

Max and Worry - Follow Your Feelings

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Publisher: Affirm Press

ISBN 9781922419729 SCIS: 5372964

\$19.99

When Max has a hard time starting his maths work, he's joined by someone new: Worry. But Worry doesn't give Max the help he needs. It feels like Worry will never leave, even when Max does what Worry tells him to! But with the help of some deep breaths and a vow to just try his best, Max can say goodbye for now to Worry, and hello to someone new...



Teacher Notes have been based on those supplied by the publisher. A full version is available on our website.

Themes:

- Feeling worried
- Accepting our feelings
- Developing confidence

Discussion Questions and Activities:

Comprehension:

- At the start of this book, Max wishes he could run away. Why is this?
- On page 7, Worry says 'it's a risk'. What does Worry think is a risk? Why does Worry think this would be a risk?
- What does Max do to avoid completing his maths work in class?
- Why do Max and Worry hide and run away from the teacher?
- When does Max decide to do something differently in his next maths class? Why does Max decide to do this?
- Worry starts to fade until they're eventually gone. When does Worry start fading?
- Why does Worry fade away completely?
- At the end of the book, when Worry has faded away, a new character called Resilience lands on Max's desk. Do you know what 'resilience' means? Why does Max meet Resilience?
- Only Max can see or hear Worry. Why do you think this is? Do you think the other characters have their own Worry or other animal with them?

Social and Emotional Development:

- When Max feels worried, his stomach churns like a washing machine. Have you ever felt like that? What happens when you feel worried or nervous?
- On the classroom wall behind Max, there are three posters with faces on them. What emotions do each of these three faces show?
- When Max asks Worry what happens when something isn't perfect, Worry tells him the world could explode, or worse: everyone looks at you. Do you think the world really would explode? What might happen instead?
- When we're feeling worried, asking for help can seem a bit scary. What happens when Max asks for help in the book?
- Does Worry become more worried, less worried or stay the same as the book goes on? Does Max become more worried, less worried, or stay the same as the book goes on?
- Why does Max not just ask Worry to leave? Why does Worry stay?

Final Reflections:

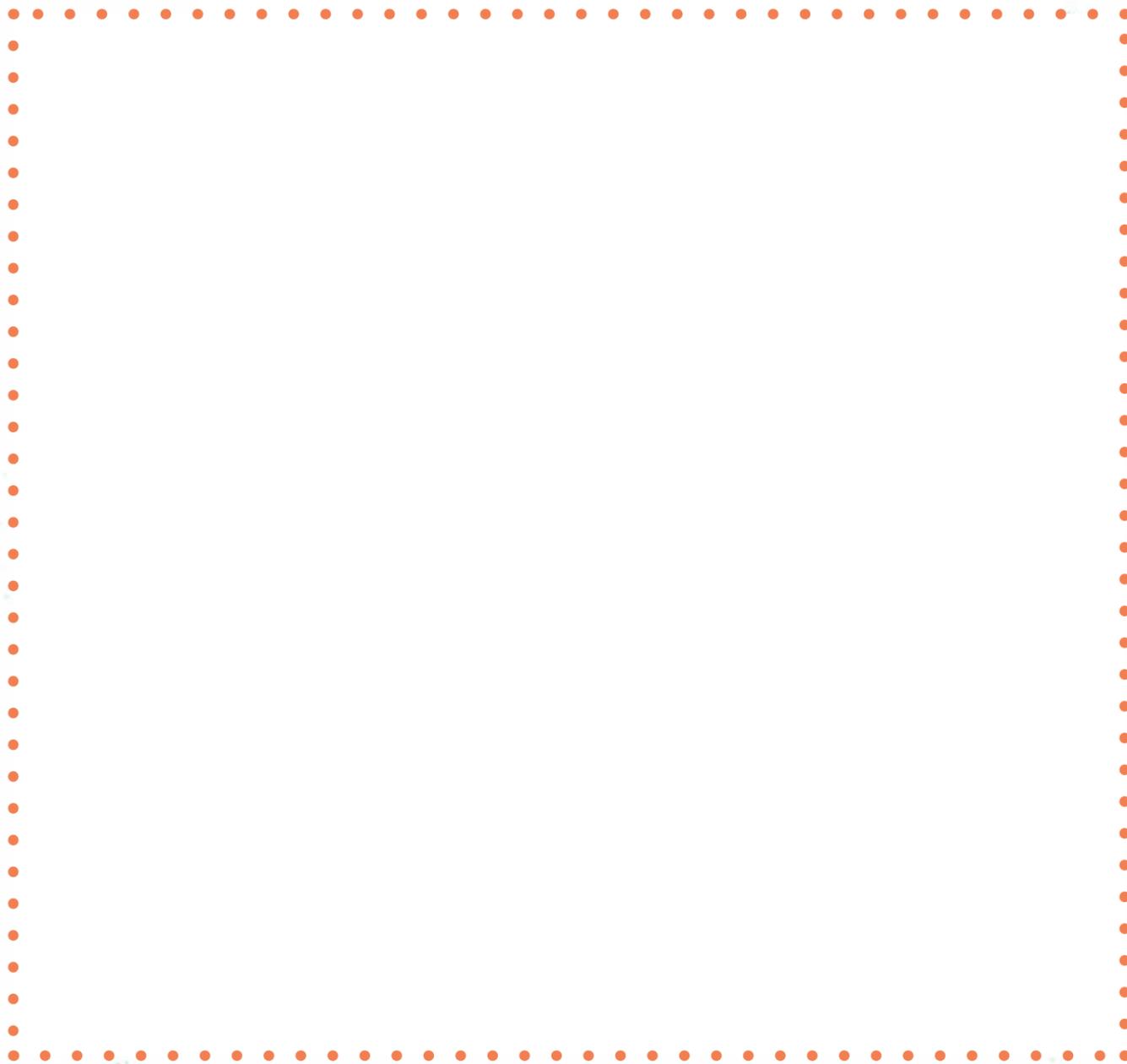
- What was your favourite part about this book? Did you have a favourite page?
- If your worry was an animal, what animal would it be?

Activities attached:

- Activity One: Draw your feeling
- Activity Two: Worry box and happy box
- Activity Three: Your own Max and Worry

Activity One: Draw your feeling

How do you feel right now: Happy? Excited? Bored? Angry? Imagine that whatever you're feeling is an animal who has come to sit with you. What would your animal be? Perhaps it's a Happy lion, or a Sad giraffe, or an Angry duck! Draw your feeling friend in the space below, or find a spare piece of paper. Perhaps you could be in your picture, too?



Activity Two: Worry box & happy box

For this activity, you will need two boxes or two jars with lids, a pen/pencil, and some strips of paper. One box will be a 'Worry Box' and the other will be a 'Happy Box'. If you have scrap paper, materials, glitter and other crafty things available, you could decorate your boxes in a fun way!

When you feel worried about something, write down what is worrying you on a slip of paper and put it in the worry box. You can write a full sentence, or just a word or two.

Perhaps soon after you have done that, or at another time, write something that makes you happy on another slip of paper, and put that paper in the happy box. Try to think of something that made you smile recently. You can write the same thing multiple times for the worry box and the happy box. Why not open the happy box from time to time and have a look at all the things that have made you feel good?

Activity Three: Your own Max & Worry

Partner up with a friend or two for this activity! Together you will write your own short story about Max and Worry. Think of a scenario when Max is feeling worried again, and what will happen when Worry returns.

Here are some questions to consider:

- What is Max nervous about?
- What does Worry say when they come back?
- What does Worry tell Max to do? Does Max do it?
- How does Max help Worry to start fading away?
- Who does Max meet at the end of your story?

If you feel like it, perhaps you could act out your story to the class?

