

Lesson: Worry Dolls

Artform: Visual Art

Skill Level: Medium

Teaching Artist: Victoria Andalucia

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To explore art materials and processes
- To develop dexterity and fine motor skills
- To manipulate and transform materials into artwork
- To learn about another culture through its tradition and practice
- To gain confidence in the ability to create
- To calm anxiety and address worries



BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Worry dolls are small handmade dolls, most often made in Guatemala (Central America) from wire, wool and small pieces of fabric. Traditionally, the dolls are given to children to help them with their worries. Children share their concerns with the dolls and then place them under their pillows where the worries will go away overnight.

YouTube video of reading of *Silly Billy* , a book by Anthony Browne
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NLzYNgCqwnc&feature=share>

MATERIALS

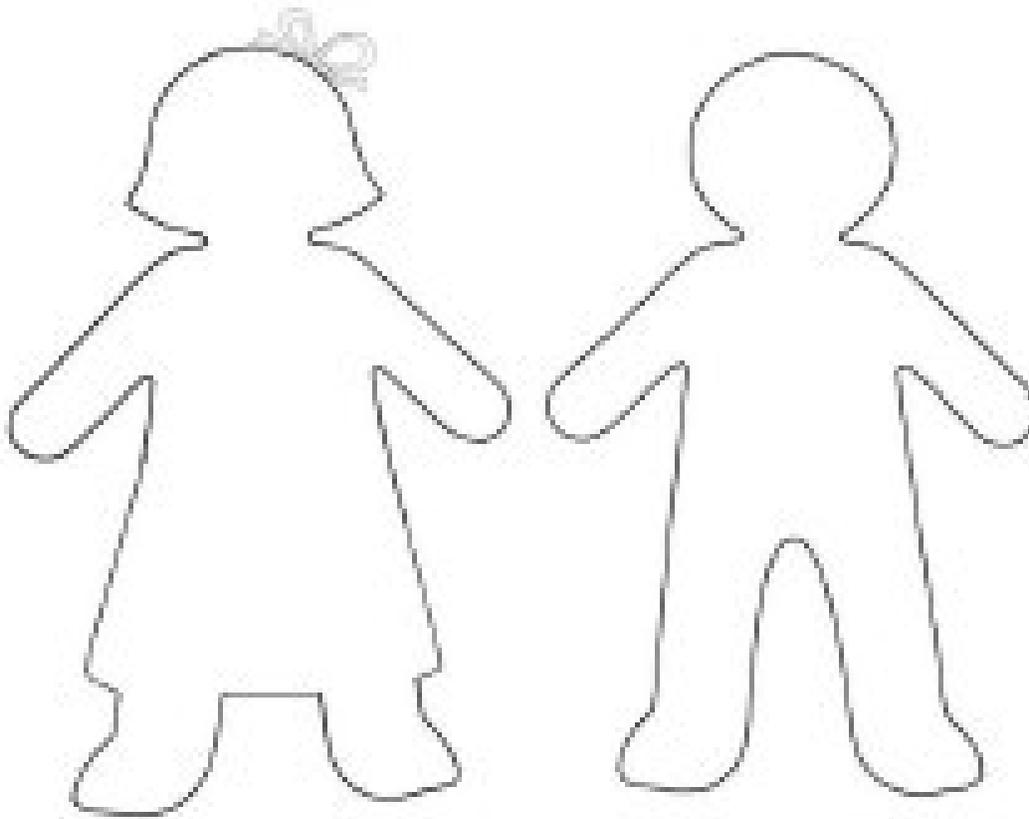
- Plain white paper (heavy weight if possible), plain piece of cardboard or the plain side of piece of a cereal box
- Pencil
- Scissors
- Crayons or markers
- Water-based paint and brush (optional)
- Scraps of cloth and yarn or string (optional)
- Colorful pictures from magazines (optional)
- White glue or another adhesive, as necessary

ACTIVITIES

After watching video above, discuss any worries or fears the student may have and what they do to calm their worries.

Draw or download and print template of a paper doll figure in Example 1.

Outline by drawing around the figure.



1. Assemble the materials you want to use.
2. Color or paint the paper doll: cut out and attach pieces of colorful magazine pictures or fabric and yarn, if available. If you are using yarn, try wrapping the yarn around the dolls and use different colors, so it is bright and colorful. Make the dolls to look like whatever you like.
3. Set the doll aside to dry. Clean up the work area and put away art supplies.
4. Discuss: now it's time for the children to reflect on what they've made, how they might use the dolls, and discuss the theme of worries.
5. Consider telling the doll of any worries you may have and placing the doll under your pillow before sleeping.
6. Next day, discuss other ways to alleviate worries.
7. Suggested alternate activities: tour of my house: move the doll from room to room, like "Flat Stanley," and take pictures of the doll in different activities, such as eating in the dining room. Use as a puppet to role-play activities. Create one or more additional dolls and have the dolls play together, dialogue, dance, sing, etc.

Learn more about the legend of the Guatemalan Worry Doll at:

<https://sleepsavvymagazine.com/what-is-a-worry-doll/>
<https://exploringyourmind.com/legend-guatemalan-worry-dolls/>

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR INCLUDING ALL CHILDREN

Provide very clear step-by-step directions and repeat or clarify, as necessary.

Redirect student's focus, as necessary.

Provide assistance with drawing, cutting and gluing skills, as necessary.

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