practice being curious about when you AND I notice our worry monster.

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NAME: _____

MY WORRY MONSTER



MY WORRY MONSTER

Draw a picture of your Worry Monster below:

NAME: _____



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QUICK SKILL SHEET

"WORRY MONSTER"



1. Prompt curiosity with Worry Monster image.
2. The Worry Monster is what we feel when we want to run away, or avoid hard things.
3. We all have a Worry Monster! AND they are one of our super-heros because they teach us when to be curious about what we are experiencing (what is happening in and around us).



Think of time you wanted to run away or avoid something hard, and then notice where you feel your Worry Monster in your body.

We can even use colors, shapes and temperatures to describe our Worry Monster.



Coloring or Drawing our Worry Monster can remind us to listen to this super-hero we have, so we can be curious about what is happening inside of us and around us.



We NOW have a shared language, we ALL know what a Worry Monster is...AND that we all have one!

You can tell others when you feel your Worry Monster as a way to ask for help!

We can also ask others if they are feeling their Worry Monster as a way to slow-down and help others too!