

ExxonMobil

DISCOVERY SERIES



Don't Worry Willy: The Musical with The Ensemble Theatre and The Don't Worry Willy Foundation



The
ENSEMBLE THEATRE

THE
**HOBBY
CENTER**
FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

2026-2027 Season 5th Grade Curriculum Guide

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About the Performance

Don't Worry Willy

Book and Original Story by Elizabeth Unaeze

Directed by Steven J. Scott

Music by Elizabeth Unaeze

Additional Music and Lyrics by Alana Scott

Arrangements by Alana Scott

A high-stakes test turns a 5th-grade classroom into a whirlwind of anxiety, self-doubt, and support. William "Willy" T. Bear, an imaginative but anxious student, escapes into the Willyverse—a world where his emotions take shape. Struggling with friendships and past bullying, he leans on his twin sister, Jen, while facing pressure from perfectionist classmate Penelope.

With a diverse group of classmates—each facing challenges like autism, dyslexia, and grief—Willy must learn to manage his emotions. Guided by their lively teacher, Miss Bovine Longhorn, and the wise Pokey Toes Turtle III, the students discover coping strategies, friendship, and self-acceptance. Through music and storytelling, *Don't Worry Willy* explores social-emotional learning, neurodiversity, and self-expression, reminding young audiences that it's okay to feel, struggle, and be themselves.



The Ensemble Theatre

Influenced by the African American Theatre movement of the 1960s and 70s, George Hawkins founded The Ensemble Theatre, a Black theatre company in 1976 in Houston, Texas. The Ensemble Theatre is celebrating its 50th anniversary this season. The Ensemble Theatre's Tour Education program reaches more than 60,000 youth and seniors annually with repertoire of educationally themed, TEKS-aligned productions available for touring to schools and community spaces as well as in-house performances in The Ensemble Theatre's Performance Center. The Ensemble Theatre also offers Artists in Residency programs where highly trained professional teaching artists deliver hands-on theatrical training in the classroom.



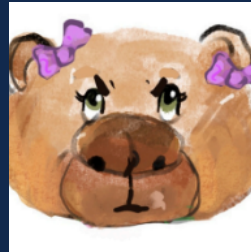
Meet the Characters



Willy T. Bear

Character

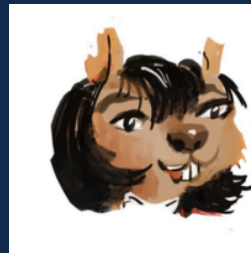
An avid reader and anxious imagineer who loves to escape to his journal when his anxiety becomes overwhelming. He can create whole worlds with his imagination he calls the Willyverse to express and process how he is feeling, so he often takes mental breaks there. Due to the bullying at his old school, Willy experiences ongoing anxiety attacks throughout the day that are triggered by his post traumatic stress. This leaves him afraid to make any mistakes at the risk of getting teased by his classmates. As a fraternal twin, his sister Jen is a positive support for him to help balance the tension he feels with Penelope who, due to her perfectionism, triggers his ongoing insecurity about messing up.



Jennifer D. Bear

Character

Willy's younger twin sister who has ADHD is full of energy and bird enthusiasm. She loves all things science but gets distracted while completing her work. Like her brother, she created a space called the ADHD laboratory, a world that she retreats to in order to process her thoughts and emotions. Though she is a great support for her brother, she too was bullied but handled it differently than he did which at times can leave her frustrated when he has a meltdown.



Suki B. Squirrel

Character

A first-generation immigrant from Japan who has a large family full of successful people, but she struggles to keep up because of her dyslexia, which means she sees letters differently. As an introvert, she stutters when she feels nervous or is put on the spot.

Meet the Characters

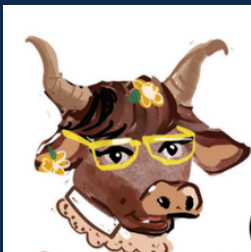


Penelope P. Porcupine

Character

A tidy yet talented overachiever grappling with the loss of her mom. When stressed, she self-harms by secretly snapping off her quills, until her negative coping mechanism is discovered by Willy. Driven by the need to make her mother proud, she is the class president and primary support for her father who due to his own grief has become disengaged leaving Penelope to fend for herself.

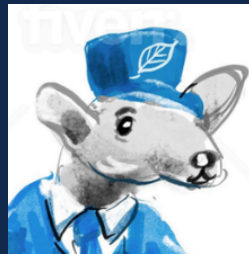
Note: *Self-harm means a person hurts their own body on purpose when they are feeling very sad, worried, or overwhelmed. It is a sign that the person needs care and support from trusted adults, not something they should be punished for.*



Miss Longhorn

Character

An eccentric teacher who is a plant-loving, bee-farming botanist. She wears flowers, plant-themed clothes, and hums songs in class.



Antonio N. Teater

Character

A neurodivergent historian who is a train enthusiast. He is bilingual and lives with his grandmother who is from Colombia. His parents, who still live there but are unable to stay in the U.S. due to citizenship challenges, communicate with him often and send books about trains around the world. As a person on the spectrum, he often has a repetitive speech and physical twitches called stimming when talking about trains.



Pokey Toes Turtle III

Character

A 100-year-old forensic storyteller who gathers facts from the lives of those he meets in search of the BIG idea in each story. This allows him to take on the role of narrator in many cases but he isn't afraid to step into a story if the situation calls him to put a voice to terms and situations that may need further explanations.



About the Hobby Center for the Performing Arts

The Hobby Center for the Performing Arts opened to the public in 2002 in downtown Houston, at the edge of the city's renowned Theater District. The district is home to several major performing arts organizations, including Houston Grand Opera, Houston Ballet, Houston Symphony, Performing Arts Houston, Theatre Under The Stars, DaCamera, and Alley Theatre. Located beside Tranquility Park and one block from Houston City Hall, the Hobby Center was named in honor of former Texas lieutenant governor and Houston businessman William P. Hobby Jr. after his family foundation made a significant contribution to the project. The Hobby Center was built on the site formerly occupied by the Houston Music Hall and Sam Houston Coliseum, both of which were demolished in 1998. Today, the Hobby Center includes three performance spaces designed specifically for theater, music, and live performance experiences:

- **Sarofim Hall** is a 2,650-seat proscenium theater designed to accommodate large-scale touring Broadway productions and major live performances. Resident companies include Theatre Under The Stars and Broadway Across America. The hall's design combines grandeur with theatrical elegance. Golden latticework frames the space, while multi-storied gold-leaf columns stand in contrast to deep midnight-blue walls. Overhead, the Joe and Lee Jamail Celestial Dome Ceiling features twinkling fiber-optic stars arranged to mirror the Texas night sky.
- **Zilkha Hall** is an intimate 500-seat "jewel-box" theater, a term used to describe smaller performance spaces designed with rich detail, warmth, and close audience connection. Home to many of Houston's local arts organizations, the hall features excellent acoustics, deep-rose tones, and walnut wood accents across two seating levels.
- **The Founders Club** is an intimate live music venue with cabaret-style seating. Guests may purchase tables of four or be seated with others, creating a social and relaxed atmosphere. The series features both local performers and nationally recognized artists in a format not commonly found in Houston. Concerts span a variety of genres, including Broadway songbook, jazz, and world music.

ExxonMobil DISCOVERY SERIES

The ExxonMobil Discovery Series is the Hobby Center's flagship education program, welcoming 5th grade students from across Houston to experience live performances by local and touring artists. Aligned with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), the series brings dance, music, and theater to life in ways that connect directly to what students are learning in the classroom. Every performance is free—including transportation—and includes curriculum materials and artist Q&As that deepen the experience.

For the 2026-27 school year, the Hobby Center is thrilled to be partnering with 22+ school districts to serve nearly 50,000 5th graders.

Special thanks to lead underwriter ExxonMobil and generous supporters: Cullen Trust for the Performing Arts, Elkins Foundation, George and Mary Josephine Hamman Foundation, Albert and Ethel Herzstein Charitable Foundation, Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, The John M. O'Quinn Foundation, Texas Commission on the Arts, H-E-B, Vivian L. Smith Foundation, and Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion

Theater Etiquette

Before you come to the Hobby Center for the Performing Arts, Please take some time to talk with your students about what to expect. Going to a live performance is a group experience unlike any other, and many students are more familiar with going to the movies or sporting events. Please help them prepare for what they'll see and how they should act. Other things to Keep in Mind: Make sure your students use the restroom before they leave school or at the theater before the show. If you get up during the performance, you may miss the best part! The performance runs approximately one hour long with no intermission. In entering or exiting the theater, safety is the primary concern. Please follow instructions from the house managers and ushers in taking your seats.

Going to a performance is different than going to a movie:

- This production is performed live. The performers can see, hear and react to the audience!
- Audience members can show the performers when they appreciate their performance! If something is funny, you can laugh! If the performers are doing a great job, then you can clap!
- Sometimes, the performers will ask you to participate by singing or clapping; please do not talk unless the performers ask you to!
- At the end of the show, the performers will bow. This is called a curtain call. If you really loved the show, you can give them a standing ovation to show that you appreciate their hard work!
- School clothes are appropriate, but some people like to dress up to go to the theater. Just make sure you are comfortable.

Going to a performance is the same as going to a movie:

- The lights dim before the performance begins and the theater stays dark during the show.
- Audience members are expected to stay quiet in their seats during the performance.
- Audience members may NOT take any pictures or video during the performance. (This is distracting to the performers and other audience members and this show contains copyrighted artistic material.)
- All cell phones and other electronic devices should be powered OFF or put on SILENT as soon as you enter the theater.

VISIT RESTROOM BEFORE - NOT DURING.

ARRIVE EARLY.

QUIET & SEATED DURING SHOW.

NO PHOTOS OR VIDEOS DURING SHOW.

PHONES OFF/SILENCED.

RESPECT THE SPACE & OTHERS.

LISTEN & ENGAGE.

APPLAUD APPROPRIATELY.

Vocabulary

ADHD (Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder): A neurodevelopmental condition marked by patterns of inattention, impulsivity, and/or hyperactivity that can affect focus, self-regulation, and daily routines. People with ADHD may experience challenges and strengths in learning, creativity, and energy regulation.

ADD (Attention Deficit Disorder): An older term often used to describe individuals with ADHD who primarily experience inattentiveness without hyperactivity. The official clinical term is now ADHD, and experiences vary widely.

Anxiety: A feeling of worry, nervousness, or unease, typically about something uncertain.

Autism (Autism Spectrum Disorder or ASD): A neurodevelopmental condition that affects how people communicate, process information, and relate to others and the world around them. Autistic individuals may have sensory sensitivities, unique ways of learning and problem-solving, and differences in communication.

Breath Release Grounding: 4-7-8 breathing: Inhale through your nose while counting to four, hold your breath while counting to seven, then exhale completely while counting to eight.

Coping Mechanisms: Healthy or unhealthy ways people deal with stress, anxiety, or difficult emotions. Willy journals, Penelope pulls her quills, and Jen retreats into her ADHD laboratory.

Disability: A natural part of human diversity. It can be physical, emotional, cognitive, sensory, or invisible. Disability is not a flaw or defect—it reflects the experience of living in a society that may not always be built with everyone in mind.

Dyslexia: A learning difference that affects how the brain processes written and spoken language. Dyslexia may impact reading, spelling, or writing, but does not reflect a person's intelligence. People with dyslexia often develop strong creative, problem-solving, or oral communication skills.

Empathy: Understanding and sharing the feelings of another person. Many characters in the show learn to support each other by practicing empathy.

Five Senses Grounding: A grounding exercise designed to manage acute stress and reduce anxiety. It involves identifying 5 things you can see, 4 things you can touch, 3 things you can hear, 2 things you can smell, and 1 thing you can taste.

Grounding Techniques: Techniques that help regain focus and stability when feeling overwhelmed.

Imagination: The ability to create ideas, worlds, and stories in one's mind. Willy uses his imagination to escape into the Willyverse as a way to process emotions.

Neurodiverse: Displaying or characterized by autistic or other neurologically atypical patterns of thought or behavior; not neurotypical. "Neurodiversity" is a word used to explain the unique ways people's brains work.

Parentification: When a child is forced to take on the role of a supportive adult within their family.

Perfectionism: A personality trait that involves a tendency to set high standards for oneself and others, and to be critical of oneself and others.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD): A mental health condition caused by an extremely stressful or terrifying event—either being part of it or witnessing it.

Self-Confidence: Believing in yourself and your abilities. Willy struggles with self-confidence but learns to trust himself by the end of the story.

Self-Expression: The way someone expresses their feelings, thoughts, or identity, whether through writing, speaking, art, or other forms.

Stimming: Self-stimulating behaviors that can include repetitive movements, sounds, words, or objects.

8 **Stuttering:** A speech disorder that causes involuntary interruptions in the flow of speech.

PRE-SHOW

DISCUSSION

Understanding Emotions

- Think about a time when you felt nervous or unsure before doing something important. What helped you manage those feelings, and what did you learn from the experience?
- What are some things you do when you feel overwhelmed or anxious? Do you write, draw, talk to someone, or do something else to feel better?



Neurodiversity Awareness

- Have you ever heard of ADHD, autism, or dyslexia? How do you think people with different ways of thinking and learning can be supported in the classroom?
- How can we be good friends to someone who is feeling sad, stressed, or different from us?
- Why is it important to understand that everyone has different challenges? How can we work together to help each other succeed?



Reflection

- Have you ever been afraid to make a mistake? What would you tell a friend who was scared of getting something wrong?
- Willy escapes into his imagination when he feels anxious. How can creativity—like drawing, writing, or music—help people express their feelings?



All performance photos by Lynn Lane

PRE-SHOW

ACTIVITIES



Emotions Charades

Choose an emotion card and act it out using only your body and face, no words! Let your classmates guess the emotion.

Safe Space Journal

Draw or describe a space where you feel safe and in control. Think about the sounds, colors, and objects you'd include.

Prediction Game

Look at just the title. Make predictions: Who is Willy? Why might he worry? What kind of show do you expect?

Strategic Quickwrite

Quickwrite: "When I feel worried, one thing that helps me is..." Share strategies if comfortable.

Career Exploration

Brainstorm all the jobs it might take to make a show. Think: costumes, lighting, music, stage crew, actors. Explore Kids Work website below using the scan code.



Kids Work! "Theater" series

Explore interactive, immersive introduction to real theatre jobs!

All performance photos by Lynn Lane

EVERY BRAIN LEARNS DIFFERENTLY

Notice strengths • Identify supports • Build an inclusive classroom

Name: _____ Date: _____



Neurodiversity means that brains can think, learn, communicate, and experience the world in different ways. Differences are a natural part of being human—there is no single 'right' way for a brain to work.

1 HOW DO YOU LEARN BEST?

Check the tools or conditions that sometimes help you learn. There are no right or wrong answers.

☐ Seeing an example	☐ Hearing directions	☐ Trying it myself	☐ Writing or drawing
☐ A quiet space	☐ A movement break	☐ Extra time	☐ Working with a partner

One learning strength I have: _____

One support that helps me: _____

2 SUPPORT DETECTIVE

Read each classroom situation. Circle or check a support that could help. More than one answer may work.

	A. A student loses their place while reading a long page.	reading guide • audio version • extra time
	B. A student feels overwhelmed by noise during group work.	quiet workspace • headphones • written directions
	C. A student has many ideas but has trouble starting an assignment.	first-step reminder • visual checklist • work with a partner

What do these supports have in common?

3 DESIGN A LEARNING-FRIENDLY CLASSROOM

Choose three features that would help more students feel comfortable, focused, and included.

CHOICE BANK

quiet corner • visual schedule
flexible seating • clear labels
movement space • calm lighting

My classroom includes _____, _____, and _____.

These choices help students by:

4 WORDS THAT SUPPORT

Change each statement into something respectful and helpful.

Instead of: "Why can't you just focus?"	Try: _____
Instead of: "Everyone else can do it."	Try: _____

WORD BANK (optional)

How can I help? • Would a different way work better? • Take the time you need.

★ BEFORE THE SHOW

What is one thing you will notice about how the characters learn, communicate, or support one another?

THE INCLUSION ACTION LAB

Notice a barrier • Choose a support • Help everyone participate

Name _____

Date _____

A barrier is something that makes it harder for a person to participate. Inclusive classrooms remove barriers and offer different ways to learn, communicate, and show what you know.

1 BARRIER OR SUPPORT?

Write B for barrier or S for support.

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Directions are only given once and very quickly. | ☐ A visual checklist shows each step of the assignment. |
| ☐ A student may answer by speaking, writing, or drawing. | ☐ A student is teased for needing extra time. |
| ☐ Everyone must work in a noisy space. | ☐ Classmates ask, 'What would help?' |

Choose one barrier above. How could the class change it?

2 REDESIGN THE TASK

A class must explain what they learned about ecosystems. Add choices so more students can participate.

THE ORIGINAL TASK:

Stand alone in front of the class and give a three-minute speech.

ADD THREE WAYS TO SHOW LEARNING



Create something: _____



Explain another way: _____



Work with support: _____

Why can giving choices help students show what they really know?

3 PRACTICE SELF-ADVOCACY

Self-advocacy means respectfully explaining what you need. Complete each sentence.

- I learn best when _____
- Could you please _____
- A tool that would help me is _____
- If I feel overwhelmed, I can _____

repeat directions • show an example • give me a minute • let me write it down • help me begin

4 OUR INCLUSION AGREEMENT

Choose three promises that could help everyone belong.

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ We listen without interrupting. | ☐ We include different ideas. |
| ☐ We respect breaks and learning tools. | ☐ We offer help without taking over. |
| ☐ We do not make fun of differences. | ☐ We ask before making assumptions. |

One promise I will practice: _____

★ WATCH FOR TEAMWORK

During the performance, notice one moment when a character asks for help, offers support, or makes space for someone else.

My prediction: A supportive moment might look or sound like...

FIFTH GRADE

TEKS Alignment

ELAR & READING- §110.7

TEKS: 5.6(A), 5.7(C), 5.9 (A), 5.10 (A)

Student Learning Connection:

Students analyze theme, character development, and storytelling while interpreting how dialogue, lyrics, and performance communicate tone, emotions, and perspective.

Science -§112.16

TEKS: 5.2 (B), 5.5 (A), 5.11(C)

Student Learning Connection:

Students investigate how the brain and body respond to stress, explore scientific observation through Jen's experiments, and connect body systems, emotions, and self-regulation to everyday life.

Mathematics - §111.7

TEKS: 5.4(H), 5.5(A), 5.8(C)

Student Learning Connection:

Students recognize patterns, sequencing, elapsed time, and data while connecting musical rhythm, classroom routines, and emotional trends to mathematical thinking.

Social Studies - §113.16

TEKS: 5.21(A), 5.24(A-C)

Student Learning Connection:

Students explore cultural diversity, identity, empathy, and responsible citizenship while recognizing how communities support individuals with different backgrounds, abilities, and experiences.

Health - §115.17

TEKS: 5.1 (A), 5.2(E), 5.4(A-B)

Student Learning Connection:

Students practice self-awareness, identify healthy coping strategies, build positive relationships, and develop decision-making skills that support emotional wellness and conflict resolution.

Fine Arts -§117.118-19

TEKS: 5.1(A), 5.2(B), 5.3(C), 5.4 (A)

Student Learning Connection:

Students experience how rhythm, melody, and musical expression communicate emotions, strengthen storytelling, and reflect diverse cultural traditions. Students interpret characters through voice, movement, and performance while examining how theatre communicates emotion, develops empathy, and tells meaningful stories.

FIFTH GRADE

STAAR Alignment



RLA

STAAR Reporting Category:

Comprehension; Author's Purpose & Craft

Student Learning Connection

Analyze how characters respond to challenges, identify themes of anxiety, resilience, and friendship, and explain how dialogue, lyrics, and storytelling develop meaning and perspective.

Mathematics

STAAR Reporting Category:

Patterns, Data Analysis, and Mathematical Relationships

Student Learning Connection

Recognize patterns, sequencing, elapsed time, and data throughout the performance. Connect rhythm, repetition, and classroom routines to mathematical thinking and problem-solving.

Science

STAAR Reporting Category:

Body Systems

Student Learning Connection

Investigate how the brain and body respond to stress. Explore body systems, scientific observation, and self-regulation while connecting emotions to physical responses.

FIFTH GRADE

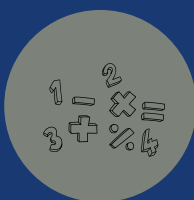
Curriculum Connections



English Language Arts

In The Classroom

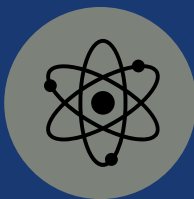
Analyze how characters respond to challenges and identify themes of resilience, empathy, and self-acceptance. Students can compare how dialogue, songs, and storytelling communicate emotions and develop character.



Mathematics

In The Classroom

Explore patterns, sequencing, rhythm, and data found throughout the performance. Students can graph emotions, compare repeated musical patterns, or organize character events using timelines and charts.



Science

In The Classroom

Investigate how the brain and body respond to stress and emotions. Students can explore self-regulation, breathing strategies, and how body systems work together during challenging situations.



Social Studies

In The Classroom

Examine how culture, identity, and community influence the characters' experiences. Discuss empathy, inclusion, and how different perspectives strengthen classrooms and communities.



Health / SEL

In The Classroom

Reflect on healthy coping strategies, emotional regulation, and asking for help. Students can discuss resilience, build empathy, and practice communication skills that support positive relationships.

Discussion



Performance Reflection

- What moment in the performance stayed with you the longest? Why?
- Which character did you connect with most, and what did you learn from them?
- What surprised you about *Don't Worry, Willy*?

Understanding Emotions

- Why did Willy and his classmates experience emotions differently?
- How did the characters learn healthy ways to cope with stress or anxiety?
- What can we do to support someone who feels overwhelmed or misunderstood?



Empathy & Community



- How did the characters build trust and stronger friendships throughout the story?
- Why is it important to understand that everyone's brain and experiences are different?
- How can our classroom become a place where everyone feels included and supported?

Growing

- What challenge did a character overcome, and what helped them grow?
- How can creativity, imagination, or journaling help us when we're facing difficult emotions?
- What is one lesson from the performance that you can use in your own life?



POST-SHOW Activities

Reflective Writing

- **Gratitude Journal**

Write or draw three things you're grateful for and explain how practicing gratitude can improve emotional well-being.



Breathing Practice

- **Breathing Exercises**

Practice square breathing or the 4-7-8 breathing technique and discuss when these strategies can help manage stress or anxiety.

Create & Perform

- **Coping Strategies Skit**

Working in small groups, create a short scene showing a character facing a challenge and using a healthy coping strategy. Perform your skit and explain what helped the character work through the situation.



Community & Connections



- **Building an Inclusive Classroom**

Brainstorm ways to make your classroom a place where everyone feels welcomed, understood, and supported. Create a class list of actions that encourage kindness, empathy, and respect for different ways of thinking and learning.

Career Spotlight

- **Careers That Support Well-Being**

Choose a career featured in or connected to the performance—such as actor, playwright, teaching artist, counselor, psychologist, occupational therapist, or special education teacher. Research what they do and identify one skill that helps them support others. Share your findings with the class.



HOUSTON THEATRE CAREER STUDIO

From an idea to the stage

Think back to *Don't Worry Willy*. Explore how theatre artists work together, then develop a show idea for fifth graders in Houston.

Name: _____ Date: _____

1 MEET THE CREATIVE TEAM

Connect each career to the work that brings a story to life.



ACTOR —

Uses voice, movement, and emotion to become a character.



DIRECTOR —

Guides the actors and shapes how the whole production comes together.



PLAYWRIGHT —

Writes the characters, dialogue, action, and story for the stage.



MUSICAL THEATRE PERFORMER —

Combines acting, singing, and movement to tell a story.

Which career helped create a moment you remember from the show? _____ Evidence: _____

2 PITCH A HOUSTON STORY

Imagine a short musical made for Houston fifth graders. Make the first creative choices.



SETTING: ☐ school • ☐ neighborhood park • ☐ bayou trail • ☐ METRORail • ☐ community festival



BIG IDEA: ☐ belonging • ☐ courage • ☐ friendship • ☐ handling stress • ☐ celebrating differences

Show title: _____ Main character: _____

In two sentences, what challenge do they face and what changes?



3 TRY A THEATRE JOB

Choose ONE career and complete its mini-challenge.

ACTOR —

Write one feeling your character must show. How will your face, voice, or body show it?



DIRECTOR —

Sketch where two actors should stand so the audience understands the scene.



~~~~~  
AUDIENCE

#### PLAYWRIGHT —

Write two lines of dialogue between the characters.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### MUSICAL THEATRE PERFORMER —

Name the emotion of the song and one movement that matches its rhythm.



### 4 YOUR HOUSTON THEATRE PATH

The Ensemble Theatre is part of Houston's theatre community. You can begin building theatre skills now through school plays, drama clubs, writing, choir, dance, and youth arts programs.

A strength I would bring to a production team: \_\_\_\_\_

One theatre skill I want to practice next: \_\_\_\_\_



**CAREER CONNECTION:** Great theatre takes creativity, communication, teamwork, preparation, and courage.

# TURN THE THOUGHT AROUND

A helpful-thinking worksheet inspired by Don't Worry Willy

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

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Willy and his classmates faced worry, pressure, and self-doubt. Helpful thoughts do not pretend everything is easy—they remind us that we can pause, ask for support, and keep growing.

## 1 SPOT THE HELPFUL REFRAME

Draw a line from each unhelpful thought to the helpful, realistic thought that fits best.

### UNHELPFUL THOUGHT

A. I always mess up.

B. This is too hard for me.

C. Nobody understands me.

D. I should give up.

### HELPFUL, REALISTIC THOUGHT

1. I can take a break, ask for help, and try one step.

2. One mistake does not define what I can do.

3. I can tell a trusted person what I need.

4. I may not know how yet, but I can keep learning.

## 2 REFRAME A MOMENT FROM THE SHOW

Choose one character and imagine the thought they could practice after a difficult moment.

Character: \_\_\_\_\_

### THE WORRIED THOUGHT

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



### A STRONGER THOUGHT

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What happened in the show that supports the stronger thought?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## 3 TRY IT WITH YOUR OWN THOUGHT

Think of a school situation that sometimes feels difficult. You may write about a made-up example if you prefer.

The situation: \_\_\_\_\_

My first thought: \_\_\_\_\_

One fact that helps me look at it differently: \_\_\_\_\_

My new helpful thought: \_\_\_\_\_

## 4 BUILD A SUPPORT PLAN

Helpful thoughts work best with helpful actions. Check two you could try.

☐ Take slow breaths

☐ Ask a trusted adult

☐ Break the task into steps

☐ Use kind self-talk

☐ Take a short reset

☐ Talk with a friend

The words I want to remember next time: \_\_\_\_\_

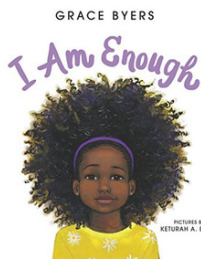
## ★ REFLECTION

How can changing your thoughts change what you do next?

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\_\_\_\_\_

# FIFTH GRADE RESOURCES

## Books



### **I Am Enough** written by Grace Byers

This book is about loving who you are. It reminds us that everyone is important, unique, and strong in their own way. You don't have to be the same as others to be enough.



### **Iveliz Explains It All**

written by Andrea Beatriz Arango

Iveliz, a Latina girl starting middle school deals with big feelings—like worry, sadness, and standing up for herself. When her grandmother with Alzheimer's moves in after Hurricane Maria, Iveliz learns to share her feelings, ask for help, and find strength in her own voice

### **Additional Websites**

Mind Yeti ([www.mindyeti.com](http://www.mindyeti.com))

Short mindfulness exercises for kids.

Zones of Regulation ([www.zonesofregulation.com](http://www.zonesofregulation.com))

Teaches emotional self-regulation.

GoNoodle ([www.gonoodle.com](http://www.gonoodle.com))

Fun movement and mindfulness activities.

## Websites

### **Child Mind Institute**



Provides resources and research to help families and educators support children's mental health, learning, and development.

Link: [www.childmind.org](http://www.childmind.org)

### **Sesame Street in Communities**



Provides free videos, activities, and tools to help children build social-emotional skills, healthy habits, and school readiness.

Link: [www.sesamestreetincommunities.org](http://www.sesamestreetincommunities.org)

### **Understood.org**



Explores ways to support children with learning and thinking differences, including ADHD and dyslexia. Shares tools and guidance for success in school and everyday life.

Link: [www.understood.org](http://www.understood.org)

### **The Don't Worry Willy Self-Care Workbook**



Supports students in building healthy coping skills and emotional wellness through stories, activities, and reflection.

Link: [www.simplelittlepublishings.com](http://www.simplelittlepublishings.com)

## CONNECT WITH US

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**Post-Show  
Student Survey**



**Post-Show  
Teacher Survey**