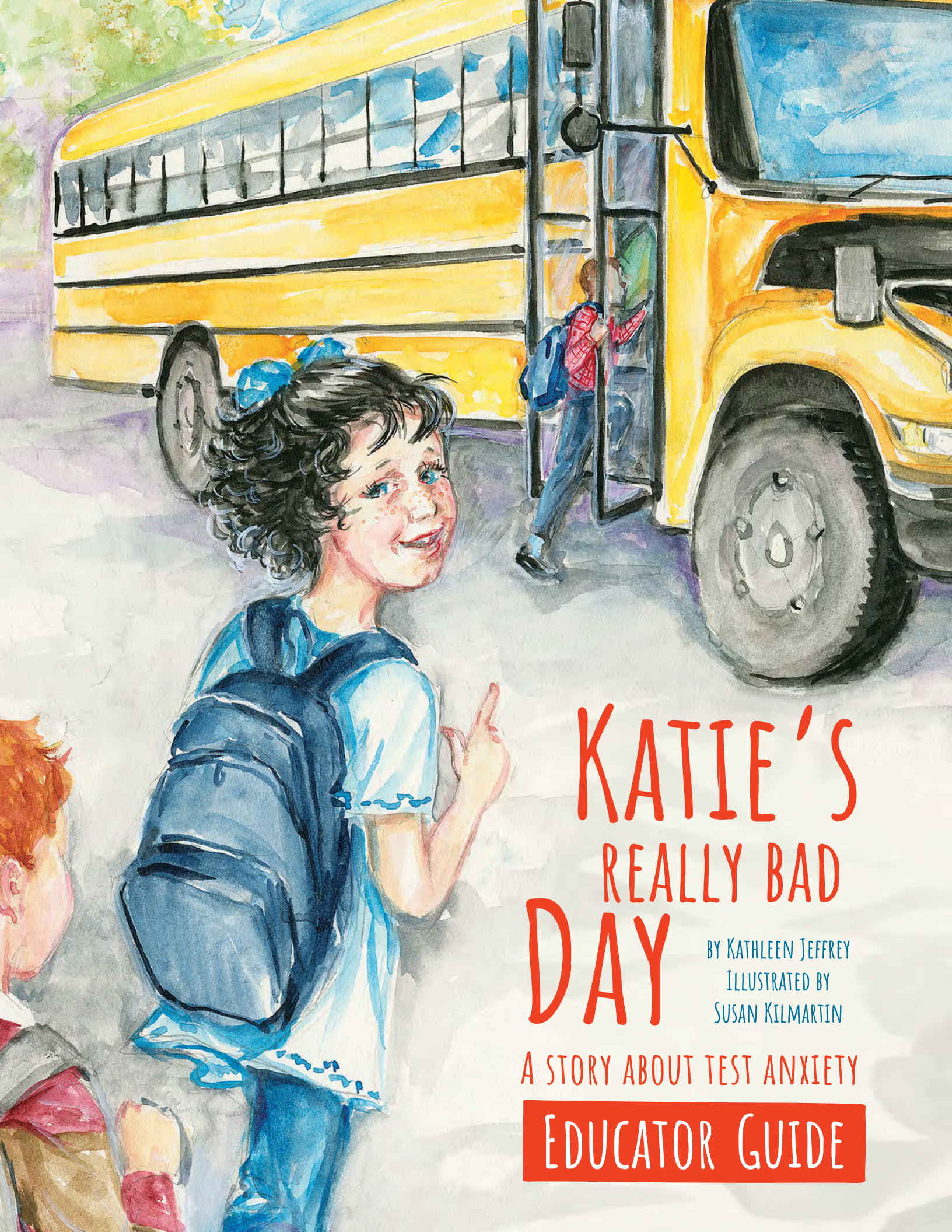


Katie's Really Bad Day

by Kathleen Jeffrey
Illustrated by
Susan Kilmartin

A story about test anxiety

Educator Guide

It's Spelling Test Day and Katie Feels Anxious...

Cheerful, fun-loving Katie sometimes gets anxious before tests, even when she knows the answers. One day, when Katie's feelings are so enormous, she panics and can't seem to do the test at all. She even disrupts the entire class. Luckily, with the guidance of her teacher, Katie discovers calming tools to soothe her nerves. Pretty soon, the whole class is joining Katie to beat that test stress!

Katie's Really Bad Day is a beautifully illustrated, relatable story with teaching points and practical advice for anxious kids.

Introduction to the Educator's Guide

Endorsed by Kirkus Reviews "GET IT", Midwest Book Review, The US Review of Books, Children's Book Review, Bookview Review, and a Mom's Choice Awards® Gold Recipient, Kathleen Jeffrey's award-winning *Katie's Really Bad Day: A Story about Test Anxiety,* is a story all young learners can connect with and is an invaluable resource for every elementary school classroom.

Katie's Really Bad Day is an intentionally written and charmingly illustrated story that authentically captures young readers' attention and makes for an essential classroom read-aloud for children ages 5–8. While reading the book with your students and completing the Educator Guide activities, your students will easily identify with Katie and her classmates and develop their text-to-self skills.

The guide's highly relevant and engaging comprehension questions and activities couple ideally to foster the skills and confidence for your students to thrive. This co-curricular combination will help your students understand that learning to manage worries and anxiety while using a variety of strategies, is part of their growth.

Katie's Really Bad Day is a perfect whole-group or individual read-aloud for students who may be nervous with any learning task, including testing. This compelling story and literature guide supports students' emotional development, which naturally leads to a more welcoming, empathetic, and reassuring classroom community and learning environment. Your students will follow along with Katie and learn to navigate their anxiety, using concrete sensory and motor skills, self-talk, and other strategies to support their regulation. Together, this calming, resilience-building book and guide are must-haves for all elementary classrooms.

Educator Note:

- For the Activities, do all 4 activities or simply choose what works for your class. However, you will need to do some variation of Activity #3 (Regulation Station), in order to have pictures for Activity #4 (Share it out! Bulletin Board).
- The Guide is aligned with Common Core Standards and the CASEL Framework. Please adapt these to fit your students' ages and needs.



AUTHOR Kathleen Jeffrey earned her BA in Elementary Education from Rhode Island College. After a career in US & international media sales, Kathleen left the corporate world and worked for the Glastonbury Abbey Bookstore in Hingham, MA. She loved her twelve-year independent bookstore adventure. Currently, she's writing children's picture books, fulfilling her vision to bring, "Love, Light, Spirit, Truth, Joy," to little ones' beautiful hearts. Kathleen lives in Massachusetts with her husband, Paul.

LEARN MORE AT:
kathleenjeffreyauthor.com



ILLUSTRATOR Susan Kilmartin grew up traveling the world and received her BFA from the University of Maryland. She is a portrait painter, calligrapher, muralist, plein air painter, and illustrator. This is the third book she has illustrated. Susan and her husband, Hugh, live on Cape Cod in Massachusetts.

VIEW HER WORK AT:
susankilmartin.com

Ten Essential Questions

Engaging, Text-Related Comprehension Questions

Introduction to the Book

To hook your students, introduce the book by previewing the concept of feeling nervous or worried at school and helping your students connect and make predictions.

Educator Note:

Read questions 1–2 before opening the book, then read questions 3–7 as you read the book out loud to engage your students. Read questions 8–10 once you've completed the reading.

- We envision students seated on the rug or somewhere comfortable, looking carefully at the pictures, making inferences, connections, and predictions as the book is read aloud and questions are asked.
- We suggest using a combination of whole-group answers and quick 1-minute "turn and talks" so every student is engaged in the content.
- In place of page numbers, quotes are used as reference points.
- The questions and comments we suggest reading out loud are italicized.

Before Reading:

Ask questions 1 and 2 before opening the book.

1. **CONNECTION:** *Before we begin reading the book, has anyone ever felt nervous about anything at school? Maybe you felt nervous about meeting a new teacher or making a new friend? I remember I felt nervous about _____* (e.g., learning to read). *What does it mean to feel nervous or anxious? What does it look like?* (Teacher can demonstrate what nervousness might look like.)

2. **PREDICTION:** Show the book's cover and note the detail in the picture. This is the perfect time to teach the word *illustration.*

   An illustration is a picture that is drawn or painted by an illustrator or artist.

   Encourage students to look at the specific details in the picture and think about the title to make predictions.

   The illustrations or pictures help us connect to Katie's story. We can tell so much about her feelings and mood from the illustrations. What do you think this book might be about? What makes you say that?

While Reading:

3. **READ:** "Red, hot prickles of fear sizzled from her head to her toes."

   CONNECTION: Teacher models: *Sometimes when I'm scared or fearful, I've felt the same way as Katie where my body gets hot and prickly. Have any of you ever felt this way? When did that happen and what else did you notice in your body?*

   READ: "Katie almost threw up."

   INFERENCE: *Wow! That's a big feeling. What do you think Katie is afraid of? Why? Raise your hands if you've ever felt like that when you've been afraid.*

4. **READ:** "I wish I were invisible."

   INFERENCE: *Why do you think Katie wishes she is invisible? Turn and talk to a neighbor: Have you ever wished you were invisible? When? If you don't want to share aloud, privately draw or write in your journal to express yourself.*

5. **READ:** "'Katie's crying and won't come in,' Finn called out."

   LITERAL TO PREDICTIVE: *Katie talks to her parents about her worries and has a plan to talk to Ms. Julie, but then on the way to school, her worries return. How does she feel by the time she gets to school?* (She is crying and sad.) *What details in the illustrations show us how Katie is feeling? What do you think might happen next?*

6. **READ:** "Let's try belly breathing... A few more times."

   APPLIED CONNECTION: *Has anyone ever tried belly breathing to help you when you feel nervous or anxious?*

Let's all try it right now. What do you notice about your body (your head, your jaw, your chest, your belly)? Why might belly breathing help to calm us?

7. **READ:** "Let me know when you're nervous. Together we'll find solutions to help you stay calm."

   APPLIED CONNECTION: *Katie has people in her life who support her when her emotions are difficult to handle. Who are the people who help you find ways to get calm at school? How about at home? What are some things you do to help you feel calmer when you are upset?*

After Reading:

8. **EVALUATION/SUMMARY**: *What do you think Katie and her classmates learn from her experiences at school? What do you think she might try next time she feels afraid, stressed, worried, or anxious?*

9. **EVALUATIVE CONNECTION:** *What did we learn from reading* Katie's Really Bad Day? *Is it expected that we might feel nervous or anxious at school sometimes? What can we do to help ourselves, so that we feel successful at school and still learn, even when experiences are tricky or difficult?*

10. **INFERENCE:** *Before we read* Katie's Really Bad Day, *we talked about the beautiful, colorful illustrations. On the last page, the author writes, "Today was a really good day!" I notice that the illustrator includes a lot of details that aren't written in words. How does the illustrator show us that Katie has a really good day?*

    Ask the following questions if your students need additional guidance:

    - *What does Katie's mom do with her test? Why might she do this?*
    - *What do Katie's and her mom's facial expressions (and eyes, mouths, etc.) tell us about how they are feeling?*
    - *What colors does the illustrator use on this page? Why do you think she chooses these colors? Any ideas?*



ACTIVITY ONE

Show Me! Using Senses to Describe

Introduction:

This fun, sensory-based activity uses text exploration to demonstrate how the author taps into our senses to show us how Katie feels. Support the development of rich language expression and creative thinking by having students show and describe details in their own words and drawings!

Materials:

Board or chart paper, copies of the "*Show Me - Using Senses*" worksheet, colored pencils/markers, pencils

Directions:

1. Ask students the following questions:
   - *What are our 5 Main Senses?* (sight, sound, touch, smell, taste)
   - *In the following sentence from* Katie's Really Bad Day, *what do we see, hear, smell, or feel?* "Katie's cheeks were swollen pink."
   - *What is the author trying to tell us in this scene where Katie's cheeks are swollen pink?* (That she's worried/stressed/anxious.)
   - *Why doesn't the author just say "Katie is worried?"* (It's more interesting and fun to read the details! She is *showing* us through pictures and interesting descriptions. This sparks more of our (the readers') creativity, instead of just *telling* us.)
2. *Today, we're going to show details like this in our own writing and drawing!*
3. Write or project the sentence: "The dog is friendly." on the board. Ask students to think about how we know a dog is friendly. How do our senses help us know a dog is friendly?



4. Have them complete the attached *"Show Me – Using Senses"* worksheet.
   - **WRITE:** Students who can write can fill in the blanks individually or collaboratively. Inventive spelling is encouraged!
   - **DRAW:** All students can then draw individually or in partner pairs. Encourage the students to draw colorful pictures that match their descriptions.

Sentence Starter	Possible Example
A friendly dog looks like...	a big, fluffy, soft, white cloud.
A friendly dog sounds like...	a wagging tail hitting the ground.
A friendly dog feels like...	a warm, squishy teddy bear.
A friendly dog smells like...	cotton candy on a summer day.

5. Lastly, students share their examples out loud (either from their writing or drawings).
   - Ask: *Can you imagine seeing, feeling, hearing, and smelling the friendly dog? Can you explain?*
6. Optional Wrap-up: *Where else in the story did the author use senses to show us details about Katie and her classmates?*

Show Me – Using Senses!

Use your senses to describe a friendly dog.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Finish the sentences. Then draw the description. Use lots of color in your pictures!



A friendly dog looks like:

_____



A friendly dog sounds like:

_____



A friendly dog feels like:

_____



A friendly dog smells like:

_____

ACTIVITY 2

4 Corners: I Feel...

Emotion Awareness

Introduction:

Through her experiences and with support from the adults in her life, Katie learns to identify the feelings in her body. This fun, movement-based, emotion-awareness activity, designed for whole-class, small-group, or individual instruction, helps students understand basic emotions and reflect on how they feel during different situations in their own lives.

- In this activity, each of your classroom corners represents an answer/color.
- Students will move to the corner that most applies to them after each statement (below) is read. This allows students the opportunity to reflect on their answers/emotions while moving their bodies and gives teachers an idea of how students feel.

Materials:

Enlarged printed version of the color-coded squares to the right (or re-create onto colored construction paper, project image of the squares, or draw on the board).



Educator Note:

In some classrooms, the public aspect and number of transitions in this activity might be too tricky. In this case, you can adapt and have students remain at their seats and put their heads down. Tell them not to peek! Have them hold up their fingers to show their feelings (e.g., 1 = sad, tired, or worried). You will likely need to read the answer options aloud after each statement.

Directions:

1. Project the following visual on the board and label each of the corners of your classroom or therapeutic space with a piece of paper. Post one large color-coded square with the words on it at each corner (e.g., blue = Corner 1: Sad, Tired, Worried).

CORNER 1 *Sad* *Tired* *Worried*	**CORNER 2** *Calm* *Focused* *Ready*
CORNER 3 *Excited* *Nervous* *Anxious*	**CORNER 4** *Angry* *Very Frustrated* *Out of Control*

2. Preview with students that different situations affect everyone differently. *You will move to the corner of the room that has the feeling that you usually feel in the example given. You may not always be in the same corner of the room as your friends. And this is expected.*

3. We start with warm-up statements to build understanding and trust. As you read each statement aloud, students move to the corner of the room that most applies to them. After each move, take a moment to pause and reflect before going to the next statement. Examples:

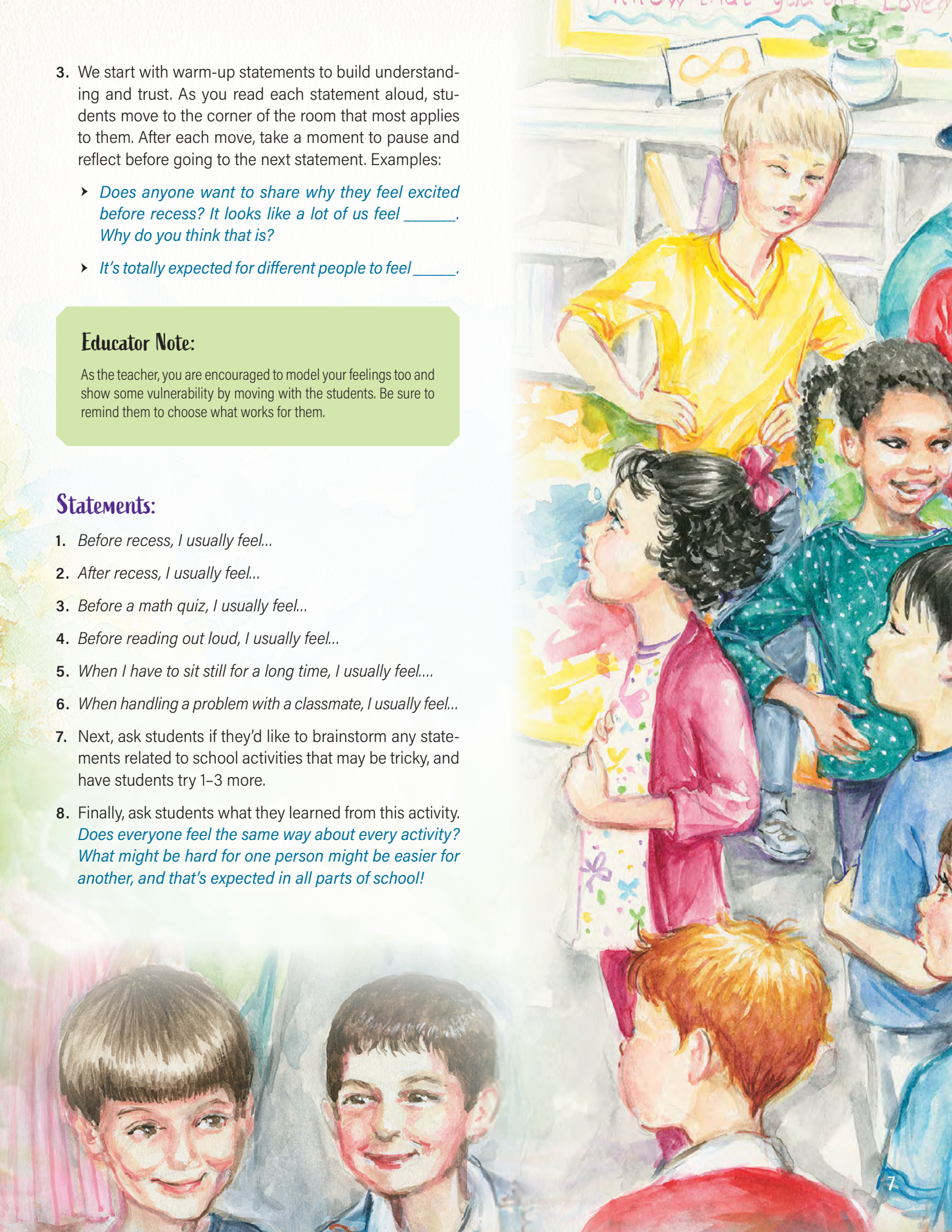
   - *Does anyone want to share why they feel excited before recess? It looks like a lot of us feel _____. Why do you think that is?*
   - *It's totally expected for different people to feel _____.*

Educator Note:

As the teacher, you are encouraged to model your feelings too and show some vulnerability by moving with the students. Be sure to remind them to choose what works for them.

Statements:

1. *Before recess, I usually feel...*
2. *After recess, I usually feel...*
3. *Before a math quiz, I usually feel...*
4. *Before reading out loud, I usually feel...*
5. *When I have to sit still for a long time, I usually feel....*
6. *When handling a problem with a classmate, I usually feel...*
7. Next, ask students if they'd like to brainstorm any statements related to school activities that may be tricky, and have students try 1–3 more.
8. Finally, ask students what they learned from this activity. *Does everyone feel the same way about every activity? What might be hard for one person might be easier for another, and that's expected in all parts of school!*



ACTIVITY 3

Regulation Stations & Tool Box Bookmark!

Introduction:

Just as Katie learned belly breathing to help regulate herself, students will learn about, try, and assess various regulation strategies to develop their own Toolbox Bookmark of strategies to access when needed.

Materials Needed:

Computer to demonstrate strategy videos, printed regulation strategy cards, printed bookmarks on oaktag, markers/colored pencils, chairs, the printed breathing board, and camera.

Directions:

In your classroom, set up the six Regulation Stations that are listed on the attached Regulation Station Activity Cards (below). Students will emerge today with their own Regulation Station Toolbox Bookmark to use for self-regulation, as needed when they feel anxious, overwhelmed, angry, or nervous throughout the school year.

1. Print and cut out the Regulation Station Activity images below. Place one activity at each station.
2. Give each student a bookmark printed (or glued) on heavier-weight paper/oaktag.
3. Students write their names and draw a picture of themselves on the front of the bookmark, showing themselves as calm or regulated.
4. Briefly demonstrate each of the calming strategies from the cards below so students are familiar with each before heading off to their stations. Use the linked videos to preview together. You could also have one laptop at each station with the videos loaded and playing.
   - **Belly Breathing:** youtu.be/KssedxpbLpg
   - **Breathing Board:** youtu.be/4NY0nuwo8co
   - **Tapping Fingers to Palm:** youtu.be/x7jqP8E6Xn8
   - **Chair Push-Ups:** youtu.be/1CH8qJVhryw
   - **Positive Self-Talk:** youtu.be/f09CESMByLg
5. Next, in small groups with their bookmarks and pencils in hand, students rotate through each station and try each of the strategies.
6. Next, they circle the thumbs up 👍 or down 👎 for each activity, as they try it, to determine if they feel it is a strategy that will help them when they feel anxious, sad, nervous, or scared. Encourage them to think about what works for them and then discuss with their partners.
7. The 6th Station is for them to brainstorm and draw their own idea of a calming strategy that has worked for them (e.g., a fidget as a "tool not toy," drinking water, writing down their worries, jumping jacks). This one should definitely be a thumbs-up! 🙂
8. When they finish rotating through the Regulation Stations, encourage students to keep their bookmark at their desks, so they can access it and their favorite strategies when needed throughout the school year. (You might even want to laminate them!)

Educator Note:

Take photos of your students as they practice their coping and regulation skills. You'll want them for Activity 4!



Tool Box Bookmark

Name:

Belly Breathing  👍 👎	**Breathing Board**  👍 👎
Positive Self-Talk  👍 👎	**Tapping**  👍 👎
Chair Push-Ups  👍 👎	**Your Choice!** 👍 👎

Regulation Station Activity Cards

Belly Breathing



Breathing Board



Use Positive Self-Talk



Tapping



Chair Push-Ups



Your Choice!

ACTIVITY 4

Share it Out! We Can Do Tricky Things

Regulation Strategies Bulletin Board

Introduction:

Katie and her classmates learned so much about naming their feelings and practicing techniques to feel calmer when something is worrying them. This activity has students creating a hallway bulletin board as a helpful reminder to use regulating strategies and to teach others in the school community about these healthy techniques!

Materials Needed:

Enlarged photos from Activity 3, bulletin board paper/construction paper, 8×10 white paper, scissors, stapler, colored pencils, pencils, old collected magazines and/or newspapers

Directions:

1. Review the calming strategies from Activity 3 (e.g., belly breathing, breathing board, self-talk, tapping, chair pushups).
2. Continuing to build on Activity 3, enlarge and print the photos you took of your students trialing their calming strategies.
3. Have students cut out their own photos and any images, words, and phrases from magazines, newspapers, etc. that highlight calm and the calming strategies.
4. Small groups each create a visual on 8×10 paper that shares how these techniques are helpful.
5. With support from the teacher, groups attach their visuals onto a large bulletin board.
6. Copy and paste the Caregiver note into an email to send to your students' families, along with a photo of the completed bulletin board.

Dear Families/Caregivers,

We are working to build our awareness of our many feelings and strategies to cope with them in school! We recently read *Katie's Really Bad Day: A Story About Test Anxiety* by Kathleen Jeffrey and completed a series of reflections and activities to support our regulation skill development.

Attached is a photo of the Regulation Strategies Bulletin Board we created. This board reminds us of some of the many strategies we use in our classroom to manage our worries, anxiety, and frustration. We are always exploring how to build our confidence and perseverance skills so we can thrive!

You may hear your child say things like, "We can do hard things," "Let's try belly breathing," "I can use positive self-talk." We encourage you to reinforce and model these concepts at home, as they are essential skills for our classroom learning community.

Please reach out with any questions!

Sincerely,

<Teacher Name>

The discussion questions and activities in this educator guide are aligned with the following Common Core Standards and Social Emotional Learning Competencies. These are adaptable to fit your students' needs.

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

Comprehension and Collaboration:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.K.1. 1.1 and 2.1 and 3.1
Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about kindergarten and grade 1–3 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL. 1.1 and 2.2
Recount or describe key ideas or details from a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL. 1.3 and 2.3
Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to clarify comprehension, gather additional information, or deepen understanding of a topic or issue.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.2.4
Tell a story or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking audibly in coherent sentences.

Print Concepts:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RF.K.1 and 1.1
Demonstrate understanding of the organization and basic features of print.

Phonological Awareness:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RF.K.2 and RF.1.2
Demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes).

Key Ideas and Details:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.K.1
With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.1.1
Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.1.3
Describe characters, settings, and major events in a story, using key details.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.2.1
Ask and answer such questions as who, what, where, when, why, and how to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.2.10
Read and comprehend literature, including stories and poetry, in the grades 2-3 text complexity band proficiently.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.K.7
With prompting and support, describe the relationship between illustrations and the story in which they appear (e.g., what moment in a story an illustration depicts).

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.1.7
Use illustrations and details in a story to describe its characters, setting, or events.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.2.7
Use information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.1.8
With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.

CASEL FRAMEWORK:

Self-Awareness
Identifying one's emotions | Having a growth mindset.

Self Management
Identifying and using stress management strategies | Showing the courage to take initiative

Social Awareness
Taking others' perspectives | Recognizing situational demands and opportunities

Responsible Decision-Making
Demonstrating curiosity and open-mindedness | Identifying solutions for personal and social problems

Relationship Skills
Communicating effectively | Practicing teamwork and collaborative problem-solving | Resolving conflicts constructively

Scan for Kathleen's website and more resources.

CONNECT WITH KATHLEEN JEFFREY!

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