

The Just Me Project



Facilitator/Teacher Manual

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The Just Me Project

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Introduction

Mission Statement

Through the innocent voices of animals, Henry and Dolly invite people to turn obstacles into opportunities, and in the process, develop an emotional vocabulary for improved health.



Foreword

This manual is designed as a guide to help you, your family, your class, and your community. You may be a parent, a health care professional, a teacher, or a volunteer trying to help veterans, military families, children, or any other helping or healing mission. Each of us can discover new capacities, hidden strengths, and our own stories as we explore new attitudes and methods of dealing with whatever we encounter.

What's the Matter with Henry? The True Tale of a Three-Legged Cat, raises the questions which lead to the discoveries of love, compassion, hope, acceptance, courage and resiliency. Henry's story reminds us that we are not defined by our misfortunes, but by our responses to them. His lessons or "Kibbles for Thought" accept that hard things happen and give our children, their parents and care-givers a fresh way to engage with others, to be true to themselves, and to transform challenges into adventures.

The companion storybook, *What About Me? I'm Here Too!*, strikes a universal chord in all of us who have felt, at one time or another, invisible, unappreciated, unloved, or displaced. Told through Dolly the dog, the book speaks of the feelings of confusion, insecurity, and loss as the once daily life of attention, walks and treats is taken over by bandages, medicine and pain. Dolly's human companions learn, as does Dolly, that everyone needs to be told they matter and that they are loved, even when time and energy are dedicated to other acute demands. Dolly can be found in all of us, looking good on the outside but sometimes hurting on the inside. Her "Kibbles for Thought" remind us to accept and share our feelings and to ask for help, because "help me" are not words of weakness, but strength.

There are many exercises in this manual and we ask you to pick and choose those that help you with your own/your group's particular needs. We have included school lessons for individual or group settings, but know that all exercises can be expanded or contracted depending on your time and your needs. Please use the music, art, science and language lessons in ways that inspire you, your child, your patient, your group and/or your school. The purpose of this material is that all who hear the story of Henry or Dolly, construct their own story and create new opportunities for themselves and their lives.

There is no required timeline to use these ideas/discussions—they can be part of a classroom exploration of a subject, a dinner table discussion in a family, or a bedside moment of comfort when someone is sick and needs to talk.

Objectives

- To facilitate the use of each storybook with step-by-step instruction for story time and ideas for sharing.
- To facilitate the use of each workbook with step-by-step instruction for using the questions in the workbooks to tell one's own story and express one's feelings.
- To explain the different assessment components.
- To explain the activities and their possible uses.
- To provide poems, songs, videos, suggested websites, lessons and other resources.
- To include an Appendix with facts and figures, opinions, talking points, suggested reading and other pertinent reference material for the educator, parent and healthcare professional.

The Just Me Project

For Educators

Research has shown definitively that children without social and emotional literacy will be limited in what they can do in the academic setting. Emotional literacy is the foundation upon which we build other important academic skills.



Henry's story, the inspiring story of a feral cat that lost his leg is an extraordinary and effective tool to help children learn tolerance, resiliency, moral courage, and self-esteem. Through this story readers become aware of the impact of emotions and learn how important it is to choose their responses to challenging experiences. The innocent voice of the cat helps frame the questions and translate the answers around issues of healing, tolerance, and compassion. It works because children anthropomorphize the animal as if it were themselves. Pets are not threatening, but comforting to children.

The Just Me project can help teachers become skilled at a simpler language of health, social and emotional responsibility, and storytelling. It can help teachers reframe their knowledge into words of trust, courage, and resilience.

The workbooks and teaching tools ground the student in the realities that hard things do happen but we can choose our responses to these challenges. The lessons taught by Henry the cat and Dolly the dog are easily integrated into the various existing required components of school curricula so that no teacher need feel that these are 'extras.' By addressing directly the issues of social and emotional learning, the Just Me Project can help schools better serve their students, families, and teachers, and lead the way towards more meaningful learning.

The Just Me Project

For Parents

If you have a child with special needs or a chronic illness, the struggles you go through each day may feel as if they will never end, and that you will not laugh or relax again. Henry's and Dolly's stories can help you and your children remember that even a kitten can have the heart of a lion; the smallest person can be brave. The project materials can be used as games, as distractions while you are waiting, as supplements to educational materials or therapy at home, or just as fun story-time to bring you closer. It is up to you.

Often when we encounter an obstacle, our words make the obstacle seem bigger and harder to overcome than it actually is. All around us we are exposed to catastrophic language, words that emphasize the negative and cause us to feel less capable than we are. Especially when a child is ill, our concerned relatives and friends may with very good intentions use a vocabulary—terrible, devastating, tragedy—which causes us to feel that no actions we take will make a difference.

It is especially important for children to learn early how to reframe their thinking and their words. When a child breaks a bone and has to be inactive, they may for the first time discover that they can draw. When a child does something, like climbing a tree, or participating in a soccer game, despite being afraid to do it, they are reframing a mental perspective. Use Henry's story to reflect on the ways you use words to describe obstacles, and think about how those words shape the way your child sees the world. Henry is not a handicapped cat, he is a handy cat. Tink is not "poor thing" but a happy dog who loves her life.

Did you know?

- Children learn how to treat others by how their parents treat them as well as others. What you say is not as important as what you do, or how you say something—is your tone of voice kind?
- Children learn how to manage their emotions by watching how their parents value and manage their emotions. Somewhere a child may observe your actions and will know the world through what they see you do.
- Children learn to focus attention and accomplish tasks by growing in a calm environment. Take time to discover your child, and take time to discover who you are.



The Just Me Project

For Health Care Professionals

The faithful caregivers of our nation's sick and disabled live with some very hard truths. One of these truths is that they have few adaptive tools to help sick children and their families talk openly about their feelings, challenges, and fears which can impede healing. The Just Me Project provides some new tools, and uniquely uses the voice and perspective of an animal to engage others.



What made Christopher Reeve a Superman was not the blue cape and the movies he made, but his responses to the challenges of living life as a quadriplegic. Each person with an illness or handicap can either feel like a victim or, they may become a teacher of how they gained high self-esteem. Henry calls each person to be the hero in his or her own story. One oncology nurse used the story to help a boy facing an amputation. He carried the book into the operating room, and in recovery drew pictures of his prosthetics for Henry.

Other nurses have used the materials in rehabilitation, discharge and home care for children with long-term challenges. They have described dramatic changes in the family when they recognize that we are all on the same journey from victim to hero.

What About Me? I'm Here Too! addresses the issues of anyone who feels invisible and lost when someone in the family is in need. Too often family members forget that the healthy siblings become at serious risk for many behavioral and health issues when all the attention and resources of a family must be dedicated to the sick member. Almost everyone has been in a situation—at home, at school, or at work—where they feel invisible, unheard, unappreciated, even unloved.

Told through Dolly the dog, *What About Me? I'm Here Too!* speaks of the feelings of confusion, insecurity, and loss as the daily life of attention, walks and treats is taken over by bandages, medicine, and pain. Dolly's owners learn, as does Dolly, that everyone needs to be told they matter and that they are loved, even when time and energy are dedicated to an acute demand.

Henry's lessons accept that hard things happen and give our children, their parents and caregivers a fresh way to engage with others and transform suffering into learning. Caregivers at Head Start or the Navy and Marine Relief Society who have used these materials say that they are especially valuable in normalizing trauma, illness and disability, and thus give the wounded veteran, child or family a new vocabulary to talk about what they are feeling, learning and discovering.

Within the time constraints of care, select what components you find appropriate and adapt them to the needs of your family, class or patient. All materials are designed to supplement, not substitute, care and therapeutic interventions.



Program Components

Effective resources provide maximum flexibility to meet the needs of the educator, parent, and/or health care professional.

Program Components	Description
Materials	
 <p><i>What's the Matter with Henry? The True Tale of a Three-Legged Cat</i></p>	<p>The story touches on the themes of compassion, courage, and resiliency and promotes respect for diversity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 82 pages • Available in English and Spanish
 <p><i>What About Me? I'm Here Too!</i></p>	<p>The story addresses the issues of anyone who feels invisible—anyone who pretends they feel OK when they really don't—and speaks of the feelings of confusion, insecurity, and loss.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 88 pages • Available in English and Spanish
 <p><i>Henry's Kibble for Thought A Homework Guide for Humans</i></p>	<p>The workbook is a valuable tool filled with questions to help children talk about their wounds, experiences, hopes, and dreams.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 76 pages • Double-sided English/Spanish
 <p><i>Dollydog's Kibble for Thought A Feelings Workbook</i></p>	<p>The workbook is a tool for social and emotional learning. Children and their families can use it to build a vocabulary that will help them express their feelings and emotions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80 pages • Double-sided English/Spanish

Program Components (cont'd)	Description
Materials (cont'd)	
Henry, Dolly and Tink Dolls	The hand-crocheted/felted Henry, Dolly and Tink dolls are cuddly one-of-a-kind “pets” that children can hold and love.
Henry, Dolly and Tink Puppets	The paper bag puppet templates can be used for storytelling, sharing, and role-playing.
Henry and Dolly Placemats	The placemats contain fun activities like dot-to-dot, mazes, and puzzles. They can be used in lunch trays at hospitals, in activity centers, or at home.
Fun Activities	Henry and Dolly activities are available in their workbooks and as downloadable files at www.henrysworld.org in the Resources pages.
Teacher Planning and Instruction	
Facilitator/Teacher Manual	This manual is designed to guide the educator, parent or health care professional on some uses of the storybooks and workbooks.
Using the Books	For the storybooks, step-by-step instructions are included for story time. For the workbooks, there are exercises and suggestions inviting introspections and facilitated discussions.
Assessments	There are two assessments per storybook: a reading comprehension assessment and an open-ended assessment. The reading comprehension assessment is in multiple choice format and it tests reading comprehension only. The open-ended assessment includes questions that can be used for discussion or as writing activities. The workbooks also have an assessment component. The assessment measures the student’s emotional language development, Henry’s and Dolly’s kibbles or lessons, and the individual response to the workbooks’ objectives.
Suggested Lessons	The suggested lessons are tied to standards and offer extended activities for the classroom.
Resources	The resources include Henry’s website, where you can find articles, videos, photos, slideshows, and items in the store. Ideas for fundraising are also included in this section. www.henrysworld.org

Using the Books

This section includes step-by-step instruction for story time. The educator, parent, or facilitator reads the story aloud, while building comprehension and engaging the children in a discussion of the story and the kibbles or lessons. For planning and teaching purposes, **Story Time** is divided into two, 30-minute, reading slots. A good halfway point is suggested for both books, as well as anticipatory questions.

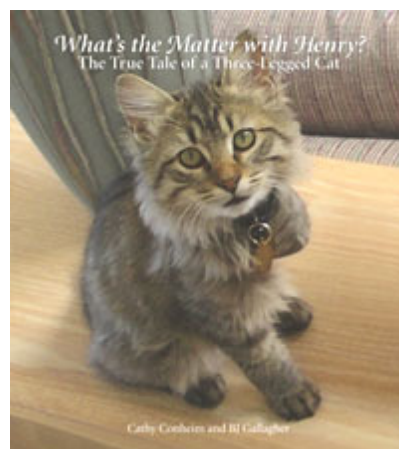
Storybooks

What's the Matter with Henry - The True Tale of a Three-Legged Cat

Story Time



30 minutes



Introduce the Story (3-5 minutes)

Display *What's the Matter with Henry - The True Tale of a Three-Legged Cat*. Have children look at the front and back cover and predict what this story is about. Read the title and the names of the author and illustrator. Invite the children to talk about their pets, if they have one. Then say:

Today you will listen to a story about a three-legged cat named Henry.

Take a Picture Walk (3-5 minutes)

Conduct a Picture Walk. Point to each photo or illustration in the book. Encourage children to predict what each photo or illustration represents. Use this information, as well as gestures and pantomime as discussion points before reading the story so the story is easier to understand.

Read Aloud (20 minutes)

Read *What's the Matter with Henry - The True Tale of a Three-Legged Cat* aloud, pointing and using gestures as you read. Read the story over a two-day period. Page 45 is a good halfway point for Day 1. Be sure to review concepts before reading. Build anticipation on Day 2 by asking the children:

What do you think will happen?

Will Henry stay and live with Cathy, Donna, and Dolly?

What will Dolly do?

Build Comprehension

Use these questions to check understanding:

Sequence *Where is Henry taken after discovering his injured front paw?* (animal hospital/veterinarian)

Details *What is the black poodle's name?* (Dolly)

Discuss the Story

Comparison *How are the kitties alike? How are they different?*

Opinion *Do you think Cathy and Donna should keep Henry or find a different home for him?*

Prediction *Do you think Henry and Dolly will be friends?*

Judgment *What do you think about Cathy's attempt to keep Henry in a pen at night?*

Inference *Do you think Henry likes being free to roam the house at night?*

Personal Response

Ask the children: *How does Henry remain himself, in spite of not having four legs?* Have them draw a picture of Henry being himself. Suggest they label the picture "Henry jm" and discuss what "jm" means. Have them share their pictures.

Henry's 5 Lessons

Write Henry's Kibble for Thought on the board:

- ***Hate is learned***
- ***Hard things happen***
- ***Be true to who you are***
- ***Play the hand you are dealt***
- ***Connect with what you care about***

Have children copy each Kibble on a separate sheet of paper. Discuss the meaning of each one and use examples from the story to explain the lesson.

Explain that a "kibble" is just a bite of food, not a whole meal. Henry's (and Dolly's) kibbles are little bites of knowledge that Henry and Dolly want to share. Have children draw a picture to go with each kibble or lesson. Follow the same steps after reading *What About Me? I'm Here Too!* Have children create their own Kibble book with Henry's and Dolly's lessons and any other lesson they'd like to include.

What About Me? I'm Here Too!

Story Time

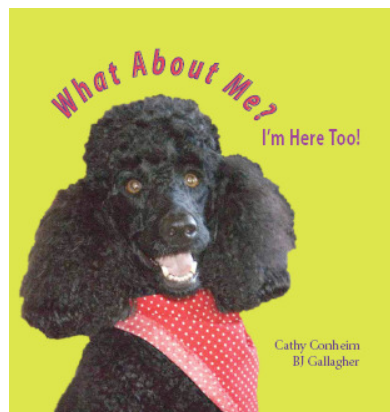


30 minutes

Introduce the Story (2-5 minutes)

Display *What About Me? I'm Here Too!* Have children look at the front and back cover and predict what this story is about. Read the title and the names of the author and illustrator. Invite the children to talk about their pets, if they have one. Then say:

Today you will listen to a story about black poodle named Dolly.



Take a Picture Walk (2-5 minutes)

Conduct a Picture Walk. Use illustrations, gestures, and pantomime as discussion points so the story is easier to understand.

Read Aloud (20 minutes)

Read *What About Me? I'm Here Too!* aloud, pointing and using gestures as you read. Read the story over a two-day period. Page 41 is a good halfway point for Day 1. Be sure to review concepts before reading. Build anticipation on Day 2 by asking the children:

What do you think will happen?

How will Dolly behave towards Henry?

Will she try to hurt him?

Build Comprehension

Use these questions to check understanding:

Sequence *Dolly was happy at the beginning of the story. How did she feel later? (puzzled)*

Details *What were some of Dolly's other feelings? (sadness, anger, guilt, fear, confusion)*

Discuss the Story

Comparison *What was Dolly's life like before Henry? What was Dolly's life like after Henry came to live there?*

Opinion *Do you think Dolly will be happy again?*

Prediction *Do you think Dolly will hurt Henry?*

Judgment *Why do you think Dolly pouted and whined when Henry stayed for good?*

Inference *Do you think Dolly likes her family?*

Personal Response

Ask the children: *Can a person (or animal) have more than one feeling?* Have them draw several pictures of Dolly expressing different emotions. Suggest they label each emotion. Have children share their pictures.

Ask the children: *Have you ever experienced a relative (or stranger) coming to live in your house? What changed when that happened? How did you feel about sharing your house?*

Dolly's 5 Lessons

Write Dolly's Kibble for Thought on the board:



- ***Accept your feelings***
- ***Share your feelings with someone who loves you***
- ***Ask for help***
- ***Nobody's perfect***
- ***Feelings can change***

Have children copy Dolly's Kibbles on the back of the sheet of paper where they wrote Henry's Kibbles. Discuss the meaning of each one and use examples from the story to explain the lesson. Have children draw a picture to go with each kibble or lesson. Have children create their own Kibble book with Henry's and Dolly's lessons and any other lesson they'd like to include.

Using the Workbooks

The workbooks serve as a tool for children to build and tell their story. They offer exercises and suggestions inviting introspections and facilitated group discussions. Children will need guidance to walk them through the questions to help them understand and give voice to the many feelings that go along with sudden changes in health and well being. We suggest that you don't try to do all the questions at once, but to use select questions as a springboard for important conversations.

Workbooks

Henry's Kibble for Thought - A Homework Guide for Humans

Time to Tell Your Story-Day 1

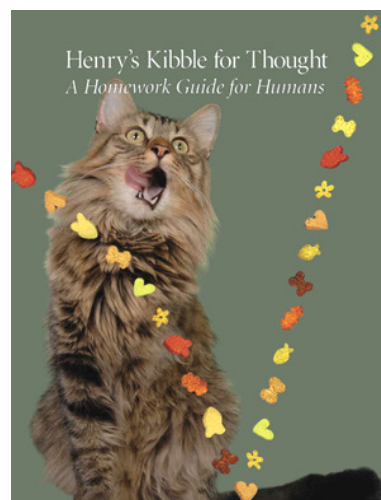


30 minutes

Introduce the Workbook (2-5 minutes)

Display *Henry's Kibble for Thought – A Homework Guide for Humans*. Have children look at the front and back cover and predict what this workbook is about. Remind children that each one of us has a story to tell, just like Henry and Dolly. Invite the children to say one thing about themselves, if they want to. Then say:

Today you will have a chance to write a story about yourself.



Take a Picture Walk (2-5 minutes)

Conduct a Picture Walk. Read out loud Henry's 5 Lessons or Kibbles for Thought on page 5 (*Hard Things Happen, Be True to Who You Are, Play the Hand You Are Dealt, Connect with What You Care About, and Hate Is Learned*).

Show children the sections for each lesson and where they will be writing their responses. Show them the "Fun Activities" in the back of the guide and tell them they will have a chance to do these as they complete the writing assignment.

Generate Ideas (5-10 minutes)

Ask children to think about what they might want to write about themselves. Give them a few moments to silently reflect. Continue by prompting:

What would you like to tell Henry about yourself?

Is there an event in your life you would like to write about?

Use strategies like the Think, Pair, and Share Strategy to allow children to express their ideas and help each other generate ideas in a non-threatening way.

Take 1 minute to "think" silently.

Take a couple of minutes to "share your idea with a partner" (assign partner strategically)

Take a few minutes to voluntarily share with others what your partner said.

Write Together

Turn to page 8, Lesson 1 – *Hard Things Happen*

Show children the photo of Henry’s scar on page 8. Explain that Henry did not choose to be a three-legged cat, but unforeseen things happen. Henry did choose, however, to not let this event define who he is.

Continue by prompting:

Can you think of some event in your life that made you upset or sad?

How did you feel before the event? How did you feel after the event?

Ask children to answer at least one question from this section or write their responses to the questions prompted.

Time to Tell Your Story-Day 2



30 minutes

Generate Ideas

Ask children to think about what they might want to write about themselves. Give them a few moments to silently reflect. Continue by prompting:

Is Henry different after his leg amputation?

How is he different? How is he the same?

What can you say about yourself? What are you like? Are you full of energy?



Write Together

Turn to page 13, Lesson 2 – *Be True to Who You Are*

1. Ask children to think about characteristics, features, or traits that describe people.

Continue by prompting:

How would you describe me?

How would you describe your best friend?

How would you describe yourself?

How would you describe the parts of you that only you know?

Tell children that there are some characteristics, features, or traits that can’t change, that one is born with them; like skin color. Then there are other traits that we can change, like behavior. Explain that by celebrating who we are, accepting those things we cannot change, and changing those things we can, we can be true to ourselves.

2. Ask children what we mean by “actions and consequences.” Explain that sometimes we must stand up for what we believe in and accept that there might be consequences. By doing so, we are being true to ourselves.

Continue by prompting:

Have you ever gotten in trouble for hitting someone who hit you first?

Did the consequence or possible punishment keep you from hitting back?

What did you learn from your actions? What did you learn from the conse-

3. Ask children if they have ever worn a mask.

Continue by prompting:

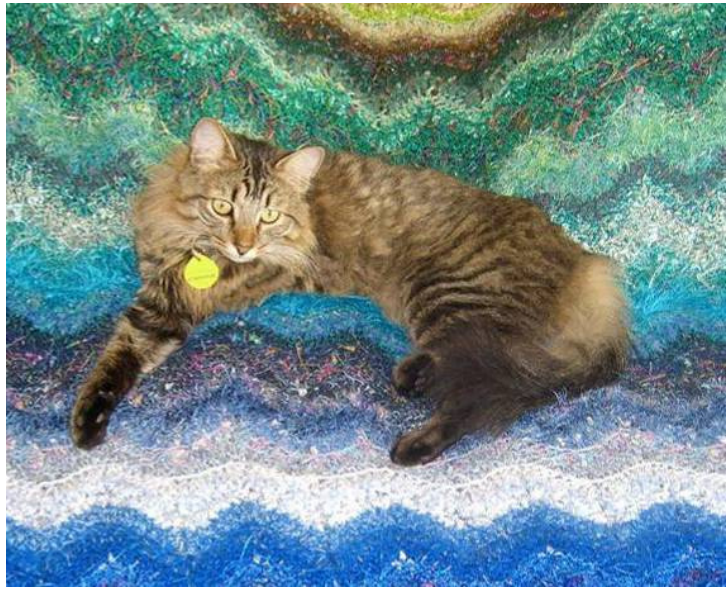
What kind of mask have you worn?

How does it feel to cover your face and be someone or something different?

Do you think smiling, pouting, or frowning is a type of mask? Why?

Explain that sometimes we can be ourselves and other times we prefer to be behind a mask. Sometimes hiding behind a mask helps us deal with something painful or something we're not ready to talk about.

Ask children to answer at least one question from this section or write their responses to the questions prompted.



Time to Tell Your Story-Day 3



30 minutes

Generate Ideas

Ask children to think about what they might want to write about themselves. Give them a few moments to silently reflect.

Continue by prompting:

Henry is missing his front paw. Does that make Henry's life hard?

Henry doesn't see himself as a "handicapped cat," but a "handy cat."

What is hard for you?

Why does Henry not see what is hard about having only three legs?

If you do something different from the ways other people do it—maybe you are left handed—how does that help you know who you truly are?

Write Together

Turn to page 17, Lesson 3 – *Play the Hand You Are Dealt*

Ask children if they have played cards before. Explain that when you play cards, you are given the cards; you don't get to choose the cards. Henry's lesson is about accepting the "cards" you are given and not blaming yourself or anyone else.

Make a deck of cards with the following descriptive words: tall, short, slim, heavy, blonde hair, black hair, curly hair, straight hair, happy, sad, confused, lonely, fast runner, slow runner, big feet, and small hands. Have children pick a card.

Continue by prompting:

Now let's have you finish this sentence with the word(s) from your card.

I am or I have . . . (tall, short, straight hair, etc.)

Is that something you can change or not?

Ask children to answer at least one question from this section or write their responses to the questions prompted.

Time to Tell Your Story-Day 4



30 minutes

Generate Ideas

Ask children to think about what they might want to write about themselves. Give them a few moments to silently reflect. Continue by prompting:

If Henry needed help, what could you do to help him? How could you help animals or people needing help?

Write Together



Turn to page 22, Lesson 4 – *Connect with What You Care About*

Show the picture of Henry and Tink. Ask children to describe how Henry and Tink feel about each other. Tell them Henry cares a lot about Tink and that he wrote a love poem for her (see Poems section). Ask children:

Is there something or someone you care about?

Ask children to answer at least one question from this section or write their responses to the questions prompted.

Time to Tell Your Story-Day 5



30 minutes

Generate Ideas

Ask children to think about what they might want to write about themselves. Give them a few moments to silently reflect. Continue by prompting:

What do you think hate means?

Is there an animal, person, or thing you hate? Why?

Do you think Dolly hates Henry?

Write Together

Turn to page 27, Lesson 5 – *Hate Is Learned*

Tell children that sometimes we hate something because we are not familiar with it, or we are afraid of it, or because someone else used the word hate. For example, if you never had onion soup, you might say you hate it. But if you tried it, you might like it.

Ask children to answer at least one question from this section or write their responses to the questions prompted.

Dollydog's Kibble for Thought - A Feelings Workbook

Time to Express Your Feelings-Day 1



30 minutes

Introduce the Workbook (2-5 minutes)

Display *Dollydog's Kibble for Thought – A Feelings Workbook*. Have children look at the front and back cover and predict what this workbook is about. Remind children that we all have feelings, like anger, fear, sadness, but sometimes we don't know how to express those feelings or we just hold them in. Invite the children to name one or several feelings they've felt. Then say:

Today you will have a chance to write about your feelings.



Take a Picture Walk (2-5 minutes)

Conduct a Picture Walk. Read out loud Dolly's 5 Lessons or Kibbles for Thought on page 20 (*Accept Your Feelings, Share Your Feelings with Someone who Loves You, Ask for Help, Nobody's Perfect, and Feelings Can Change*).

Show children the writing sections and the "Fun Activities" in the back of the guide. Tell them they will have a chance to do these as they complete the writing assignment.

Generate Ideas (5-10 minutes)

Ask children to think about feelings words. Continue by prompting:

When Henry came to live with Dolly and her family, Dolly felt confused. How did she feel when Henry got all the attention? Can you name other feelings?

Have children turn to the Glossary of Feelings and Emotion on page 22 and circle some of Dolly's feelings.

Write Together

Turn to page 3 - *This is my book about my feelings*.

Ask children to fill-in the blanks on page 3 and then draw a picture of how they feel.

Continue the activity on page 4.

Make a copy of page 3 and save it in each student's portfolio.

Time to Express Your Feelings-Day 2



30 minutes

Generate Ideas (5-10 minutes)

Remind children that there are many different feelings. Continue by prompting:

Can you have more than one feeling at a time?

Write Together (20-25 minutes)

Turn to page 5, connecting feeling words with Dolly's facial expressions.

Ask children to draw a line connecting each facial expression with a feelings word. Go over each picture and ask children which feeling word they selected to describe how Dolly feels.

(Note: There are several possible answers.)

Turn to page 6 and have children fill-in the blanks.

Have children share their list of feelings words.

Time to Express Your Feelings-Day 3



30 minutes

Generate Ideas (5-10 minutes)

Ask children if they like puzzles. Tell children that sometimes feelings are like puzzles. Continue by prompting:

How are feelings like puzzles? (hard to connect or figure out)

Write Together (20-25 minutes)

Turn to page 7, Feelings Words Puzzle (5 minutes)

Ask children to find all the feelings words in the puzzle.

Go over the words in the puzzle and have children count how many words they found.

Turn to page 8, Feelings Detective (20 minutes)

Ask children if they ever heard of a "feelings detective." Continue by prompting:

Pretend you are a feelings detective and figure out feelings by looking at the clues on page 8 and 9.

Ask children to fill-in the blanks.



Time to Express Your Feelings-Day 4



30 minutes

Generate Ideas (5-10 minutes)

Remind children that when they don't understand something, they can be a detective and look for clues, just like when they were a "feelings detective." Continue by prompting:

Dolly had many feelings when Henry showed up. Her feelings were all scrambled up sometimes. Has this ever happened to you? How does it feel when this happens?

Write Together (20-25 minutes)

Turn to page 10, Dolly's Feeling Maze (5 minutes)

Have children solve the feelings maze. Ask children:

When you helped Dolly through her feelings maze, what were some of the feelings at first? What were some of the feelings at the end?

Turn to page 11. (15 minutes)

Have children fill-in the blanks.

Turn to page 12. (10 minutes)

Have children unscramble the feelings words. Ask:

What is the scrambled message from Dolly? (Feelings get scrambled up sometimes.)

Time to Express Your Feelings-Day 5



30 minutes

Generate Ideas (5-10 minutes)

Ask children to close their eyes and think of a special place. Give them a few moments to silently reflect. Continue by prompting:

*Imagine you and your best friend are there.
How do you feel?*



Write Together

Turn to page 13 (10 minutes)

Have children fill-in the blanks and then draw the picture of the place they imagined.

Turn to page 14 (10 minutes)

Have children fill-in the blanks and then draw the picture of the adventure they remember.

Ask children to share their adventure with the class.

Time to Express Your Feelings-Day 6



30 minutes

Generate Ideas (5-10 minutes)

Ask children to close their eyes and think of a special person. Give them a few moments to silently reflect. Continue by prompting:

*Imagine you are talking to that special person. Can you hear his or her voice?
How does it sound?*

Write Together

Turn to page 15 (10 minutes)

Have children fill-in the blanks and then solve the crossword puzzle.

Discuss the different senses and how our bodies are designed to feel, smell, hear, talk, and see.

Turn to page 16 (10 minutes)

Have children fill-in the blanks. Discuss what it feels like to hurt. Ask:

When Henry lost his paw, did it hurt? Have you ever gotten hurt?

Ask children to share their experience with the class.

Time to Express Your Feelings-Day 7



30 minutes

Generate Ideas (5-10 minutes)

Ask children what they like to do best. Give them a few moments to silently reflect. Continue by prompting:

Dolly is really good at catching the tennis ball. How does it feel to be good at something?

Sometimes Dolly loses the ball. How do you think she feels when this happens?

Write Together

Turn to page 17 (10 minutes)

Have children fill-in the blanks and then draw a picture of them being good at something.

Turn to page 18 (10 minutes)

Have children fill-in the blanks. Discuss what it feels like to lose something. Ask:

Have you ever lost something that was special to you? Did you feel someone would blame you? Were you afraid?

Ask children to write the story of when they lost something.

Time to Express Your Feelings-Day 8



30 minutes



Generate Ideas (5 minutes)

Ask children if they'd like to be feelings detectives again. Continue by prompting:

Sometimes feelings detectives discover things that are invisible.

Write Together

Turn to page 19 (25 minutes)

Have children fill-in the blanks. Discuss what it feels like to lose someone. Ask:

Have you ever lost someone special, like a friend? How did you feel?

Ask children if they would like to share a story about someone or something special that they lost.

Assessments

Storybook Assessment: Reading Comprehension

Storybook: *What's the Matter with Henry? The True Tale of a Three-legged Cat*
(Assessment: Maria Gibbons, 4th grade teacher, Deterding Elementary School)

1. What letter did the special stripes make on the small brown tabby kittens forehead?
 - a) X
 - b) V
 - c) A
 - d) M
2. Where did the four kittens go when Cathy and Donna put them outside?
 - a) They played by the door for a while.
 - b) They went to see the veterinarian.
 - c) They went to the neighbor's house.
 - d) They went home with the mail carrier.
3. Where did Donna, Cathy, and Dolly find the missing kitten?
 - a) in a gopher hole
 - b) in Dolly's doghouse
 - c) in the tree outside
 - d) in their car
4. Why did the doctor have to remove the kitten's leg?
 - a) The kitten's leg was ugly.
 - b) The leg would be a little shorter and make the kitten walk funny.
 - c) It would be too expensive to put a cast on the broken leg.
 - d) The leg would get infected and make the kitten sick and die if not removed.
5. What did Cathy say when Donna told her to go tell the doctor to help the kitten die quickly without pain?
 - a) "I think maybe *you* should tell the doctor."
 - b) "I'm not brave enough."
 - c) "Let's just put the kitten back and let nature take its course."
 - d) "Let's talk to another veterinarian."
6. When Cathy and Donna named the kitten Henry they said...
 - a) "A name for the King of the Jungle."
 - b) "We'll name him after my brother."
 - c) "A fine name for a boy cat."
 - d) "He's named for our veterinarian that helped him."

Storybook Assessment: Reading Comprehension Cont'd

Storybook: *What's the Matter with Henry? The True Tale of a Three-legged Cat*
(Assessment: Maria Gibbons, 4th grade teacher, Deterding Elementary School)

7. How did Henry react to Dolly?
 - a) He hissed at her.
 - b) He touched his nose to hers.
 - c) He tried to scratch her with his one good paw.
 - d) He shivered in fear and tried to get away from her.
8. What type of Cat is Henry now?
 - a) A sick cat
 - b) A circus cat
 - c) An indoor cat
 - d) A lion
9. What did Henry think of the "Circus Tent" pen?
 - a) He wanted to get out of it and explore the house.
 - b) He wanted a two-story pen.
 - c) He wanted Dolly in the pen with him.
 - d) He wished it were smaller.
10. What important lesson does Henry teach Donna and Cathy?
 - a) Dog lovers should never adopt a cat.
 - b) All cats are curious.
 - c) Dogs and cats can't share a house.
 - d) If we keep trying then we can overcome obstacles.

Answer key:

1. d) 2. a) 3. b) 4. d) 5. a) 6. c) 7. b) 8. c) 9. a) 10. d)

Storybook Assessment: Open-ended

Storybook: *What's the Matter with Henry? The True Tale of a Three-legged Cat*

Open-ended questions for discussion:

1. What expectations did Cathy and Donna have about the kitten? What did Henry do to change those expectations?
2. What prejudice did Cathy have about cats? How did she learn it? How did this prejudice change after she got to know Henry?
3. When Henry woke up with three legs not four, was he angry? Was he frightened? What did he do in the new home to show people how he felt? What do you do to show people how you feel?
4. When Henry still had his bandages, how did he ask for help? How do you ask for help?
5. When Dolly first met Henry, what did she do? How do you think she felt? When you meet someone new, what do you do?
6. Henry kept trying to escape from his pen until he succeeded. Why did he keep trying? Why is it important to keep trying?
7. What does it mean to you that Henry has the “heart of a lion”?

Storybook Assessment: Reading Comprehension

Storybook: *What About Me? I'm Here Too!*

1. What did Donna and Cathy bring home one day?
 - a) a dog
 - b) a lizard
 - c) a kitten
 - d) a frog
2. What was wrong with the kitten?
 - a) He was injured.
 - b) He was bored.
 - c) He was sick with a cold.
 - d) There was nothing wrong with him.
3. How did Dolly feel about the kitten at first?
 - a) Unhappy
 - b) Concerned
 - c) Thrilled
 - d) Distraught
4. How did Dolly feel as time went by and the kitten started healing?
 - a) Happy
 - b) Bored
 - c) Sad
 - d) Excited
5. Why did Dolly pout, whine, and bark?
 - a) She wanted to get something to eat.
 - b) She wanted to get attention.
 - c) She wanted to go out to play.
 - d) She wanted to get some sleep.
6. Dolly's feelings were all mixed up.
 - a) True
 - b) False
7. What did Donna think was wrong with Dolly?
 - a) She was having a bad hair day.
 - b) She was missing her friend.
 - c) She was feeling lonely and left out.
 - d) She was tired and sleepy.

Storybook Assessment: Reading Comprehension Cont'd

Storybook: *What About Me? I'm Here Too!*

8. What did Cathy whisper in Dolly's ear?
 - a) "Come here."
 - b) "Sit, girl!"
 - c) "I'm so embarrassed."
 - d) "I'm so sorry."

9. What did Cathy promise Dolly?
 - a) to pay attention to her
 - b) to understand her
 - c) not to scold her
 - d) All of the above.

10. When Cathy and Dolly go on their walk at the end of the story, they _____.
 - a) express their love for each other
 - b) ignore each other
 - c) get lost in the rain
 - d) stop at the park to play ball

Answer key:

1. c) 2. a) 3. b) 4. c) 5. b) 6. a) 7. c) 8. d) 9. d) 10. a)

Storybook Assessment: Open-ended

Storybook: *What About Me? I'm Here Too!*

Open-ended questions for discussion:

1. Dolly thought she had a perfect life. Why?
2. Dolly knew how to be a good girl. What were some of the ways in which she was good when the kitten was sick?
3. Why did Dolly feel lost and forgotten?
4. What did Dolly feel when Cathy said she should be nice to her brother?
5. When did Dolly feel that people did not love her anymore? What did she do?
6. In what ways was Dolly confused?
7. Why did Cathy say she was sorry to Dolly? Why was that important?

Workbook Assessment: Emotional Healing

Workbook: *Henry's Kibble for Thought: A Homework Guide for Humans*

1. Were you able to tell or write your story? How did you feel after telling or writing your story?
2. Henry says "Hard things happen." What do you think he means by that?
3. Henry says "Be true to who you are." What do you think he means by that?
4. Henry says "Play the hand you are dealt." What do you think he means by that?
5. Henry says "Connect with what you care about." What do you think he means by that?
6. Henry says "Hate is learned." What do you think he means by that?
7. Have you used one of the emotional band-aids? If so, did anyone notice it? What did they say? How did you feel?
8. What was Henry's hidden message in the word scramble?
9. If you wanted to send someone special a hidden message, what would it say? Who would you send it to?
10. If someone special sent you a hidden message, what would it say?

Workbook Assessment: Emotional Development

Workbook: *Dolly's Kibble for Thought: A Feelings Workbook*

Use the feelings wheel below to help you answer the questions.

Feelings Wheel

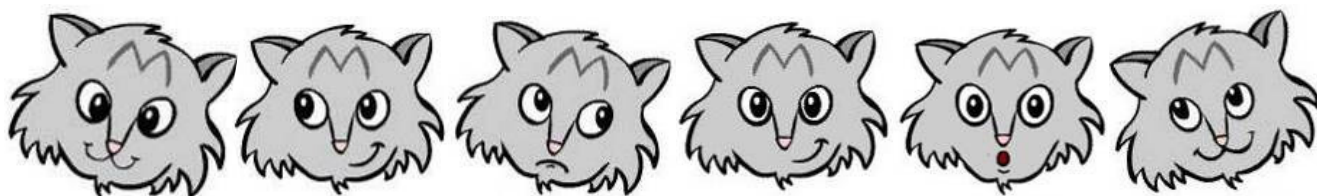


● Happy ● Surprised ● Angry ● Sad ● Confused ● Guilty ● write your own feeling

1. How did you feel before starting the workbook?
2. How did you feel after you finished the workbook?
3. Which were your favorite feelings words in the workbook?
4. Did you create an Emotions Cookbook? If so, which “recipes” did you include?
5. If you could choose one feeling word to describe how you feel right now, what would it be?
6. If you could choose one feeling word to describe how you felt last night, what would it be?
7. If you were a feelings detective, how would you describe how your best friend feels right now?
8. What feelings words would you use to describe the worst and the best experience you have had? List the words in two columns and compare them. Are they similar or not?
9. Dolly says “Accept your feelings.” What do you think she means by that?
10. Dolly says “Feelings can change.” What do you think she means by that?

Using the Activities

Each workbook includes activities to support the books' themes. Many of the activities are designed for group settings. You may want to have children make one of the puppet projects before completing the workbook and use the puppets to guide the discussion.



Henry's Activities

The following activities build on the themes of caring, communicating, choosing, and celebrating who you are. They are designed to challenge the child in a fun and non-threatening way.

Henry's World of Feelings

In this activity, children explore and discover new or different feelings. Children are encouraged to complete Henry's feelings map and then write a short story about how they are feeling.

Henry's Says (Simon Says) Game

Children play Henry's version of this game and follow Henry's commands, which are his lessons. For example, "Henry says: Hard things happen – take a deep breath." Children follow this command, prefaced by "Henry says," and thus Henry's lessons are reinforced in the game.

Fun Henry Activities

These activities include scrambled words, mazes, and a word search. The words and message all relate to Henry and his world.

Animal Puppet Show

Children create puppets using craft sticks and provided illustrations. They are encouraged to write a short script and, set up a stage, and rehearse their play. Through the use of puppets, children unlock feelings and emotions.

Henry and Friends Finger Puppets

With these Henry finger puppets, children can express emotions and develop a vocabulary for self-expression and emotional language. Each finger puppet has a different emotion and children can play games and respond with whatever emotion they so choose.

Henry, Dolly, and Tink Paper Bag Puppets

Children make their own paper bag puppets and use them for storytelling, sharing, and role-playing.

Emotional Band-Aids

These whimsical Henry, Dolly, and Tink band-aids are designed to give children a voice to express where they hurt. When you ask the simple question – "where do you hurt?" – feelings and emotions begin to unlock. Children are encouraged to put on a band-aid any time they feel they need one; parents, students/friends and teachers are encouraged to ask "where do you hurt?" and "how can I help you?" so a dialogue can follow.

Dolly's Activities

The following activities build on the theme of feelings and emotions. Most of the activities are individual activities to allow the children to express their feelings and share with the group. Group activities, like the bingo game, offer an excellent opportunity to address situational feelings and how sometimes those feelings are manifested in negative ways, like bullying.



Dolly's World of Feelings

In this activity, children explore and discover new or different feelings. Children are encouraged to complete Dolly's feelings map and then to play a charades-type game, where one player acts out a feeling using non-verbal cues and the other player tries to guess which feeling it is.

My Feelings Movie

Sometimes, when we watch a scary movie, we feel frightened and anxious. If we watch a funny movie, we might feel cheery and relaxed. Emotions are a result of the things we see and the things we hear, either in our mind or the outside world. Our brains translate those images and sounds into feelings. By creating a movie about their feelings, this activity reinforces this concept. Children are encouraged to use pictures, words, and sounds to create a movie-type of their choice. They are also encouraged to observe the reaction of the audience to their funny, sad, or scary movie.

Dolly's Emotions Cookbook

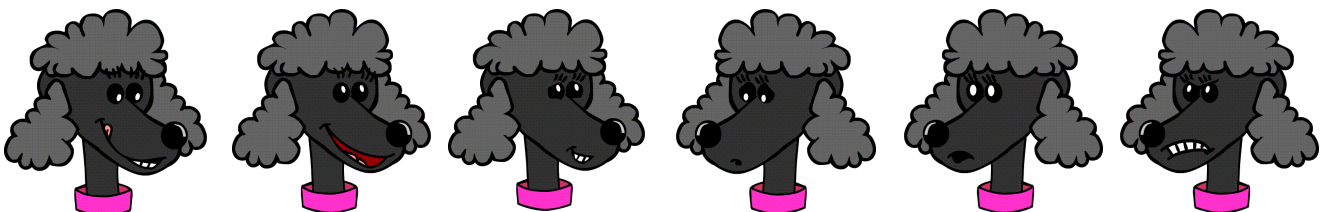
In this activity, children create "emotions recipes" by mixing "ingredients" such as sound, color, taste, smell, words, and events. In doing so, they discover that like the ingredients in a recipe, when combined, these things produce an emotion. Children are encouraged to share their recipes and discover that each person has a unique "recipe" for each feeling.

How Would Dolly and Henry Feel? Matching Bingo Game

In this matching game, children discover how Dolly and Henry feel and react to each other's actions by assuming the role of each animal and matching an action with one or more feelings. Children in situations with chronically ill siblings sometimes take out their frustration in the form of bullying. Expressing feelings, getting along with others, and recognizing and channeling anger are some of the lessons Dolly and Henry teach us. You are encouraged to use this game to discuss situational feelings, individual feelings, and initiate conversations about how feelings can change.

Where Do You Hurt?

These whimsical Dolly emotional band-aids are designed to give children a voice to express where they hurt. When you ask the simple question – "where do you hurt?" – feelings and emotions begin to unlock. Children are encouraged to put on a band-aid any time they feel they need one; parents, students/friends and teachers are encouraged to ask "where do you hurt?" and "how can I help you?" so a dialogue can follow.



Poems, Songs, Videos, and Toys

Use the poems, songs, videos, and toys to supplement the curriculum.

Poems

To Tink with Love, From Henry

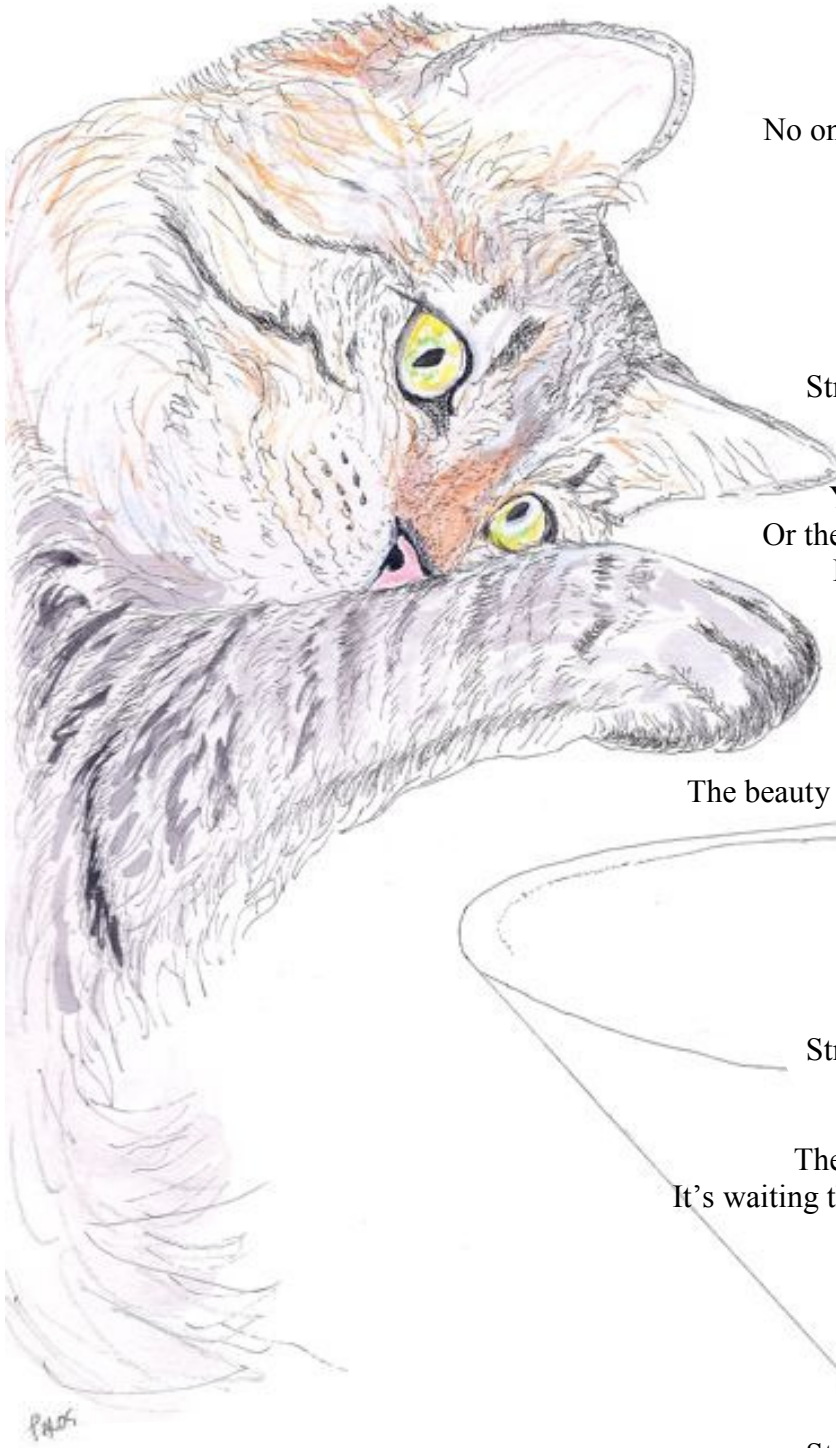
Roses are Red
Violets are Blue
My new love's a dog
Her legs are but two.
Together we play,
We more than have fun
She bounces to find me
Boy, can she run!
Some say we're disabled
But not Tink and I
We play like all others
The time it does fly.
She stands on two legs
And I stand on just three
Two kindred spirits,
Tink and Just Me.
For those that "tink" Tink
Is not more than just swift
Let me remind you
To me she's a gift
What limbs one's endowed with
Is not really the point
It's what's in our hearts
That our souls do anoint
So Tink is my playmate
And also my love
A two-legged doggie
Sent down from above
Forget what is missing
Be here and now
Count all your blessings
We'll show you how.
So all you dear humans
Who come watch us play
Remember what matters
Live fully each day!



Songs

Just Me

Music and Lyrics by Gayle St. Gregory



Just me - that's who I want to be
Just me - the beauty that I see
No one can tell me what I should become
Or how I should conform
To what they think is the norm

Just me - proud of what I see
It's me - I've set my spirit free
For the first time in the mirror I see
Strength and pride looking back at me
Just me

You have to make a different choice
Or the world outside will steal your voice
Don't let them tell you how to think
Don't let them tell you how to look
Or what to do

My smile smiling back at me
All the while strange I didn't see
The beauty I've become without asking anyone
A whole new life's begun
Finally I've won

Just me - proud of what I see
It's me - I've set my spirit free
For the first time in the mirror I see
Strength and pride looking back at me
Just me

The world inside has a still small voice
It's waiting there to guide you with every choice
It will tell you the truth
And the truth will set you free

Just me - proud of what I see
It's me - I've set my spirit free
For the first time in the mirror I see
Strength and pride looking back at me
Just me - finally I'm free
Free to be me
Just me - free to be me
Just me



Henry's Song

Music & Lyrics by B. Glenn Copeland--2007

My name is Henry
I play and I frolic
I'm loving and
friendly
I purr and I rollick

No one can be
Just Me
That you can
plainly see

I like to jump and
Explore in new
places
Though sometimes
I bump things
And leave a few
traces

But I have the
heart to be
Just who I am,
Just Me.

And I shall be
what only I can be
And only I can be
Just Me.

And you can do
what only you can
do
And that's to show
us who's just you

No one else
No one else
No one else
No one else can be
just you.



What About Me?

Music & Lyrics by B. Glenn Copeland--
2007

There is someone who I love
Someone I'm always thinking of
Someone in my family
Someone whose heart is brave and free

Someone with a special dream
to show we're much more than we seem
But I know I'm special too
So, I'm asking you

What about me? What about me?
There are things I need to tell you
There are things I need to do

Some days I want to yell
that things are no going well
I need someone I can tell my troubles to

What about me? What about me?
There's this place I want to go to
What about me? What about me?
And can my friends come too?

When I'm not feeling bold
It's your hand I need to hold
And I too need to be told
"We love you"

What about me, what about me?
What about me?



Videos

Introduce children to Henry via the web:

- Henry's website: www.henrysworld.org.
- Tink's video on YouTube: (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z120CqWVfWM>)
- A special video for the SD Zoo: (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HyngO9g7Zxs&feature=related>)
- Henry's first television appearance: (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vjXYaHYgqxo&feature=related>)
- Another television appearance: (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NZ5iy95F9uU&feature=related>)
- An interview with Cathy Conheim and Henry: (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4VkFOUziUmM>)
- An interview with CNN: (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Elb83imc4HE>)

Toys



Children respond well to hand-held toys and dolls. These hand-knit replicas of the real animals will enhance the program. Children in a fourth grade classroom took turns holding Henry's "girlfriend," a tiny two-legged dachshund named Tink, during small reading group sessions. Once students held Tink, they passed her to someone who had shown respect or politeness during the lesson. Another class used the Dolly doll as the "keeper of secrets" and shared their feelings with her.

As children learn about Henry, Dolly, and Tink, they create new possibilities for themselves and for their lives.

Resources

Henry's Website

Go to Henry's website www.henrysworld.org to access articles, photos, videos, and slideshows. The Store page has items for purchase as well as free downloadable files.



Other Recommended Websites

www.lessonplanet.com
www.familyeducation.com
www.kidscanlearn.net
www.free.ed.gov

Storytelling

<http://www.healingstory.com/>
<http://www.healingstory.org/>
<http://www.storynet-advocacy.org/news/healing.shtml>
http://www.andreheuer.com/program/healing_art_storytelling.html

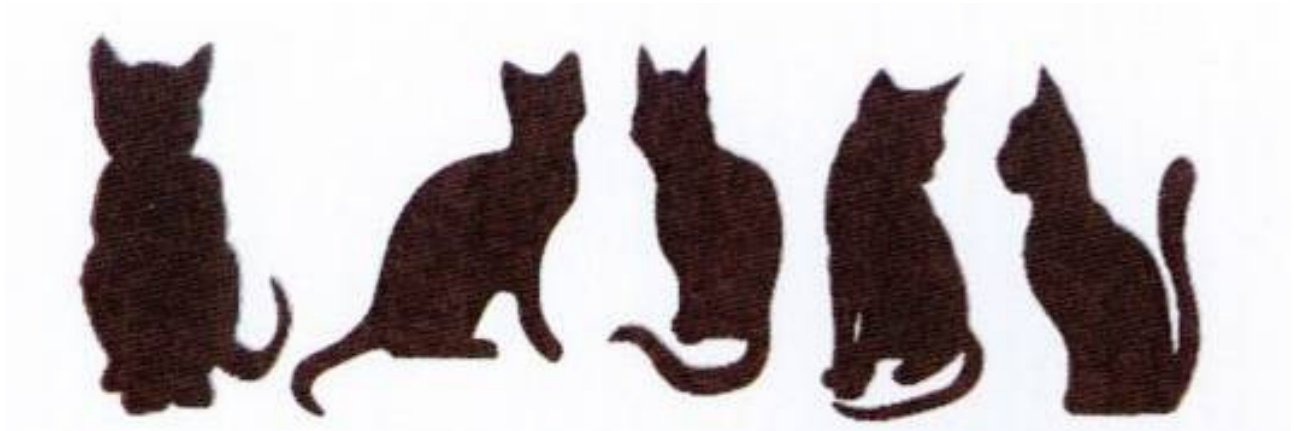
Resiliency

<http://resilnet.uiuc.edu/library/grotb95b.html>
<http://www.healthychildren.org/english/healthy-living/emotional-wellness/Pages/default.aspx>
http://www.familytlc.net/resilient_children_preteen.html
<http://www.raisingresilientkids.com/>



Suggested Lessons

Art Center



Cat Silhouette Project

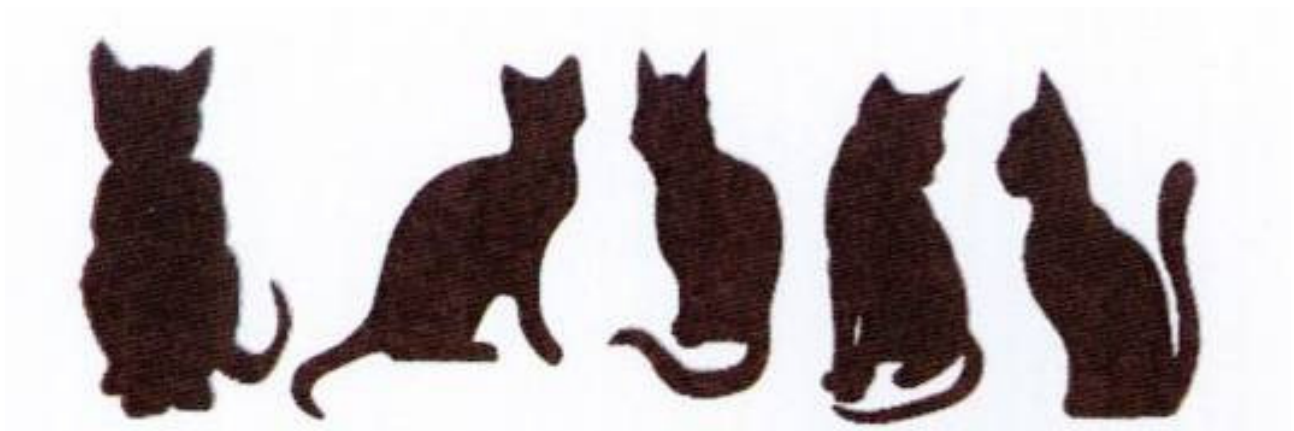
In this project, designed by Sue Ann Foster, children create silhouettes using pre-cut simple cat silhouettes. They trace the shape, alter it if they so desire, and then use their imagination to design the interior.

Anticipatory Set: Introduce or review vocabulary terms: outline, shape, lines, trace, silhouette, emphasis, contrast

Materials/Teaching: several pre-cut simple cat silhouettes, 12"x18" heavy paper, pre-cut mounting board, scissors, markers, oil pastels, color pencils, glitter, glue sticks

Guided Practice: Have children practice tracing by making a tracing of their hands. Next, have them select a pre-cut cat silhouette to trace on heavy paper. Show them how to trace around the pre-cut silhouette and remind them they can alter the shape if they so choose. After tracing, have children fill the shape with their own unique designs.

Independent Practice: Assign a second Cat or dog Silhouette as a free-time activity or homework.



Language Arts Center

“Meow” Version of *What’s the Matter with Henry*

One child wrote Henry with the wish that an edition could be made in “meow” language so he could read it to his cat. In this lesson, use phonics to teach the sounds of the English language. Stress tone, look, intensity, touch, volume, etc. so children can become aware of communication patterns.

Anticipatory Set:

Discuss the English consonant and vowel sounds. Explain that sounds are produced in different parts of the mouth, lips, tongue, and throat. Model some of the sounds below.

Materials/Teaching:

Select from the following consonant and vowel phonemes and write them on the board:

consonant phonemes	vowel phonemes by mouth position
/m/	/ē/ three, me, eat
/p/	/i/ hit, been, gym
/t/	/ā/ cake, great, tray
/b/	/e/ met, said, lead
/k/	/a/ hat, have, laugh
/n/	/ī/ lime, tie, sight
/d/	/ə/ table, about, soda
/g/	/o/ hot, sock, talk
/l/	/u/ but, rough, does
/f/	/aw/ saw, ball, water
/h/	/ō/ toe, poke, coat
/r/	/ōō/ moon, suit, chew
/w/	/ōō/ book, put, would
/sh/	/oi/, /oy/ toy, coil, lawyer
/s/, /z/	/ou/, /ow/ how, loud
/m/	/ûr/ fur, her, bird
/ng/	/är/ far
/v/	/ôr/ four, or
/th/	
ks/x	
/j/, /ch/	
/y/	
/r/	

Divide the class into “Consonants” and “Vowels.” Have each group make the sounds. Tell them they will now have a chance to make their own version of Henry’s story using the sounds they just practiced. This will be their “meow” version of the story and may be nonsensical and whimsical since they’ll be combining consonant and vowel sounds. Recommend they to select at least one consonant/vowel combination for each page of their storybook and have them illustrate the pages. Stress tone, look, intensity, touch, and volume by showing them examples of different communications types.

Independent Practice: Have the children “share out” their stories in pairs or small groups.

Letter Writing to Henry

Henry receives hundreds of e-mails through his website. He may not be able to answer all of them, but you may want to contact him and send a group letter as part of a language arts lesson.

One of his favorite letters came from a 4th grade teacher in Sacramento:

Dear Henry,

I am a student teacher and have had the privilege of sharing your book with my class of 4th graders. As I read your story out loud, I hoped that someone would become inspired by your courage to be authentic. What I didn't realize was that person would be me.

I am in the process of becoming credentialed by the state of California. During this procedure it is easy to lose yourself and become the product of a system. The day I introduced your book my teaching methods were being evaluated. Under the pressure, I began to conform to advice that did not feel right to me. I started yelling. One of the students looked up at me with tear filled eyes and said, "Mrs. Tiner this is not you! You never yell."

As I lay in my bed that night I began reflecting. I needed classroom management but how could I do it and still be true to myself? Then I remembered something I had observed another teacher do a few years earlier. Whenever her class got out of control, she didn't yell, she ignored the chaos and practiced putting a golf ball into a cup. When she started putting, the children grew quiet and sat in their seats ready to learn. I didn't know how to putt but I knew what I could do.

The next morning I asked the students if they remembered what jm stood for at the end of your name. The students proudly blurted out, "JUST ME!" I congratulated them and went on to explain that I was not being me the day before. I had yelled and I was sorry. I explained that from now on instead of yelling I would knit. It was amazing; it worked. Thank you Henry for helping me be, just me.

Sincerely,

Sharon Tiner
4th Grade Teacher
Deterding Elementary School



Science Center

Henry's Healing Garden



Henry has been called a “therapist” as he reaches out to children and adults so they may start the healing process. Through the years, horticulture as a therapy for well-being has become a recognized and respected therapeutic modality conducted by trained, registered professionals. The garden can be a powerful place of renewal and connection with one’s true self. Many schools have successfully set up gardens. You can create a sensory-stimulated environment with plants selected for fragrance, texture, taste, and color. We recommend that you grow the following plants in Henry’s healing garden: medicinal herbs such as peppermint and chamomile; fruiting plants such as strawberries, cherry tomatoes, and cucumbers; fragrant plants such as ornamental peas; and colorful plants such as sunflowers. Children may start the seedlings in the classroom and then transfer their plants to their home garden or school garden.

Fundraising Ideas

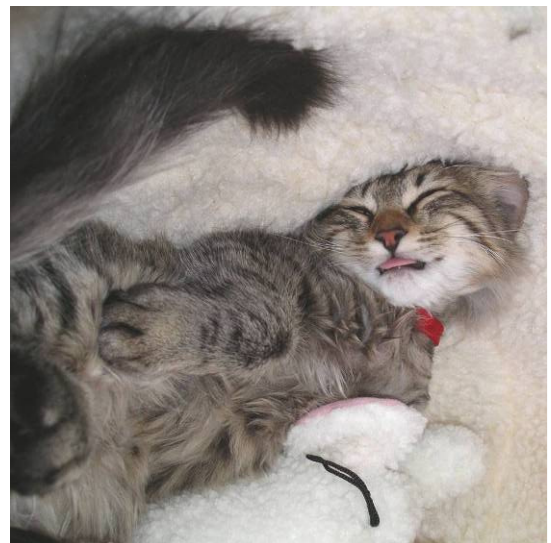
1. Purchase Henry and Dolly books - Purchase books at cost and use them as a fund-raiser to help a local organization. Have children decide what their mission will be (i.e. to help animals, to support Paralympics, etc.). Make this a civics lesson by having them research and vote on the organization that’s closest to their mission. After they have donated money, have them follow up and see what their money bought. By doing so, children will learn to make a difference in their communities.
2. Frame children’s artwork (cat silhouettes) and have a silent art auction during parent’s night.
3. Make children’s artwork into cards. Have a Henry writing exercise where children write a note in Henry’s voice and invite students, teachers, and administrators at their school to participate in a fund-raising effort.



Talking Points of Henry's Story

What Happens?

- Something interrupts life as you knew it—it could be an accident, a disaster like an earthquake, or a disease.
- This may change where you live, how you live and what makes sense.
- You may be wounded by the change, in body or in your heart and mind.
- People you know or meet may not know how to treat you or what to say.
- You may have to find a new way to live, and to adapt to what has changed.
- This new world may be confusing to you and you may feel many mixed emotions, such as sadness for your loss, or guilt that you survived or cannot help more.
- Even the people around you who are kind may not really understand.
- You may feel alone, isolated and different.
- You may not know how, or you may be afraid to ask for help.
- What can you do?



Make the Move From Victim to Hero

- It is NOT the events of your life that dictate how you live, it is your response to those events that matters.
- On the inside, you are still the person that you were before.
- By telling your story, putting words to your feelings, you can help yourself and others find healing. Your story can be powerful medicine.
- Think of each challenge as an adventure: how can you figure out how to do things in a new way under these new circumstances.
- Pay attention to all the abilities and talents you still have, not only the ones that have changed or are gone, count your blessings as you look forward.
- Stay true to your nature, be the best that you can be, and explore all the new ways to be yourself: try new things, sing new songs, draw new pictures, make new friends as you discover your new world.

Talking Points of Dolly's Story

What Happens?

- You get lots of messages, impressions and feelings—noises, smells, sights and sensations—they may confuse you.
- You may not know what to do with all these feelings.
- You may be frightened if the feelings are new, conflicting or strange.
- People you know may treat you differently, or they may express a confusion of feelings themselves.
- You should find a way to express and sort out what you are feeling.
- You may feel alone, isolated and different.
- You may not know how, or you may be afraid, to ask for help.
- What can you do?

Make the Move From Victim to Hero

- Feelings are temporary, they do not last.
- Try to pay attention to all the ways you can explain or name what you feel. It will help you to understand your feelings and why you may feel this way.
- You can explore your feelings by talking about them with a trusted parent, friend, teacher, doctor, counselor or clergyman.
- By telling your story, putting words to your feelings, you can help yourself and others find healing. Your story/telling your story can be powerful medicine.
- Recognize that there are always within you, many different responses to the world around you and your experience.
- Only you can choose which feelings to act upon and the appropriate action to take.
- Once you understand and experience each feeling—you can then choose which feelings to focus on, and which to disregard.
- The feelings you choose to encourage help others to get to know the real you, just you.



Appendix

Facts and Figures

Why list facts and figures about the challenges we face? Children and families dealing with challenges have more in common than they know. The first step in helping is to investigate and then to reach out to others. Our books, workbooks and activities aid in learning new strategies and ways of dealing with change. They can help us become resilient and confident in our ability to overcome adversity. They help us explore who we are and who we want to become. They help us to help others.

There are both visible challenges—an amputated leg, or experiencing an earthquake—as well as invisible challenges—traumatic brain injury, mental illness, hunger—but you and your child/group can learn that you can choose how you respond. This is the journey from victim to hero, from experience to understanding to imagination, and then to endeavor. As you read the facts and figures below, remember that each represents stories of recovery, and of that journey to the heroism within each of us.



- As of 2008 there were 73.9 million children in the United States.
- 67% lived with two married adults.
- 21% spoke a language other than English at home.
- 18% live in poverty.
- 72% of children in poverty and are hungry.
- During the current recession, it is estimated that 22.5% of all children are going hungry for some time each week.
- Even mild under nutrition experienced by young children impacts their behavior, their school performance, and their overall cognitive development.
- 11% of all children have no health insurance.
- 77% of children received the recommended vaccines for childhood diseases.
- 25% of children have untreated dental cavities.
- 7.3% of children have limitation of activity due to chronic health conditions.
- 5.1% of children missed 11 or more days of school in 12 months due to illness or injury.
- 1 in 3 children is considered obese or overweight.
- 43% of households with children had one or more of the three critical housing problems (physical inadequacy, crowding or cost burdens).
- 55% of children ages 3-5 were read to on a daily basis by a family member.
- 9% of children have asthma.
- 14% of children have a special health care need lasting more than 12 months, requiring prescription medication, and limiting normal functional and developmental activity.

Facts and Figures Cont'd

Disabilities in children include:

- Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder
- Autism
- Blindness and other Visual Impairments
- Cerebral Palsy
- Deafness and Hearing Loss
- Developmental Delay
- Down Syndrome
- Emotional Disturbance
- Epilepsy
- Intellectual Disability (formerly Mental Retardation)
- Learning Disabilities
- Rare Disorders
- Severe or Multiple Disabilities
- Speech and Language Impairments
- Traumatic Brain Injury (5.3 million people are living with TBI, children are the most at risk for these injuries)

In families with a child with chronic conditions, more family dysfunction is experienced; there is more school absence as well as employment absenteeism and loss, less participation in community activities, and more difficulty with childcare. According to the National Survey of Children's Health, parental concern about emotional, behavioral and learning difficulties experienced by their children is more than double the actual diagnosis by a professional of those difficulties. There are many reasons for this, not least being lack of access to professional care or attention.

The Rand Corporation estimates that between 180,000 and 350,000 veterans have suffered head trauma, which may lead to brain injury. These are in addition to the over 30,000 veterans returning with disabling wounds. These individuals' injuries may not become evident for years. Our project's concern is the enormous impact on the children in these military families of both the visible and invisible wounds, which will change their lives.

We strive to serve all such families, as well as teachers who want to integrate lessons on character development and life skills in their classrooms, in addition to health care professionals who know that the choices made by patients and their caregivers determine long-term recovery, resilience and vitality.



What We Believe/Opinions

- Health is more than the absence of disease.
- Your inner world matters.
- We can choose behavior, but not feelings.
- We need to create healthy outlets for difficult feelings that are held within and become toxic, causing sickness in body, mind, and actions.
- Each of us will encounter difficulties and challenges.
- We can choose how we respond to our experiences.
- Our self-esteem is a result of things we see and hear in our outside world and things we see and hear in our inside world. What we tell ourselves in our inner world is what creates our feelings.
- Individual capacities are nurtured by exploration and opportunities to express creativity.
- Every person has a story, and every story is valuable. Children need to learn to be the central character in their own story.
- It is better to have a choice than to not have a choice.
- Flexibility equals empowerment; the person with the most flexibility of coping will be the one who controls his/her life effectively.
- Black/white, good/bad are binary systems which decrease our flexibility. We need to expand children's real options for expression and choice.



The Just Me Project: Social and Emotional Learning

The Just Me Project strives to build resilience and social and emotional competencies so that children can overcome obstacles and transform trauma as they work to live fully.

CASEL (Collaborative Association for Social and Emotional Learning) reports that social and emotional learning improves students' positive behavior and reduces negative behavior. It promotes young people's academic success, health and well-being at the same time that it prevents a variety of problems such as alcohol and drug use, violence, truancy, and bullying.¹

The Just Me Project uses the voices of Henry, the three-legged cat, and Dolly, the dog who feels invisible, to initiate conversations which reframe adverse experiences. We know that pets are trusted transitional objects for children, able to listen to secrets and sorrows, joining in play and joy whenever possible, and being present to give comfort at all times. The virtual pets, Henry and Dolly, have been able to normalize trauma and teach the lessons of emotional awareness through simple "Kibble for Thought" to which adults and children relate. They emphasize that none of us is defined by our circumstances and that each of us can choose our responses.

The books of the project "*What's the Matter with Henry?*" and "*What About Me? I'm Here Too*" convey to the reader the lessons that Hard Things Happen, Nobody's Perfect, Be True to Who You are, Hate is Learned, Ask for Help, etc. and engage each participant in the journey from victim to hero, and in telling their own stories.

A large body of scientific research has determined that effective social and emotional learning in schools significantly improves students' social and emotional skills, attitudes about self and others, social interactions, academic achievement and attitudes toward school, while decreasing levels of emotional distress and conduct problems.²

In Sacramento, two teachers were able to transform 1000 students in a school serving the disadvantaged by using the story of Henry and an art project. Children who had been repeatedly bullied were recognized for their talent and respected for the first time in their lives; children who had been silent spoke of their identification with the cat; and teachers who struggled to be authentic in the classroom recognized the lessons for them available in the story.

¹ www.CASEL.org; and *Promoting social and emotional learning. Guidelines for educators, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1997*

² See the research review on the CASEL website.

The Just Me Project: Social and Emotional Learning Cont'd

Children suffering from injury and illness have found identification with the cat as he discovers that he can teach humans to recognize that he has the heart of a lion and is not handicapped.

Children who have felt different and isolated identify with the tiny two-legged Dachshund named Tink, (Henry's girlfriend) who refuses to be a "Poor Thing" and rejoices as helpful humans build her wheels. Adults who have experienced trauma or illness, such as returning military veterans, find that the materials of The Just Me Project open the conversation about recovery with their families, and are able to express their grief, their struggles, and their hope to Henry, Dolly and Tink.

The simple lessons of the Kibble for Thought, such as Hard Things Happen and Hate is Learned, make it easy for parents, teachers and care-givers to reframe the circumstances of challenge into courage, creativity and compassion.

Since the project was begun in 2007, over 3000 military families have used the materials, schools in various states teach tolerance, overcoming stigma and social and emotional learning through the program, and over 45,000 emails of stories have been answered by Cathy Conheim, the cat scribe and founder of the project. Support has come from The Whiteman Foundation, The Ross Perot Foundation, the Fischer Houses, the Navy and Marine Relief Society, and numerous animal publications and organizations. Materials are available in Spanish, and now to serve the children of Haiti, in Creole.



Suggested Reading

36 Children

By Herbert Kohl

1990 Plume, Paperback

*The Power of Story, Teaching
through Storytelling*

By Rives Collins and Pamela Cooper

2005, Second Edition, Paperback

The Storytelling Classroom: Applications Across the Curriculum

By Sherry Norfolk, Jane Stenson, and Diane Williams

2006, Libraries Unlimited, Paperback

Horticultural Therapy Methods: Making Connections in Health Care, Human Service, and Community Programs

By Rebecca L. Haller and Christine L. Kramer, Ed.

2006 Haworth Press; Softcover, 163 pages

Garden Projects for the Classroom & Special Learning Programs

By Hank Bruce & Tomi Jill Folk

2003 Petals and Pages; Softcover, 212 pages

