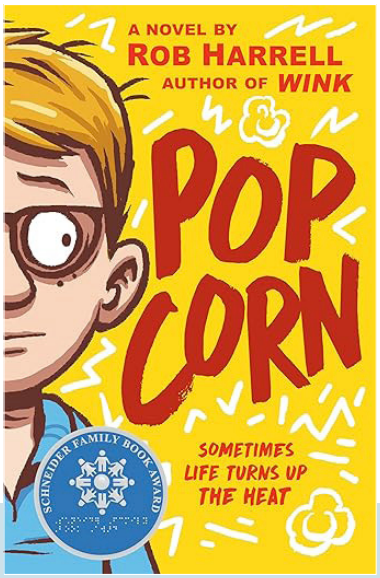
EXPLORE MORE BOOK GUIDE

Activities, tools & resources for learning with this book!

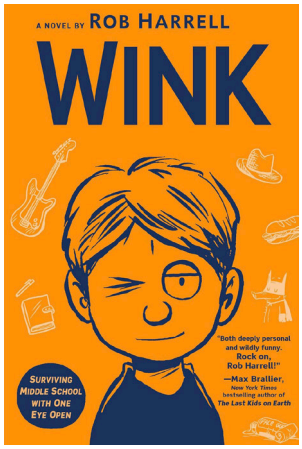


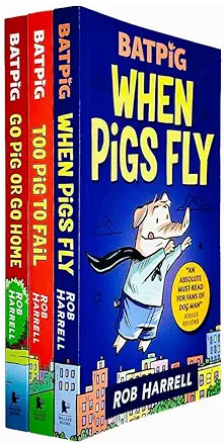
Meet Rob Harrell

In addition to writing middle grade novels, Harrell created the comic strip Big Top and now writes and draws the daily strip Adam@Home. Harrell lives in Zionsville, Indiana with his dog, Shepler.

Learn more about Rob **ONLINE**.

Read more from Rob:





EXPLORE MORE BOOK GUIDE

LET'S BEGIN!

Before reading the book...

Use the Visual Thinking Strategy (VTS) questions below to orient readers, and to help guide a group discussion. Begin by taking a quiet moment to look closely at the book jacket, allowing time for observation and contemplation of the images.

- What is going on in this picture?
- What do you see that makes you say that? (provide evidence)
- What more can we find?

Watch this **VIDEO** for a quick VTS demo

HAVE QUESTIONS?

Please contact Alison Johnson at Island Readers & Writers, 207-460-6828 or ajohnson@islandreadersandwriters.org.

LET'S TALK!

Discussion Questions

1. It must have been hard for Andrew to watch his grandmother forget things. Have you ever known anyone with Alzheimer's? What would you do to help?

Alzheimer's: *a progressive brain disease that slowly destroys memory, thinking skills, and eventually the ability to carry out daily activities.*

2. On page 61 Andrew calls himself "more of a shove it down deep inside kid." Discuss with your classmates what this means to Andrew and if you ever feel this way.

3. The cartoon drawings are humorous. Is this a coping mechanism for Andrew? Do you think it helps him? Why?

4. If you were Andrew's friend, what would you try to do to help him on picture day (or any stressful day)? Do you think Jonsie did the right thing? Do you think Andrew is a good friend? Why or why not?

STANDARDS

Covered throughout this Explore More Book Guide:

SL.1. Prepare for and participate in conversations across a range of topics, types, and forums, building on others' ideas and expressing their own.

SL.2. Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.

SL.3 Present information and supporting evidence appropriate to task, purpose, and audience so listeners can follow the line of reasoning and incorporate multimedia when appropriate.

R.4. Read various texts closely to determine what each text explicitly says and to make logical inferences; cite specific textual evidence to support conclusions drawn from the texts.

R.5 Provide an accurate summary of various texts; determine the central idea(s) or theme(s) and analyze its development throughout each text.

R.6. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

R.8 Analyze the structure of various texts, including how the features and components relate to each other and the whole.

R.9. Assess how perspective or purpose shapes the content and style of various texts.

L.5. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

5. Do you ever feel like your emotions or worries "POP" when there's too much pressure? What strategies help you cope?

THE BUZZIES
STEAMBRAIN
SIZZLEMELON
NOGGIN FERRETS

6. On page 196 you will find nicknames for anxiety. Do you think they are accurate? Can you think of any more?

7. Were you surprised when grandma was found in the school? Do you think it was important for Andrew to be the first to spot her?

8. Many adults helped Andrew through his day. Can you think of all of them and how they helped?

9. Why do you think Gene is so mean?

LET'S CREATE!

Book-Inspired Art

1. Find a quiet place to sit and observe nature. Choose a small natural object to focus on. As you spend time quietly observing, draw a detailed sketch of your object. Notice details you may not have seen at first. What sounds do you hear nearby? What textures, shapes, or patterns do you see that you can include in your drawing?

2. Create an "Anxiety File". Draw and/or write about your daily emotions and worries. Choose to talk to someone about it or keep it private.

Typography:
the way letters and words are designed and arranged on a page, including font, size, style, spacing, placement, and color.

3. Use the comic strip template in Appendix A and B and create a funny story on how you would communicate with your anxiety. Use different fonts and forms of typography.

4. POPCORN ART: Use Appendix C. Inside the kernel, write or draw "pressures" or "worries". In the "popped" popcorn, draw or write positive strategies or things that would help you cope.

5. Write a letter to Andrew giving him advice.

6. Each student chooses an emotion. On a blank piece of paper, write the emotion in the middle and doodle what it looks like, without using words.

Standard W.3. :
Routinely produce a variety of clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, audience, and purpose.

LET'S DIVE DEEPER!

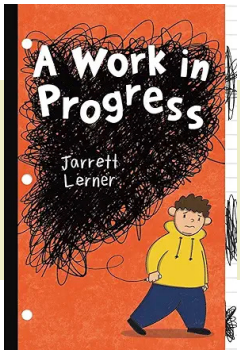
Explore More

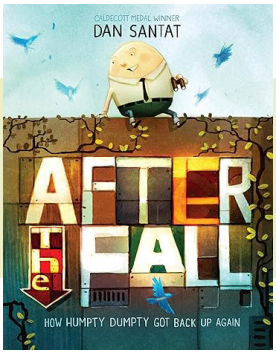
1. Have you ever struggled with emotions? Seek assistance by reaching out to a school counselor, a parent, or a trusted adult. There are many people who want to help and support you!

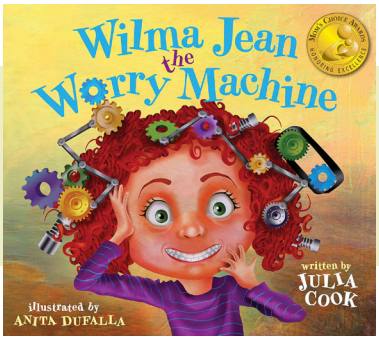
2. Check out the resources at the end of the book for more information on anxiety, OCD and Alzheimer's.

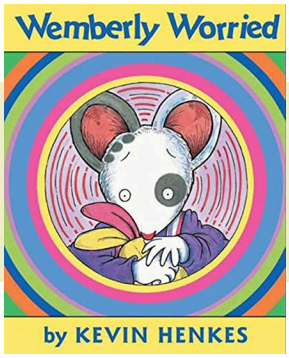
LET'S READ MORE!

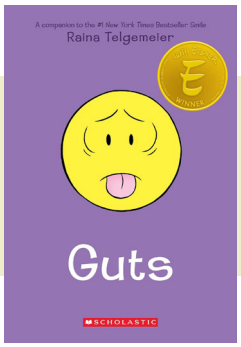
Text to Text Connections

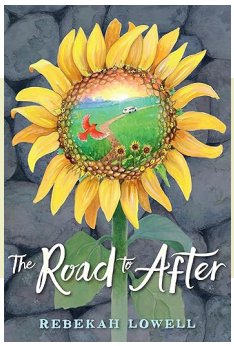












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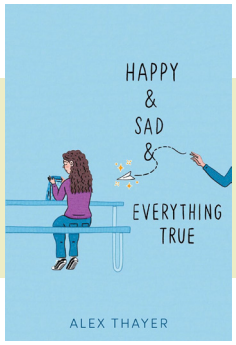

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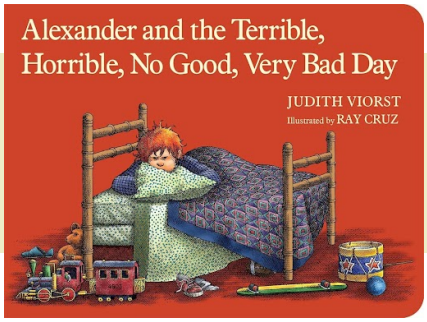
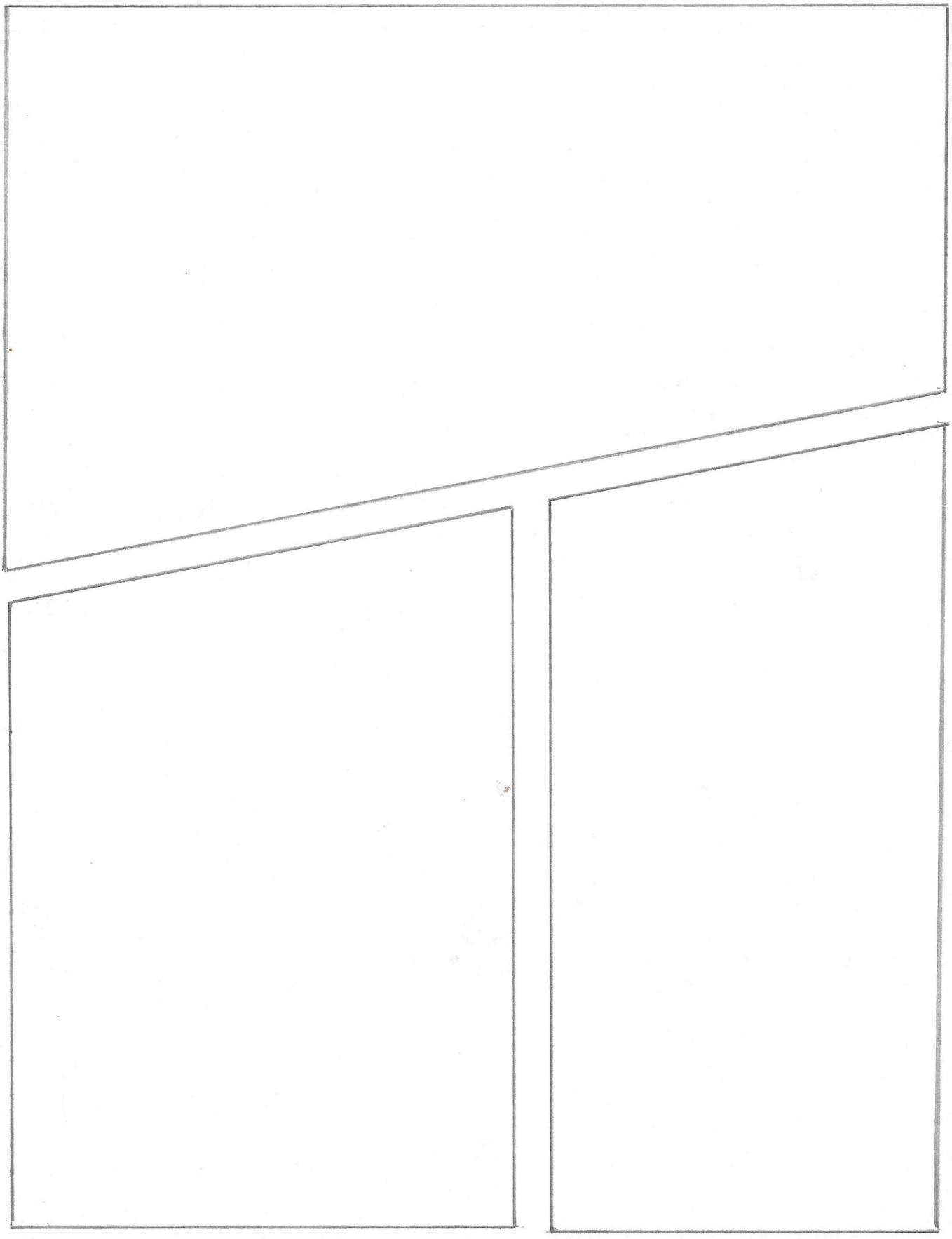
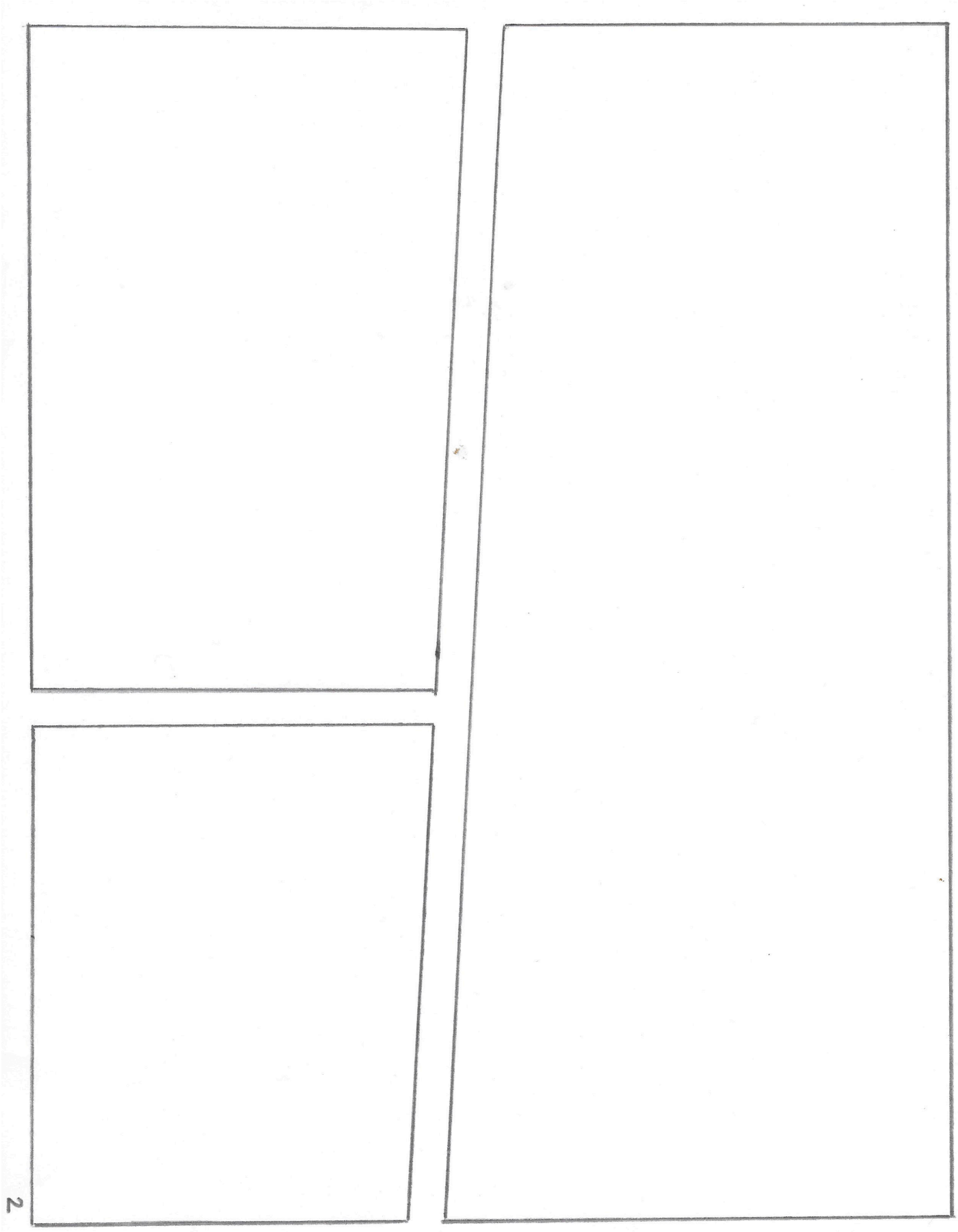


APPENDIX A

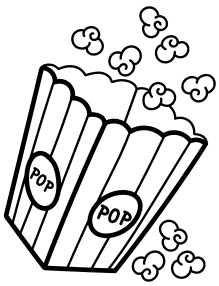


APPENDIX B



Popcorn Reflection Activity

Draw kernels and write or draw your worries, pressures, or challenges



Inside the popped popcorn, write or draw positive strategies, strengths, or things that help you cope.