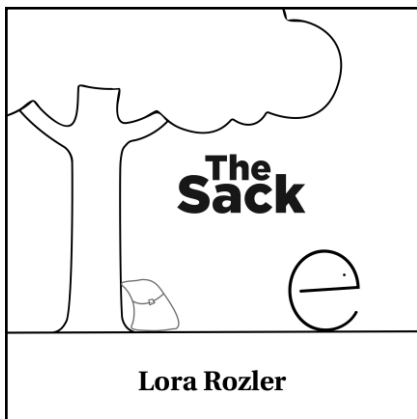


The Sack

Parent and Teacher Companion Kit

Step into a world of self-discovery with **The Sack**. Follow 'e' as it journeys through an enchanted forest, carrying self-doubt and facing unexpected challenges. Through gentle storytelling and vivid illustrations, this story highlights the power of our thoughts, the courage it takes to overcome obstacles, and the importance of supporting one another. Suitable for ages 6–12, **The Sack** offers a meaningful way to explore resilience, self-belief, and kindness, providing ideas and prompts to help guide thoughtful classroom conversations.



Feel free to use the templates and activities in this Companion Kit for your *personal use* at home or in the classroom.

For information about the author and additional educational resources, visit lorarozler.com.

The Sack in the Classroom

Dear Educators,

Stories have a unique power to open hearts and minds, making them a wonderful way to begin meaningful conversations with our children. I wrote **The Sack** with the hope that it would serve as a catalyst for exploring important topics such as empathy, resilience, compassion, self-belief, and the emotional experiences we all carry.

The Sack invites children to reflect on their feelings, recognize the invisible burdens others may bear, and discover ways to support one another in their daily lives. It also encourages students to embrace challenges, develop a growth mindset, and harness the power of positive thinking.

This companion kit is designed to help you bring the themes of **The Sack** into your classroom. Inside, you'll find discussion prompts, lesson ideas, and activities tailored to a range of age groups and learning needs—all aimed at fostering emotional resilience and a supportive classroom community. Feel free to adapt these resources to suit your students and teaching style.

Thank you for sharing this journey with your students. May **The Sack** spark meaningful conversations, inspire kindness, and empower every child in your classroom.

Lora Rozler

Lesson 1: Understanding Self-Doubt and Self-Belief

Objective: Help students recognize self-doubt and learn how positive thinking can help overcome challenges.

Activity: Read **The Sack** aloud, focusing on how the character 'e' carries an invisible sack of self-doubt.

Discuss times when students felt unsure or afraid to try something new.

Have students draw their own "sack" and write or draw one negative thought they sometimes carry. A template can be found in the **Templates Section**.

Guide them to think of a positive thought that can help them feel brave and write or draw it next to their sack.

Outcome: Students understand that everyone has doubts but can choose to carry positive thoughts that help them grow.



Lesson 2: Embracing Challenges and Growth Mindset

Objective: Teach students that growth comes from facing difficulties rather than avoiding them.

Activity: After reading the story, discuss the “**enchanted forest path**” and the obstacles ‘e’ faces.

Set up a simple obstacle course or classroom challenge.

Encourage students to try the course, emphasizing that it's okay to stumble or find things hard.

Afterward, discuss how facing challenges helps us learn and grow, just like ‘e’ learned to set down its sack of self-doubt.

Outcome: Students learn the value of perseverance and a growth mindset through experiential learning.



Lesson 3: The Power of Thoughts and Helping Others

Objective: Explore how thoughts affect our feelings and actions, and how we can support others.

Activity: Highlight in **The Sack** how ‘e’ discovers the power of thoughts that hold us back or set us free.

Have students share examples of positive thoughts that make them feel strong or happy.

Role-play scenarios where a friend is carrying a “heavy sack” of worries or doubts and discuss ways to help them feel better.

Create a **Kindness Wall** where students post positive messages or affirmations for classmates.

Outcome: Students gain awareness of their inner dialogue and learn empathy and ways to support peers emotionally.



Lesson 4: Positive vs. Negative Thought Sorting Game

Objective: Help students identify positive and negative thoughts and practice turning negative thoughts into positive ones.

Activity: Prepare cards with positive and negative thoughts (e.g., "I can do this!" vs. "This is too hard for me.").

Have students take turns drawing a card, reading it aloud, and sorting it into **Positive** or **Negative** containers. Find card suggestions in the **Templates Section**.

Discuss why each thought is positive or negative and how it might make someone feel.

For negative thoughts, challenge students to come up with a positive alternative.

Extension: Have students create a **Positive Thought T-shirt** with a positive thought about themselves. A t-shirt template can be found in the **Templates Section**.

Outcome: Students learn to distinguish between helpful and unhelpful thoughts and practice reframing negative thinking.



Lesson 5: Connecting Thoughts and Feelings

Objective: Teach students the difference and connection between thoughts and feelings.

Activity: Define **thoughts** (words we say to ourselves) and **feelings** (emotions we experience).

Use sorting tasks: students sort cards into **thought** or **feeling**.

Read aloud from **The Sack** and pause to identify whether a character is expressing a thought or a feeling.

Discuss how thoughts can influence feelings and vice versa.

Outcome: Students develop emotional literacy and understand how their thinking shapes their emotional experiences.



Lesson 6: Compassion Builders

Objective: Help students recognize how their thoughts about others can be critical or compassionate, and practice choosing kind, empathetic thoughts.

Activity 1: Discussion – The Power of Our Thoughts

Use scenarios from **The Sack** or similar to discuss what happens when we think unkind or kind thoughts about others.

Sample prompts: “How would you like others to think about you?”

“How do you feel when you think unkindly about someone else?”

Activity 2: Identifying and Transforming Thoughts

List ways we sometimes criticize others in our thoughts (e.g., clothing, abilities).

In pairs, students come up with compassionate alternatives to critical thoughts.

Discuss as a class how changing our thoughts can lead to kinder actions and feelings.

Extension: Encourage students to keep a “Kind Thoughts Journal” for a week, noting one compassionate thought about someone each day. A Writing template can be found in the **Templates Section**.

Outcome: Students become more aware of their inner dialogue, understand the impact of their thoughts, and practice choosing compassion.



Lesson 7: Embracing the Unknown – Courage to Explore New Paths

Objective: Encourage students to face uncertainty and take risks in learning and life.

Activity: Reflect on ‘e’s choice to leave the comfort of familiar paths and explore the enchanted forest.

Facilitate a discussion about times students felt scared to try something new.

Create a **Courage Chart** where students list new things they want to try and steps they can take to face their fears.

Celebrate small acts of bravery in the classroom.

Outcome: Students build courage and understand that growth often requires stepping into the unknown.



Lesson 8: Recognizing and Letting Go of Self-Doubt

Objective: Help students identify self-doubt as an invisible burden and practice strategies to release it.

Activity: Discuss how 'e' carries a heavy, invisible sack of self-doubt throughout the story.

Have students write or draw what their own **sack** of doubts might look like.

Introduce mindfulness or breathing exercises as tools to set down their sack temporarily. A template can be found in the **Templates Section**.

Share examples of positive affirmations that can replace self-doubt.

Outcome: Students become aware of self-doubt's impact and gain practical tools to manage it.



Lesson 9: Helping Others Carry Their Burdens

Objective: Foster empathy and community support by recognizing others' unseen struggles.

Activity: Discuss how 'e' learns to help others carry their own invisible sacks.

Have students share ways they can support friends or family members who might be struggling.

Role-play scenarios where students practice offering kindness and encouragement.

Create a classroom **Helping Hands** board where students post supportive actions they've done or received.

Outcome: Students develop empathy and a sense of responsibility toward their peers' emotional well-being.



Lesson 10: The Impact of Inner Dialogue on Our Actions

Objective: Explore how the thoughts we tell ourselves influence our behavior and choices.

Activity: Identify examples from *The Sack* where 'e's thoughts affect its decisions and feelings.

Have students keep a **Thought Diary** for a day, noting any negative or positive self-talk.

Discuss how changing inner dialogue can change how we act and feel.

Practice rewriting negative thoughts into empowering ones.

Outcome: Students gain insight into the connection between thoughts, emotions, and actions, reinforcing the power of positive self-talk.



Lesson 11: Growth Mindset Through Storytelling

Objective: Use *The Sack* to reinforce the concept that abilities and intelligence can grow with effort.

Activity: Read the story focusing on how 'e' overcomes obstacles by embracing challenges.

Introduce the idea of a growth mindset versus a fixed mindset.

Have students share personal stories of learning from mistakes or challenges.

Create a **Growth Mindset Pledge** where students commit to trying their best and learning from setbacks.

Outcome: Students internalize growth mindset principles and feel motivated to persist through difficulties.



The Sack

Templates Section

Instructions: Write the following statements on chart paper (or else photocopy and distribute this sample page). Invite students to sort the *Thought Statements* on this page onto the T-chart on the following page. Encourage students to discuss their reasoning, share experiences and come up with their own statements for either column.

The Sack Thought Statements

I can do this.	They will laugh at me.	I'm not good enough.
I'm not smart like the others.	I'm not creative.	I am loveable.
Nobody likes me.	I can do hard things.	If I mess up, I can always try again.
It doesn't matter what others think.	I can't do it <i>yet</i> .	I shine in my own way.
They're better than me.	Mistakes help me grow and learn.	I always mess up.

Name: _____

[illegible]



Additional Activities:

- Invite students to map out each hurtful/negative thought from the T-Chart with a corresponding positive affirmation. Encourage students to identify the “rock” (negative thought), then “drop it” and replace it with a healthier, empowering statement.

Below are examples of Reframed Statements:

Negative Thought (The Rock)

1. I'm not good enough.
2. Nobody wants to play with me.
3. I always mess things up.
4. I'm not smart like the others.
5. No one cares about me.
6. I can't do anything right.
7. They're better than me.
8. I'm too weird.
9. Everyone's mad at me.
10. It's all my fault.

Positive Reframe (New Thought)

- I am enough today.
I am kind and fun.
Mistakes help me learn.
I have great ideas.
I am deeply loved.
I keep on trying.
I shine in my way.
Being me is enough.
I can make things better.
I forgive myself daily.

- Have students design a t-shirt with a positive affirmation as a daily reminder to refocus and reframe a repetitive negative thought they may have. You may reference some of the statements from the book or brainstorm ideas with your students.

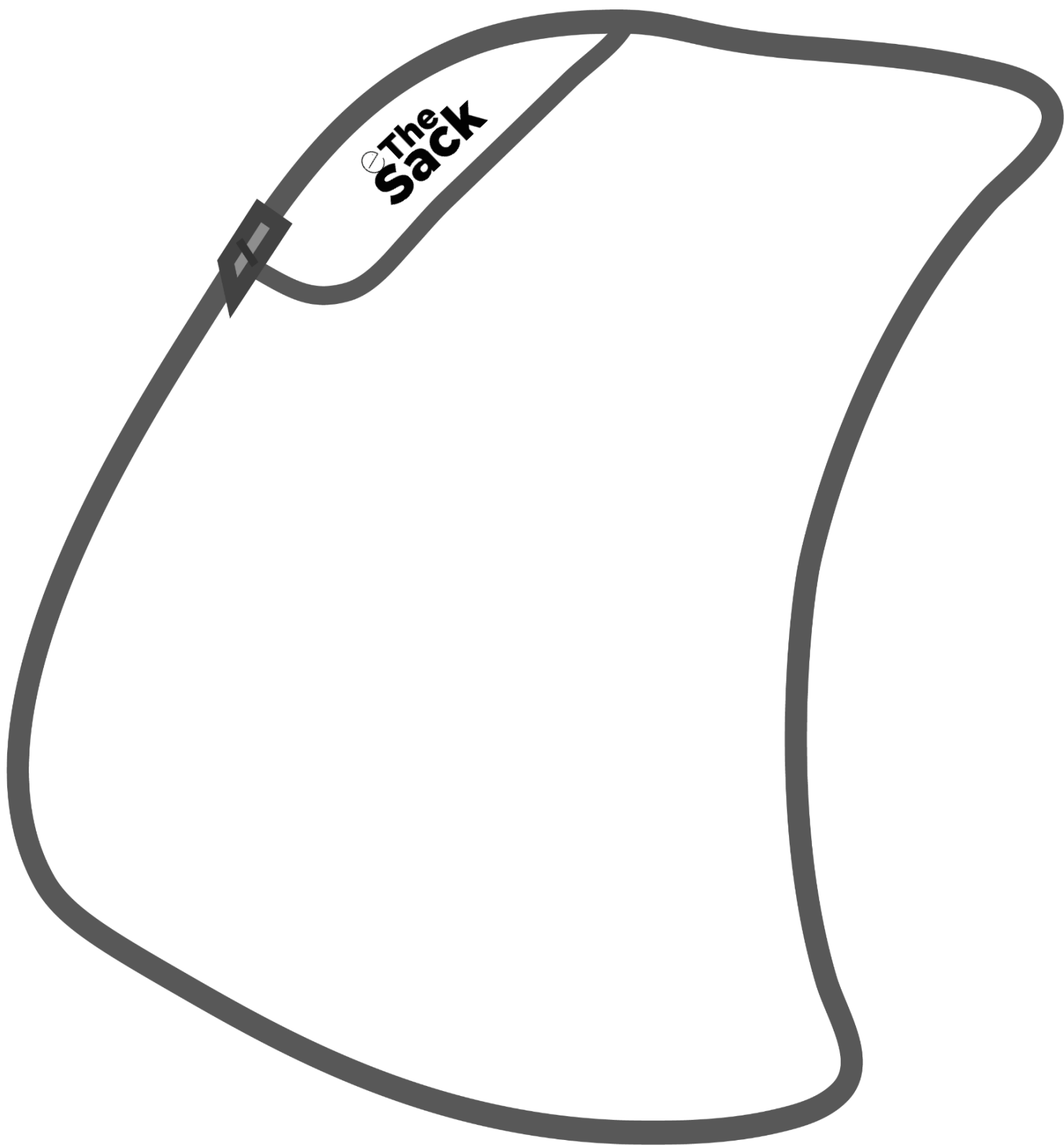
Examples of Positive Affirmations:

I've got this
Not everything I think is true
I can do hard things
I have what it takes
I am unique
Push on despite the fear
It's okay to ask for help
I trust myself
I am brave
I am creative
I am loveable
I am enough
It doesn't matter what others think

Name: _____



Name: _____





Name: _____



Cut out the story frames and place them in sequence. Retell the story.

