

MAKE YOUR OWN WORRY JAR

1

INTRODUCE THE TOPIC TO YOUR CLASS

Introduce the topic of worrying over the course of several lessons by sharing relatable stories with your class. Normalising anxiety and helping children to realise that everybody worries will help children to acknowledge and understand their own worries and feel more comfortable expressing them in activities such as this one.

2

FIND AND DECORATE YOUR JAR

Find a large empty jar with a lid that can be easily sealed. Decorate the jar as a class asking all the children to contribute; you can add paint, stickers, ribbons and a label. Make this as fun and inclusive an activity as possible.



3

DISCUSS DIFFERENT TYPES OF WORRIES

Once the jar is complete, ask each child to think about something that worries them. Talk about this as a class and ask the children to make suggestions about the sorts of things that people worry about. Emphasise that worries can be small or big, from feeling afraid of the dark to struggling with friendship at school or issues at home. Every worry counts.



FIND YOUR WORRY PEBBLES

Ask each child to collect a pebble or a stone next time they are outdoors. You may wish to have some extras to hand for those children who can't do this. As a class, decorate the pebbles together with paint. Ask the children to think about how they are feeling about their worry as they decorate and paint the pebbles.



PLACE YOUR WORRIES SAFE IN THE JAR

When the pebbles are dry, ask each child to come forward and place their worry pebble in the jar. If they choose, they can tell the rest of the class which worry their pebble represents. You can ask the other children for suggestions on how to overcome some of the worries, which will support with building empathy. Explain to the children that by putting their pebble in the jar, they are putting their worry to one side, safe in the jar, so that they don't need to have that worry anymore. Place the lid firmly on the jar closing all the worries inside.



CONTINUE USING YOUR CLASSROOM WORRY JAR

Over the course of time, children can contribute as many new pebbles (worries) to the jar as they choose. Provide regular opportunities for children to bring new worries to the class and talk about them together.



THE WORRY JAR

by Lou John and illustrated by Jenny Bloomfield

Some days, Frida's worries become the only thing she can think about. But then, her granny teaches her an ingenious way to keep her worries in check-and Frida finally feels the weight of her fears slip away . . .