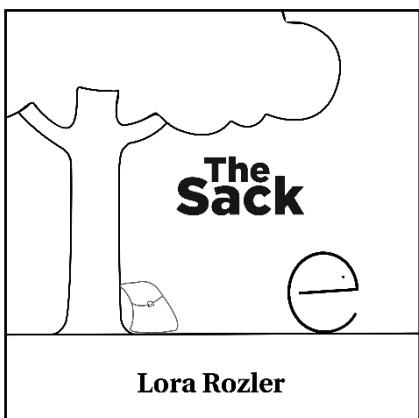




## Parent and Teacher Companion Kit

Step into a world of self-discovery with *The Sack*. Follow **Little** as it journeys through an enchanted forest, carrying self-doubt, fear, and worry, and facing unexpected challenges along the way. Through gentle storytelling and vivid illustrations, the story explores the power of our thoughts, the courage it takes to overcome obstacles, and the importance of lifting one another up.

Designed for ages 6–12, *The Sack* offers a meaningful way to explore resilience, self-belief, and kindness. This Companion Kit provides ideas, prompts, and activities to help guide thoughtful conversations at home or in the classroom.



Feel free to use the templates and activities in this kit for personal use with your learners.

To learn more about the author and explore additional educational resources, visit [lorarozler.com](http://lorarozler.com).



# Author's Note

**Dear Parents and Educators,**

Stories have a special way of opening hearts and helping children understand the world inside them. In **Words**, we explored the impact of the language we share aloud. With **The Sack**, we turn inward to the quieter stories we tell ourselves — the thoughts that shape our confidence, our courage, and the way we move through everyday challenges.

In this story, **Little-e** carries a sack filled with heavy, self-defeating thoughts: the “*I can’t*,” “*I’m not good enough*,” or “*What if I fail?*” whispers that so many children experience but rarely voice. These are the thoughts that weigh us down, hold us back, and keep us from trying something new. Throughout this Companion Kit, we refer to these heavy, discouraging thoughts as **Sack Talk**.

But not all thoughts belong in the sack.

Some thoughts float outside it — light, hopeful, balloon-like ideas that lift us up. These reassuring, empowering thoughts help children rise, try again, and believe in themselves. We call these uplifting thoughts **Soar Talk**, and they remind children that bravery often begins with a single hopeful idea.

The activities that follow invite children to notice what they’re carrying, name their thoughts without judgment, and gently shift from Sack Talk to Soar Talk. Through creativity, conversation, and reflection, children learn that:

- thoughts are not facts,
- some thoughts can be set down,
- and even small shifts in thinking can help them feel lighter and more capable.

Whether used during morning meetings, circle time, or quiet moments at home, these activities help children see the story of **Little-e** as both a mirror and a guide — a mirror that reflects their own inner experiences, and a guide that offers tools for navigating those feelings with resilience and self-belief.

Thank you for sharing this journey with your learners. My hope is that **The Sack** sparks meaningful conversations, encourages compassion, and helps every child discover the lightness that comes when we choose thoughts that help us soar.

With warmth,

Lora Rozler

# How to Use This Companion Kit

This Companion Kit is designed to help children explore the inner world of their thoughts using the metaphors from *The Sack*. The activities can be used at home or in the classroom to spark meaningful conversations about resilience, self-belief, empathy, and emotional awareness.

In the story, Little-e carries an invisible sack filled with heavy, self-defeating thoughts — what we call Sack Talk. These are the kinds of thoughts that weigh us down, such as “*I can’t*,” “*What if I fail?*” “*I’m not good enough*,” or “*They’ll laugh at me*.” Sack Talk can make challenges feel bigger than they really are, and while everyone experiences these thoughts, it’s important for children to learn that they are not facts — just thoughts they can notice and gently set down.

Alongside these heavier thoughts are lighter, hopeful, uplifting ones — balloon-like ideas that float outside the sack and help children rise. We call these Soar Talk. Examples include “*I can give it a try*,” “*I don’t know it yet*,” “*I can ask for help*,” “*I am learning*,” or “*I shine in my own way*.” These thoughts don’t pretend everything is easy; they simply give children the courage and space to move forward.

Throughout this kit, activities guide children to:

- notice which thoughts they’re carrying,
- understand how those thoughts influence feelings and choices,
- practice shifting from Sack Talk to Soar Talk,
- and build confidence through small, meaningful mindset shifts.

There is no required order for completing the activities. Choose the lessons that best fit your learners, and revisit them anytime. Many include a Home Connection to help families continue learning together.

Thank you for supporting your learners as they navigate their inner world. With gentle awareness and language, children discover that while everyone carries an invisible sack at times, they also have the power to choose thoughts that help them lift, rise, and soar.

 A. ART, WRITING, AND REFLECTION

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### 1. Draw Your Sack (*Art + Discussion*)

**Objective:** Help students identify their own invisible Sack Thoughts and imagine the Soar Thoughts that can lighten their load.

**Instructions:**

Students draw their own “Little Sack.”

- Inside the Sack, they write or draw **Sack Thoughts** (e.g., self-doubt, fear, worry).
- Around the outside, they add **Soar Thoughts** — the light, balloon-like ideas that help them rise.

Encourage students to share (if comfortable) and discuss how Soar Thoughts can shrink or lighten their Sack.

**Home Connection:**

Invite children to share their drawing at home and talk about one Sack Thought and one Soar Thought.

---

### 2. My Little Sack Reflection (*Writing*)

**Objective:** Build self-awareness by naming Sack Thoughts and choosing kinder, more supportive Soar Talk.

**Prompt options:**

- “One Sack Thought I sometimes carry is...”
- “A Soar Thought that could help me instead is...”
- “When I change my thoughts, I feel...”

Students write a short reflection and may share to normalize talking about thoughts openly.

**Home Connection:**

Ask students to tell a family member about one Sack Thought they noticed and how they turned it into Soar Talk.

### 3. Growth Mindset Comic Strip (*Storytelling*)

**Objective:** Show how shifting from Sack Talk to Soar Talk can change a character's choices and outcomes.

**Instructions:**

Students create a 3–4 panel comic featuring a character (inspired by Little-e) who wants to try something new but feels weighed down by Sack Talk.

In the final panels, the character uses Soar Talk — or receives support from a friend — and decides to try anyway.

**Home Connection:** Students explain their comic at home and describe the moment where the character nearly gave up and what helped them rise.

---

### 4. “I Used to Think...” Reflection (*Then vs. Now*)

**Objective:** Help students recognize their own growth and how effort lifts them beyond previous Sack Thoughts.

**Sentence stem:**

“I used to think I couldn’t \_\_\_\_\_, but now I know I can \_\_\_\_\_ when I \_\_\_\_\_.”

Students reflect on a skill they’ve improved (reading, sports, friendships, etc.) and recognize how they moved from Sack Thoughts to Soar Thoughts.

**Home Connection:**

Encourage students to share their sentence at home and think of another example together.

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## B. THOUGHT AWARENESS AND REFRAMING

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### 5. Thought Detective (Sorting Game)

**Objective:** Help students identify the difference between Sack Thoughts that weigh us down and Soar Thoughts that lift us up.

Using 6–8 mixed thought cards, students sort each one into Sack Thoughts (heavy) or Soar Thoughts (lifting).

Together, the class chooses one Sack Thought and rewrites it using Soar Talk.

**Home Connection:**

Students notice one Sack Thought and one Soar Thought at home and share them with a family member.

## 6. Rewrite the Line (*Partner Reframing*)

**Objective:** Practice turning self-critical Sack Talk into encouraging Soar Talk.

Give sentence starters such as:

- “I can’t...”
- “I always mess up when...”

Students complete a starter, then swap papers.

Partners rewrite it using Soar Talk (e.g., “I can...,” “Sometimes I struggle, but I can...”).

**Home Connection:** Invite students to teach a family member how to “rewrite” Sack Talk into Soar Talk.

---

## 7. Heavy to Helper Chart (*Reframing*)

**Objective:** Show how specific wording changes the emotional weight of a thought.

Create a T-chart:

- **Heavy Sack Thought**
- **Soar Talk Thought**

Brainstorm examples as a class.

Emphasize that Soar Talk does not pretend everything is easy — it simply helps us keep trying.

**Home Connection:** Encourage families to create a small “Sack to Soar” chart at home.

---

## 8. Thought vs. Feeling Sort (*Emotional Literacy*)

**Objective:** Help students distinguish between thoughts (Sack or Soar) and the feelings that follow.

Sort cards into **Thoughts** vs. **Feelings**.

Connect them:

Pick one thought (e.g., “They’ll laugh at me”) and ask, “What feeling might come after this?”

**Home Connection:** Ask students to share one thought and one feeling from their day with a family member.

## 9. Thought Diary (*Awareness Activity*)

**Objective:** Build awareness of inner dialogue and how it shapes choices.

For one school day, students notice their inner voice.

They jot down one **Sack Thought** and one **Soar Thought**.

Rewrite the Sack Thought together as a class or in small groups.

### **Home Connection:**

Students notice one Sack Thought at home and practice rewriting it with a caregiver.

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## 10. “Yet” Flip Cards (*Language Shift*)

**Objective:** Show how adding “yet” transforms Sack Talk into Soar Talk.

Provide students with statements like:

- “I can’t do this.”
- “This is too hard for me.”

Students add “yet” and complete the sentence with a helpful next step.

### **Home Connection:**

Families can practice adding “yet” at home whenever a child says “I can’t...”

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## C. MOVEMENT, MINDFULNESS, AND RITUALS

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## 11. Let It Go Ritual

**Objective:** Provide a concrete way to notice, name, and release Sack Thoughts.

Students imagine placing a Sack Thought into Little-e’s Sack.

They write or draw the thought (no names) on a paper scrap, then crumple it and drop it into a “Sack Box” or “Worry Bin” with a slow exhale.

Students place a hand on their heart, breathe, and think one Soar Thought about themselves.

### **Home Connection:**

Encourage students to use this ritual at home when a Sack Thought feels heavy.

## 12. Happy Place Visualization

**Objective:** Teach a calming strategy for moments when the Sack feels heavy.

Guide students to imagine a place where they feel safe.

Invite them to picture setting down Little-e's Sack at the edge of that place.

Students draw and label their Happy Place.

**Home Connection:**

Encourage students to describe their Happy Place to a family member.

---

## 13. Sack Challenge Course

**Objective:** Help students notice Sack Talk during effortful tasks.

Set up an obstacle course or challenge.

Explain: "When you feel like stopping, that's a Sack Thought moment."

Discuss afterward:

- "What Sack Thoughts did you hear?"
- "Which Soar Thoughts helped you keep going?"

**Home Connection:**

Students share one moment they pushed past Sack Talk at home.

---

## 14. Challenge of the Week

**Objective:** Build resilience by practicing gentle risk-taking.

Choose a weekly challenge (e.g., try a new skill, answer a question, make a new friend).

Students notice what their invisible Sack says before trying, then reflect on the Soar Thoughts that helped.

**Home Connection:**

Families can encourage and celebrate the weekly challenge.

## 15. Magic Worry Box Craft

**Objective:** Provide a hands-on way to drop Sack Thoughts and choose Soar Thoughts.

Students decorate a “Worry Box.”

Whenever a Sack Thought appears, they write it down and place it inside, pairing it with a deep breath and a Soar Thought.

**Home Connection:** Students show their Worry Box at home and explain how it helps them.

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## D. PEER SUPPORT, EMPATHY, AND COMMUNITY

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### 16. Kindness Wall & Helping Hands Board

**Objective:** Help students lift one another’s invisible Sacks through kindness and support.

Students write short **Soar Notes** — balloon-like compliments or encouraging thoughts — and post them on a **Kindness Wall** for anyone who needs a lift. They can also add a **Helping Hand** whenever they give or receive support, showing how the class lightens each other’s Sacks through kind actions.

**Home Connection:** Students share one Soar Thought or helping action with someone at home.

### 17. Compliment Circle

**Objective:** Encourage noticing strengths and efforts in others.

Sitting in a circle, each student gives a Soar Thought-style compliment to the person beside them.

Discuss how giving and receiving kindness lightens our Sack.

**Home Connection:** Families can try a “compliment round” at dinner.

### 18. Compassion Switch

**Objective:** Transform Sack Talk about others into compassionate Soar Talk.

Students brainstorm critical thoughts people sometimes think.

In pairs, they “switch” them to compassionate, supportive thoughts:  
“He’s bad at this” → “He’s still learning, like me.”

**Home Connection:** Students share one “compassion switch” at home.

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## E. CLASS ROUTINES AND CAPSTONE

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### 19. Words That Lift Us (Anchor Chart)

**Objective:** Make Sack Talk → Soar Talk language visible.

Create two columns:

- **Words That Weigh Us Down (Sack Talk)**
- **Words That Lift Us Up (Soar Talk)**

Add examples throughout the year to reinforce shared vocabulary.

**Home Connection:**

Encourage families to use Soar Talk at home.

---

### 20. Success of the Day

**Objective:** Help students notice moments when they rose above Sack Talk.

At the end of the day or week, students share a success — big or small — and reflect on what Soar Thoughts helped them try.

**Home Connection:**

Families can start a daily/weekly “success share.”

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### 21. Mindset Bingo

**Objective:** Encourage regular Soar Talk behaviors.

Create a Bingo grid with actions like: Used Soar Talk today • Noticed a Sack Thought • Tried something new • Asked for help • Kept going after a mistake • Encouraged a friend • Shared a kind Soar Thought • Practiced “yet” language

When students complete an action, they color the square. Celebrate when they complete a row, highlighting how each choice shows them rising above Sack Talk.

Celebrate completed rows as evidence of growth.

**Home Connection:**

Families can look for “Bingo moments” at home.



# Discussion Starters

- What kinds of thoughts live inside a Sack?
- How does your body feel when your Sack feels heavy?
- When have you helped someone lift their invisible Sack?
- How can our class become a place where everyone feels lighter?
- Let's explore the "rocks" in the story (worry, doubt, fear). How does each add weight? Are there others?
- Which rock feels heaviest to you, and why?
- How might letting go of one rock change the weight of the others?
- Share a real-life "rock" similar to one from the story.
- How do positive, balloon-like thoughts help you rise?
- What's one thought you'd remove from your Sack today?
- Why do you think Little-e kept the Sack closed for so long?
- What kind words could you offer someone whose Sack feels heavy?
- How can mistakes become "light rocks" that help us grow?
- If your Sack had a color today, what would it be and why?
- What happens to our classroom when we all lighten our Sacks together?

---

## Optional Extensions

- These questions can also be used as **written responses** (writing template included in the Templates section of this resource kit).
- For circle time, place each question on a small card and put them in a **Sack of Questions**. Pass the Sack around and invite students to draw a question to reflect on or discuss.

**Instructions:** This activity can be completed as a whole group, in small groups, or independently. **Cut out the Thought Statements** below and sort them onto a graphic organizer under ‘**Soar Thoughts** (Helpful)’ and ‘**Sack Thoughts** (Hurtful)’ (or use the T-chart on the next page). Encourage discussion, personal examples (if comfortable), and additions to either column.

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 yet.	I shine in my own way.
They're better than me.	Mistakes help me grow and learn.	I always mess up.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Sack Thoughts</b>	<b>Soar Thoughts</b>



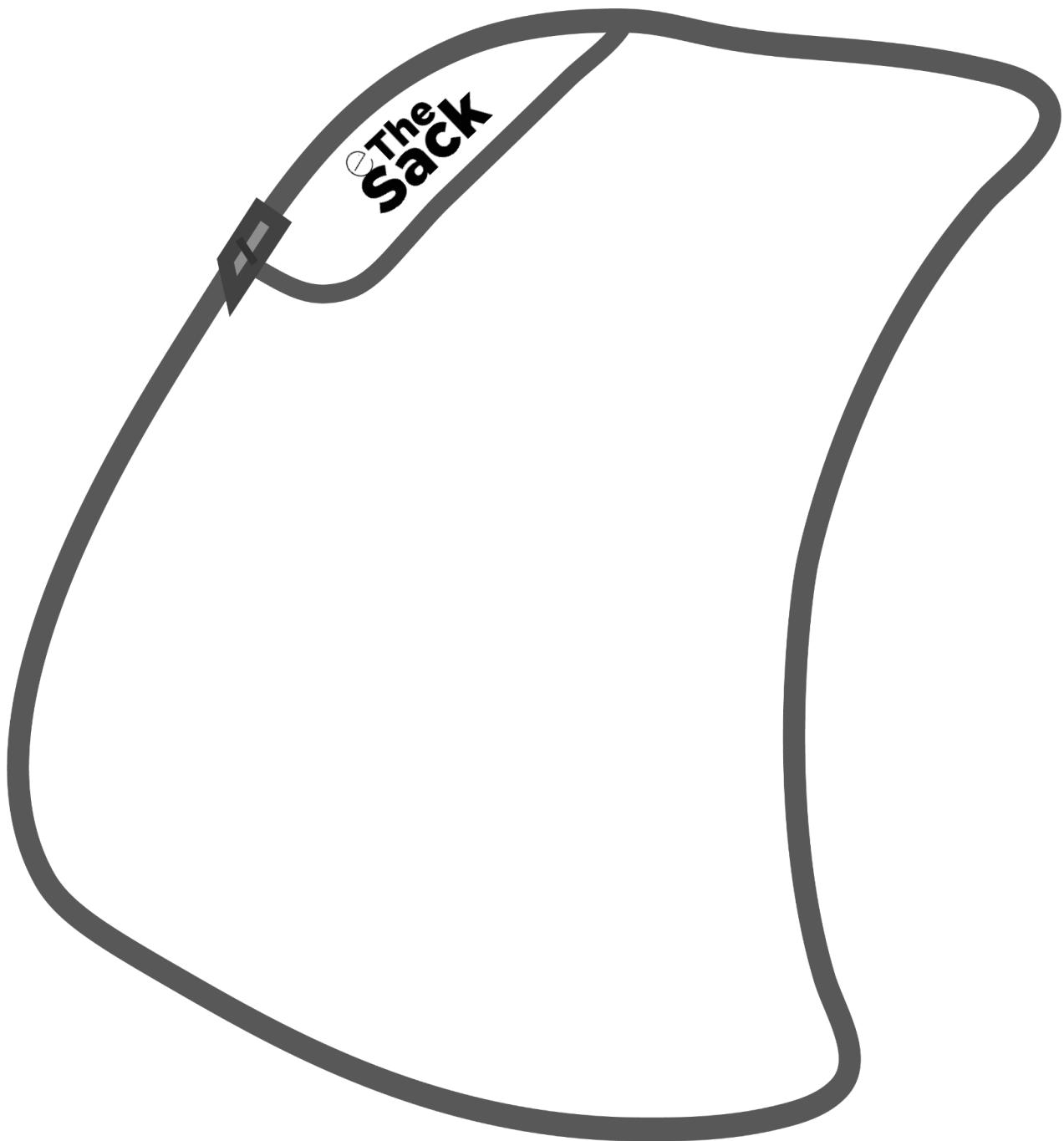
# Positive Affirmations

**Instructions:** Cut out the statements below. Match each **Sack Thought** with its corresponding **Soar Thought**. After matching, choose one that resonates with you most (or write your own). Use the template on the next page to paste the *Sack Thought* inside the sack and the *Soar thought* outside of it. Use it as a daily reminder to reframe your thinking.

SACK THOUGHTS	SOAR THOUGHTS
<b>Nobody wants to play with me.</b>	<b>I am kind and fun.</b>
<b>I'm not smart.</b>	<b>I have great ideas.</b>
<b>No one cares about me.</b>	<b>I am loved.</b>
<b>I'm not good enough.</b>	<b>I am enough.</b>
<b>I always mess things up.</b>	<b>Mistakes help me learn.</b>
<b>I'm too weird.</b>	<b>I am unique.</b>
<b>Everyone is mad at me.</b>	<b>I can make things better.</b>
<b>It's all my fault.</b>	<b>I forgive myself.</b>

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# What I No Longer Carry



**Instructions:** Have students design a T-shirt with positive affirmations as a daily reminder to refocus and reframe repetitive Sack Thoughts they may have (template enclosed). You may reference the statements in the book or brainstorm ideas with students.

## Examples:

I've got this.	I can take things one step at a time.
Not everything I think is true.	I can find another way.
I can do hard things.	I can be kind to myself and others.
I have what it takes.	I can ask for support when I need it.
I am unique.	I matter.
Push on despite the fear.	I belong.
It is okay to ask for help.	I trust myself.
I can try again.	I am brave.
I learn a little more each day.	I am creative.
I can figure things out.	I am loveable.
I can stay calm and keep going.	I am enough.
I can breathe through hard moments.	It does not matter what others think.
I can choose a lighter thought.	
I am learning as I go.	

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



Name: \_\_\_\_\_



## Reflecting

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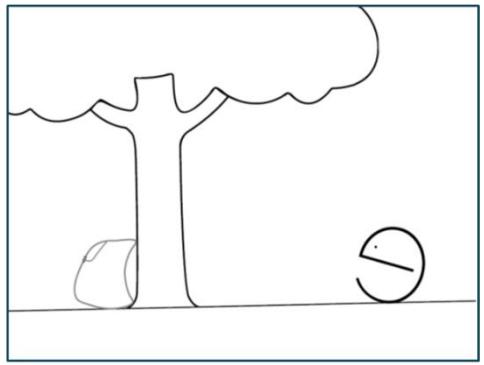
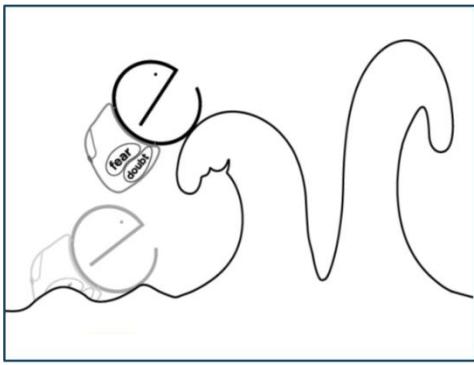
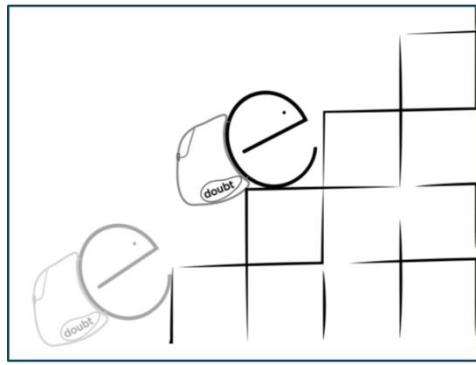
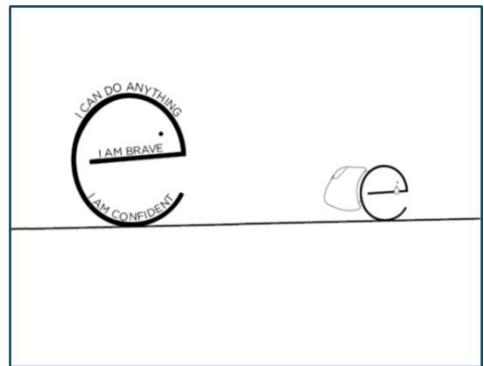
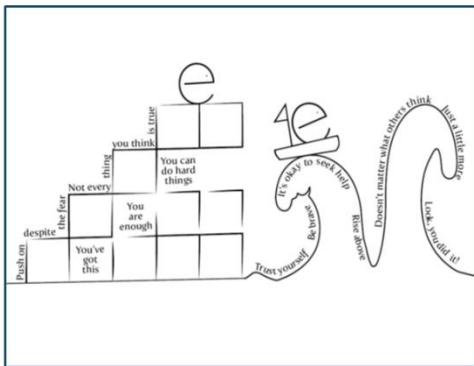
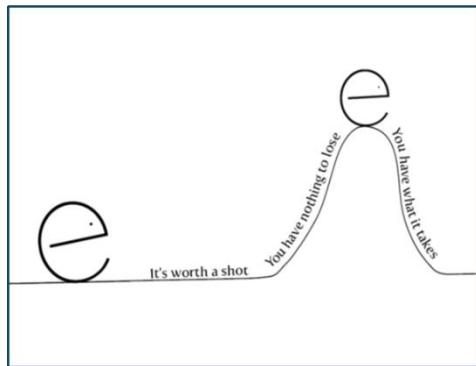
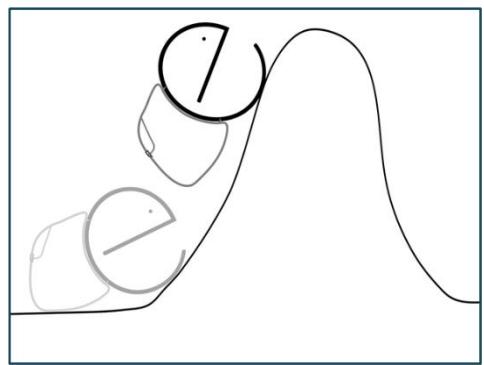
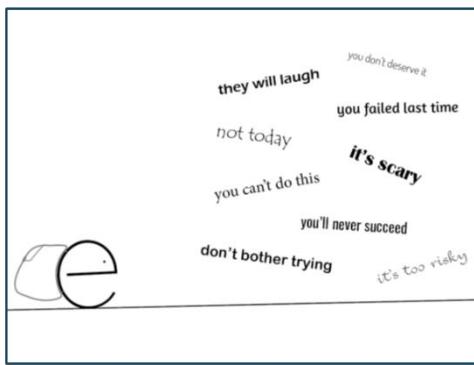
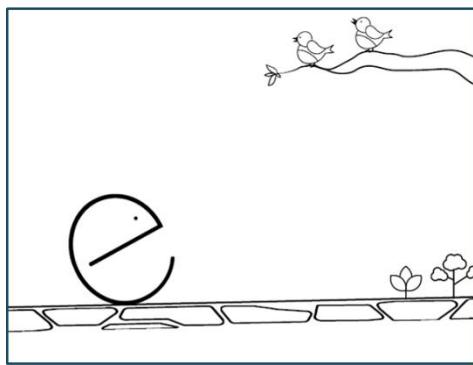
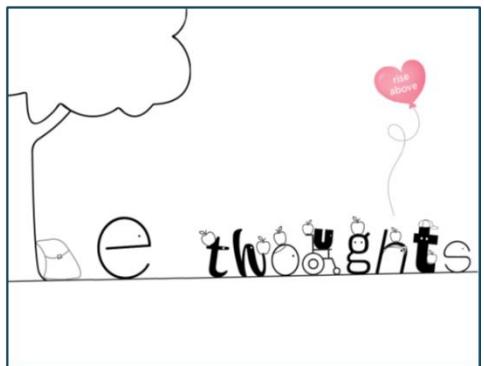
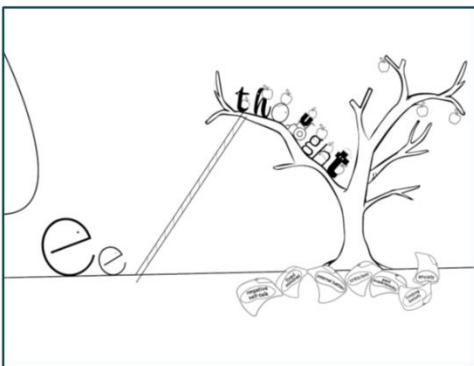
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A large, empty, rounded rectangular box with a dark blue border, intended for writing a response.

# Story Sequencing

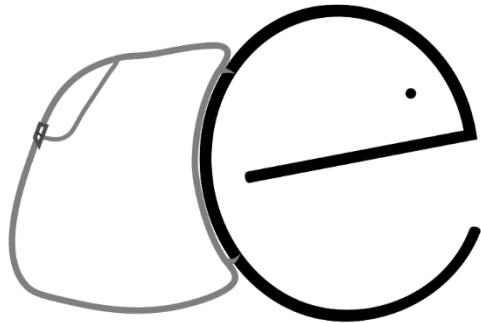
**Instructions:** Cut out the story frames and place them in sequence. Retell the story.



# The Sack

Lora Rozler

I have a little sack  
That bounces on my back,  
It's filled with tiny, bossy thoughts  
That like to shout and stack.  
Some say, "You're not ready,"  
Some say, "You're too slow,"  
They make my steps feel heavier  
Wherever I might go.  
  
One day I stopped and opened it,  
Let every thought fly free -  
The sack grew light, my heart felt bright,  
And so much more like me.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_



## The Sack

**Instructions:** Fill in the blanks to complete the poem.

I have a little sack 

That bounces on my \_\_\_\_\_,

It's filled with tiny, bossy thoughts

That like to \_\_\_\_\_ and stack.

Some say, "You're not ready,"

Some say, "You're too \_\_\_\_\_,"

They make my steps feel heavier

Wherever I might \_\_\_\_\_.

One day I stopped and opened it,

Let every thought fly \_\_\_\_\_ -

The sack grew light, my \_\_\_\_\_ felt bright,

And so much more like \_\_\_\_\_.



# Rocks as Metaphors

**Instructions:** Explore the metaphorical “rocks” in the story. How does each one add weight to Little-e’s Sack? Which rock feels heaviest to you, and why?

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## Negative Self-talk



## Fixed Mindset



## Internal Battles



---

## Criticism



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## Past Experiences



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## Limiting Beliefs



---

## Anxiety



Name: \_\_\_\_\_



## Thoughts to Feelings

**Instructions:** Read each thought and think about **how it makes you feel**. Then draw a line from the statement to the happy face if it **makes you feel uplifted (Soar Thought)**, or to the sad face if it **makes you feel defeated (Sack Thought)**.

You can't do this

You failed last time

You have what it takes

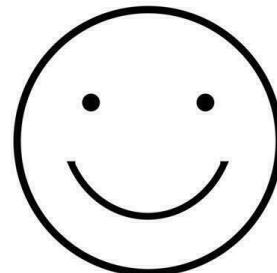
Don't bother trying

You are enough

You can do hard things

You'll never succeed

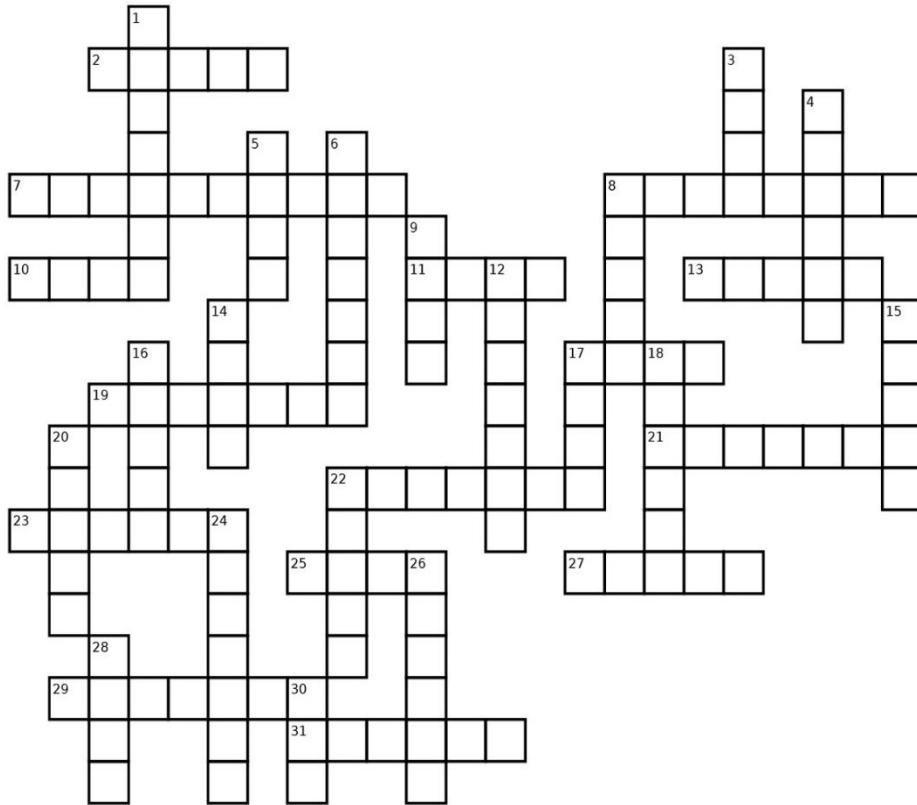
You don't deserve it



Name: \_\_\_\_\_



## Crossword Puzzle



### Down:

1. Where was Little 'e' walking in the start of the story
3. What Little 'e' used to get over waves
4. You \_\_\_\_\_ last time!
5. It's worth a \_\_\_\_\_
6. In one of the bags - "Fixed \_\_\_\_\_"
8. In the balloon Rise \_\_\_\_\_
9. One \_\_\_\_\_ at a time
12. \_\_\_\_\_ beliefs, in one of the sacks
14. Change \_\_\_\_\_ perspective
15. Little 'e's third challenge
16. Not everything you \_\_\_\_\_ think is true
17. You can do \_\_\_\_\_ things
18. The letters used this to solve their challenge
20. Little 'e's last rock in his sack
22. Little 'e's first challenge
24. You have \_\_\_\_\_ to lose
26. The letters where trying to reach these
28. What did Little 'e' put down when he got tired
30. You've \_\_\_\_\_ this!

### Across:

2. the second rock in Little 'e's sack
7. The letter 'u' was sitting in this
8. I can do \_\_\_\_\_
10. Little 'e' first rock in his sack
11. Negative self-\_\_\_\_\_
13. You have what it \_\_\_\_\_
17. It's ok to seek \_\_\_\_\_
19. Whether you can or you can't, it all starts with this
21. Push on \_\_\_\_\_ the fear
22. You'll never \_\_\_\_\_!
23. One of the type of lines 'e' always went back to
25. Author \_\_\_\_\_ Rozler
27. Little 'e' saw there in the forest
29. The \_\_\_\_\_ is far, each step is so tall
31. It doesn't matter what \_\_\_\_\_ think

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



## Thought Reframing

**Instructions:** Think of statements that make your sack feel heavy.

**Write them in the rocks.**

For every rock, write an affirming statement that could help lighten your load.

**Write them in the balloons.**

