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My Magic Breath in My Pocket



SEL Story + Printables (Grades 2~5)

Includes:

- **Storybook – “My Magic Breath in My Pocket”**

Printable SEL story (student pages) about a girl who feels nervous reading aloud, a calm teacher, and a simple pocket breath that travels with her wherever she goes.

- **Comprehension Questions**

12 open-ended questions that cover setting, body clues, big feelings, the Calm Corner, pocket breath steps, and how Sofia changes from the beginning to the end of the story.

- **Reading Check**

True/False, Multiple Choice, and “Put the Story Events in Order” activities to quickly check students’ basic understanding of the text and key details.

- **Story Map**

Graphic organizer for characters, setting, problem, important events, solution, and theme/lesson – perfect for story retell, sequencing, and identifying the central message.

- **SEL Reflection Sheet – My Magic Breath in My Pocket**

Guided reflection where students choose a powerful moment from the story, notice Sofia’s body clues, think about why adult support matters, and connect the idea of “big feelings at school” to their own lives.

- **My Calm Toolkit – Notice–Name–Do–Say–Next Time**

SEL graphic organizer that walks students through noticing body clues, naming a feeling, choosing a calm strategy (pocket breath, Calm Corner, asking for help, taking a small step), kind self-talk, and making a simple “next time” plan.

- **Writing Prompt – “My Pocket Breath Story”**

Writing page with lined space, word bank (buzzed, nervous, pause, breathe, steady, anchor, try again, small step, calm) and checklist so students can write about a real or imagined time they felt nervous and used a calm strategy.

- **Role-Play Cards – My Magic Breath in My Pocket**

4 scenario cards based on key scenes (being called on to read, using the Calm Corner, hearing a whisper, choosing one small step) to practice asking for a break, using pocket breath, and trying again with kind self-talk.

- **Bonus Activity – “My Pocket Anchor”**

Cut-and-write page where students create an anchor card for their pocket: they choose anchor words, write their pocket breath plan (pause → in for 3 → out for 4), decide when they will use it, and add a kind sentence to themselves.

- **Bonus Activity – “Pocket Breath Bookmark”**

Bookmark template students can cut, color, and keep in a book or folder, with space to practice the 3 rounds of pocket breath, choose a calm word, set a small step for reading, and decorate with pocket/anchor/wave symbols.

- **Coloring Pages**

Black-and-white SEL coloring pages showing Sofia with her pocket anchor in class and sitting in the Calm Corner – great for early finishers, calm-down time, or as an art-plus-writing extension.

- **Teacher Guide**

Detailed teacher guide with lesson objectives, suggested pacing, discussion questions, step-by-step lesson ideas, optional extensions, and assessment suggestions aligned with both SEL and ELA goals.

My Magic Breath in My Pocket

(SEL Story for Grades 2–5)

Sofia liked the small, calm parts of the day.

She liked the click of her pencil case closing.

She liked the smell of paper in a new workbook.

She liked the quiet second before the bell—when the classroom held its breath.

But this morning, the room did not hold its breath at all.

It buzzed.

Backpacks thumped onto chairs. Sneakers squeaked on the floor. A marker sang across the whiteboard—eeeeek—and someone's laugh popped like a balloon.

Sofia sat at her desk and tried to feel normal.

I'm fine, she told herself.

Mrs. Bennett clapped her hands twice. "Good morning, everyone! Today we're doing a quick reading check. Just one page. Then we'll talk about it."

Sofia's stomach tightened.

A reading check.

At home, Sofia read under a blanket with a flashlight. She read about lost puppies and secret maps and brave kids who solved problems.

But reading out loud in front of a whole class?

That was like stepping onto a stage when you didn't mean to.

Mrs. Bennett started calling names. One by one, classmates stood, read, sat back down.

Each time a voice finished, Sofia's heart beat a little faster, like it was trying to run ahead of her.

Sofia tried to focus on the page. She traced one line with her eyes.

But her thoughts kept jumping.

What if I mess up?

What if my voice shakes?

What if I forget how to say a word I already know?

When Mrs. Bennett said, "Sofia, you're next," the air felt suddenly heavier.

Sofia stood up too quickly. Her chair knocked the desk with a sharp clack.

A few heads turned.

Heat rushed to Sofia's cheeks. Her hands felt strange—too hot, too tight, like she was holding invisible rocks.

She looked at the page.

The words were still there.

But they didn't look friendly anymore.

They looked like they were floating, sliding away just when she needed them.

Sofia opened her mouth.

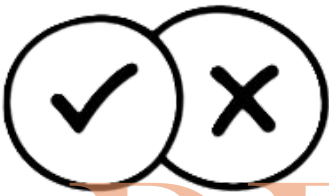
A whisper came out.

Then she reached a word that usually would have been easy... and it stuck.

Her throat squeezed. Her fingers curled into fists.

Somewhere behind her, someone whispered—just a little sound—and Sofia couldn't even tell what it was, but her mind shouted:

They're talking about me.



Name: _____ Date: _____

My Magic Breath in My Pocket

A) True or False

Write T for true or F for false.

1. ___ Sofia loves the loudest parts of the day.
2. ___ The classroom “buzzed” this morning.
3. ___ Mrs. Bennett says they will do a quick reading check.
4. ___ Sofia reads out loud first.
5. ___ Sofia’s chair makes a sharp clack when she stands up.
6. ___ Mrs. Bennett looks angry when Sofia says, “I can’t.”
7. ___ The sign in the corner says: “Take a Break. Take a Breath. Try Again.”
8. ___ The pocket breath has Sofia breathe in for 4 and out for 3.
9. ___ Sofia names her feeling as “excited.”
10. ___ Sofia chooses a small step: trying one sentence.

B) Multiple Choice (circle one)

11. Why does Sofia’s heart beat faster during the reading check?
 - A) She wants to race at recess
 - B) Each time a classmate finishes, she feels her turn is closer
 - C) She drank too much water
 - D) She is excited to read a funny story
12. What does Mrs. Bennett do first to help Sofia?
 - A) Sends her to the office
 - B) Notices body clues and offers the Calm Corner
 - C) Tells the class to laugh
 - D) Takes away her book
13. What makes Sofia feel “steady” in the Calm Corner?
 - A) Drinking juice
 - B) Holding her pocket like an anchor
 - C) Listening to music
 - D) Drawing pictures
14. What happens after Sofia tries again?
 - A) Mrs. Bennett ignores her
 - B) Ben murmurs, “Nice job.”
 - C) Sofia runs away
 - D) The class yells loudly

C) Put the Story Events in Order (1–8)

- A. ___ Mrs. Bennett announces a quick reading check.
- B. ___ Sofia’s chair makes a sharp clack.
- C. ___ Sofia blurts, “I can’t.”
- D. ___ Mrs. Bennett offers the Calm Corner.
- E. ___ Sofia puts her hand on her pocket.
- F. ___ Sofia breathes in for three and out for four (three times).
- G. ___ Sofia names her feeling: “Nervous.”
- H. ___ Sofia reads one sentence, then another.



Name: _____ Date: _____



My Magic Breath in My Pocket

Directions: Complete the story map using details from the story.
Write in complete phrases or short sentences.

Write the names of the main people in the story.

1. Characters

2. Setting

Where and when does the story happen?

3. Problem

What goes wrong? What does Sofia struggle with?

4. Important
Details

What important events happen?

Important Details

1. What happens first? _____

2. What happens next? _____

3. What happens after that? _____

5. Solution

How does Sofia handle the problem?

6. Theme/
Lesson

What does the story teach?

Name: _____ Date: _____



MY POCKET ANCHOR

Directions:

Cut out the anchor shape (or draw your own). Inside the anchor, write your calm plan. Then answer the questions below.

MY ANCHOR WORDS:

1. _____ 2) _____ 3) _____

MY POCKET BREATH PLAN:

Pause → In for 3 → Out for 4 →

Name it: _____ → Small step: _____

WHEN I WILL USE MY POCKET ANCHOR (circle):

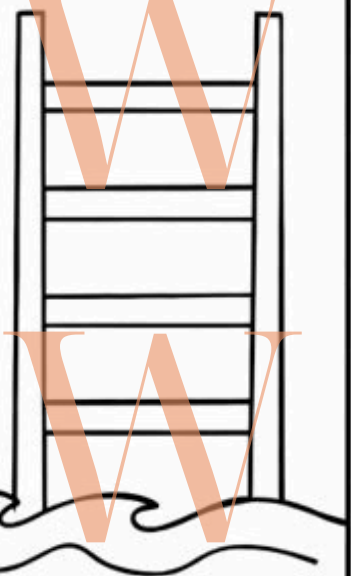
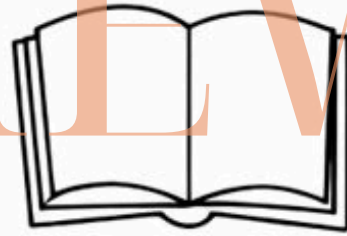
reading out loud / tests / sports / arguments / loud places / other: _____

ONE SENTENCE I CAN TELL MYSELF:

“ _____ ”

ONE SENTENCE A GROWN-UP CAN TELL ME:

“ _____ ”



Teacher Guide - My Magic Breath in My Pocket

Lesson Objectives

By the end of this lesson or mini-unit, students will be able to:

- Retell the main events in *My Magic Breath in My Pocket* and describe the key characters (Sofia, Mrs. Bennett, classmates).
- Explain in their own words what it feels like to be nervous about reading aloud and how big feelings can show up at school.
- Identify body clues of anxiety (tight hands, fast breathing, warm face, “galloping” heartbeat) and connect them to their own experiences.
- Describe and practice the “pocket breath” steps (pause, hand on pocket, breathe in for 3, out for 4 – three rounds).
- Use the Notice–Name–Do–Say–Next Time framework to choose a calm strategy, kind self-talk, and a small next step.
- Complete comprehension, reading-check, and story-map tasks using details from the text.
- Write a short narrative/reflective piece about a time they felt nervous and how they could carry calm with them, one breath at a time.

Standards Alignment

SEL Competencies

- Self-Awareness
- Self-Management
- Social Awareness
- Relationship Skills
- Responsible Decision-Making

ELA Standards

- Reading comprehension: characters, setting, problem/solution, sequence of events, theme, and character change.
- Speaking & Listening: sharing ideas in pairs or groups, listening respectfully, role-playing classroom situations.
- Writing: narrative/reflective writing about real or imagined experiences, using details from the story and students’ own lives.

Materials Needed

From this resource

- Printable storybook: *My Magic Breath in My Pocket* (student pages with text and illustrations).
- Comprehension Questions page.
- Reading Check page (T/F, multiple choice, ordering).
- Story Map organizer.
- SEL Reflection Sheet – *My Magic Breath in My Pocket* (plus *My Calm Toolkit* boxes).
- *My Calm Toolkit* – Notice–Name–Do–Say–Next Time framework (on the SEL sheet).
- Writing Prompt – “My Pocket Breath Story”.
- Role-Play Cards – *My Magic Breath in My Pocket*.
- Bonus Activity – “My Pocket Anchor”.