

THE TEENY-TINY VOICE

Venita Dimos & Natasha Curtin

TEACHER NOTES

Teacher Notes by Venita Dimos

WALKER BOOKS

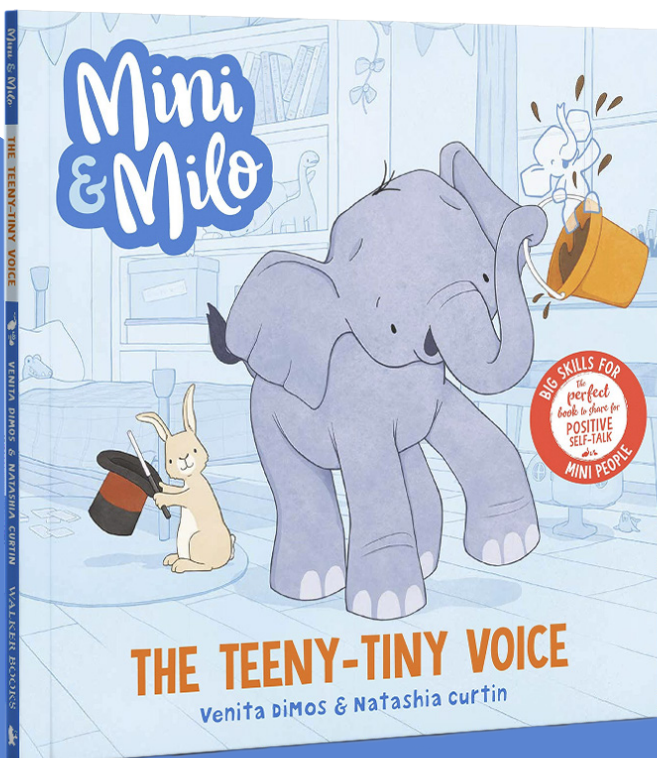
About the Series

MINI AND MILO: THE TEENY-TINY VOICE
CREATORS: VENITA DIMOS AND NATASHIA CURTIN
ISBN 9781760656157 HARDBACK
MARCH 2023

Story-led, with humour and heart, this series follows the adventures of Mini the elephant and Milo the rabbit as they navigate friendship and all its ups and downs. Each book explores aspects of social and emotional intelligence, such as mindset, Self-Talk, listening, communicating about emotions, problem solving, conflict resolution, with further books to come.

The books explore key life skills in a fun, humorous and imaginative way; with Mini the elephant finding a resolution for each problem through trial and error. This helps build young readers' confidence in problem solving.

The books reward repeated readings because of their humour, dynamic read-aloud texts and satisfying plot resolutions. The detailed illustrations supplement the texts and create a fully dimensional world for Mini.



The perfect book to model positive Self-Talk.

Mini has a tiny house, a tiny bedroom, and a tiny best friend who dreams of being a magician. She also has a big secret – she hears a tiny invisible voice that sometimes causes big trouble. Mini realises that just as she has rules to follow, she just might be able to set some for her own invisible mischief maker, turning anxieties into affirmations.

THEMES INCLUDE:

- Communication • Friendship • Feelings/emotions
 - Positive self-talk and self-compassion
 - Problem Solving • Humour

These notes are designed for using the book in Grades 1-3 classrooms. They provide the following:

- Act as a guide for reading the book with a class;
- Offer detailed suggestions and scripts for exercises and games to develop an understanding of Self-Talk and encourage Positive Self-Talk. Printables, worksheets and reflective questions are provided;
- Highlight other themes for discussion; and
- Link the book to curriculum focus areas such as reading comprehension, vocabulary and visual literacy.

About the Author:

Venita Dimos is an experienced Lawyer, Mediator and Neuroleadership coach. For over 20 years she has helped thousands of people solve complex problems and navigate difficult times in their lives. As a mother of three daughters, she is passionate about empowering children with the skills and resilience to navigate the inevitable curveballs that life throws at them. Venita's books explore key life skills in a fun, humorous and imaginative way. Her *Mini & Milo* series has been driven by the importance of teaching children emotional and social intelligence early on, so they arrive into adulthood armed with skills that support their future success and happiness.

Venita is an outright optimist, loves heartfelt conversations and has a penchant for all things chocolate.

Visit her online at www.mediationcompany.com.au, LinkedIn and Instagram @venitadimos

About the Illustrator:

Natashia (pronounced NA-TAR-SHA) **curtin** is an upcoming illustrator who is developing a reputation for the charm and emotional clarity of her illustrations in books, including *Vernon the Penguin*.

Natashia grew up in a Yolngu township in the Northern Territory, and completed high school while living in the highlands of Papua New Guinea. She always had her nose in a book, or was drawing pictures – because computer games weren't invented yet, and it was stinky hot outside. She moved to Melbourne in the 1990s to study graphic design and learned how to live in a big city. While working as a graphic designer, Natashia met and married a lovely man, and they had two boys (who don't draw, because computer games were invented).

You can follow her on Instagram, Facebook or at natashiacurtin.com

Notes from Venita:

*'I'm not smart enough, funny enough, brave enough, pretty enough, strong enough'
- the list goes on!*

This is our inner critic that often starts in childhood – and can persist into adulthood. Research shows we have over 6000 thoughts per day. That's a lot of airplay for our Teeny-Tiny Voice! If our thoughts are constantly negative, it leads to low self-esteem, stress, anxiety, and poor mental health.

This book comes from a deeply personal place of my own experience with my Teeny-Tiny Voice, as well as with my professional work. Over the years, I've developed strategies that have helped clients replace self-criticism with self-kindness and improve their mental well-being.

As a mother of three daughters, I know there will be times when the world tells our children that they are not good enough. I was driven by a deep desire to create a simple book that introduced children to positive Self-Talk and self-kindness early on. It is my hope that this book empowers children with practical strategies to master a positive mindset, while reassuring them that they are not alone – everyone (even adults!) grapples with their Teeny-Tiny Voice at times.

Mindset is a lifelong journey. My wish is that this book prompts open conversations across all generations, sparking heartfelt conversations of Teeny Tiny Voices for children and adults alike!

Reviews:

"The Teeny-Tiny Voice is the first in a brilliant new series for children about emotional and social intelligence. I especially liked the way Mini's voice was shown as a smaller, kind of invisible version of Mini herself, just a line drawing, while the real Mini and Milo and other elements of the story were in full colour.

I loved The Teeny-Tiny Voice, and look forward to reading more of Mini and Milo."

Kids Book Review

"These books allow people of all ages to process their feelings, because there will always be times we all need to work out what we are feeling, and children's books can be a safe and judgement-free way and place to do this, and the simplicity can really help readers find out how to talk about what they are feeling."

Ashleigh Meikle

"An important message for all of us."

Reading Time

"Children will love the ideas put forward in this humorous tale: that you can do something about the negative voice in your head, that you can be resilient and positive."

ReadPlus

"Filled with emotional intelligence and adorable characters, The Teeny Tiny Voice is a sweet, relatable and helpful exploration of the subconscious mind."

A Word About Books

Teacher Notes

BEFORE READING - THE BOOK COVER

If this is the first Mini and Milo book you have read with your class, begin by pointing out the series name and book title.

There are 3 characters illustrated on the front cover, two of which are elephants. Who or what do you think the smaller, elephant might be? Why is he illustrated as a simple line drawing, almost like he is 'transparent'?

The main characters in this book are called Mini and Milo. What does the word Mini mean? Based only on the cover, which character do you think would be called Mini? Read the opening pages which introduce Mini the elephant, who is not small. Discuss this use of a joke/humour.

Alternatively, if you have read other Mini and Milo books with the class before, begin by reminding them about the characters on the front cover. Do they remember what happened to Mini in a previous book? Mini has a problem to solve in each book in the series - can they predict what the problem is in this book? Do they think Mini will be successful in solving it?

There is a new character illustrated on this cover: a very small elephant. Who or what do students think this might be? Why is he illustrated as a simple line drawing, almost like he is 'transparent'?

WHILE READING

When the Teeny Tiny Voice is introduced, discuss with students that we all "talk" to ourselves and have beliefs about ourselves. Sometimes our Teeny Tiny Voice can help us feel good about ourselves, but sometimes it can make us feel small or give us too many things to worry about.

As you read, pause and point out the different roles Mini's Self-Talk plays, for example:

- At the swimming pool, she is using positive Self-Talk to do something brave - can students think of examples of when they did something brave? Did they tell themselves "I can do it"?
- When Mini disobeys the rule and has a mud bath inside, her Self-Talk is a bit disrespectful and makes a joke out of something serious.
- Playing soccer, Mini's negative Self-Talk makes her feel bad about herself and her capabilities.
- When Milo doesn't laugh at Mini's joke, the Teeny Tiny Voice makes her feel small and unloved, telling her that 'no one likes you'. What in this illustration and elsewhere in the book helps us to understand this is not true? (Milo is paying attention to her, looking puzzled but supportive...- see notes on Friendship, below)

What do the rules on the fridge say?

Do students have rules like these at home?

Do students think that trying to be busy and distract yourself from a problem helps to solve the problem?

Point out the bold and changed font for 'her head' and 'her Rules'. When Mini creates rules for her Teeny Tiny Voice, they don't solve the problem straight away. Discuss with students that making our Self-Talk more positive takes practice and we need to keep trying.

POSITIVE SELF-TALK EXERCISES

There are 4 steps to helping kids build positive Self-Talk skills. Suggested exercises for all 4 steps are outlined below, with the relevant template worksheets at the end of these notes.

STEP 1: MEET YOUR TEENY-TINY VOICE – LET'S EXPLORE OUR INSIDE WORLD!

We all have a Teeny-Tiny Voice!

Our Teeny-Tiny Voice is like a little feeling friend inside us! It can make us feel happy and brave – or sometimes not so happy.

Our Teeny-Tiny Voice can be a little helper, or sometimes a tricky friend! Just like we explore our outside world, let's be explorers of our minds and meet our Teeny-Tiny Voice!

STEP 2: GIVE IT RULES

Just like we have rules at school and home, our Teeny-Tiny Voices need some rules too!

By setting rules, we teach our Teeny-Tiny Voice how to be a kind and positive friend. Rules help your Teeny-Tiny Voice cheer you on when you try new things. They are a friendly reminder for your Teeny-Tiny Voice to be nice.

They are also a reminder for you to talk kindly to yourself, and to encourage yourself just like you would do for a friend. Let's set some rules for our Teeny-Tiny Voice, like Mini does in the story.

STEP 3: MAKE IT POSITIVE

Self-talk matters!

Just like we are kind to others, we also must remember to be kind to ourselves. When our Teeny-Tiny Voice is cranky and saying mean things, we need to ask ourselves:

1. Is it kind?
2. Is it helpful and encouraging?
3. Would I talk like that to a friend?

STEP 4: CALM IT DOWN

Sometimes our Teeny-Tiny Voice is extra-cranky and chats non-stop! It might give you worries, or remind you of sad things over and over again.

Let's learn how our bodies tell us when we are feeling worried, anxious or stressed - and let's make a Calm Down Plan!

"MEET YOUR TEENY-TINY VOICE" Exercise 1: Teeny Tiny Portrait

The objective of this exercise is to raise self-awareness and help children understand that we ALL have an inner voice and it's a natural part of being human! By drawing their Teeny-Tiny Voice, students express their thoughts and feelings visually, which is easier than verbal communication. Through art, children bring their Teeny-Tiny Voice to life in a simple, safe, and fun way that prompts self-reflection.

A template worksheet is provided at the end of these notes, on which students can draw (or paint, or collage).

Script:

Just like we explore different places and things in the outside world around us (by taking walks, looking at nature, going to a park to discover new things) today we're going to explore our thoughts and feelings. It's like going on an adventure to explore inside our mind!

Think of your Teeny-Tiny Voice as a little feeling friend inside us - it can make us feel happy and brave - or sometimes not so happy. Our Teeny-Tiny Voice can be a little helper, or sometimes a tricky friend, and that's ok! We all have one!

We're going to draw a picture of our Teeny-Tiny Voice. I can't wait to see what your Teeny-Tiny Voice looks like!

[Optional: Teachers could consider telling children they have their own Teeny-Tiny Voice and a little about their Teeny-Tiny Voice. Or, even drawing their own Teeny-Tiny Voice and sharing their drawing]

"MEET YOUR TEENY-TINY VOICE" Exercise 2: Teeny-Tiny Voice Patterns

The objective of this exercise is to encourage students to explore their inner world a little more deeply, becoming aware of the conversations (Self-Talk) they have with themselves. They will learn how their Self-Talk can influence their feelings and emotions, in both a positive and negative way. They will also identify any repetitive patterns and the types of situations which trigger their negative Self-Talk.

The following questions could be discussed verbally, as a class, or you could set them as a writing and reading exercise using the template worksheet provided.

1. Can you think of a time when your Teeny-Tiny Voice made you feel happy or proud?

Examples: It cheered you on when you tried to do something new, or made you feel proud of yourself after doing something hard.

2. Can you think of a time when your Teeny-Tiny Voice was a bit cranky?

Examples: It made you feel like you shouldn't raise your hand in class (like Mini!), or that you weren't good at something (like when Mini missed the ball), or that or shouldn't ask to join in a game.

3. When is your Teeny-Tiny Voice crankier than usual and giving you lots of worries?

Examples: When I make a mistake, When I lose a game, When I'm feeling left out, When I'm tired.

4. How does your Teeny Tiny Voice make you feel when it's cranky?

Examples: Angry, sad, embarrassed, silly, alone, scared, frustrated, worried, shy

5. How does your Teeny Tiny Voice make you feel when it's positive and kind?

Examples: Brave, Happy, Strong, Proud, Smart, Excited, Loved, Calm

Reflection/Discussion on "Meet Your Teeny-Tiny Voice" Exercises 1 and 2 above

These questions at the end of the exercise help student reflect on their experience meeting their Teeny-Tiny Voice for the first time!

1. "What did you learn about your Teeny-Tiny Voice today?"
2. [for students who completed the worksheet template exercise] "When your inner voice is cranky, how do you feel?"
3. [for students who completed the worksheet template exercise] "When your inner voice is positive, how do you feel?"
4. [for students who completed the worksheet template exercise] "What makes your Teeny-Tiny Voice happy and positive?"
5. "Who do you think is in charge of your Teeny-Tiny Voice?"

6. "What's one thing you can do to make your Teeny-Tiny Voice kinder and more positive?"

"GIVE IT RULES" Exercise: You Set the Rules

The objective of this exercise is to help students understand that they are in control of their Self-Talk. It encourages a positive mindset by empowering students with the ability to set positive and supportive rules for their Teeny-Tiny Voice. It promotes self-confidence by equipping students with a simple strategy to cope with negative Self-Talk.

Have students write some rules for their Teeny-Tiny Voice on the template worksheet provided. Revisit the rules Mini wrote for her Teeny-Tiny Voice in the book, for inspiration.

Encourage students to tailor their rules to make them specific and personal where possible, for example: "Help me feel confident when I talk in front of the class", "Remind me that it's ok to make mistakes", "Encourage me to be brave when I try new things."

Script:

Who is the boss of your Teeny-Tiny Voice?
YOU are!

Just like we have rules at school and home, our Teeny-Tiny Voices need some rules too! By setting rules, we teach our Teeny-Tiny Voice how to be a kind and positive friend.

Rules are a friendly reminder for your Teeny-Tiny Voice to be positive and kind! They help your Teeny-Tiny Voice cheer you on when you try new things and remind you that its ok to make mistakes. Sometimes, your Teeny-Tiny Voice might be cranky, but these rules will help it remember to be a fantastic and supportive friend to you.

Let's set some mini rules for our Teeny-Tiny Voices that are packed with kindness and encouragement! These rules are a reminder for you to talk kindly to yourself and encourage yourself just like you would do for a friend.

Reflection/Discussion:

These questions at the end of the exercise help student reflect on why it is important for their Teeny-Tiny Voice to have rules and how the rules become their positive self-talk.

1. "Why does your Teeny-Tiny Voice need rules?"
2. "How do you think following these rules will help you?"
3. "What happens when your Teeny-Tiny Voice forgets to follow the rules?"
4. "What can you do to remind your Teeny-Tiny Voice to follow the rules?"
5. "Which rule do you think will help you the most in feeling happier?"

"MAKE IT POSITIVE" Exercise 1: Is that Kind?

The objective of Exercise 1: Is That Kind? is to assist students in recognising the difference between negative and positive Self-Talk. It will assist students to become more mindful of their Self-Talk, recognising the impact on their feelings when it is negative or positive.

For younger students, write the words "kind" and "not-kind" on the whiteboard or on large sheets of paper on the wall. Read the below statements out loud, and have students point to the appropriate word, to indicate whether they think each statement is "kind" or "not-kind?"

Older students could fill in the template worksheet provided and add some specific words about how each statement would make Mini feel.

Script:

Self-talk matters!

Just like we are kind to others, we also must remember to be kind to ourselves.

When our Teeny-Tiny Voice is cranky and saying mean things, we need to ask ourselves 3 questions:

1. Is it kind?
2. Is it helpful and encouraging?
3. Would I talk like that to a friend?

You need to show yourself the same kindness you would show a friend.

Mini's Teeny-Tiny Voice is a being very chatty today! Is it being kind or not-kind? How is it making her feel?

- "You're terrible at this." Kind or not-kind?
- "It's okay. All elephants makes mistakes sometimes!" Kind or not-kind?
- "You can't draw at all." Kind or not-kind?
- "Just give it a go! You can do this!" Kind or not-kind?

- “You’ll never be good at basketball. You’re so clumsy.” Kind or not-kind?
- “No-one wants to play with you.” Kind or not-kind?
- “Just be yourself and smile. You’re a good friend.” Kind or not-kind?
- “You lost again! You never win.” Kind or not-kind?
- “You’re learning something new. Keep trying, and you’ll get it!” Kind or not-kind?

“MAKE IT POSITIVE” Exercise 2: Reframing negative Self-Talk

The objective of this exercise is for students to recognise the importance of replacing negative Self-Talk with kind and supportive thoughts. They will cultivate self-compassion by learning the skill of reframing negative Self-Talk with positive, encouraging Self-Talk. The activity will provide students with simple strategies and self-awareness which promotes a positive mindset for overall well-being, resilience, self-worth, and personal growth.

Reframing is an effective way of shifting mental state for kids and adults alike and mastering this skill is an invaluable tool that students can benefit from in their lifetime.

The following questions could be discussed verbally, as a class, or you could set them as a writing and reading exercise using the template worksheet provided.

Script:

Let’s help Mini change her thoughts so she can be kinder to herself.

Can you think of some ‘Happy Words’ to use instead, to help her feel better?

1. “I got a question wrong in class. I’m not smart!” Happy Words: _____

Examples: “It’s okay to make mistakes”, “I learned something new”, “Mistakes help me grow and get smarter”.

2. “Someone didn’t play with me. I don’t have any friends!” Happy Words: _____

Examples: “I’m a good friend”, “I can find fun things to do on my own or with other friends”, “There are lots of other nice people to play with.” “I’m open to making new friends”.

3. “Everyone is better at sport than me. I’ll never be as good as they are!” Happy Words: _____

Examples: “I’ll focus on practising and getting better,” “There will always be someone better, and worse than me at something”, “I’m doing my best”, “I know I can improve with practice”, “I’ll do better next time.”

4. “I didn’t get chosen for the school play. No-one likes me!” Happy Words: _____

Examples: “I tried something new”, “I did my best and had fun”, “I’m proud of myself for trying”, “Not everyone can get into the play”, “I’ll try again next time.”

5. “I always lose at every game.” Happy Words: _____

Examples: “What matters is that I played a fun game”, “I learn from every game I play,” “I’ll focus on trying again and having fun rather than winning.”

Reflection/Discussion on "Make it Positive" Exercises 1 and 2

These questions at the end of the Exercises help students reflect on the importance of positive Self-Talk

1. "Who is in charge of Mini's Teeny-Tiny Voice and how she thinks and talks to herself?"
2. "How did changing Mini's thoughts change the way she felt?"
3. "How might Mini have felt if she didn't change her thoughts?"
4. "What can you do when your Teeny-Tiny Voice is cranky and you have a not-kind thought?"
5. "What are some 'Happy Words' you can say to yourself if you're feeling sad, upset or angry?"

"MAKE IT POSITIVE" Game 1: Create a Chatterbox

Have students create a chatterbox to help a friend with their Teeny-Tiny Voice and positive Self-Talk.

If you're not familiar with chatterboxes, [Twinkl.com.au](https://www.twinkl.com.au) has instructions for making one from A4 paper on their blog, here: <https://www.twinkl.com.au/blog/how-to-make-a-chatterbox>.

Younger students could use the provided printable, with happy words statements already included.

Older students could make their own chatterbox using blank paper. Ask them to think of their favourite Happy Words that they could say to encourage a friend or help them feel better, and write them in.

Examples:

- You are strong
- You are brave
- You can do hard things
- You are a good friend
- It's ok to make mistakes
- Keep trying and don't give up
- You are loved
- It's ok, we all make mistakes
- Just be you and smile
- I am here for you
- You are never alone
- Believe in yourself

"MAKE IT POSITIVE" Game 2: Teeny-Tiny Stories

This game is an extension of Exercise 1 above, in which students decided whether statements were Kind or Not-Kind. Again, the objective is to help children recognize and differentiate between a kind and unkind Teeny-Tiny Voice, fostering self-awareness and positive Self-Talk. The game empowers children with the skill of identifying and challenging negative Self-Talk in a safe, non-personal and fun way!

Have students take turns. The chosen child can either remain in their seat or come to the front of the classroom.

Read one of the stories aloud and then have the 'player' decide if the Teeny-Tiny Voice is being Kind or Not-Kind. After they have made their choice, ask the player to say more about it. For example,

- Why did you think it was kind or not kind?
- How did Mini's Teeny-Tiny Voice make her feel?
- If the choice was 'Not-Kind' what could Mini say to herself that is kind?

Reflection/Discussion Questions for after the game:

1. "What did you learn about Mini's Teeny-Tiny Voice during the game?"
2. "Was there a time when your Teeny-Tiny Voice was not kind? How did it make you feel?"
3. "Why is it important to have a kind Teeny-Tiny Voice?"
4. "How can we make sure our Teeny-Tiny Voice is kind to ourselves and others?"

"CALM IT DOWN" Exercise I: Stress in Your Body

The objective of this exercise is to raise awareness among children about the physical signs and sensations associated with anxiety and stress, enabling them to identify when they are feeling anxious or stressed. Students will understand that we all feel worried, nervous, stressed, or anxious at certain times.

By tuning into the physical manifestations of anxiety and stress, it fosters emotional intelligence and enables students to take proactive steps to manage these feelings.

Read the list of some of the ways stress can manifest physically. You could either have students put up their hand when they identify with something you read, or have them use the supplied template worksheet to draw an arrow or colour in the parts of the body they identify with.

Script:

Sometimes our Teeny-Tiny Voice is extra cranky and hard to tame!

Maybe it is giving you worries about something, or it keeps remembering sad things over and over again that happened in the past.

Let's learn about how our body can tell us when our Teeny-Tiny Voice is really cranky and over-chatty, and we're feeling worried or stressed! Remember, we all have these feelings sometimes, and talking about them can help you feel better.

Sometimes when you're worried or stressed you might feel it in your:

Heart: Your heart beats fast, like you've just run a race!

Chest: Your chest feels tight like its squeezing you a bit too much!

Breathing: you might start to breath really fast.

Tummy: Your tummy feels unwell, or it might feel like there are ticklish butterflies flying around in there!

Hands or Legs: Your hands or legs feel a bit shaky, wiggly or fidgety.

Head: Your head starts to hurt.

Shoulders: Your shoulders feel heavy, like you're carrying a backpack.

Skin: your skin might feel a little tingly.

Sweaty Body: You might start sweating – for example your palms feel a bit wet.

"CALM IT DOWN" Exercise 2: Calming Your Mind and Body

The objective of this Exercise is to teach children science-backed techniques that may assist them to calm their mind and body when they are feeling anxious, stressed or worried. The strategies promote emotional self-regulation and well-being.

They are invaluable skills that students will be able to use and master as part of their everyday life, both now and into adulthood.

Read the below list of ideas aloud, inviting students to say whether they have tried any of them, and brainstorm other calming techniques as a group. Or, have students use the provided template worksheet to circle their favourite calming techniques.

BREATHE: Take 5 deep breaths. Take a big breath IN and then BLOW out slowly, making sure your 'OUT' breath' is longer than your 'IN' breath.

HAPPY WORDS: Use Happy Words to remind your Teeny-Tiny Voice to be kind!

MOVE: Move your body! Play outside, go for a walk, skip, jump or another activity.

DRAW: Draw, paint or colour in a picture.

TALK: Get your worries OUT by talking about your feelings to someone you trust.

WRITE: write a story or write a letter to a friend.

READ: Read a book.

5,4,3,2,1! Name, write or draw 5 things you can see, 4 things you can touch, 3 things you can hear, 2 things you can smell, and 1 thing you can taste.

MUSIC: Listen to your favourite song, sing or dance!

PLAY: Play a game, do a puzzle, build something, play with a toy.

GRATITUDE: Write or draw 5 things that make you happy.

Reflection/Discussion on "Calm It" [Or, "Calm It Down"] Exercises 1 and 2:

1. "How might our body feel when our Teeny-Tiny Voice is cranky and needs to calm down?"
2. "Which feeling in your body did you find interesting or funny today?"
3. "Can you remember a time when you felt one of these things but then made them go away?"
4. "What sorts of things make your Teeny-Tiny Voice cranky?"
5. "What kinds of things can we do to help our Teeny-Tiny Voice calm down?"

OTHER DISCUSSION POINTS AND ACTIVITIES

Observing Characters

After reading, ask students to think of some adjectives to describe the two main characters, Mini and Milo.

Then, encourage them to look at the illustrations closely to find out more about what each character likes and make a short list (Examples: Milo does magic tricks, and likes carrots. Mini loves mud baths and her crocodile toy and reads lots of books).

Discussion - Friendship

Discuss what it means to be a good friend. Looking at the illustrations, can students find examples of Milo being a good friend to Mini -

- Listening when she has a worrying secret
- Trying to help solve the problem
- Hugging/Comforting her when she is crying
- Doing fun things together

Older children could write about what they think Milo is observing and feeling during the events of the story.

Vocabulary

Review the first 2 spreads of the book and find all the words and colloquialisms that mean small:

- Mini
- Smallest
- Tiny
- Teeny-tiny
- Weeny-zeeny
- Ity-bitty

Workshop other words that mean 'small'. Review the spread in which Mini tries to run away from the Teeny Tiny Voice. Find all the words that mean rushing or going fast:

- Running
- Sprinted
- Bolted
- Raced
- Darted and Dashed

Workshop more words with a similar meaning.

Humour

Return to the discussion about the humour in Mini's name - she is definitely not small!

Can students identify other humorous elements in the story - anything else they found funny? Does the humour come from things that the characters do (Mini's mud bath, Milo using a torch to look in Mini's ear, The Teeny Tiny Voice saying 'hello' in different languages)? Or from the text (sounds and rhymes like 'weeny-zeeny')?

Visual literacy

Mini's running path

Look at the spread in which Mini tries to run away from the Teeny Tiny Voice.

Notice that the illustrator has contracted a whole week into this one, double-page spread.

Mini is shown running in a circuitous path across the spread, which makes the illustration very dynamic and creates a sense of hurry, speed and even frenzy - how do students feel when they look at this?

Can students name some of the things Mini is rushing past?

Older students could consider how the impact of this spread would change (slow down, distract the reader, change the focus) if the author instead used words to describe all the things Mini rushed past.

Older students could create their own illustration in a similar style, depicting things they do on each day of the week.

Cover design

If you have read other books in the series with the class before, ask them to look at the covers of all the books together. What do they notice about the background illustrations and the character illustrations? What effect does it have to see Mini and Milo in full colour, and the backgrounds in a single colour?

The same device is used in the classroom spread in *Teeny Tiny Voice*. Why do you think this is?

Tracing the plot and Trial-and-Error problem-solving

(This suits classes which have read more than one book in the series)

After reading two or three books in the series, point out to the class that in each of the stories, Mini has a problem, and she tries various ideas to solve that problem – sometimes with help from someone else – before reaching a final solution.

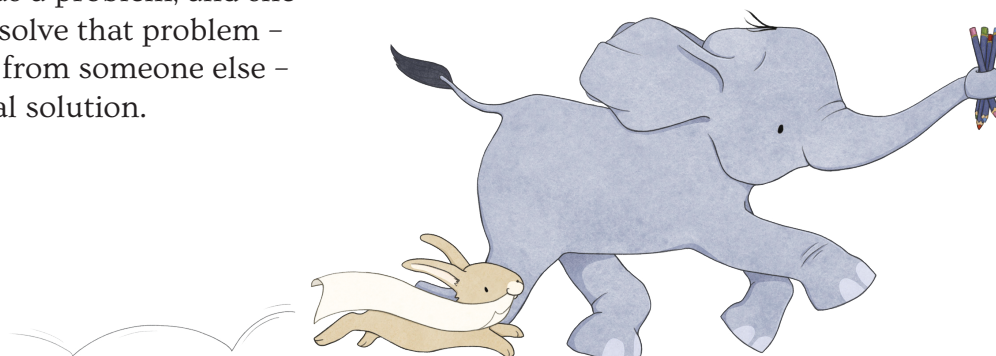
Can students recall some of the things Mini tried?

“Problem and solution” is a common plot device. Older students might be able to think of other picture books or novels which use this device.

Mini’s problem-solving efforts also provide a great model for kids and can encourage them to develop resilience.

Discuss that if you have a problem, sometimes the first thing you do to try to solve it doesn’t work. That’s OK and it’s always worth trying again. Trying several things before you find the solution that works best is sometimes called ‘trial and error’.

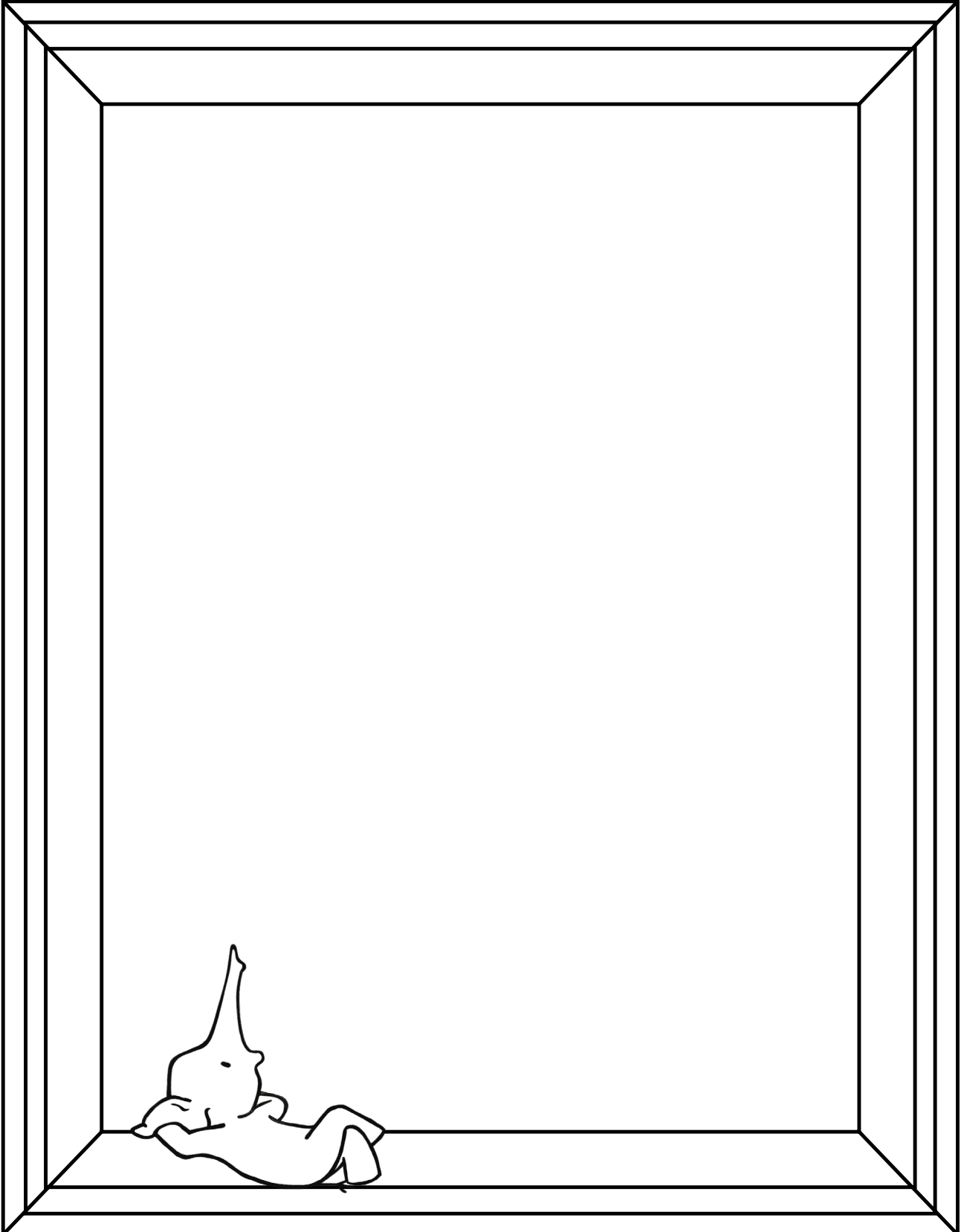
Review one or two of the stories and make a list of the ideas Mini tries, and whether someone else helps her. You could do this verbally with the full group, or older students could create a list or table. For example, in *The Teeny Tiny Voice*, Mini tries to distract herself and tries to run away, before she settles on creating rules for the Voice. In *The Big Flappy Ears*, she tries pinning her ears open, cleaning her ears out, writing sticky notes.... Sometimes we see Milo helping her, and Mr Snort provides a suggestion.



1. My Teeny-Tiny Voice Portrait

Let's Explore Our Inner World!

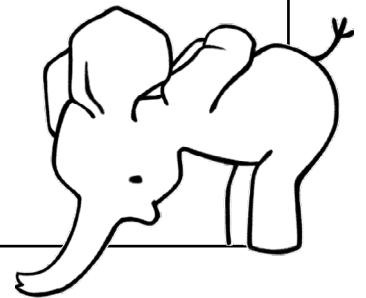
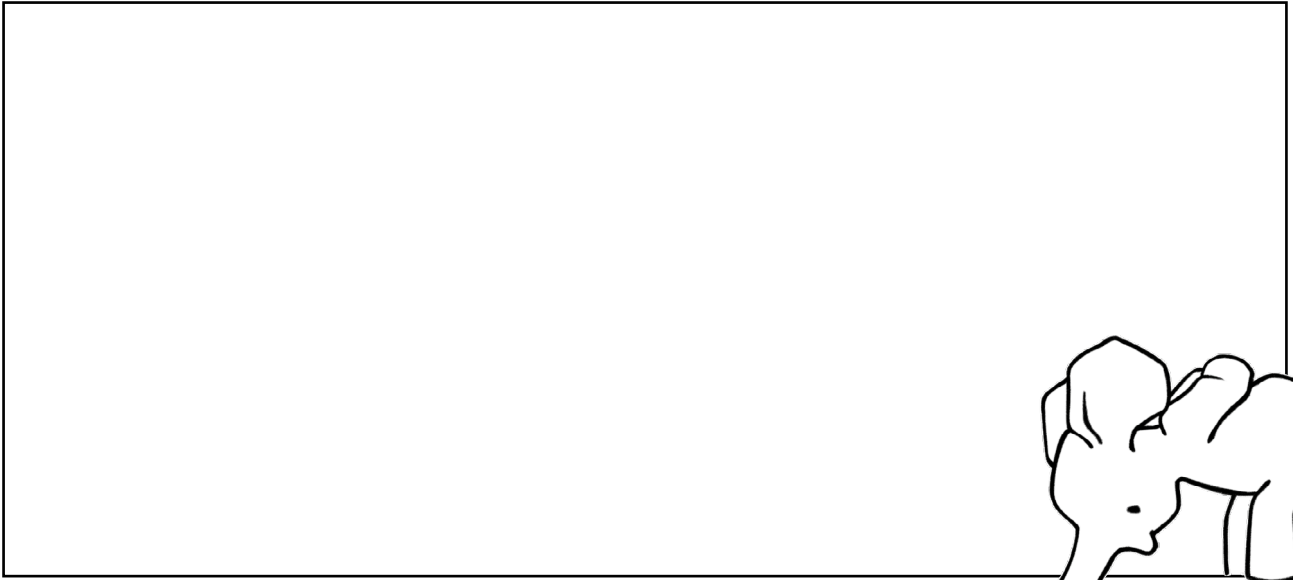
Draw a picture of your Teeny-Tiny Voice in the box below.



Illustrations © Natasha Curtin 2024. All Rights Reserved.

2. My Teeny-Tiny Voice Feelings

Write or draw about a time when your Teeny-Tiny Voice made you feel happy or proud! For example, maybe it cheered you on when you tried to do something new, or made you feel proud of yourself after doing something hard.



Write or draw about a time when your Teeny-Tiny Voice was a bit cranky. For example, maybe it made you feel like you shouldn't raise your hand in class (like Mini!), or that you weren't good at something (like when Mini missed the ball), or that or shouldn't ask to join in a game.



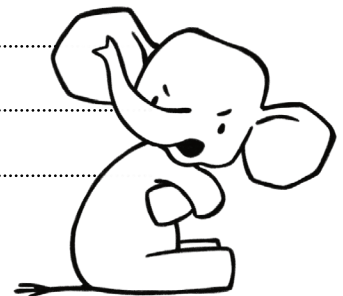
2. My Teeny-Tiny Voice Feelings

Does your Teeny-Tiny Voice have any bad habits? Circle anything in this list which makes your Teeny-Tiny Voice cranky:

- ★ When I make a mistake
- ★ When I lose a game
- ★ When I'm feeling left out
- ★ When I'm trying a new activity
- ★ When someone has something I want
- ★ When I don't understand something
- ★ When I'm talking in front of the class
- ★ When I get into trouble
- ★ When I'm tired
- ★ When I have to share

Other things that make my Teeny-Tiny Voice cranky:

- ★
-
- ★
-
- ★
-
- ★
-
- ★
-
- ★
-



2. My Teeny-Tiny Voice Feelings

Circle how your Teeny Tiny Voice makes you feel when it's cranky:

★ Angry

★ Sad

★ Embarrassed

★ Silly

★ Alone

★ Scared

★ Frustrated

★ Shy

★ Nervous

★ Worried

★ Jealous

Other feelings:

★

★

★

★

★

★

Circle how your Teeny Tiny Voice makes you feel when it's positive and kind:

★ Brave

★ Happy

★ Strong

★ Proud

★ Smart

★ Excited

★ Loved

★ Calm

★ Adventurous

★ Confident

★ Friendly

★ Grateful

Other feelings:

★

★

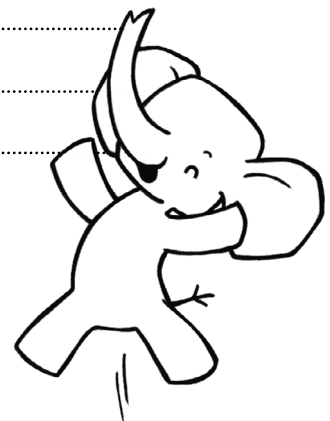
★

★

★

★

★



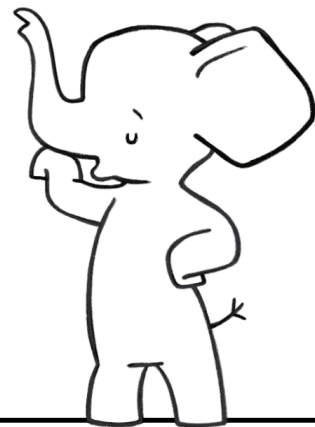
3. Big Rules For My Teeny-Tiny Voice

1.

2.

3.

4.



4. Kind Or Not-Kind?

Mini's Teeny-Tiny Voice is a being very chatty today!
Is it being kind or not-kind? How is it making her feel?

“You're terrible at this.”

Kind or not-kind?

How do you think this
makes Mini feel?

“It's okay. All elephants make mistakes sometimes!”

Kind or not-kind?

How do you think this
makes Mini feel?

“You can't draw at all.”

Kind or not-kind?

How do you think this
makes Mini feel?

“Just give it a go! You can do this!”

Kind or not-kind?

How do you think this
makes Mini feel?

4. Kind Or Not-Kind?

Mini's Teeny-Tiny Voice is a being very chatty today!
Is it being kind or not-kind? How is it making her feel?

“No-wants to play with you.”

Kind or not-kind?

How do you think this
makes Mini feel?

.....

“Just be yourself and smile. You're a good friend.”

Kind or not-kind?

How do you think this
makes Mini feel?

.....

“You lost again! You never win.”

Kind or not-kind?

How do you think this
makes Mini feel?

.....

“You're learning something new. Keep trying, and you'll get it!”

Kind or not-kind?

How do you think this
makes Mini feel?

.....

5. Happy Words

Turn Negative Self-Talk into Positive!

Let's help Mini change her thoughts so she can be kinder to herself. Can you think of some 'Happy Words' to use instead, to help her feel better?

Teeny Tiny Voice says: **"I got a question wrong in class. I'm not smart!"**

Think of some Happy Words to use instead:

.....
.....

Teeny Tiny Voice says: **"Someone didn't play with me. I don't have any friends!"**

Think of some Happy Words to use instead:

.....
.....

Teeny Tiny Voice says: **"Everyone is better at sports than me. I'll never be as good as they are!"**

Think of some Happy Words to use instead:

.....
.....

Teeny Tiny Voice says: **"I didn't get chosen for the school play. No-one likes me!"**

Think of some Happy Words to use instead:

.....
.....

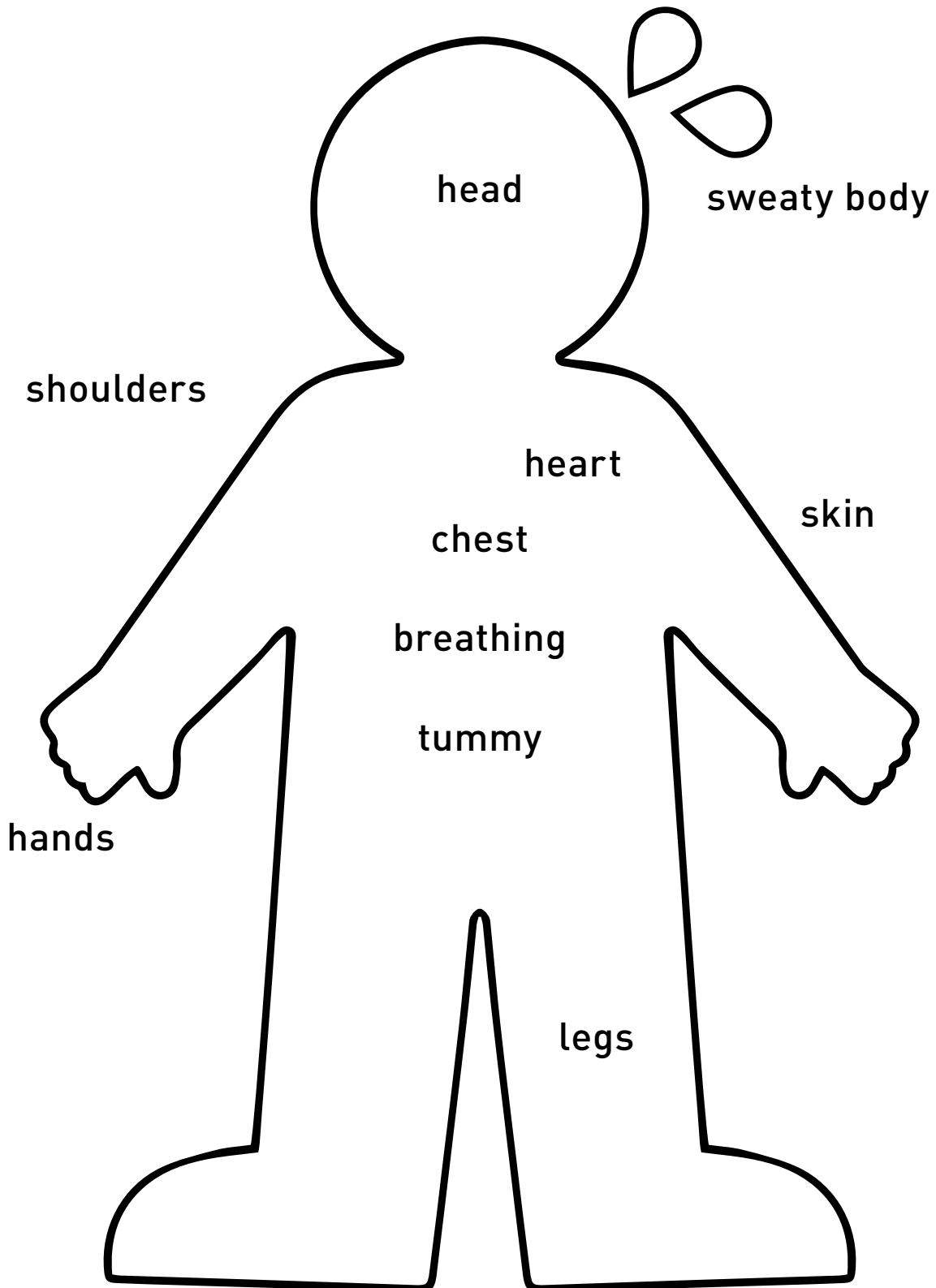
Teeny Tiny Voice says: **"I always lose at every game."**

Think of some Happy Words to use instead:

.....
.....

6. My Worried Teeny-Tiny Voice

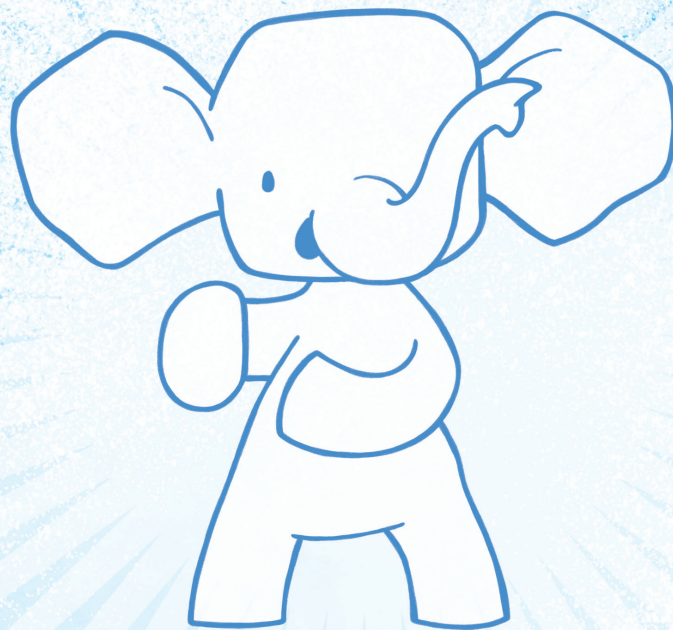
Colour in or draw an arrow pointing to the parts of your body that let you know you are feeling stressed or anxious.



7. My Teeny-Tiny Calm Down Plan

Here are some things you can do to help you and your Teeny-Tiny Voice calm down when it's being extra-cranky! Circle 3 of your favourite ways to calm your body and mind from the list below:

- BREATHE** Take 5 deep breaths. Take a big breath IN and then BLOW out slowly, making sure your 'OUT' breath' is longer than your 'IN' breath.
- HAPPY WORDS** Use my Happy Words to remind my Teeny-Tiny Voice to be kind!
- MOVE** Move my body! Play outside, go for a walk, skip, jump or another activity.
- DRAW** Draw, paint or colour in a picture.
- TALK** Get my worries OUT by talking about my feelings to someone I trust.
- WRITE** Write a story or write a letter to a friend.
- READ** Read a book
- 5,4,3,2,1** Name, write or draw 5 things I can see, 4 things I can touch, 3 things I can hear, 2 things I can smell, and 1 thing I can taste.
- MUSIC** Listen to my favourite song.
- PLAY** Play a game, do a puzzle, play with a toy.
- GRATITUDE** Write or draw 5 things that make me happy.



**WALKER
BOOKS
CLASSROOM**



Free education resources written
to the Australian curriculum.

classroom.walkerbooks.com.au