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Preface

When thinking about what to create for my expo project, and determining my passions in relation to Occupational Therapy, pediatrics was the first thing that came to mind. Bullying is a topic that I feel very strongly about, and that is because as a middle school student up until my last year of high school I was bullied, which I have found has had a significant affect on the way I view myself and others perceptions of me. The bullying that I experienced led me to have a deep desire to help others who I see are hurting, and who feel as though they are insignificant or unwanted. Time and time again, especially in a school system setting, you see all kinds of children bullying others for the sake of gaining popularity and “looking cool,” building up ones own self-esteem, or possibly from learned behaviors at home. Apart from my own experience, research states that 60% of students who are bullied are students with numerous disabilities, as well as a child in the United States is bullied in school every 7 minutes. Also, 1 in 10 student’s actually drop out of school because of repeated, chronic bullying. Whatever the case may be, bullying is something that can and should be prevented.

The best way to tackle any problem is looking at the source of the problem. In relation to children with special needs, I began to realize that the lack of understanding the perspective of a child with special needs is the cause of many cases of bullying in this population. This lack of emotional understanding, coupled with a disconnect of certain key values such as compassion, kindness, socialization, value, coping skills, self control, stress/anxiety relief, and self-esteem are all components in the act of bullying. For example, bullying may stem from a form of jealousy and therefore having a sense of self-esteem could prevent it; or a lack of value for individuals who may differ from you may be in direct

relation to bullying. This age and population of children are also more prone to worrying about what their peers think of them and being accepted, therefore stress/anxiety relief may be part of the preventative process of bullying, as well as coping skills to deal with such fears and worries that lead to those behaviors. Therefore, I created this project with bullying prevention in mind, to use as a 9-week program for teachers, counselors, or other school system workers to both learn more about the effects of bullying, as well as to be aware of how to prevent such actions from occurring in both the special needs population and the children in regular education classrooms.

Description

The *Prevention through Perspectives* is an interactive tool for middle school teachers or counselors that can be used in a school setting to promote bullying prevention through the teaching of multiple perspectives and key values in children. It can also be used with parents for educational purposes, and to help with awareness or to give information on what to ask their child with or without special needs to determine whether or not bullying is an issue for them in their school.

The *Prevention through Perspectives* is a nine-week program that includes 15-20 minute weekly classroom activities for each key component of combating bullying. The nine core themes include emotional understanding (perspective taking), compassion, kindness, self-esteem, value, coping skills, self-control, stress/anxiety relief, and socialization. This program may be used with children who have already been observed bullying a child with or without special needs, but it is purposefully structured for use with children who the professional using the program may deem at risk for bullying. This interactive program, designed most specifically for counselors, can most beneficially be used to help teach a bully, in a one-on-one setting, the consequences of their actions by what perspective and feelings the victim may be suffering from as a result of the bullying. Although designed for optimal use in an individualized setting, this may also be used as a classroom activity involving inclusion classrooms and general education classrooms for use of educational purposes in perspective taking on children who may look and act different than the typical population.

This program was designed by an occupational therapy student, and with that, this program is not solely a “teaching” tool, but instead, it also includes the act of “doing” with

activities that correspond with each key value. Occupational therapists are professionals that strive to promote independence, increase quality of life, and enable individuals to participate in everyday activities that they want and need to do. Bullying is an issue that affects everyday activities, as it directly impacts social participation. It is also important to note that 1 in 10 students drop out of school because of repeated bullying, and therefore this not only impacts social participation, but also may influence education as well.

Lastly, the *Prevention through Perspectives* accompanying information provides education and information for teacher awareness and parent awareness on bullying. The printable documents include signs and effects of bullying to watch for, as well as questions to subtly ask children with disabilities to gather more information on whether or not bullying is a problem in their school. Although this is mostly a prevention based tool, the printable information also includes a guide for what to do if bullying has occurred in the classroom, or if a parent gains knowledge that their child has been bullied.

Education

What is Bullying?

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school-aged children. It involves a real or perceived power imbalance and the behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Children with physical, developmental, intellectual, emotional, and sensory disabilities are more likely to be bullied than their peers. Any number of reasons such as physical vulnerability, difficulties with social skills, or environments in which the child with special needs is challenged – may increase risk of these children to be bullied.

Commonly Bullied Special Needs Populations

Essentially, any child is at risk for being bullied, whether they have special needs or not. Although, there has been research that suggest children with certain disabilities and disorders are at greater risk for being bullied. For example, it has been found that children with ADHD are both more likely to be bullied and even somewhat likely to bully their peers. Children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) are also at increased risk of being left out by their peers and bullied. Research has shown that these children are more than three times as likely to be bullied as their peers. Children with epilepsy and other medical conditions that affect their appearance such as cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, and spina bifida are likely to be called names related to their disability. Children with hemiplegia (paralysis of one side of the body) are more likely than others to have fewer friends. Children who have diabetes and are dependent on insulin, children who stutter, and those with learning disabilities are all more likely to be teased in a school setting than their peers.

Signs of Bullying

A lot of children with special needs have difficulties with communication. Whether there is a physical or mental disability, being able to clearly tell that you are being bullied may be challenging. Therefore, it is important that teachers, parents, close friends, and others are involved and aware of signs to watch for when it comes to bullying and being bullied by others.

Common Signs of Being Bullied:

- Increased feelings of sadness and loneliness
- Changes in sleep and eating patterns
- Loss of interest in activities they used to enjoy
- Health complaints or unexplainable injuries
- Decreased academic achievement
- Aggressiveness and starting to bully someone else (role reversal)
- Sudden loss of friends or avoidance of social situations
- Self-destructive behaviors such as running away from home or harming themselves
- Frequent headaches or stomach aches, feeling sick or faking illness
- Lost or destroyed clothing, books, electronics, or jewelry

In a special needs population, some of these signs and symptoms may be common to the individual child and hard to differentiate between what is normal and abnormal. Therefore, it is extremely important to be aware of these signs and use your best effort and observations to determine the true cause of certain behaviors.

Teacher and Parent Awareness

Sometimes, observation alone can be used when determining if a child is being bullied. Other times, it can be useful to ask questions to figure out whether a child is not comfortable with telling an adult about their problem with a bully. Subtly asking a child if they are being bullied because of their disability, watching facial expressions, body language, nervousness, or other signs can also be good indicators that the child is falsely representing the bullying that is present in their life.

Subtle Questions to Ask a Child:

- Ask your child about hunger issues after school. "You're always so hungry after school! Have you been eating your lunch I packed you? / Haven't you been buying your lunch?"
- You could mention some missing items. "I can't find your iPod that was in your backpack. Did someone take them from you?"
- You could mention that their clothing has been torn. "I see that your jacket is ripped on the sleeve. Did someone do that to you?"
- "Do you have any special friends at school? Who are they? Whom do you hang out with?"
- "Whom do you sit with at lunch and on the bus?"
- "Are there any kids at school who you really don't like? Why don't you like them? Do they ever pick on you or leave you out of things?"

How to Deal with Bullying

Although this document is geared more towards prevention, it is important to know how to deal with bullying that has already occurred.

Parental Steps after Bullying

- Find out the detailed information about what exactly the bullies are doing including when it occurs, where it occurs, and what occurs. Everything about the incident(s) needs to be documented.
- Find out if any physical threats have been made towards your child, and whether these are life threatening (police may need to be contacted).
- Contact the school and make an appointment with the principal for a meeting.
- Make sure all details are written and documented, and bring all information to any meetings about the bullying. Tell your child's story and ask for help.
- Ask questions such as "What can I do to help stop this? What are you all going to do to prevent this and stop it from happening again?"
- Make sure to always follow up to see if the bullying has stopped, and follow up with the principal.
- If it continues, document it and you are eligible to file a Notice of Harassment. You may need to contact superintendent of schools, board of education, or possibly even state and federal authorities.

Teacher Steps after Bullying

- Report It!
- Confront the bully in private. Challenging them in front of their peers in detail may enhance aggression.
- Take immediate action when bullying is observed. Make sure students know bullying behaviors will not be tolerated.
- Reduce the amount of time students can spend unsupervised.
- Stagger recess, lunch, and class-release times. This approach will minimize the number of bullies and victims present at one time, so supervisors have less trouble spotting bullying.
- Monitor areas where bullying can be expected, such as bathrooms. Adult monitoring can increase likelihood that bullies will get caught, and that bullying will not occur in the presence of an adult.
- Hang classroom signs prohibiting bullying, as well as the consequences associated with that behavior.
- Schedule regular classroom times in which students and teachers engage in discussion and role-playing related to prevention of bullying and other forms of physical and emotional forms of violence among students.
- Encourage parental participation by establishing an inviting environment for students and parents to come and ask questions and learn about school procedures in relation to bullying.
- Develop strategies to reward students for positive behaviors that are inclusive.

Prevention Through Perspectives Program

Week 1: Emotional Understanding

Description: Emotional understanding in this program is defined as the ability to be aware of your own emotions and the emotions of others. It also refers to the ability to understand the impact of your actions on others, and the emotions those actions may produce.

Rationale: Emotional understanding is necessary in successful prevention of bullying behaviors. The ability to understand one's own emotions enables individuals to become self-aware and learn to then control their emotions in an appropriate manner. Emotional understanding strongly influences the ability to get along with others as well, due to the subsequent capability to show empathy, compassion, and respect when becoming aware of another's sadness or distress.

Goal: The goal of this week's activity is to see improvement in the student's ability to determine peer emotions based on facial expressions. The goal is to then generalize the activity, by having the student provide verbal understanding of the information in the form of emotions caused by the effect of bullying behaviors.

Activity: "I Like To Move it Move it"

Materials: Space to allow for movement, chair to sit in, and a mirror (optional)

Instructions/Steps:

- Begin by having the leader (therapist, counselor, etc.) explain the directions of the activity, in which the leader will give a command of either "walk, sit, or move."
- These directions will be given with a certain emotion or scenario such as "Walk as if you are lonely," or "Someone just gave you a candy bar, move in a way that describes how that makes you feel."
- When the command/direction is "walk," the student should walk in a clockwise direction around the room. When the command is "sit," the student is to sit in the chair and complete the emotion/scenario. When the direction is "move," the student is allowed to make any movement desired to reflect the request while staying in a designated area.
- The leader is to allow the student up to one minute to experience and go through the emotion/scenario in the "walk, sit or move" manner.

- Examples of directions to use (Starting with either Walk, Sit, or Move)
 - With anger
 - As if you feel good
 - With patience
 - With happiness
 - As if you are comfortable
 - With fear
 - With joy
 - As though someone has been kind to you
 - As if you are lonely
 - As if you are lost
 - As if you are hurt
 - As though someone has been picking on you
 - With love
 - As though you've been laughed at
 - With sadness
 - With jealousy
 - As though you are worried/stressed
- The leader (therapist, counselor, etc.) should then guide the student in a discussion using the follow up questions provided

Variations:

- If the student has difficulties with motor planning, the leader may assist as needed
- If the student is struggling with understanding emotions and how they look, one may choose to utilize the optional mirror by first demonstrating the facial expression, and then having the student watch themselves in the mirror repeat the same facial expression

Reflection/Follow Up Questions:

- Which movement was the hardest for you? Which one was the easiest? Why do you think that is?
- Do you think that the way you showed your emotions would be the same way someone else would show them? Why or why not?
- In your experience, how can you tell when someone is upset or hurt by you or your actions towards them?
- Some of the emotions are harder to express than others, such as jealousy. What does jealousy look like to you? Is it possible that some of these emotions, such as jealousy, could be shown in forms of anger or sadness or frustration?
- Can you remember and describe a time when you made someone happy or had a positive impact on him or her? How did you know this was positive?
- Can you remember and describe a time when you made someone upset or angry? How did you know this was negative?

- Is it easy to tell when someone is having a bad day? Why is that? What do they do that makes you believe they're having a bad day?

Week 2: Compassion

Description: Compassion is defined as concern for the sufferings and misfortunes of others. It also refers to a strong desire to alleviate the suffering seen in others. In essence, it means, “When you see someone hurting, you want to make them feel better.”

Rationale: Research shows that qualities such as compassion and empathy are effective in prevention of problem behaviors in school-aged children. Compassion is a value that incorporates a desire to help those in need, which directly relates to the issue of bullying and its negative effect on children.

Goal: The goal of this week’s activity is to see improvement in the student’s ability to problem solve in ways to show compassion to others. This goal is to be accomplished by using scenarios that ask the questions such as “How could you help?” in a particular situation or “How would you like to be helped if this were you?”

Activity: “How Can I Help You”

Materials: *How Can I Help You* scenario activity sheets, writing utensil of choice (pencil, pen, markers, etc.)

Instructions/Steps:

- Begin by letting the student read the first scenario
- After reading the scenario, allow the student to answer the question such as “How could you help in this situation?” The student should be prompted to draw how they would choose to help in the space provided
- Give the student adequate time to think of and draw their proposed action in response to the given scenario (1-3 minutes per scenario)
- The leader (therapist, counselor, etc.) should then guide the student in a discussion using the follow up questions provided

Variations:

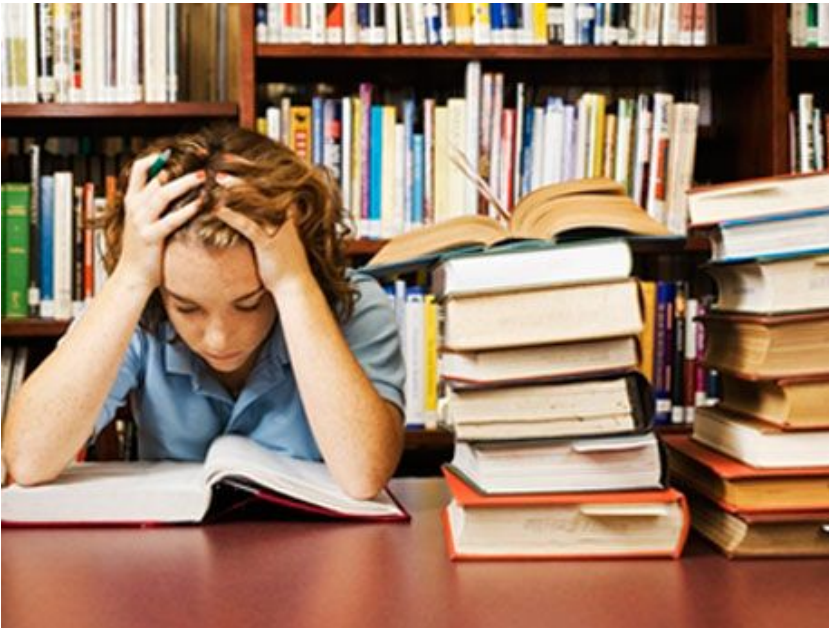
- If the student has difficulties with drawing or writing skills, have them act out what they would choose to do, or simply discuss it
- If the student is having difficulty making a decision as to what to draw, or is unsure of how to answer, you may give the student 2-3 different options to choose from, and have them draw what they believe is the best “answer”

Reflection/Follow Up Questions:

- Can you describe in your own words what compassion is?
- Could you tell me about a time that you showed compassion to someone? How did the person respond to what you did? How did you feel afterwards?
- Can you remember a time when others have showed compassion towards you? How did that make you feel?
- Can you think of some ways we can show compassion at school? Towards our classmates? Teachers?
- Do you think there is anything that may stop you from being compassionate towards others? What might those things be? How could you possibly change this?
- In the scenarios, what are some things you could actually say to the people who are hurting?
- Why do you think it matters to show compassion?



Penelope is a new girl at your school, and hasn't made any friends yet. You see that she sits at lunch by herself and doesn't talk to anyone. She also plays alone during gym and no one sits with her on the bus. She seems lonely, how can you help? Draw it!



Your brother is almost finished with his first year of high school. He tells you that it is really hard, and you aren't going to be able to get through it because you aren't smart enough. This makes you angry and really nervous about starting high school. What could someone do to help you feel better? Draw it!

You've been best friends with Elias ever since you started going to school. You both love sports, so you tried out for the basketball team together. You made the team but Elias didn't. Some of your other classmates that also made the team keep calling him a loser, and you can tell this really upsets him. What can you do to help? Draw it!



Week 3: Kindness

Description: Kindness is the quality of being friendly, generous, and considerate. The most appropriate form of kindness in this context is being considerate towards others.

Rationale: It is important to demonstrate kindness in everyday life to promote socialization and interpersonal skills. It is also necessary to build relationships that are healthy, appropriate, and do not pose at risk for bullying behaviors. Showing kindness demonstrates that one cares and is willing to help others, which also increases the likelihood of obtaining lasting friendships in school-aged children.

Goal: The goal of this week's activity is to see improvement in the student's ability to demonstrate kindness. This activity is geared towards motivation of kindness by use of mimicking an influential person that displays the characteristics of kindness such as being considerate, friendly, and generous.

Activity: "Who is your Superhero?"

Materials: Plain paper, writing utensil of choice (pencil, pen, markers, etc.), scissors, and instructions of *how to make a paper booklet*

Instructions/Steps:

- Begin by making the paper booklet with the instructions provided with the blank sheet of paper
- Next, have the student first think about someone that they would describe as their "Superhero." This can be an actual superhero, a family member, teacher, or any other influential person in their life.
- The leader may then prompt the student to be creative, as they can draw a picture of their superhero on the front cover of their booklet, as well as write their name if desired (the student may also make up a superhero name if they have chosen a family member such as "The Magnificent Mom." Give the student 3 minutes to complete this.
- For the remaining six pages inside of the origami booklet, the student is then asked to first choose two instances or moments in which their superhero demonstrated friendliness (i.e. Magnificent mom gave my school teacher a gift for Christmas). The student should put one instance/moment per page, and then draw or write it out. Give the student 3 minutes to finish this.
 - If time is short, the student may also be prompted to only choose one instance, and draw this moment out across the two pages.
- The next two pages should include instances or moments in which their superhero demonstrated generosity (i.e. Magnificent mom gave me an extra

\$1 for my snack last week). These pages should also include drawings and/or manuscript of the instances. Give the student 3 minutes to finish this.

- If time is short, the student may also be prompted to only choose one instance, and draw this moment out across the two pages.
- The last two pages should include two moments in which their superhero demonstrated consideration towards others (i.e. Magnificent mom let someone pass her in the McDonald's line so that they could eat first). Again, these stories should also be demonstrated in some way on the booklet pages, and the student should be given 3 minutes to complete this.
 - If time is short, the student may also be prompted to only choose one instance, and draw this moment out across the two pages.
- Upon completion of the Superhero booklet, the leader should guide the student in the following discussion questions

Variations:

- If the student has difficulties with motor planning and making the “origami” booklet, you may use hand-over-hand assistance or already have an extra booklet to provide for them
- If the student is having difficulty in choosing a “Superhero,” give three options to choose from
- If the student cannot write or draw, have them verbally describe their booklet while you make it for them
- If done in a group setting, have all individuals share at the end of the session

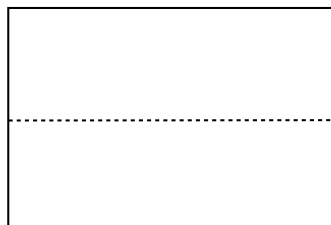
Reflection/Follow Up Questions:

- Can you think of any moments in your life that you demonstrated kindness like your superhero has?
- Does it make a difference when someone is kind to you? Can you think of a time someone was kind to you and it turned your day around in a really good way?
- What are some random acts of kindness that you could take part in (write a kind note, help make dinner, let someone ahead of you in line, etc.)?

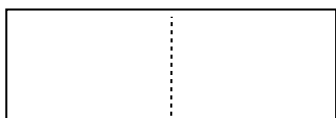
How to Make a Six-Page Book With One Sheet of Paper!



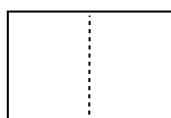
1. One sheet of white paper.
12" X 18" is a good size to use.



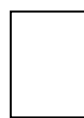
2. Fold in half lengthwise. Also known as a "Hotdog Fold".



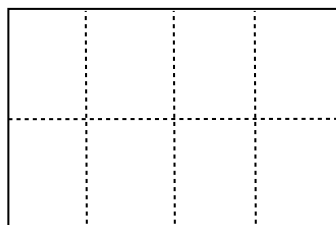
3. Fold in half again.



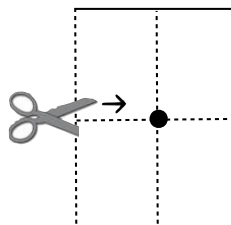
4. Fold in half again.



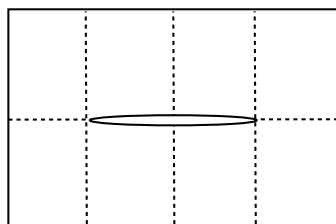
5. Now you have a very small folded sheet of paper. But it isn't a book yet.



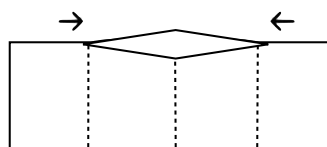
6. Unfold everything. Now it is a big sheet of paper with lots of fold lines.



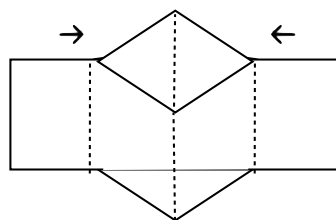
7. Fold in half in the middle- this time a "Hamburger Fold". Make a mark with your pencil in the center of the folded sheet. Take your scissors and cut from the *folded edge* to the center dot. Stop cutting at the dot!



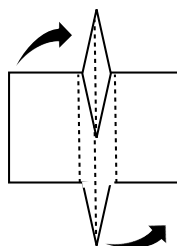
8. Unfold your sheet of paper. It should look like this with an open slit in the middle. Fold it in half length-wise again. (Hotdog Fold.)



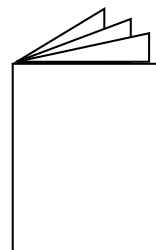
9. Push folded edges towards center allowing the slit to open up into a diamond shape.



10. Keep pushing edges together until diamond becomes a slit again, perpendicular to folded edges.



11. Fold one edge toward slit and the opposite slit toward folded edge.



12. Be sure to go over the creases to make them sharp. Now you have a small six-page book!

Week 4: Value

Description: In this program, value is referred to the importance of worth of all people regardless of age, race, religion, sex, gender, or other differing factors. This also refers to the value of both the bully and the victim, but focus is specifically on the viewpoint of the bully in regards to the value of the victim and their thoughts and feelings.

Rationale: Many bullying issues come from a lack of care or respect/value for diversity. This may include individuals who suffer from mental or physical impairments have different religious and ethnic backgrounds, or who may view the world differently or are considered “oddballs” in school classrooms. Whatever the case may be, this activity is appropriate in that it allows the student to demonstrate their own biases and understanding of others, as well as to reflect upon their self-image and how realistic that is compared to where they view others in relation to themselves.

Goal: The goal of this week’s activity is to see improvement in the student’s ability to value those differing from them. The goal is to have the student contemplate the way they view others, as well as to see improvement in respect and appreciation for diversity.

Activity: “People In A Tree, Who Do You See?”

Materials: *People in a Tree* handout, colored writing utensils of choice (markers, colored pencils, crayons, etc.)

Instructions/Steps:

- Begin by handing out the *People in a Tree* sheet to the student
- Next, prompt the student to choose one of the people in the tree that they think best demonstrates them, in how they view themselves in relation to others (i.e. I’m more popular than others, therefore I view myself at the top of the tree). They can color the person they have chosen. Give the student no more than 2-3 minutes to complete this.
- Next, read each of the four scenario prompts to the student one at a time, and follow the directions given, allowing 1-2 minutes for completion of each prompt:
 - There is somebody in your class that is different than everyone else. They come to school with torn clothes and sometimes smell like they haven’t been able to shower in a few days. Choose somebody that you think best demonstrates this person in comparison to you, and color him or her in.

- There is somebody that looks different than others in your class. This person has to use a wheelchair, and isn't able to write or take notes. Choose somebody that you think best demonstrates this person in comparison to you and color him or her in.
- There is someone that doesn't talk to others much at school. They are very quiet and shy. Choose somebody that you think best demonstrates this person in comparison to you and color him or her in.
- There is somebody in your school that everyone describes as being very popular. This person has a lot of friends and participates in many after school activities. Choose someone that you think best demonstrates this person in comparison to you and color him or her in.
- Upon completion, there should be five different children colored in on the worksheet. The leader should then guide the student with the discussion questions provided

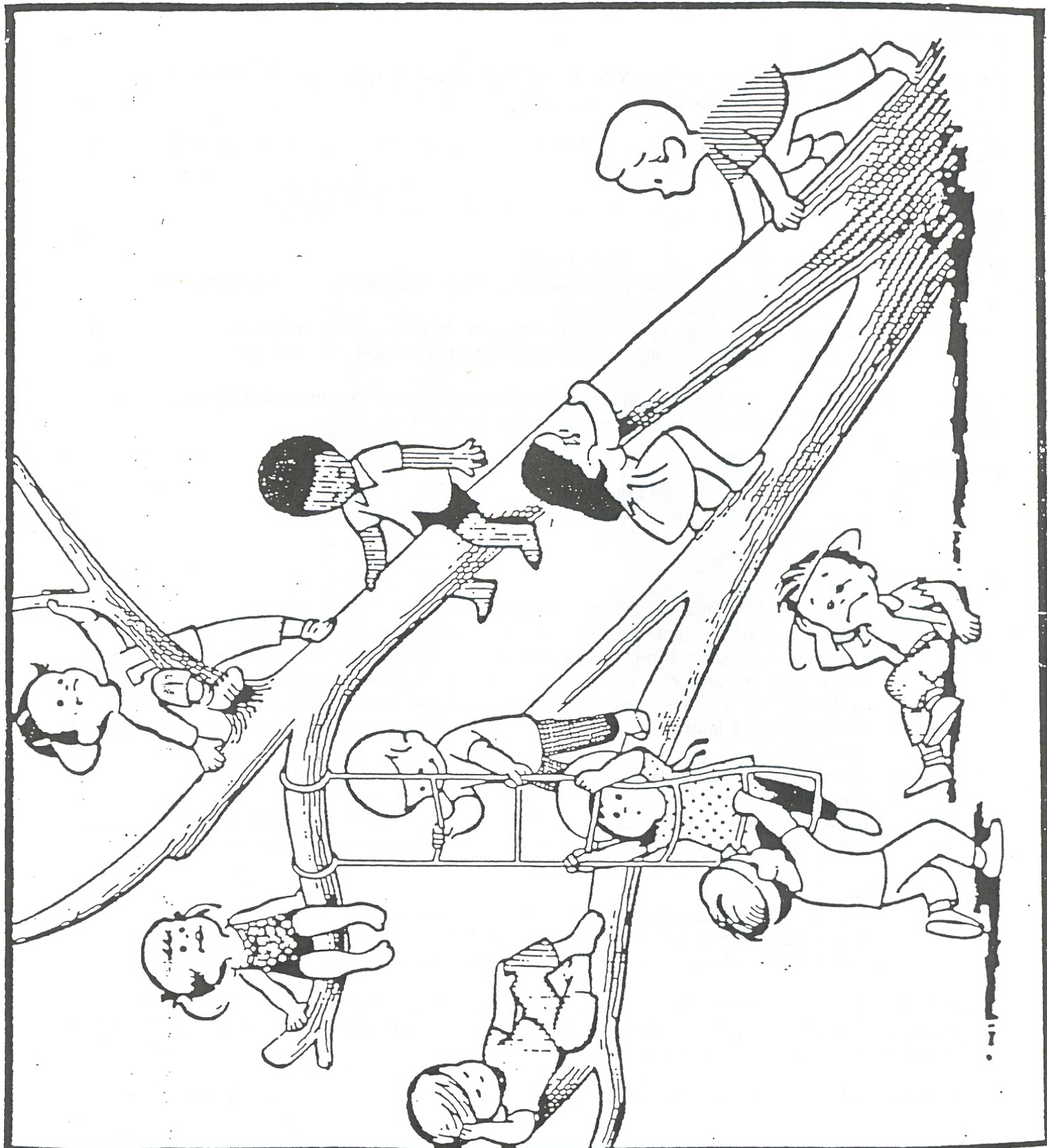
Variations:

- If the student has difficulties with coloring on the page, they may simply mark the individual they have chosen with a writing utensil of their choice
- If the student has poor vision, point to and thoroughly describe the facial expressions and position of the children in the picture

Reflection/Follow Up Questions:

- How difficult was it to decide which person to pick? Which one was the easiest to choose? Which one was the hardest? Why do you think that is?
- Why do you think you chose the way you did?
- Tell me about how you value each one of the people described. Do you view yourself as more important than any of them? Do you view yourself as less than any of them? Why do you view yourself as such?
- If you were able to change any of the ones you picked, would you? If so, which one would you change, what would you change it to, and why would you choose to do so?
- Do you think that it is easy to appreciate and enjoy people that are different than you? Why or why not?

- How could you treat someone to show him or her that you value them or find them important? How does it feel when someone treats you like you're important?
- Does a person have to earn respect, or do all people deserve it?
- How do you feel when someone judges you without knowing you, just because you may be different from them? Does it make you feel unimportant?



Week 5: Socialization/ Social Participation

Description: Socialization refers to one’s degree of participation in a community or society. It also describes the appropriateness of one’s behavior to others, and the degree of relational and friendship skills that one possesses.

Rationale: Research has shown that a lack of relationship and socialization skills paves the way for many bullying incidents. One of the evidence-based approaches to combat this includes a target strategy focusing on teaching social skills during individual or group interaction. Such skills may include how to manage emotions, seeing another person’s perspective, maintaining a friend group, and handling group pressure.

Goal: The goal of this week’s activity is to see improvement in the student’s ability to participate in socialization at school with peers. The goal is also for the student to verbalize an understanding of appropriate social and relationship skills such as effective communication, cooperative work, and prevention or resolving of interpersonal conflicts.

Activity: How Do You Handle It?

Materials: A quiet, secluded area for role-playing and discussion, and the *Social skills scenario* activity sheets

Instructions/Steps:

- To begin, read the scenario provided on “maintaining a friend.”
- Next, read the role-play instructions. As the conversation takes place, be mindful of the key points and goals to accomplish in your responses. Allow 3-5 minutes to complete this.
- Follow up with discussion questions as well as teaching the appropriate way to communicate and resolve conflicts in order to maintain friendships.
- Repeat the process with the “handling group pressure” worksheet provided.

Variations:

- If the student has difficulties with decision making, give options for how to respond to the conversation
- If the student has a difficult time understanding the scenario or story provided, have them come up with a time in which they have had conflicts with their friends, or felt pressured to perform perfectly (i.e. a student may feel anxious about participating on the soccer team because they believe if they mess up or aren’t “good enough” then others won’t like them).

Reflection/Follow Up Questions:

- Maintaining a Friend
 - Was it difficult to role-play this conversation? Was it hard to stay cool and collected when you were hurt and sad about the situation? Why or why not?
 - Have you ever been in a situation in which you have felt insecure or left out by a friend or group? How did this make you feel? How did you respond to how you felt?
 - If you could act differently than the way you did, what would you say or do?
 - Why do you think it is important to talk to people in a kind and understanding way? Do you think that this changes their view of you when you're nice to them? Would it change your view of someone if they treated you kindly after you left them out and made them feel excluded and alone?
- Handling Group Pressure
 - Have you ever been in a situation where you felt pressured to do something you knew you weren't supposed to do? How did you respond or handle it?
 - If you have ever given into peer pressure or done something you knew was wrong, would you take it back? If you could change it, how would you do things differently?
 - Do you feel nervous or worried when you have to choose between doing what is right and following someone you might call a friend? Why do you think you feel nervous or worried?
 - Do you think it would be easier or harder to give into peer pressure or to fight it? What are some things you could say to your friends when you choose to do what is right rather than what they may want you to do?

Maintaining A Friend

Scenario: Your best friend has started to hang out with someone new at school. You get jealous and so you ask if they want to spend the night with you this weekend. They say that they are unable to come because their parents won't let them. On Monday you find out that they spent the night with their new friend, but didn't include you. You are upset, angry, and hurt.

Role-Playing Instructions: Imagine that I am your best friend and you have decided to talk to me about how not being invited has made you feel. Role-play this conversation.

Leader Goal: As the leader, make sure to challenge the student by responding with inappropriate, rude comments. You should also give the student opportunity to work towards acceptance, whatever the outcome of the conversation may be.

Key Points for the Leader to Remember Throughout the Conversation:

- The student should demonstrate the ability to appropriately communicate their negative feelings to their friend (i.e. "Not being invited made me feel like you don't care about me, and that really hurts my feelings. I care about you, and we've been friends for a long time. I want you to know that I would appreciate being included next time.")
- The student should ask appropriately if there is an unresolved issue that needs to be addressed with the friend (i.e. "Is there anything that I've specifically done to hurt your feelings or to cause you not to want to hangout with me? If so, let's talk about it. I want to sincerely apologize for hurting your feelings if I have done so.")
- The student should effectively listen to their friend, rather than speak throughout the entire conversation.
- The student should work towards acceptance of the outcome; even if that does not include a desired outcome, such as if the friend states that they simply don't like them anymore or doesn't think they are cool. An appropriate response may be "I am sorry that you feel this way about me, and I appreciate your honesty."

Handling Group Pressure

Scenario: You and your friend decided to go to summer camp together. During the first day there, you notice that your friend is teasing and making fun of the other campers. Your friend has also started taking things from them as well. You know that this is wrong, but feel pressured to not say anything, and maybe even follow them. You are worried and not sure about what you should do.

Role-Playing Instructions: Imagine that I am your friend and that you have decided to talk to me about how you think what I am doing is wrong. Role-play this conversation.

Leader Goal: As the leader, make sure to pressure the student into going along with you during the conversation. Make sure to give the student the opportunity to express their thoughts on the teasing, and let the student choose your side or his own path.

Key Points for the Leader to Remember Throughout the Conversation:

- The student should demonstrate the ability to appropriately communicate their thoughts on right vs. wrong without making the friend feel “judged” (i.e. “You know that I think you’re a great person, that is why I am your friend. But in this situation, I think that what you are doing is wrong. I don’t feel good about this. What do you think?”)
- The student should demonstrate the ability to redirect appropriately in order to avoid doing what they know to be wrong, as well as positively interact with their friend (i.e. “I know that you want me to do this with you, but I just don’t think it is a good idea. I would rather hangout with you and play games together or listen to music. Doesn’t that sound like much more fun?”)
- The student should effectively listen to their friend, rather than speak throughout the entire conversation.
- The student should work towards acceptance of the outcome; even if that does not include a desired outcome, such as if the friend states that they simply don’t like them anymore or will not hang out with them if they do not follow them.

Week 6: Self-Esteem

Description: Self-Esteem includes confidence in oneself and one's abilities. It also includes the awareness of an individual's strengths.

Rationale: The purpose of self-esteem as a weekly theme in this program is due to the many instances in which bullying takes place because of jealousy and self-consciousness.

Goal: The goal of this week's activity is to see improvement in the student's ability to be aware, confident, and content with one's abilities. The goal is to build confidence, and to improve a student's ability to interact with peers without feeling as though they have to put someone down to build themselves up.

Activity: Empowering Acrostics

Materials: Plain or colored paper (or notecard), *Personality traits and characteristics* worksheet, and a writing utensil of your choice (pen, pencil, markers, etc.)

Instructions/Steps:

- Begin by describing the purpose and meaning of the acrostic cards.
 - The paper/notecard is to be made with only positive and empowering words, phrases, and thoughts.
 - The purpose is to use this as a reminder that the student is the word that is being described on the paper/notecard.
- Next, ask the student to begin writing their name vertically along the paper or notecard in bold, uppercase letters.
- Ask the student to then fill out each letter with a personality trait or characteristic in which they believe describes them. You may choose to refer to the attached *personality trait and characteristic* list. Make sure that these are all positive traits. Give the student 2-3 minutes to complete this.
- Example:
 - Joyful
 - Awesome
 - Smart
 - Modest
 - Intelligent
 - Neat
 - Empathetic
- Next, have the student turn the notecard or paper over, choose and write down one characteristic in which they believe they struggle with viewing

themselves as (i.e. A student may not view themselves as capable, therefore capable would be a good word to use)

- Other empowering words may include (but are not limited to) worthy, strong, good enough, honest, deserving, loved, approved of, included, cherished, or adored
- The student should then be allowed 3-5 minutes to fill out each letter with an encouraging phrase, action/belief, or possibly a role they play in which inspires and empowers them to feel the characteristic in which they've chosen
- Example:
 - Work forwards, not backwards
 - One day at a time
 - Respecting others
 - Trusting myself
 - Honesty
 - You can do this!
- The leader should then follow up the activity with the discussion questions below.
- If time allows, the student may be given freedom to color or decorate their acrostics as desired

Variations:

- If the student has difficulties with choosing the words for their name, give them a few different options and brainstorm together the words to choose, or use the attached *personality trait and characteristic list*
- If the student's first name is too long to use, ask them to use a nickname or their last name instead
- If the student has difficulties with writing, allow them to tell you their thoughts and ideas so that you may write it for them

Reflection/Follow Up Questions:

- Why did you choose that particular emotion or empowering word? Why did you choose what you did when filling out your acrostic word?
- What is one way in which you can believe in yourself today? Could it help to repeat the things you listed on your acrostic card?
- What do you believe keeps you from feeling as though you are "worthy," or whichever characteristic you chose to write down? What do you think you could do to change that?

- How do you see some of the things you chose to write down play into your life? (i.e. if you chose to use “joyful” for the J in your name, how would you describe the joy in your life? Can you give examples?)
- Do you think we can sometimes be too hard on ourselves? What happens when we do that? Can you give examples?
- Can self-criticism sometimes be good for us? How so? Can you give examples?
- How do we know when we’ve crossed the line and are being too hard on ourselves?

Personality Traits and Characteristics

Able	Efficient	Laidback	Secure
Active	Elegant	Logical	Selfless
Adaptable	Empathetic	Loyal	Self-sufficient
Admirable	Energetic	Lovable	Sensitive
Adventurous	Enthusiastic	Meticulous	Sentimental
Agreeable	Exciting	Modest	Serious
Alert	Extraordinary	Mature	Sharing
Appreciative	Fair	Neat	Simple
Appropriate	Firm	Noteworthy	Sincere
Aspiring	Flexible	Non-aggressive	Skillful
Balanced	Focused	Observant	Sophisticated
Brave	Forgiving	Open	Sociable
Calm	Freethinking	Optimistic	Spontaneous
Capable	Friendly	Orderly	Stable
Captivating	Fun-loving	Organized	Steadfast
Caring	Generous	Original	Strong
Charismatic	Gentle	Passionate	Studious
Cheerful	Genuine	Patient	Sweet
Clever	Good-natured	Peaceful	Sympathetic
Colorful	Gracious	Perfectionist	Thorough
Compassionate	Hardworking	Perseveres	Tolerant
Confident	Helpful	Personable	Trusting
Conscientious	Honorable	Practical	Uncomplaining
Cooperative	Humble	Principled	Unique
Courageous	Humorous	Purposeful	Uppity
Courteous	Idealistic	Quiet	Uplifting
Creative	Imaginative	Quaint	Venturesome
Daring	Individualistic	Rational	Vivacious
Decisive	Innovative	Realistic	Well-rounded
Dedicated	Insightful	Reflective	Wise
Deep	Intelligent	Relaxed	Witty
Determined	Joyful	Reliable	Zealous
Disciplined	Kind	Resourceful	
Discreet	Knowledgeable	Respectful	
Earnest	Leaderly	Responsible	

Week 7: Self-Control

Description: Self-Control is defined as the ability to control one's emotions and desires, or the expression of them in one's behavior, especially in difficult situations.

Rationale: Self-control first requires emotional understanding and self-awareness, which were all incorporated into the program prior to this weekly activity. Bullying may be caused by instances where lack of self-control is prominent, and at certain times, anger is the initiating emotion that triggers the negative behavioral response. Therefore, self-control of intense emotions such as jealousy and anger are the key areas of emphasis for this week.

Goal: The goal of this week's activity is to see improvement in the student's ability to control intense emotions in an appropriate manner.

Activity: "The Image You Control"

Materials: *The Visual Imagery* worksheet and a quiet space to relax and concentrate *if a sound machine is available, more specifically one that has a "beach" ocean waves setting, this would be appropriate to use during this activity, or you may simply choose to play a YouTube video of an ocean sound. You may use this one:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DDY346OQCDo>

Instructions/Steps:

- Begin by having the student sit comfortably in a chair or on the floor (their preference)
- Next, tell the student to close their eyes and begin reading the *visual imagery* worksheet information in a calm, low, and slow voice. The leader should make sure to give sufficient time between each visual image provided, and allow for the student to completely immerse themselves into the calming scenario
- Allow for this activity to take at least 5 minutes, and do not rush through it. Follow up with the discussion questions provided

Variations:

- If the student has difficulties with concentration, allow for them to stand and sway during the activity
- If the student does not understand what you are describing, provide a beach scene or other picture to help them to imagine exactly what you are talking about

Reflection/Follow Up Questions:

- Did you feel less angry or sad and more calm/relaxed after this activity?
- What did you see, hear, feel, or smell during this visualization? Did anything stand out in particular? If so, why do you think that is?
- What did it feel like to throw your troubles into the water? Do you feel better or more “light” after doing so?
- Do you think this is something you could use to help control your emotions when you get angry or upset during class? What about in the gym or cafeteria?
- Could doing something like this allow you to calm yourself down without others even knowing you’re doing it? Are there benefits to this? Why or why not? What may be some of those benefits?
- Do you think this is something you could practice to get better at to help you when you start to feel “out of control?”

Visual Imagery Prompt

Close your eyes. "See" in your mind's eye a beautiful beach. Feel the sun shining down on your face, feel its warmth. Feel the breeze coming from the ocean; it is soft and warm. Palm trees are overhead and you can hear the seagulls' circle overtop your head. You are walking in the sand, barefoot, and you can feel your feet sink with each step. It feels squishy and soft. You are now close to the edge of the sea, and let the water roll over your feet as you hear the crashing waves. You decide to take a dip in the water, and as you do, you can feel the warm, gentle, refreshing saltwater relax you. You come out of the water and walk to your towel, and you sit down to relax. You rest for a while as you take in the beauty surrounding you. You are focusing on how the beach looks, how the waves sound, and how the saltwater smells. You feel the warmth of the sun drying you off, and you breathe in the warm ocean air and stay as long as you like.



When you are ready to leave, you decide to go the edge of the water and throw in anything that has been bothering you, anything you wish to be rid of in your life, anything you are feeling angry or sad about. This feels like a heavy burden on your shoulders, or a big rock that you are now able to throw into the sea and watch it sink to the ocean floor. You are thankful to be rid of these burdens, problems, anger and worries. You then walk peacefully back through the warm sand and take a rest on your beach towel as you watch the sunset fall and the sun fade behind the ocean sky.

Week 8: Stress/Anxiety Relief

Description: Stress/Anxiety Relief activates the body's natural relaxation response. It is the reduction of everyday stress in order to boost energy, mood, and overall mental, physical, and emotional wellness.

Rationale: The purpose of stress/anxiety relief in this program is due to the overwhelming information in the area of stress in middle school students. This stress/anxiety is found to be due to a tremendous desire to fit in and be accepted with peers. The activity of this week is to be used to relief such stress and anxiety, and to focus on what is "in the student's heart," as what truly matters.

Goal: The goal of this week's activity is to see improvement in the student's ability to independently relieve stress. The goal is to then see improvements in the student's ability to function at school appropriately without excess fear and worry in relation to peer pressure and developing and maintaining healthy friendships/relationships.

Activity: Paper Mosaics

Materials: Multiple pieces of different colored paper, writing utensil (pen, pencil, marker), glue, scissors (optional), and either a template provided, or a plain white sheet to allow for the student to make their own mosaic from scratch

Instructions/Steps:

- Begin by discussing that mosaics are creative, calming, and fun stress reduction activities. Show provided examples, and include more found if desired.
 - The leader may also choose to discuss simple "mosaics" in which the student sees on a typical basis (i.e. bathroom ceramic tiles) in order to give the student a better understanding of what they will be creating
- The leader should then allow for the student to either choose one of the templates provided or use a plain white sheet of paper to create their own mosaic picture
- The leader should prompt the student to work with one area at a time, and they may either rip the colored paper or cut it out, this should be based on preference, time, and resources.
- The student should then glue their paper "tiles" onto the template or in the shape they chose if doing this on a blank sheet of paper. Give the student 5-10 minutes to complete this activity.
 - *On the templates provided such as the flower, the student may be allowed to color in smaller areas if desired (i.e. flower stem).

- Upon completion of the activity, the leader may allow for the student to name their mosaic, and should then follow up with the discussion questions provided
- *This activity can also be done with the “*What’s in your Heart*” Worksheet. To do the paper mosaics with this particular worksheet, the leader should:
 - Ask the student to write down six different emotions on each line provided in which they feel on a regular basis. These may be as simple as “happy, angry, upset” or more complicated such as “jealous, anxious, etc.” Give the student 1-2 minutes to complete this.
 - The student should then choose a color to use for each particular emotion, and glue a slip of that colored paper next to the name of the emotion in the box. This step should take 2-3 minutes to complete.
 - The student should then be prompted to fill their “heart” with the emotions they have stated they have. The student should begin by rating their emotions from what they are feeling from the most to the least. Therefore, if the student is typically happy, and they chose pink for that emotion, then the majority of their heart will be filled in with pink. Give the student 3-5 minutes to complete this.
 - After rating each emotion, the student should then glue on the strips of “mosaic pieces” as desired to fill in their “heart.” Give the student 3-5 minutes to complete this.
 - Upon completion, the leader should guide the student in the discussion questions provided.

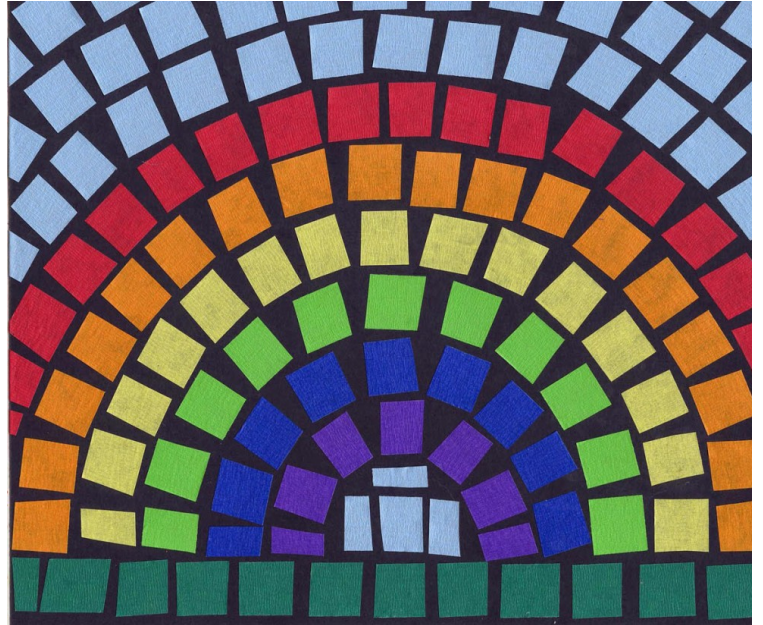
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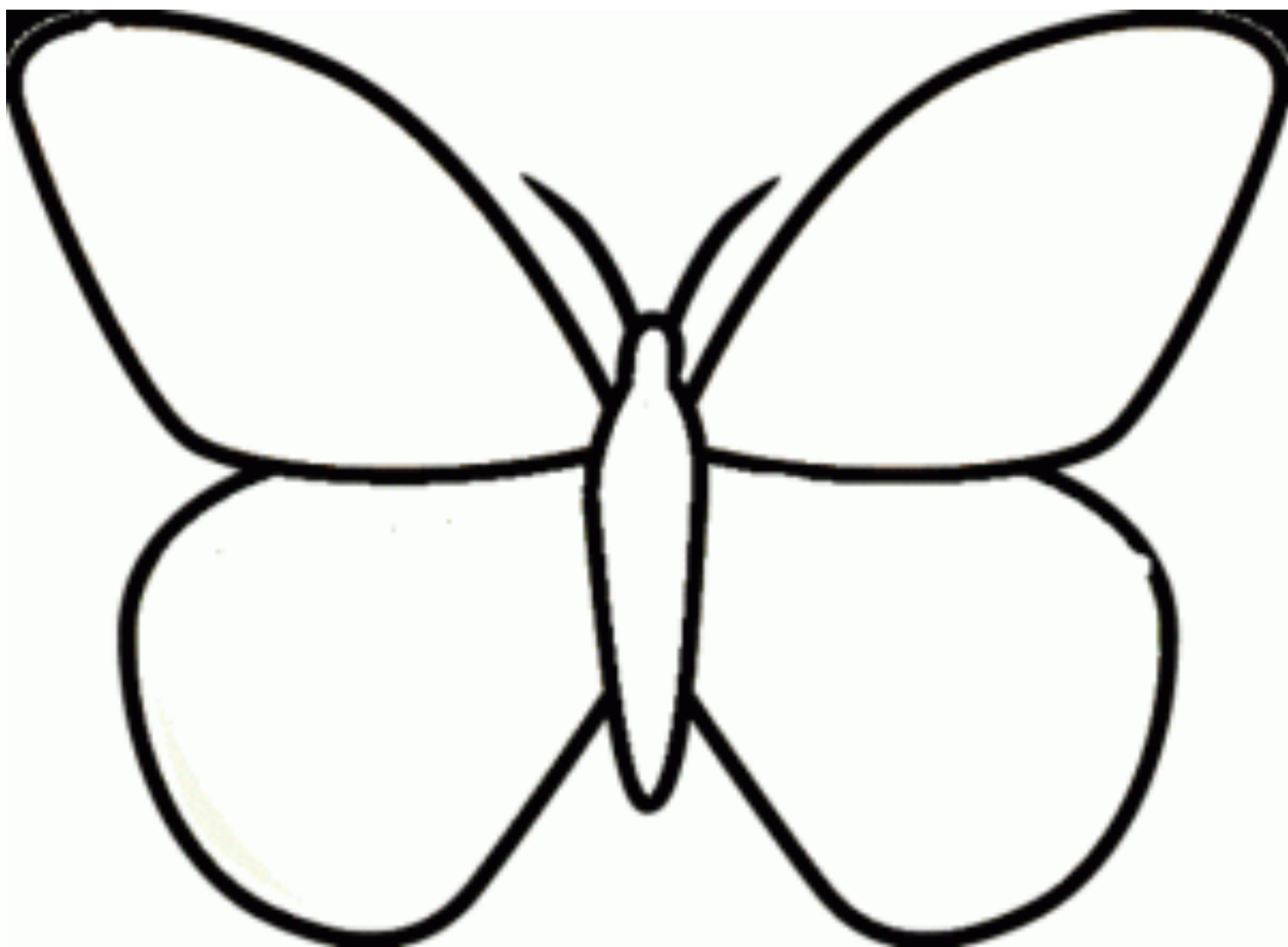
- If the student has difficulties with choosing emotions for the mosaic in *What’s in your Heart*, the leader should give options
- If the student has a hard time ripping the paper or cutting, provide pre-cut colored strips of paper

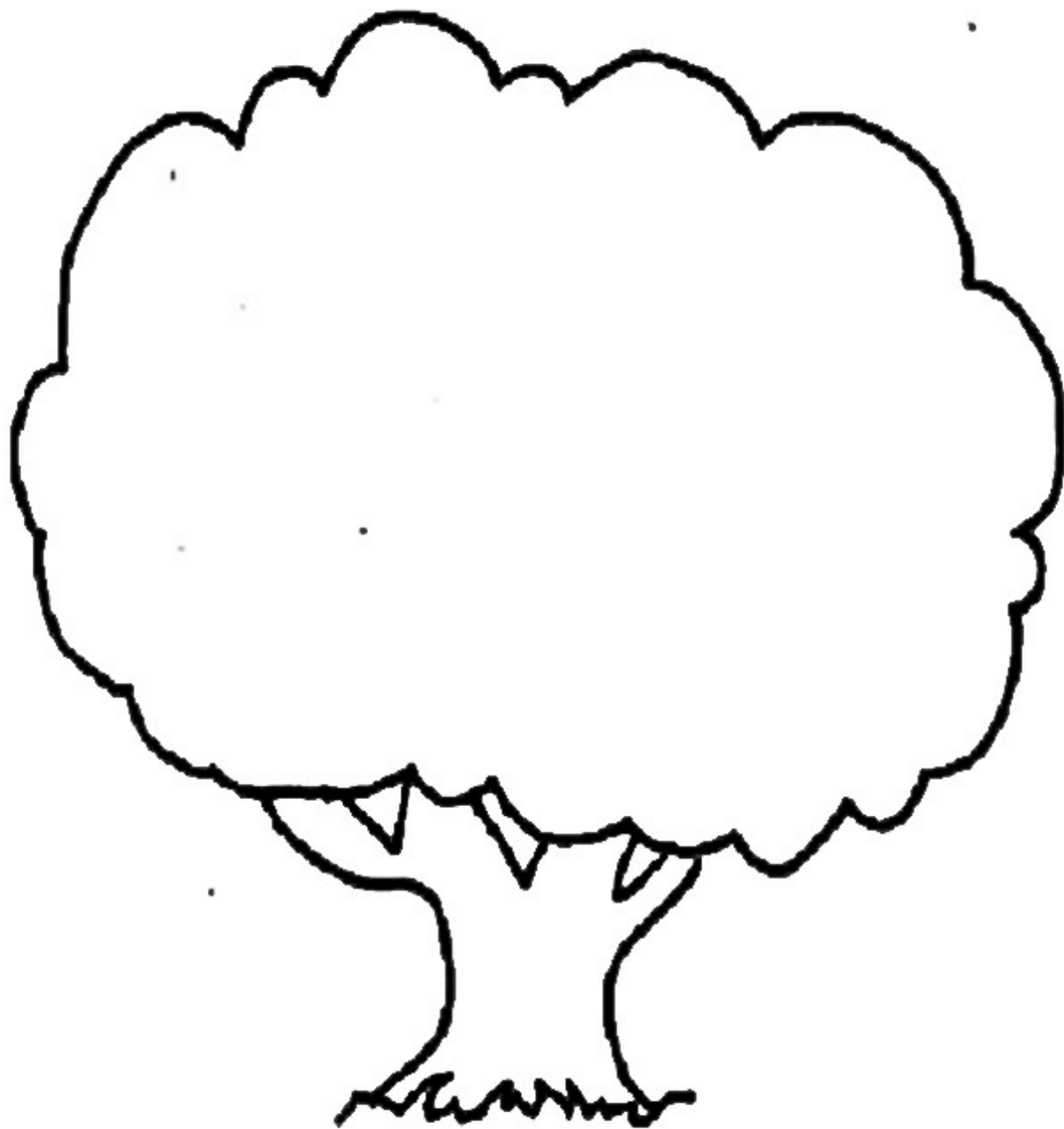
Reflection/Follow Up Questions:

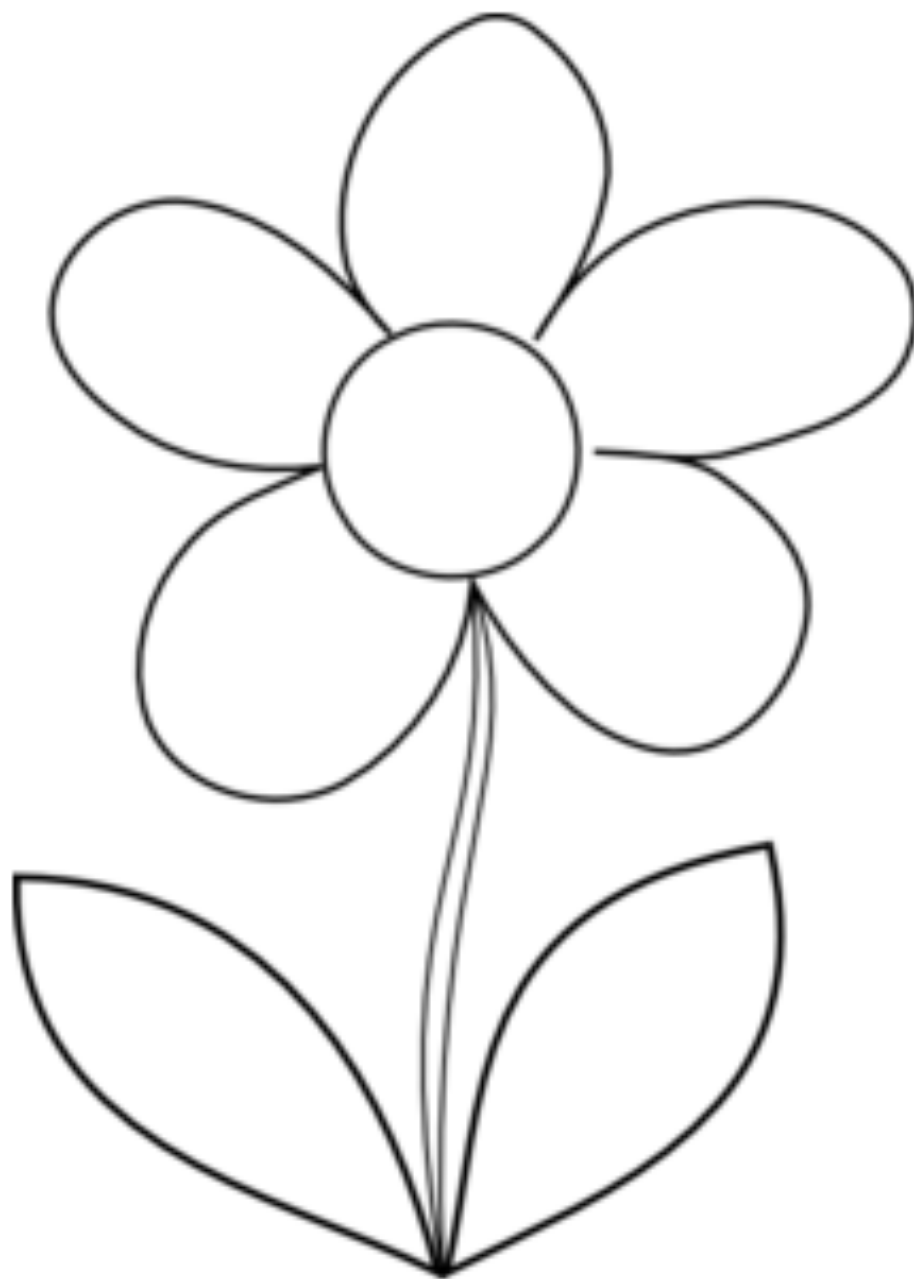
- Template/ Original Mosaic
 - What does it feel like when you get stressed? Do you ever try to make yourself feel better and relax? If so, what do you do? Does it work? Why do you think it does or doesn’t?
 - How did you feel after making your mosaic? Did you enjoy the freedom you had when creating your own? Or did you enjoy having the template to work with? Why?

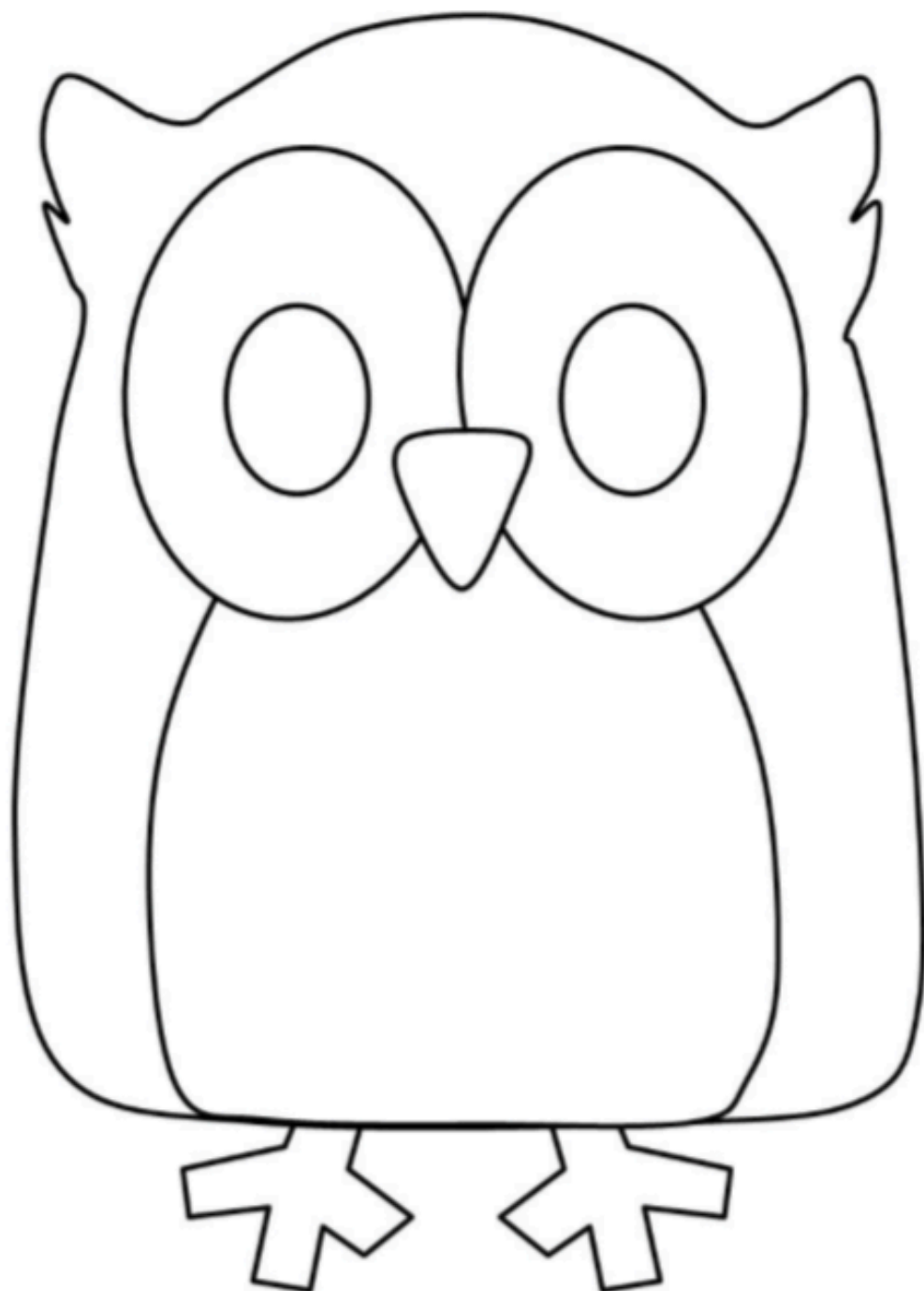
- Is there any way that you could incorporate something like this into your life to help you when you become anxious about school or when getting anxious about keeping a friendship or becoming popular?
- What's In Your Heart
 - Was it helpful for you to make a visual picture of what is in your heart? Why do you think doing this may be helpful or useful to you?
 - Was it easy to come up with six different emotions that you feel on a regular basis? Why do you think that is?
 - If you could change the emotions that you feel in your heart, specifically the negative ones, what would you change them to? Why?
 - After making your mosaic of your own heart, do you think you could guess what someone else's heart may look like by the way they act and treat others?
 - Did this activity relax you and help you feel less anxious? Why or why not?
 - What are some strategies that you think you could use to help you calm down and feel relaxed when you are stressed?











Week 9: Coping Skills

Description: Coping Skills include the ability to invest one's own conscious effort into solving personal and interpersonal problems in order to try and control, minimize, or tolerate stress and conflict.

Rationale: Appropriate coping skills are necessary to deal with stress/anxiety related to the desire to be accepted in peer relations for school-aged children. Coping skills are essential in the preventative process as well, to avoid letting a student get to the point where such stress/anxiety, worry, fear, anger, or other negative emotion causes bullying or inappropriate behaviors.

Goal: The goal of this week's activity is to see improvement in the student's ability to continually employ appropriate anxiety reducing mechanisms through the use of coping skills. As this is also the last week in the program, it is important to also include reiteration of previous lessons and incorporate that information into the final activities of the program.

Activity: Zendoodle

Materials: Black writing ink pen, *Zendoodle* example patterns, and *Zendoodle* blank squares worksheet (a quiet, peaceful space is recommended with little distraction; as well as calming music to play when drawing, if able)

Instructions/Steps:

- Begin by defining what a *Zendoodle* is: use of drawing structured, purposeful patterns to facilitate anxiety release and meditation through repetitive drawing motions
- Next, show the student the numerous *Zendoodle* patterns from the *Zendoodle* example patterns worksheet provided, and allow them to choose 3-4 to use in their *Zendoodle*
- Prompt the child to begin drawing their *Zendoodle*, this is an open ended activity, although there are a few rules to adhere to:
 - The child should not use a pencil or be allowed to erase their work, and they are also required to use the entire square to fill up with patterns
 - The child is required to use at least 3 different patterns (if able) in their *Zendoodle*
- Allow for 5-10 minutes to complete the *Zendoodle* (play calming music if its available). If the child completes one square, they should either be directed to complete another if desired, or follow up with discussion questions

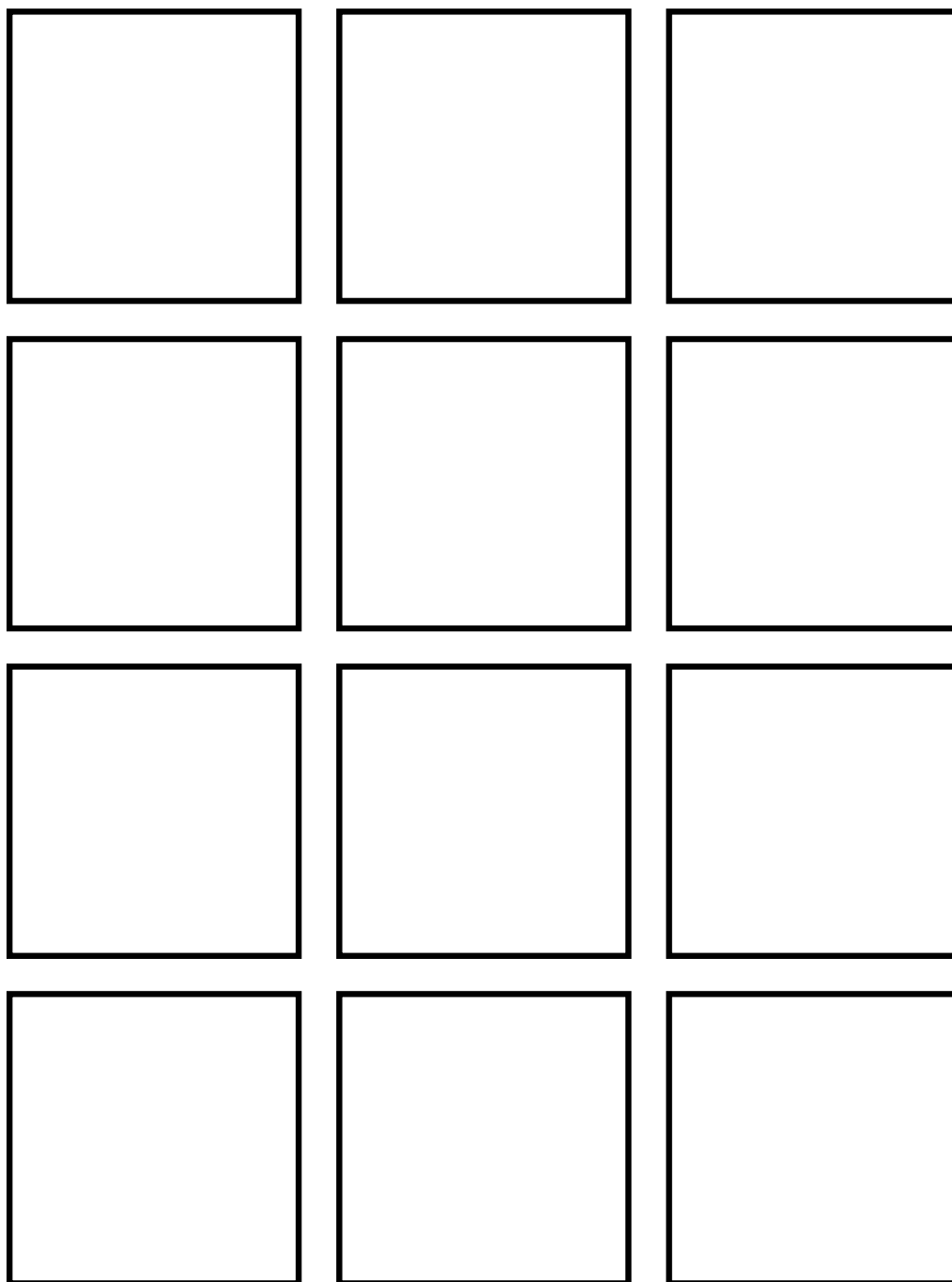
- ******This is a very open ended activity, meaning that if the student wants to stray from the patterns, the leader may allow this to happen and let the student freely “doodle.” This is because the purpose of this activity is the process over the product, and therefore the final product is not necessarily of any benefit.
- ******There are also numerous sized Zendoodle square worksheets provided for the leader to choose at their own discretion, as well as a few options to Zendoodle within other confines such as a flower or animal. There are also numerous patterns provided.

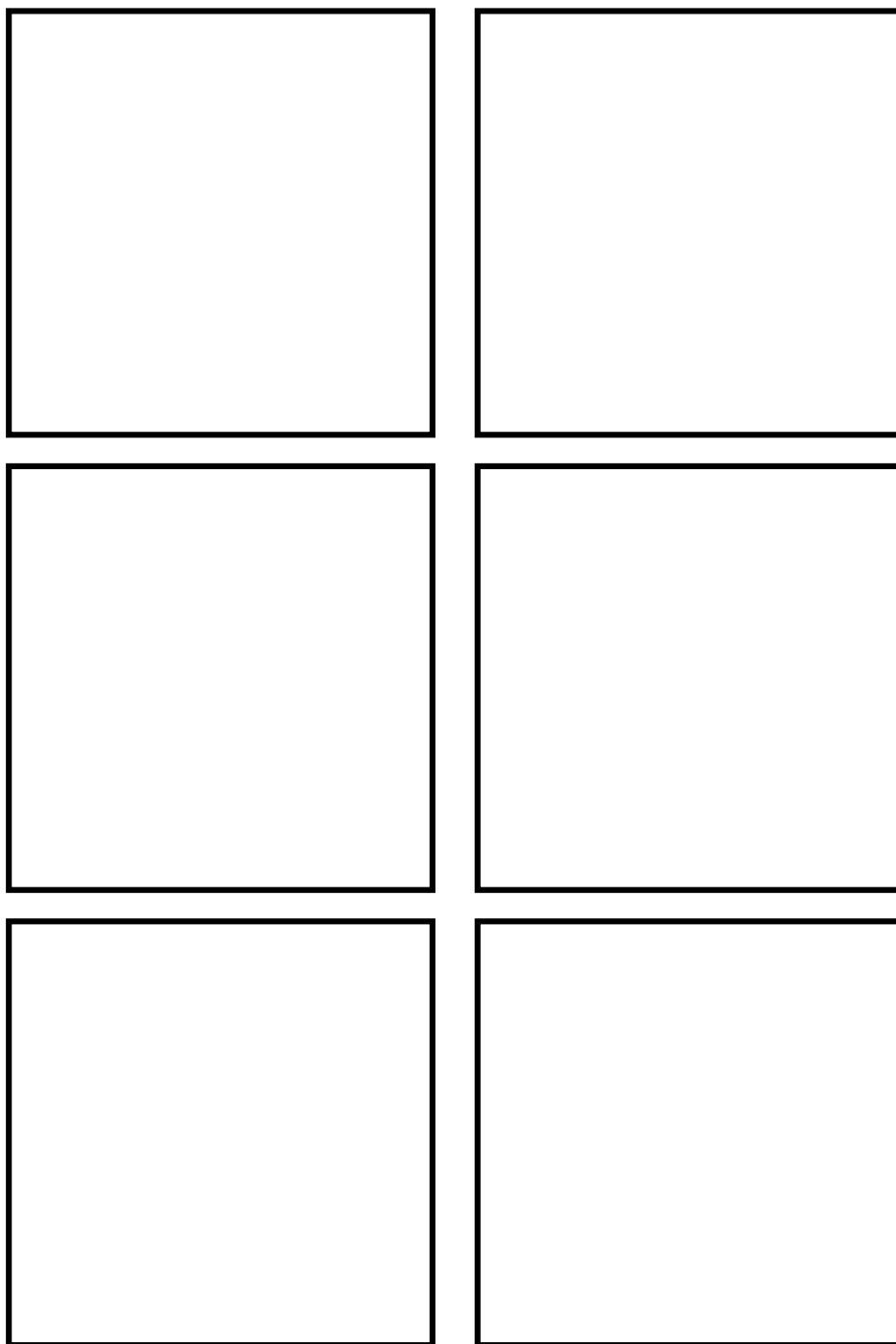
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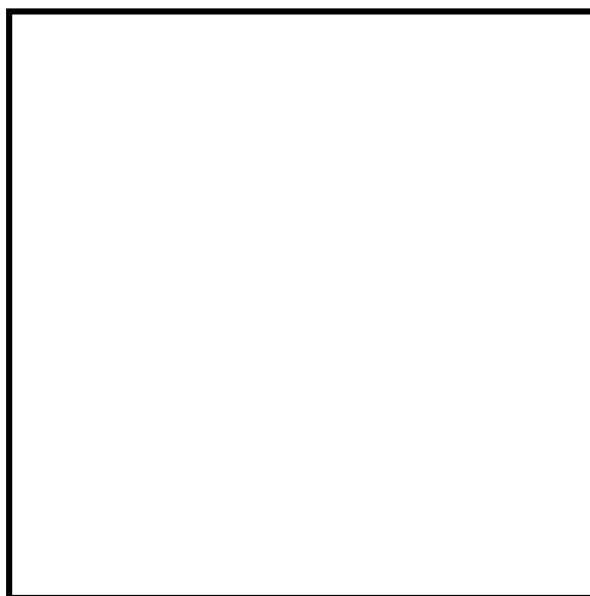
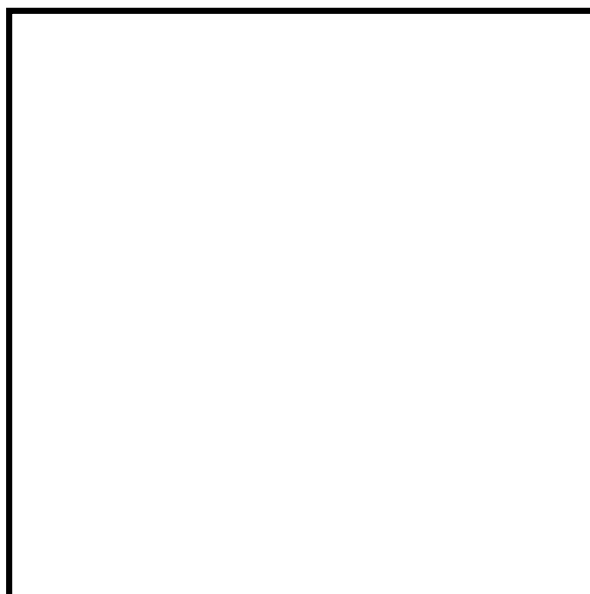
- If the student has difficulties with visual perception, have them trace a larger patterned Zendoodle with a simple design
- If the student has difficulties with sustained attention, use a smaller paper square rather than the larger sheet of paper
- For a student with difficulties in grasp patterns, use modified grips to help them hold the pen correctly
- If the student has difficulty choosing which pattern to use, only give 2-3 options of choice

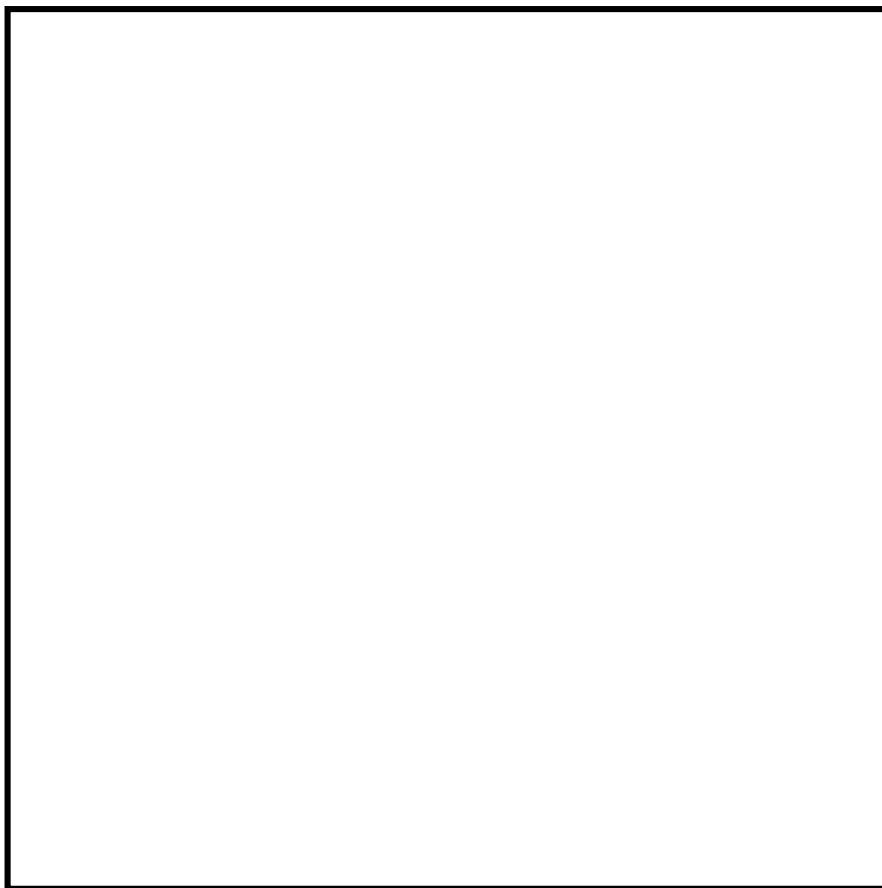
Reflection/Follow Up Questions:

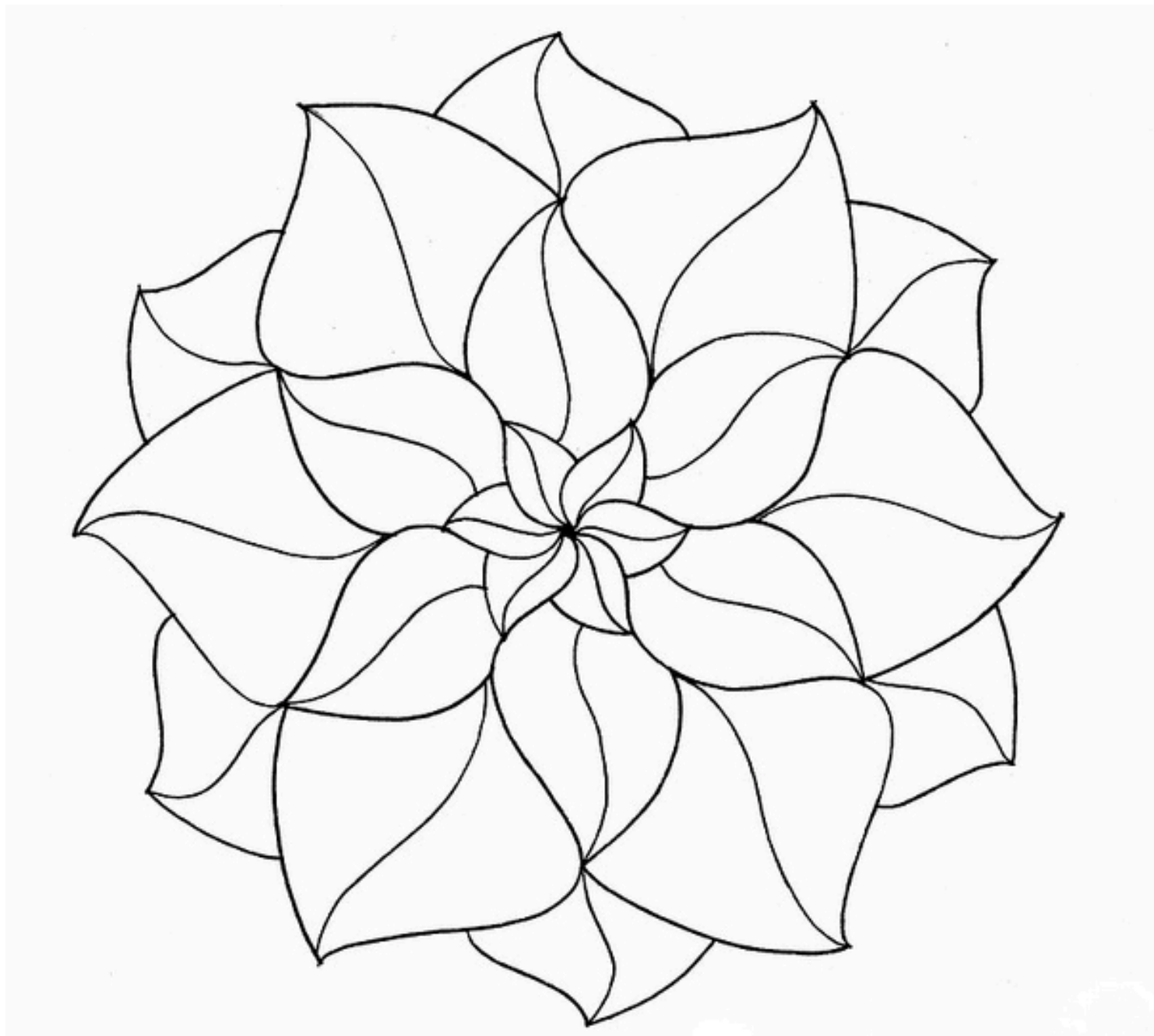
- How did you feel when you completed your Zendoodle? Did you feel any different than before you sat down to create it?
- Do you think you could Zendoodle or “doodle” before or after class to allow help calm yourself before taking a big exam or when you are feeling nervous about where you may fit in with your friend groups?
- Why do you believe it is important to learn how to control your emotions and feelings? Why are coping skills important?
- What are some of the most common things that stress you out? How do you tend to deal with those? Are these things related to your relationships with others or about school? Is it a combination of both?
- Did you like it better when you were able to freestyle your Zendoodle or when you had a pattern to go by? Why do you think that is?

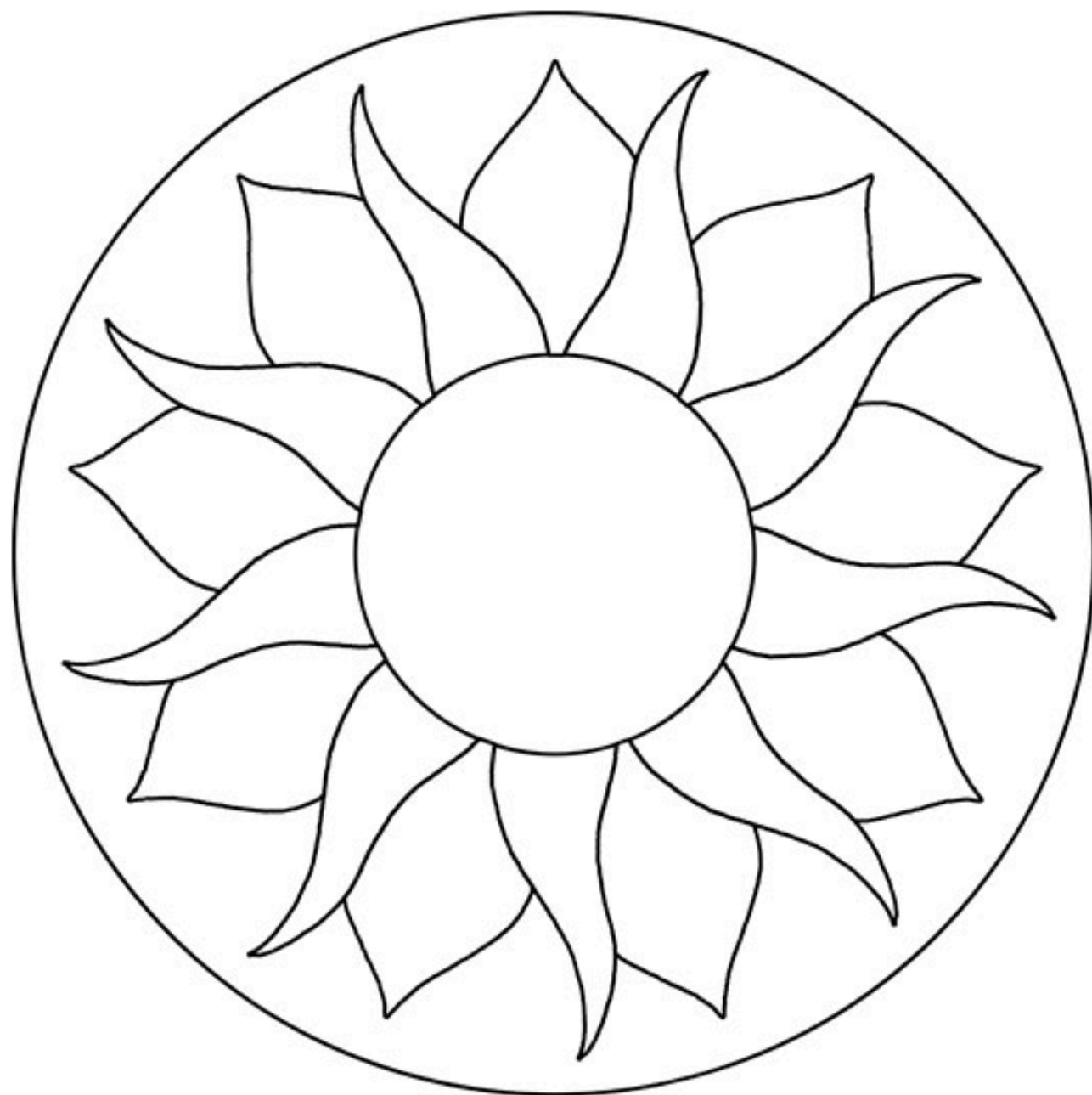




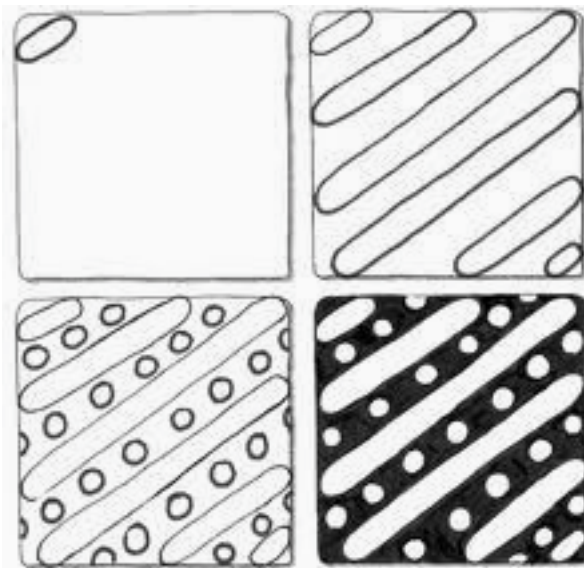
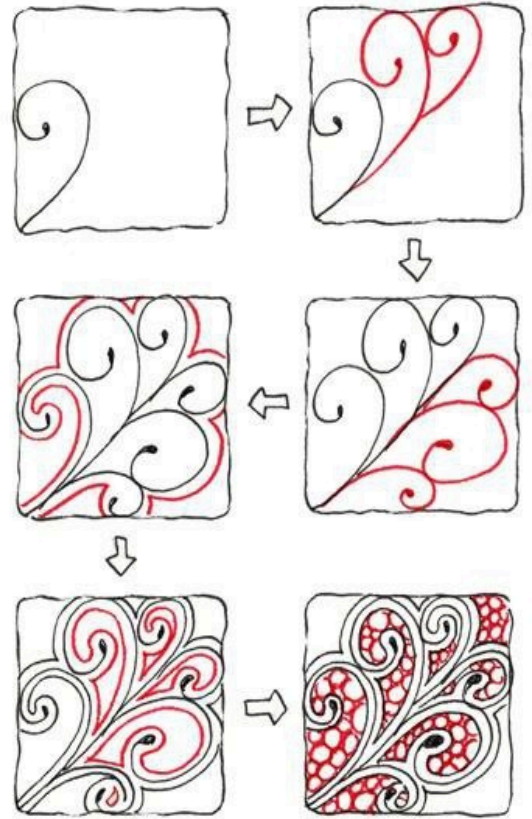
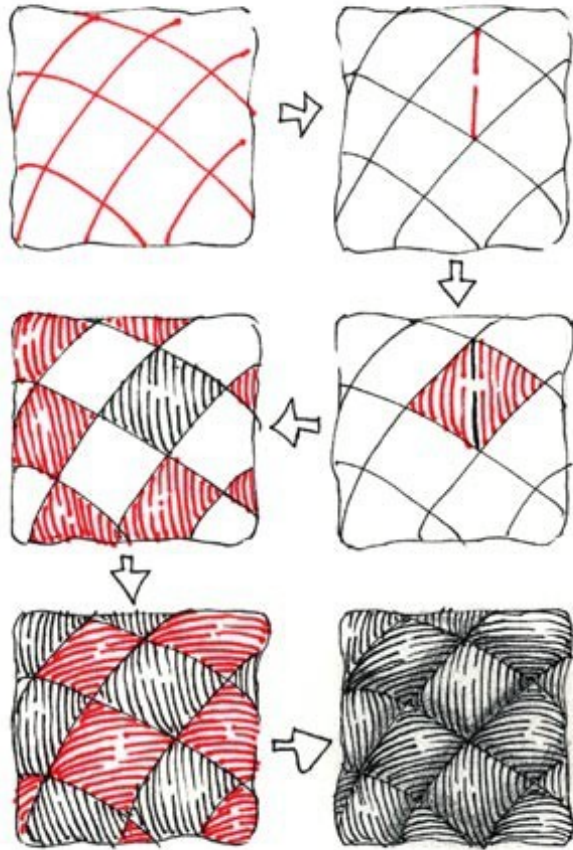


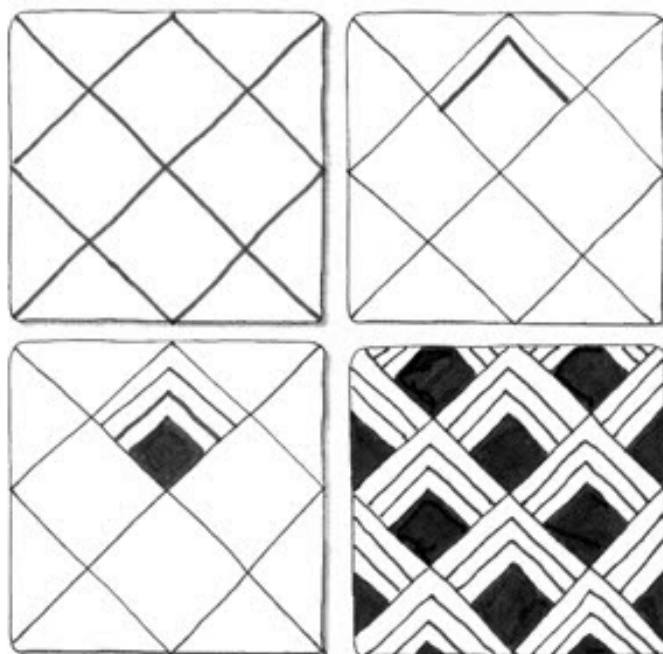
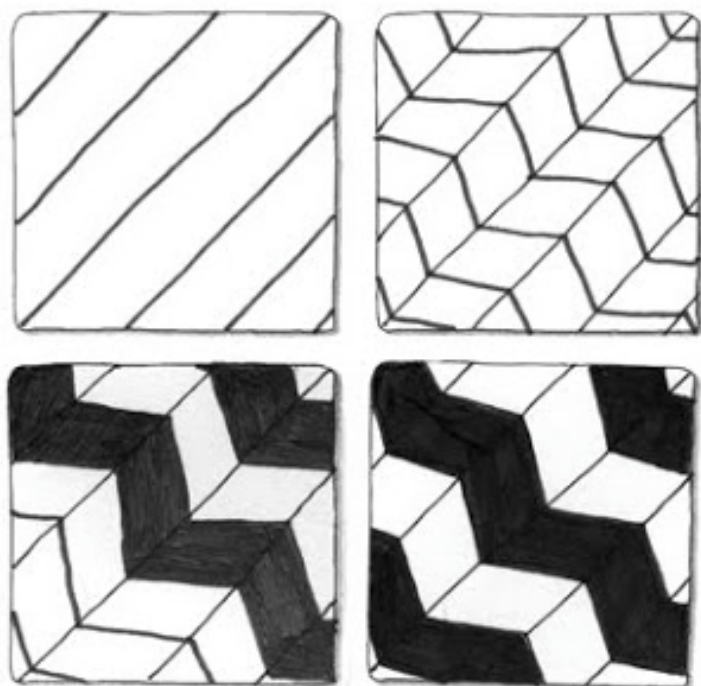
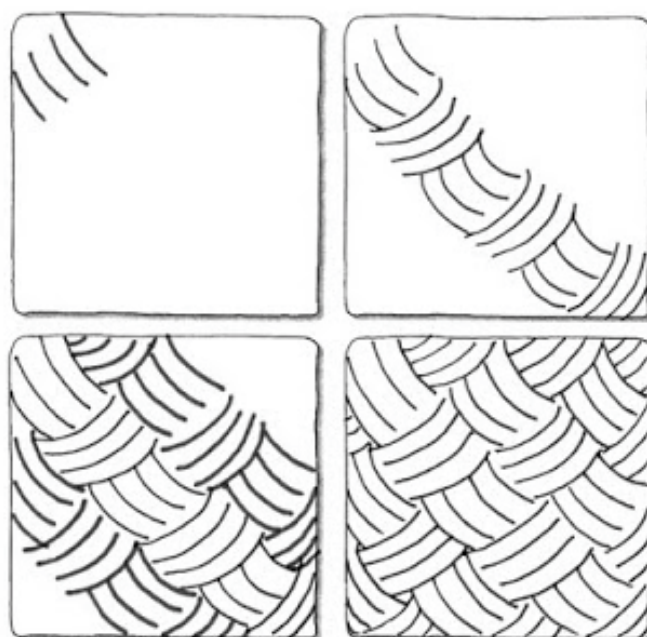
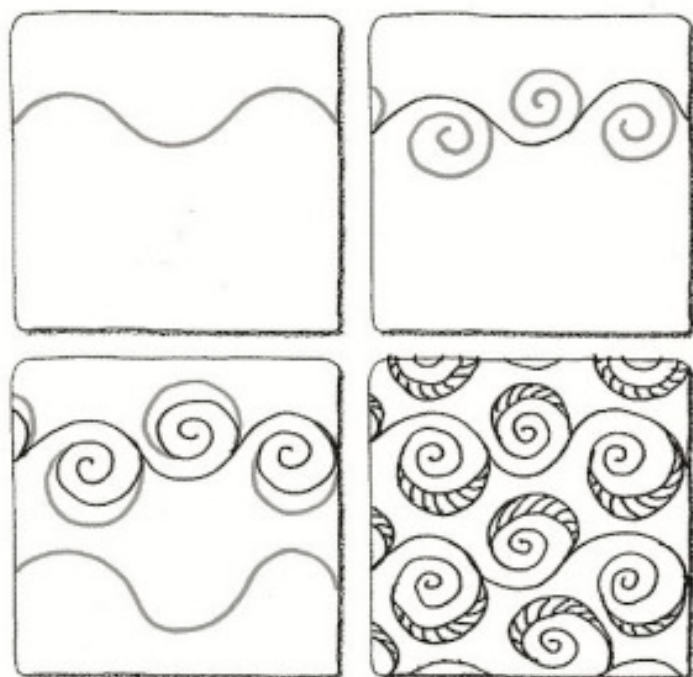


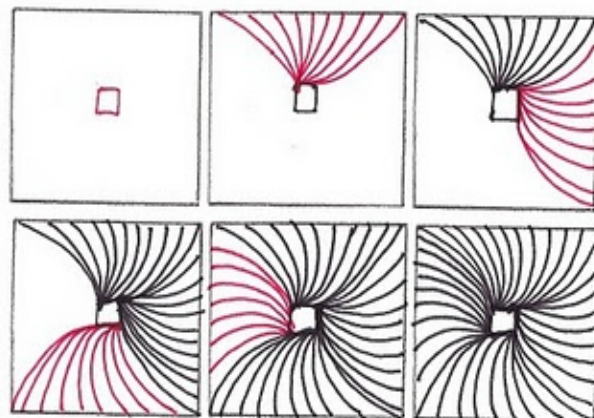
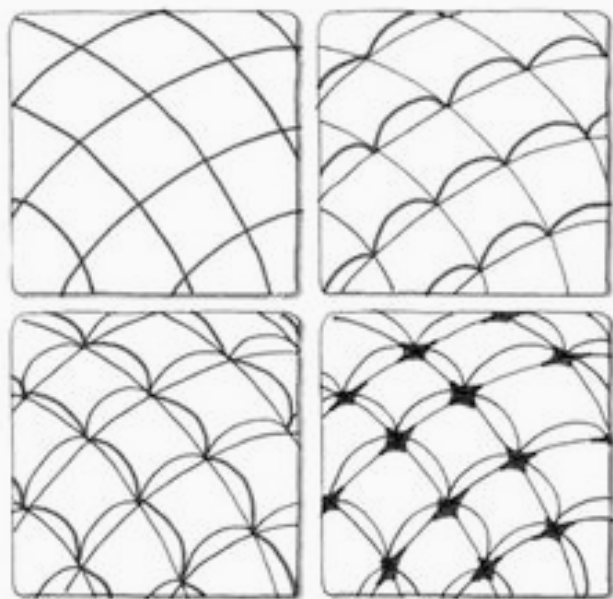
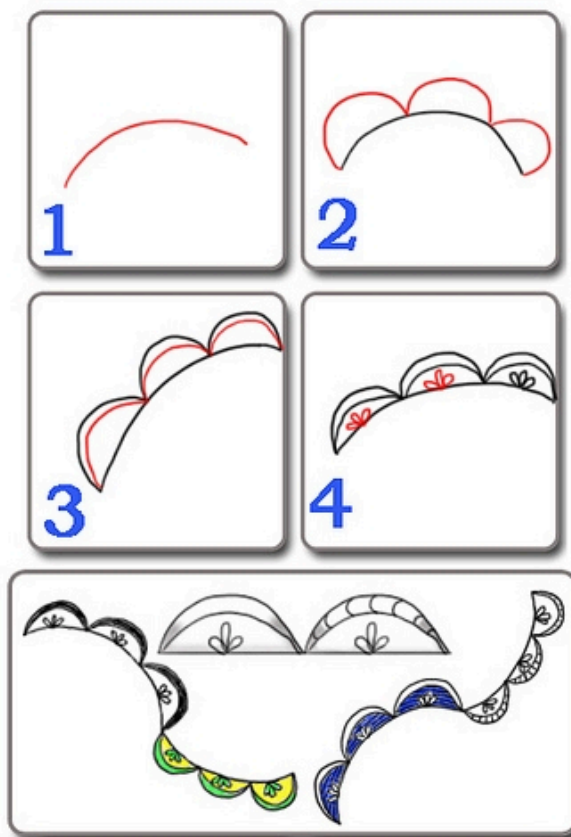
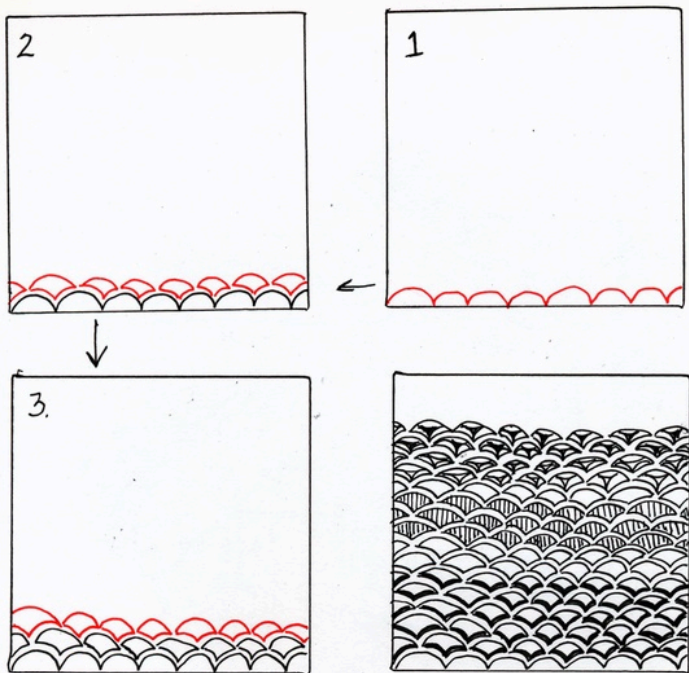


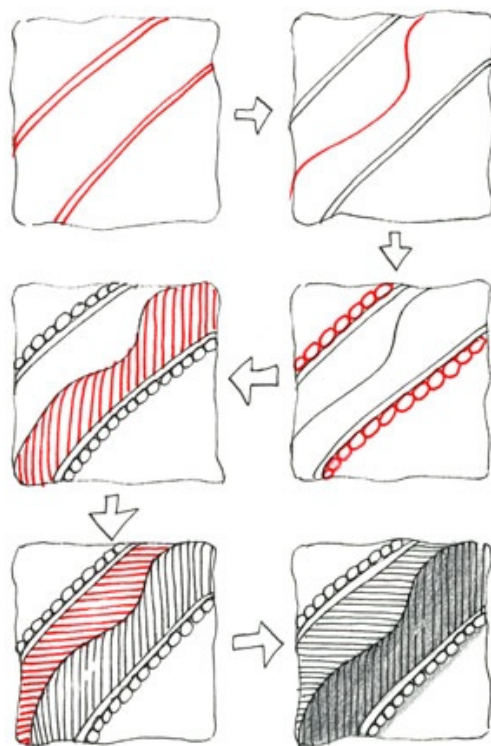
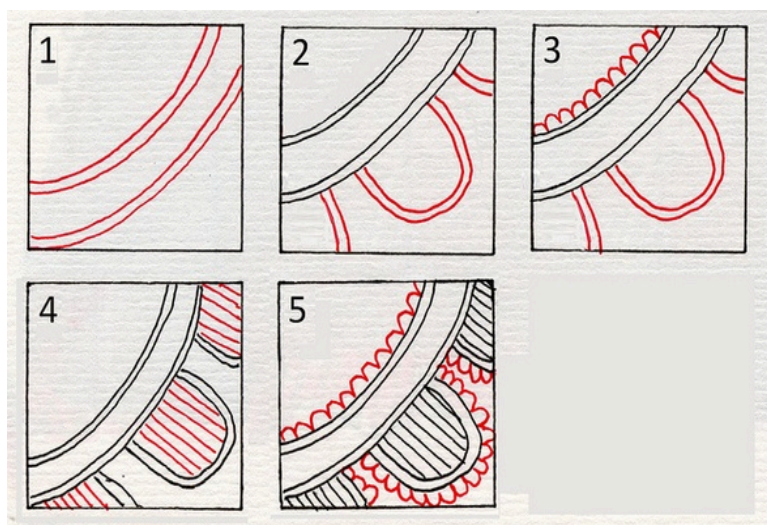
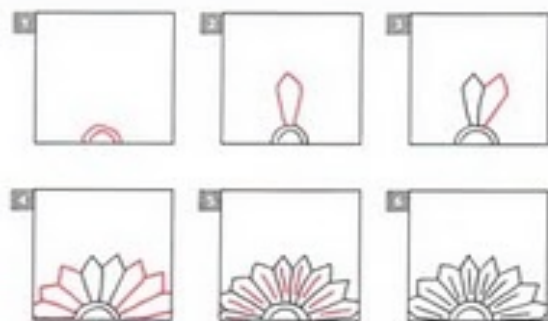


Zendoodle Pattern Examples





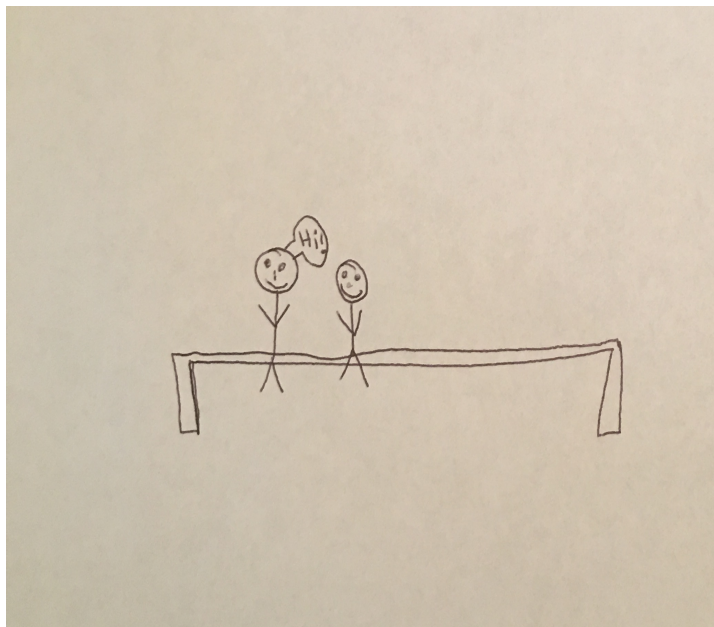




Activity Examples By A 6th Grade Middle School Student

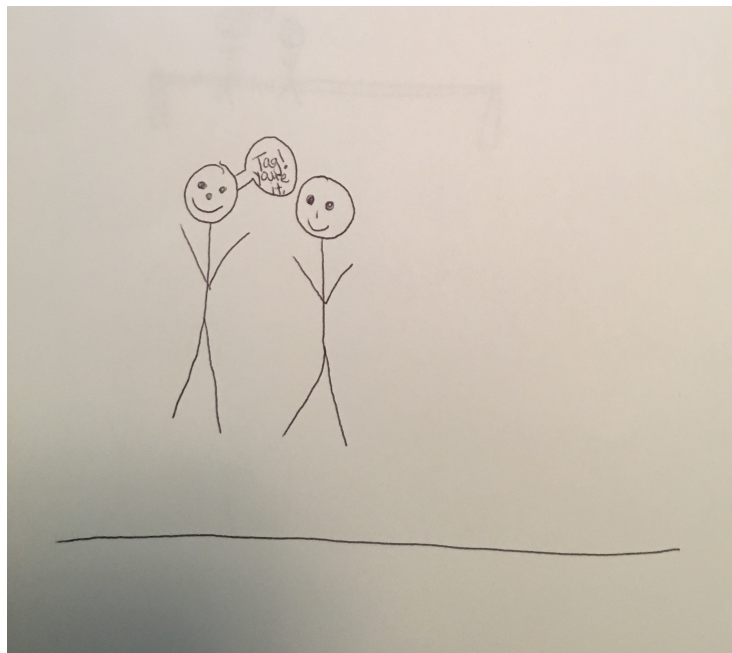
Compassion: "How Can I Help You?"

Penelope Scenario



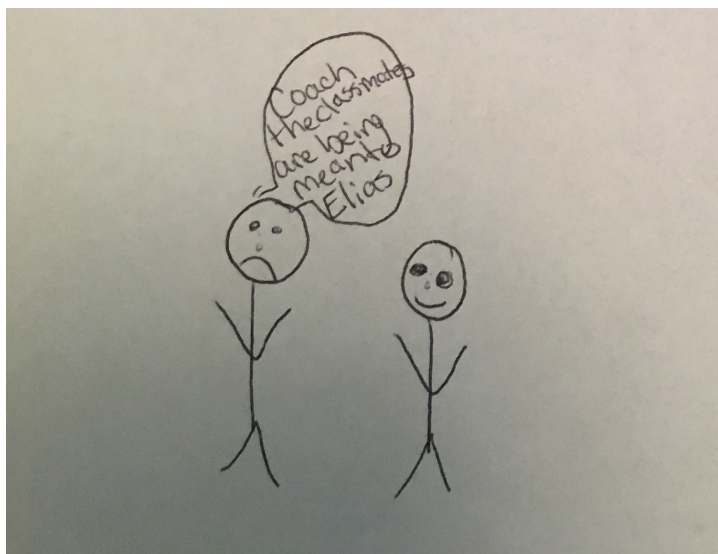
"This is a picture of me going to sit with Penelope at lunch. This picture can also be of me and Penelope in the gym."

Transition to High School Scenario



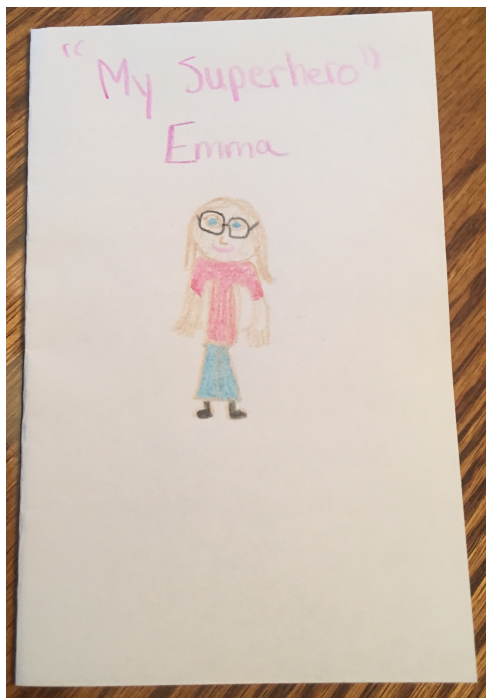
"Someone could come and play with me to get my mind off of it. This is a picture of someone playing tag with me."

Elias Scenario



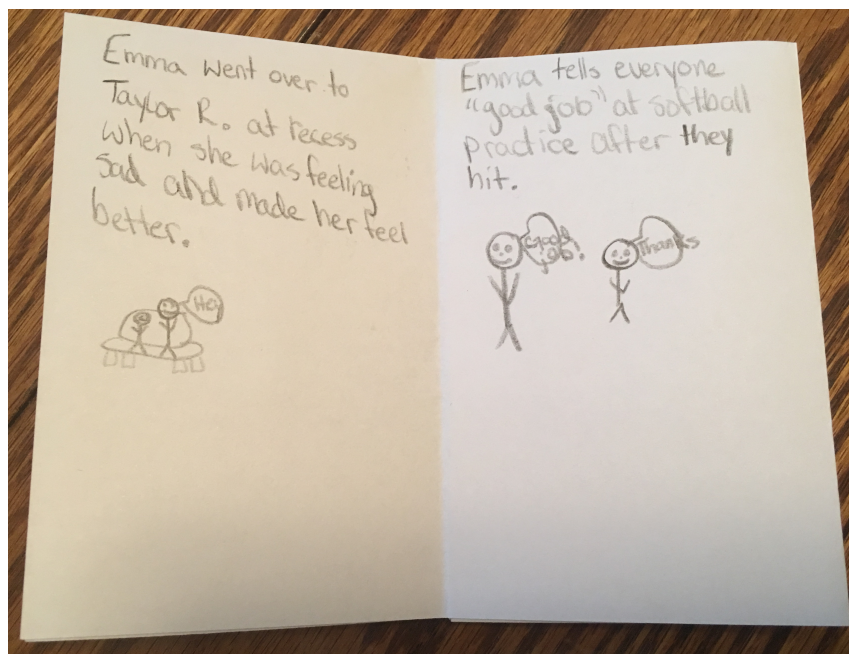
"I could tell the coach or a teacher about it."

Kindness: "Who Is Your Superhero?"



"My Superhero Emma"

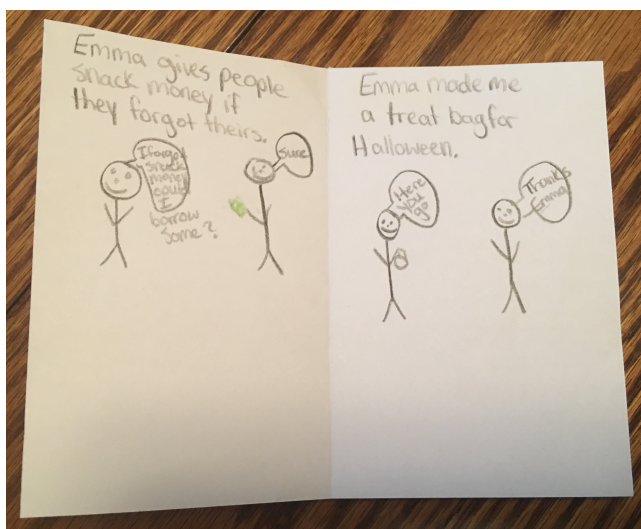
Friendliness



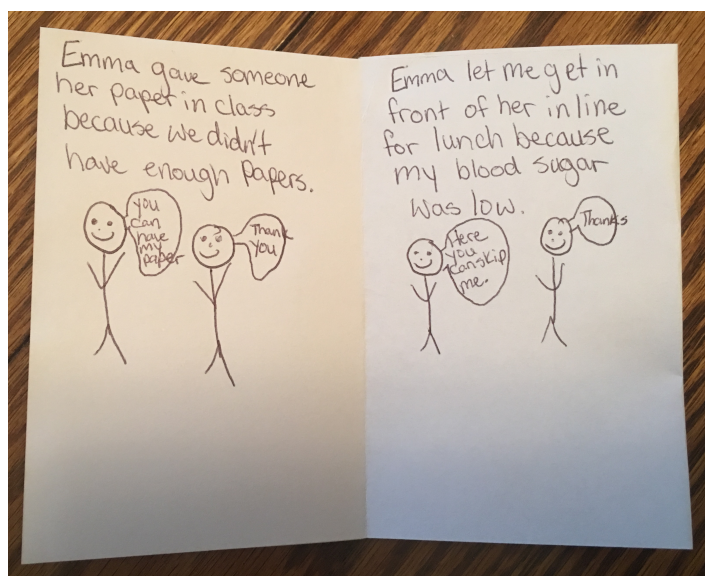
"Emma went over to Taylor at recess when she was feeling sad and made her feel better. Emma tells everyone 'good job' at softball practice after they hit."

Consideration towards others

Generosity

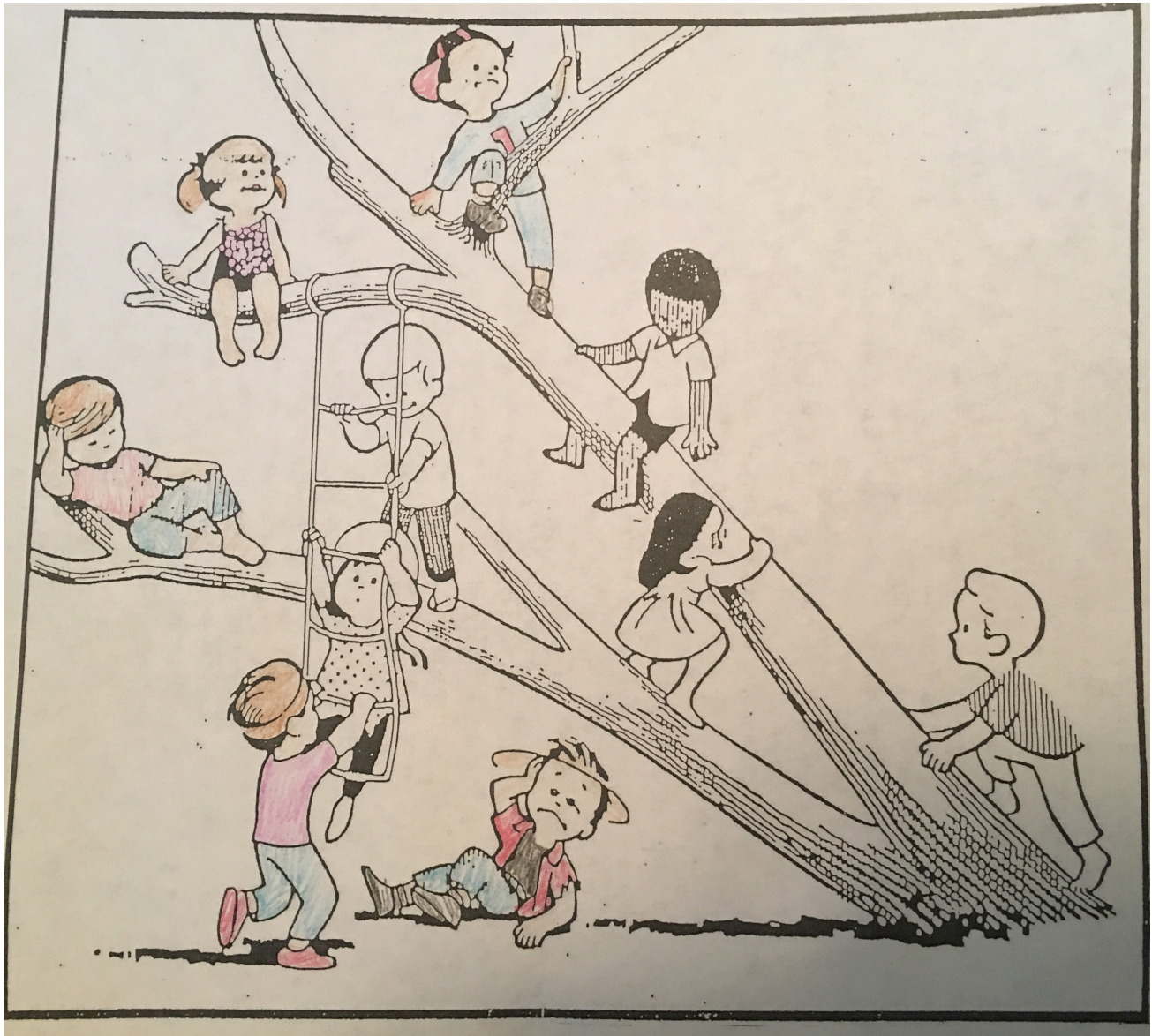


"Emma gives people snack money if they forgot theirs. Emma made me a treat bag for Halloween."



"Emma gave someone her paper in class because we didn't have enough papers. Emma let me get in front of her in line for lunch because my blood sugar was low."

Value: "People In A Tree, Who Do You See?"



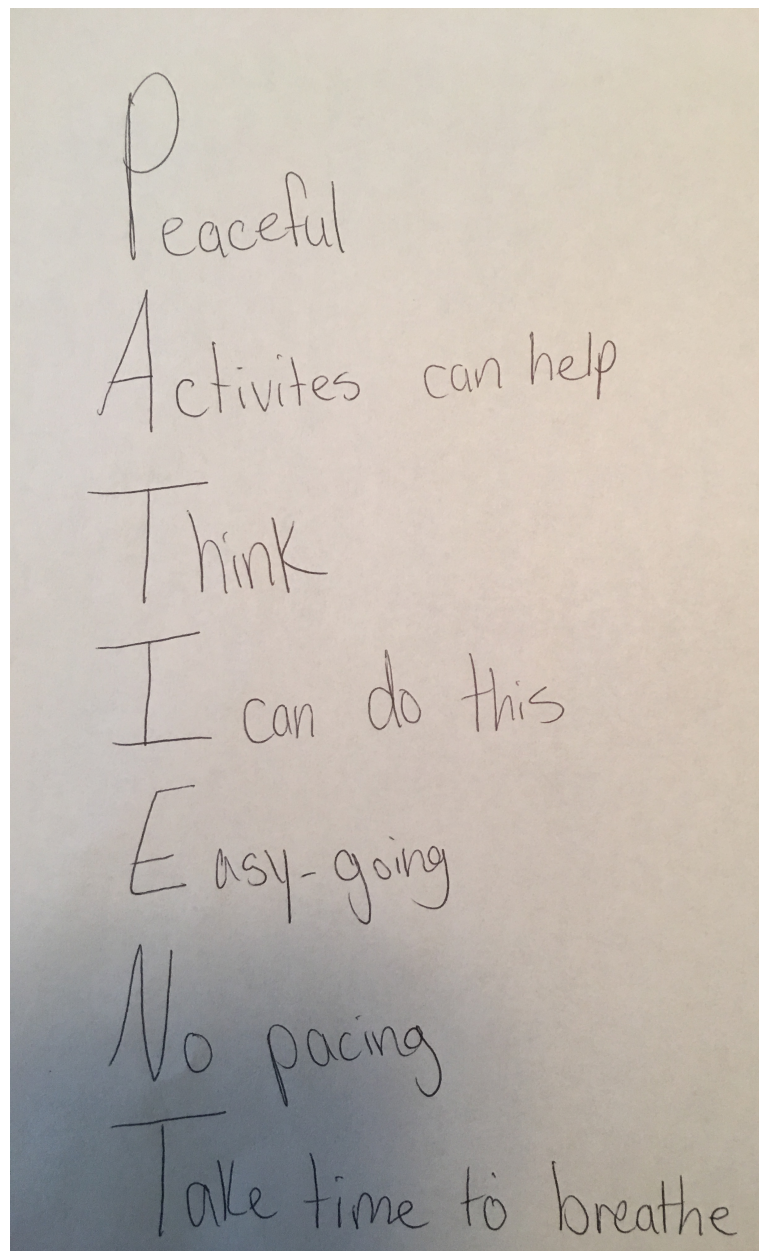
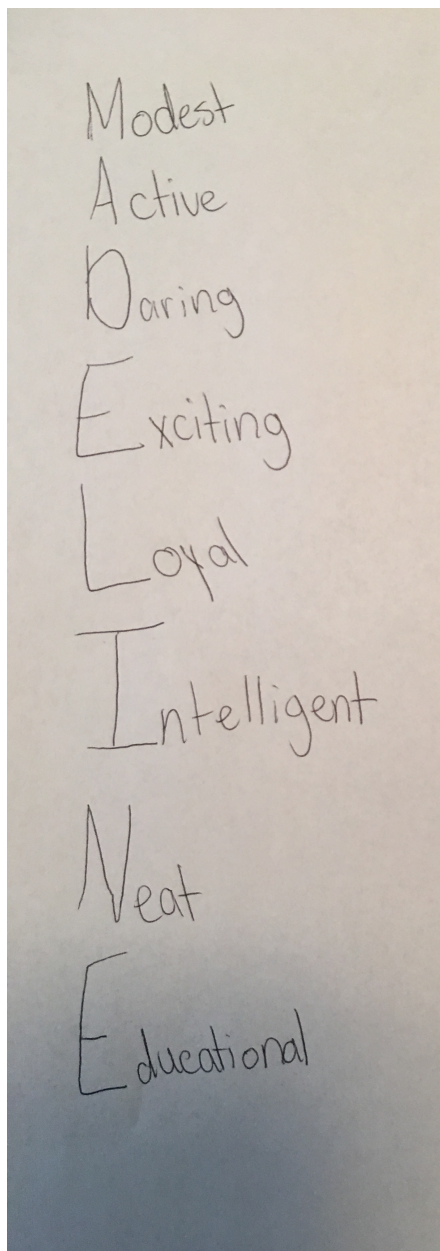
"The easiest to choose was the popular one. He is at the top and he even has a #1 on his shirt."

"The hardest was the person in the wheelchair, because no one in the picture looks like they need one. I chose the boy who had fallen to be him."

"I am the little girl that is sitting on the branch and looking up. Mostly because I like to climb trees, and I'm really good at it."

"The shy one is the boy who looks sleepy, and the other little boy trying to climb the ladder is the one that hasn't been able to shower because his hair looks messy."

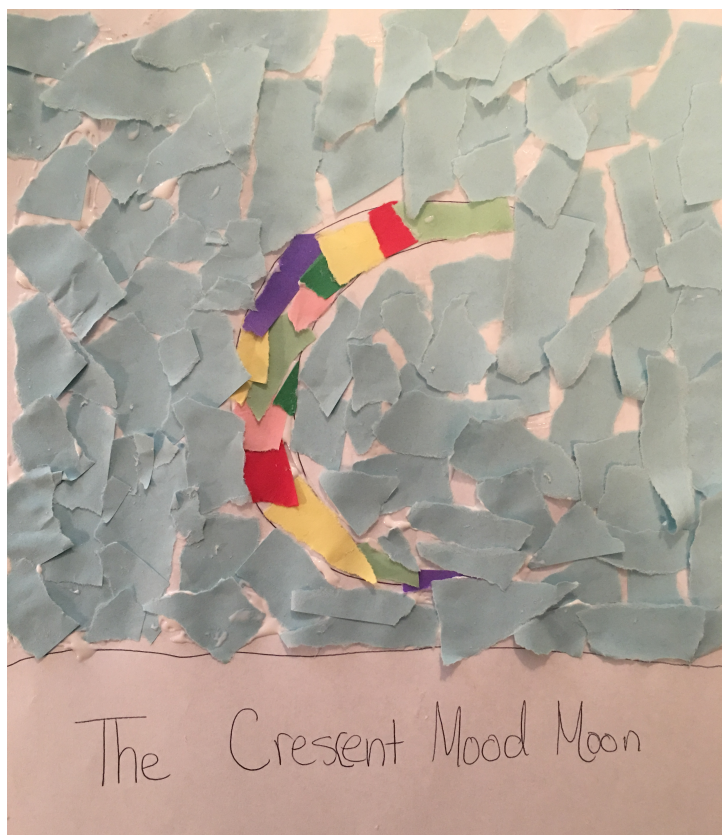
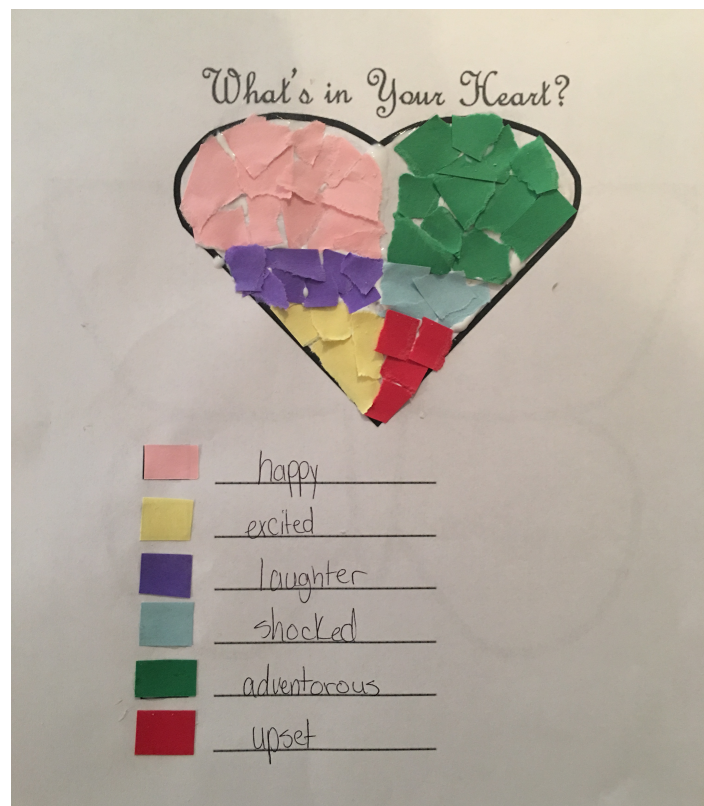
Self-Esteem: "Empowering Acrostics"



"I have a really hard time being patient when I am waiting for my grades to come back after a test. I can help myself to be more patient by taking the time to breath, taking my mind off of it with activities, and telling myself that 'I can do this.'"

"I think that sometimes we can make ourselves feel bad when we are too hard on ourselves. We can know when we are being too hard on ourselves when we begin to start feeling bad or upset."

Anxiety/ Stress Relief: "Paper Mosaics"

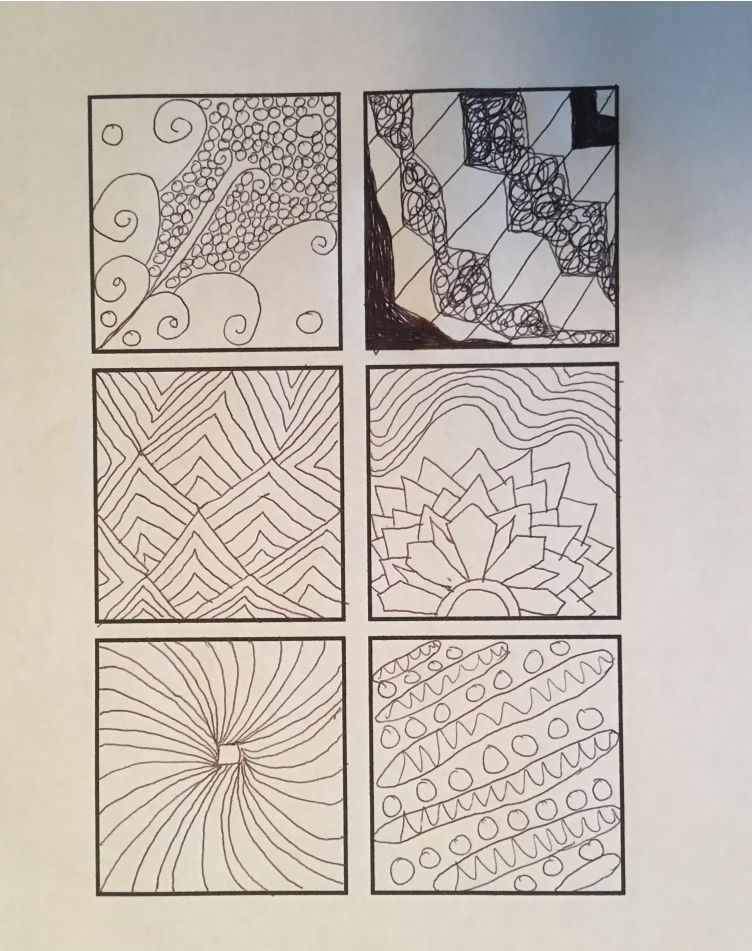
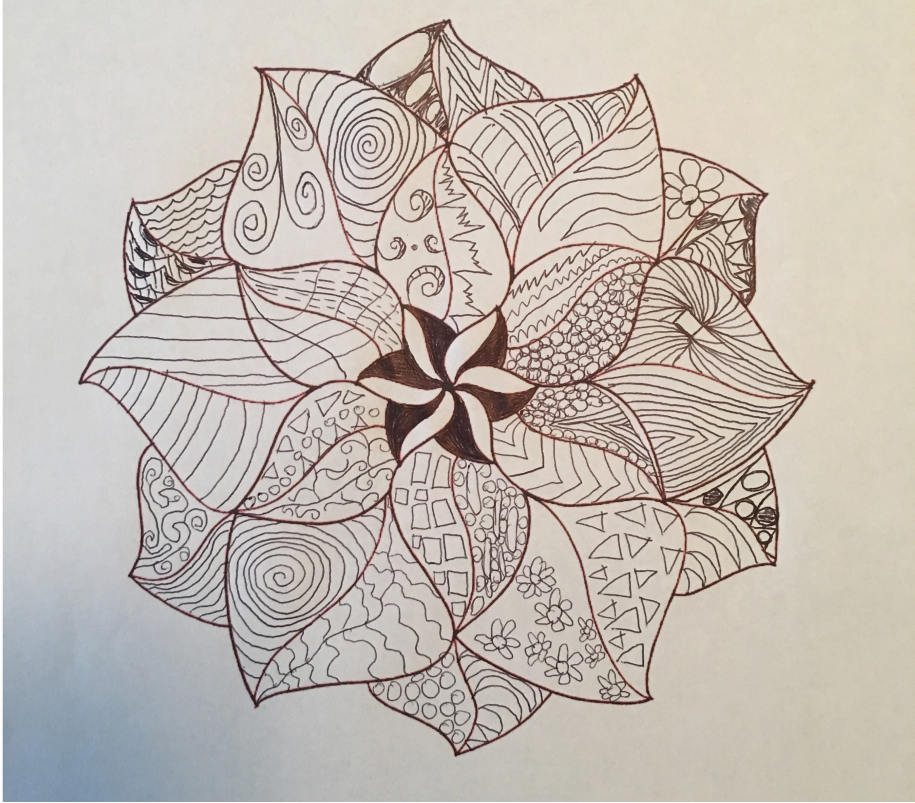


"When I get stressed it makes me feel bad and angry. I've never thought about what I do to make myself feel better, but this was fun."

"I've never thought about what was 'in my heart' before. It was hard for me to know what was in my heart, so it would be harder for me to figure out what is in someone else's."

Coping Skills: "Zendoodle"

"I enjoyed getting to look at the patterns and do what I wanted with them, rather than going by the example."



"It is important to have coping skills so that you know how to deal with things in the right way. I get stressed out a lot with homework, school, and practice. This activity got my mind off of those things."

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