Clarinda Community School District
Modified Allowable Growth for Dropout Prevention (MAG-DoP)

Professional Learning

Strategies for Differentiating Instruction v1

Classrooms that successfully meet the needs of all learners are highlighted by differentiated instruction. Teachers can differentiate lessons by offering a variety of learning environments and methods for students to access content, engage in the learning process, and meet assessment standards. This increases the opportunity for the entire spectrum of students in the classroom to learn and achieve.

Strategies for Differentiating Instruction in the Classroom

Environment: Organization of Learning Environment

- Utilize flexible grouping of students that is task specific, i.e. when students are assigned a research task create small groups with students who are both strong and weak in related skills.
- Clearly post steps and expectations for the day where all students can see them.
- Post and regularly update a calendar with both short and long term due dates.
- Display work and information that reinforce curriculum and learning strategies.
- Have materials for students at all levels readily available, i.e. extensive classroom library, computer access.
- Classroom design should allow for maximum student participation, flexible grouping, and freedom of movement for the teacher, i.e. tables arranged in a horseshoe.
- Incorporate independent and small group learning centers into the design, i.e. computer stations, study carrels.
- The arrangement of the classroom should be purposeful and predictable.

Content: Learning Objectives & Access to Materials

- Provide materials at varied levels of difficulty.
- Provide a variety of medias through which students can access curriculum, always including both text and non-text sources, i.e. magazines, internet, political cartoons, personal journals, audio tapes, film, etc.
- Utilize engaging, richly detailed sources (not just the textbook!) in every lesson, i.e., primary source materials, picture books, interactive computer programs, video clips, biographies, etc.
- Provide students with unit organizers/lesson plans, rubrics, assignment guides and models of excellent performance before the lesson.
- Utilize manipulatives and models; tangible objects that can help students better understand abstract concepts.
- Identify specific objectives for technology use and preview films, software, websites, etc. before use.

Process: Delivery and Organization

- Use inquiry, problem-based and project-based learning whenever possible to enhance student engagement and provide multiple entry points into learning. Students have the opportunity to engage in learning that matters to them and to use their skills in real-world contexts.
- Designing units around a central issue, problem or question provides students with coherence between lessons and makes the work both engaging and intellectually challenging. Lessons throughout the unit should be connected to the central issue, problem or question with the purpose of providing students with understanding that will help them respond to the central issue, problem or question.
- Utilize cooperative learning activities which require active participation by all members of the group, while also including individual student responsibilities. Cooperative learning decreases academic competition, and instead establishes systems of collaboration, cooperation and support. For

example, to create a concept map, each team works on a large piece of chart paper, identifying core ideas that relate to a pre-determined central concept, then add supporting details and make connections. Each team member works with a different colored marker.

- When planning the lesson, design it to access student strengths. Anticipate student weaknesses and plan ahead to provide necessary supports.

- When planning, consider individual student's IEP's and plan for necessary accommodations, modifications, and adaptive technology.

- Anticipate the organizational, study, and learning skills required to participate in learning and complete the assignment(s) successfully, and embed the pre-teaching and/or review of these skills into the lesson plan.

- At the beginning of and throughout the year, explicitly teach students strategies for note-taking, reading and comprehending text, solving math story problems, etc. Establish routines for completing the writing process (pre-write, first draft, revise, edit, publish) and provide students with strategies for pre-writing, revising, and peer editing.

- Locate materials that are engaging and accessible to students at all levels.

- Make the transition to new material by helping students to make connections between the new material and their prior knowledge and personal experiences, i.e. KWL chart.

- Preview the lesson by connecting it to the larger unit.

- Prepare students to be successful by providing and discussing lesson guide, rubric, and models of excellent performance.

- Pre-record upcoming due dates as an entire class in student's individual planners and on a classroom calendar.

- Begin units with an opening piece (can be as short as ten minutes) that will grab their attention and interest and preview the unit's central problem, issue or question.

- Vary the format of lessons through a unit to maintain student engagement and interest, i.e., simulation activities, cooperative learning, class debates, interactive lecture-discussions, work in pairs, etc.

- Break lesson into workable units/steps; post and review "To Do" steps each day.

- Present information both visually and orally.

- Utilize the workshop model.

- Model the process for an activity before asking students to complete it individually or in groups.

- Provide students with, and model the use of, planning think sheets, graphic organizers, concept maps, story maps, study guides, etc. to support reading and writing activities.

- Conference with individuals and small groups while students are working.

- Warn students of impending transitions and prepare them to effectively move from one activity into another.

- Be aware of low frustration levels. Help students address the problem individually and guide them to materials and activities they can be successful with.

- Adjust accommodations and modifications for individual students throughout the lesson when necessary.

- Continuously evaluate the effectiveness of the lesson throughout and be flexible with time, instructional delivery, activity design to improve student learning and engagement when necessary.

Product: Assessment

- Assessments need to be conducted throughout the unit, not just at the end, to monitor student learning and progress. Teachers should assess students' progress toward developing understanding about information related to the unit's central issue, problem or question, as well as students' development of learning, thinking and study skills built into the unit.

- Primarily use performance-based assessments which allow students to demonstrate their knowledge through authentic tasks that are presented in real-world contexts. For example, when probability in math class, rather than having students solve pre-designed problems from the textbook, have students work in small groups to create math games based on probability and conduct a "Carnival Day" where students play each other's games and provide feedback.

- Rubrics should clearly state the purpose and goal of the project, steps for completing the project, and expectations for the final product so students know what they need to do to be successful.

- Utilize exhibitions, which allow students to demonstrate their learning through a variety of media, and portfolios, which demonstrate student learning in relation to their personal growth and academic achievement over time.

- Design assessment options that will allow students to demonstrate their learning by utilizing their strengths. Whenever possible, final projects should include cooperative learning formats and public presentation of knowledge gained, i.e., a skit or play, a live or videotaped interview or newscast, a debate, an oral presentation, a PowerPoint display, etc.

- Include an additional challenge or enrichment activity which can be either optional or required depending on the individual student.

- Practice standardized testing in context, analyze the results to identify students' strengths and weaknesses, and utilize this data to guide study, thinking and basic skills instruction.

- Teach students test-taking skills, i.e. chunking, mnemonics, keyword method, throughout the year.

Classroom Climate & Routines

- Setting up daily routines in your classroom provides students with a structure that is both stable and predictable. Students know what to expect, which encourages positive behavior and success, while increasing learning time and reducing time off task. Routines may include beginning each class with ten minutes of silent reading or a five minute review of the previous day's content, having specific procedures for completing science labs, writing due dates in student planners at the start of each week, etc.

- In order for an inclusive classroom to be a successful and productive one, it must be a "safe space" where both students and teachers respect and trust one another. Take the time at the beginning of the year to create a caring, collaborative classroom culture. Continue to both foster positive communication and collaboration and recognize student successes throughout the school year. When negative behaviors do occur, try to solve them one-on-one with the student(s) to avoid public embarrassment and/or a power struggle. Creating a positive classroom environment will drastically reduce the number and seriousness of negative behaviors throughout the school year and will increase effective learning time.

15 Effective Strategies
for Dropout Prevention

Since 1986, the National Dropout Prevention Center (NDPC) has conducted and analyzed research; sponsored workshops and national conferences; and collaborated with researchers, policymakers, and practitioners to further the mission of reducing America's dropout rate by meeting the needs of youth in at-risk situations, including students with disabilities.

Students report a variety of reasons for dropping out of school; therefore, the solutions are multi-dimensional. The NDPC has identified 15 Effective Strategies that have the most positive impact on reducing school dropout. These strategies appear to be independent, but actually work well together and frequently overlap. Although they can be implemented as stand-alone strategies, positive outcomes will result when school districts or other agencies develop program improvement plans that encompass most or all of these strategies. These strategies have been successful at all school levels from PK-12 and in rural, suburban, and urban settings. The strategies are grouped into four general categories: Foundational strategies (school-community perspective), early interventions, basic core strategies, and managing and improving instruction.

Foundational Strategies

★ Systemic Approach
★ School-Community Collaboration
★ Safe Learning Environments

Early Interventions

★ Family Engagement
★ Early Childhood Education
★ Early Literacy Development

Basic Core Strategies

★ Mentoring/Tutoring
★ Service-Learning
★ Alternative Schooling
★ After-School/Out-of-School Opportunities

Managing and Improving Instruction

★ Professional Development
★ Active Learning
★ Educational Technology
★ Individualized Instruction
★ Career and Technical Education (CTE)
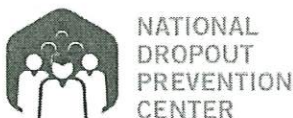
NATIONAL
DROPOUT
PREVENTION
CENTER

Effective Strategies Defined

★ **Systemic Approach**—This strategy calls for a systemic approach and process for ongoing and continuous improvement across all grade levels and among all stakeholders, through a shared and widely communicated vision and focus, tightly focused goals and objectives, selection of targeted research-based strategies and interventions, ongoing monitoring and feedback, and data-based decision making. It also requires the alignment of school policies, procedures, practices, and organizational structures and continuous monitoring of effectiveness.

★ **School-Community Collaboration**—This strategy focuses on the power of an engaged and responsive community where everyone in the community is accountable for the quality of education, resulting in a caring and collaborative environment where youth can thrive and achieve. Critical elements of this type of collaboration rely on effective, ongoing, and multi-dimensional communication so that dropout prevention is a communitywide and ongoing effort.

★ **Safe Learning Environments**—Safe, orderly, nurturing, inclusive, and inviting learning environments help students realize potential as individuals and as engaged members of society. All students need to be safe, physically and emotionally; to be expected to achieve; to be recognized and celebrated equitably for accomplishments; and to feel genuinely welcomed and supported. A safe and orderly learning environment provides both physical and emotional security as well as daily experiences, at all grade levels, that enhance positive social attitudes and effective interpersonal skills. A comprehensive discipline plan and violence prevention plan should include conflict resolution strategies and should deal with potential violence as well as crisis management. A safe, nurturing, and responsive learning environment supports all students, teachers, cultures, and subgroups; honors and supports diversity and social justice; treats students equitably; and recognizes the need for feedback, innovation, and second chances.

★ **Family Engagement**—Research consistently finds that family engagement has a direct, positive effect on youth's achievement and is one of the most accurate predictors of a student's success in school. Critical elements of this type of collaboration rely on effective, ongoing, and multi-dimensional, two-way communication as well as ongoing needs assessments and responsive family supports and interventions.

★ **Early Childhood Education**—Birth-to-five interventions demonstrate that providing a child additional enrichment can enhance brain development. The most effective way to reduce the number of children who will ultimately drop out is to provide the best possible classroom instruction from the beginning of school through the primary grades.

★ **Early Literacy Development**—Early literacy interventions to help low-achieving students improve their reading and writing skills establish the necessary foundation for effective learning in all subjects. Literacy development focus should continue P-12.

★ **Mentoring/Tutoring**—Mentoring is typically a one-to-one caring, supportive relationship between a mentor and a mentee that is based on trust. Mentoring offers a significant support structure for high-risk students. Tutoring, also typically a one-to-one activity, focuses on academic support and is an effective practice when addressing specific needs in collaboration with the student's base teacher.

★ **Service-Learning**—Service-learning connects meaningful community service experiences with academic learning. This teaching/learning method promotes personal and social growth, career development, and civic responsibility and can be a powerful vehicle for effective school reform at all grade levels.

★ **Alternative Schooling**—Alternative or non-traditional schooling and delivery model options (e.g., alternative times and environments, blended learning, virtual learning, competency-based credit opportunities) provide alternative avenues to credit earning and graduation, with programs paying special attention to the student's individual and social needs, career goals, and academic requirements for obtaining a high school diploma and transitioning successfully to life beyond graduation.

★ **After-School/Out-of-School Opportunities**—Many schools provide after-school, before-school, and/or summer academic/enhancement/enrichment opportunities (e.g., tutoring, credit recovery, acceleration, homework support, etc.) that provide students with opportunities for assistance and recovery as well as high-interest options for discovery and learning. These opportunities often decrease information loss and can inspire interest in arenas otherwise inaccessible. Such experiences are especially important for at-risk students because out-of-school "gap time" is filled with constructive and engaging activities and/or needed academic support.

★ **Professional Development**—Adults who work with youth at risk of dropping out need to be provided ongoing professional learning opportunities, support, and feedback. The professional learning should align with the agreed upon vision and focus for the school/agency, the agreed upon instructional framework of high leverage research-based practices and strategies, and the identified needs of the population served. The professional learning opportunities provided should be frequently monitored to determine the fidelity of implementation and need for additional support and feedback.

★ **Active Learning**—Active learning and student engagement strategies engage and involve students in meaningful ways as partners in their own learning. These strategies include student voice and choice; effective feedback, peer assessment, and goal setting; cooperative learning; thinking critically, creatively, and reflectively; and micro-teaching, discussion, and two-way communication. To be most effective, teachers must provide students with tools and strategies to organize themselves and any new material; techniques to use while reading, writing, and doing math; and systematic steps to follow when working through a task or reflecting upon their own learning.

★ **Educational Technology**—Instructional Technology can effectively support teaching and learning while engaging students in meaningful, current, and authentic efforts; addressing multiple intelligences; and adapting to students' learning styles. Educational technology can effectively be used in individualized instruction and can not only help prepare students for the workforce, but can empower students who struggle with self-esteem. Effective use of technologies depends upon the timely response to and application of the rapidly expanding choices and matches to identified student needs.

★ **Individualized Instruction**—Learning experiences can be individualized, differentiated, or personalized (combining paced and tailored learning with flexibility in content or theme to fit the interests, preferences, and prior experiences of each learner). In an environment that is fully personalized, the learning objectives and content as well as the method and pace may all vary (so personalization encompasses differentiation and individualization).

★ **Career and Technical Education (CTE)**—Quality CTE programs and related career pathways and guidance programs with P-20W orientation are essential for all students. Youth need workplace skills as well as awareness and focus to increase not only the likelihood that they will be prepared for their careers, but also that school will be relevant to what is next.

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Connect. Contribute. Collaborate.

Clarinda Community School District

Where students are at the
CENTER
of everything we do!

1

Be blessed, not stressed.
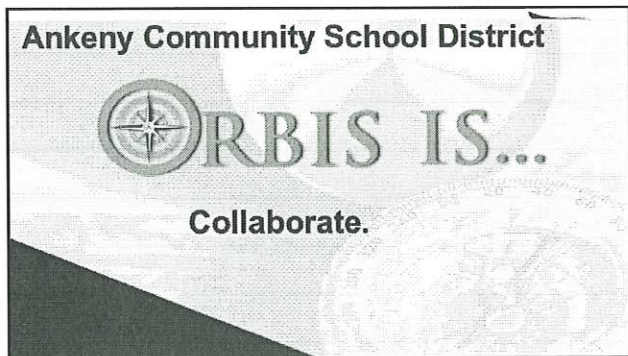Be where your feet are.
Be curious, not furious.

2

Connect.

- Focus on careers touching mental health
- Provide authentic experiences for our learners
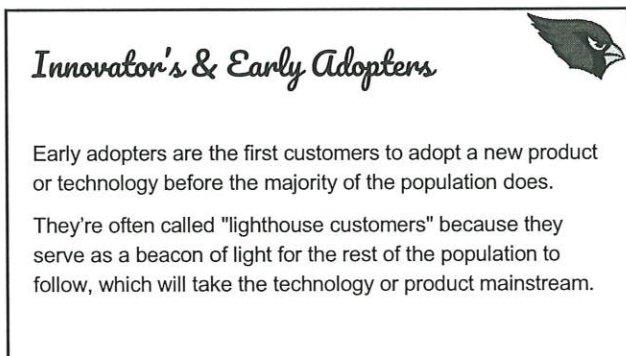- Partner with the community
- Support economic development in Clarinda

STEM BEST GRANT

3

Clarinda Economic Development

7

Ankeny Community School District

ORBIS IS...

Collaborate.

8

Innovator's & Early Adopters

Early adopters are the first customers to adopt a new product or technology before the majority of the population does.

They're often called "lighthouse customers" because they serve as a beacon of light for the rest of the population to follow, which will take the technology or product mainstream.

9

Contribute.

13

Connect.

Defined STEM
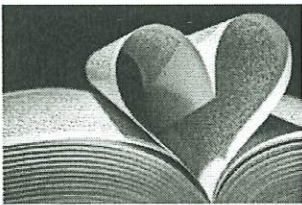
Collaborate.

Green Hills AEA

14

What's Your Story?

15

Clarinda Community School District
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Welcome!
What door do you need?

SEL

Break Room

Sensory Room

Explore SEL

Library
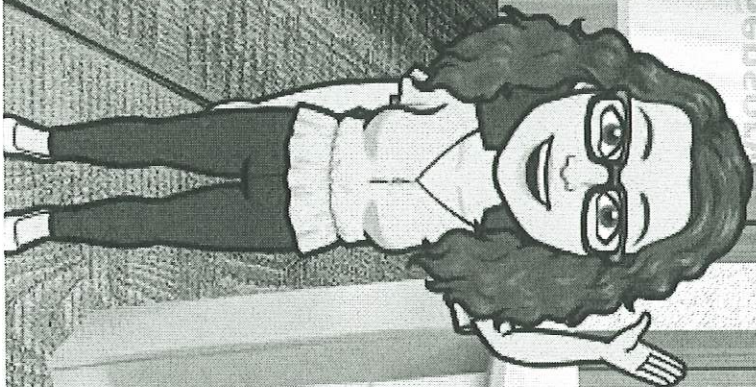
The ZONES of REGULATION

Front Desk

RED ZONE
- Mad
- Rage
- Scared
- Frustration

BLUE ZONE
- Sad
- Tired
- Sick
- Bored

YELLOW ZONE
- Frustrated
- Worried
- Confused
- Stressed
- ?
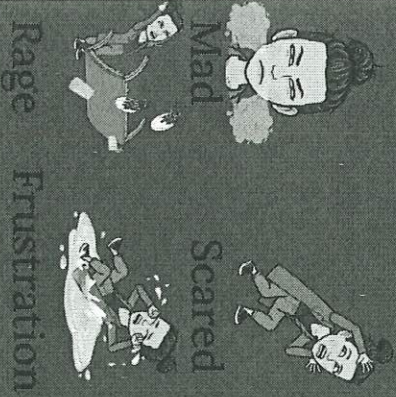
GREEN ZONE
- Happy
- Calm
- Ready To Learn
- Focused
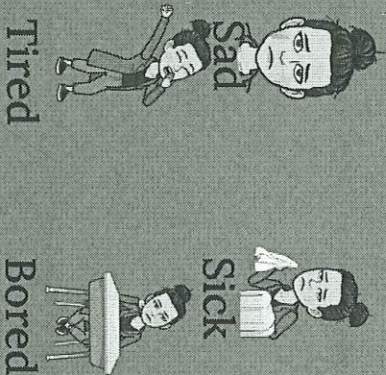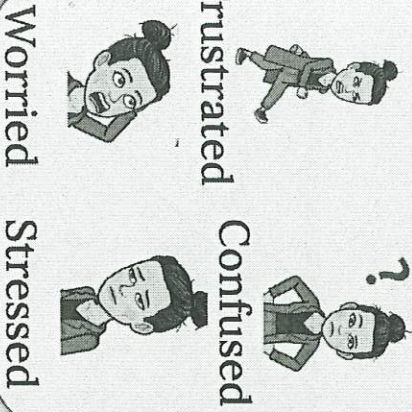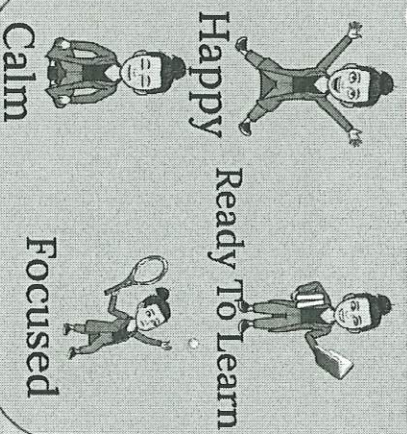
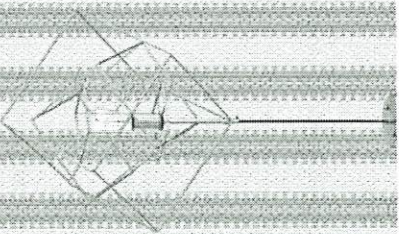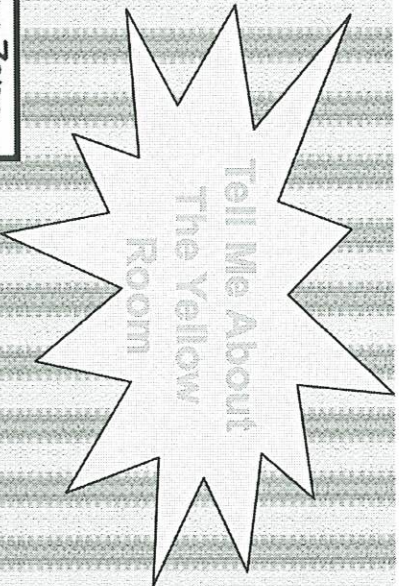## What ZONE are you in?
Pick your ZONE
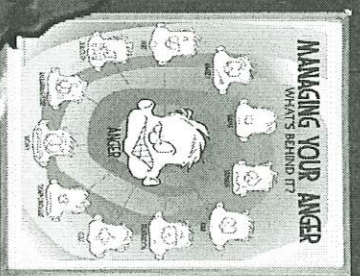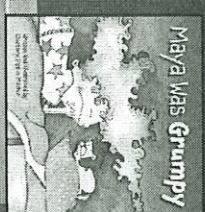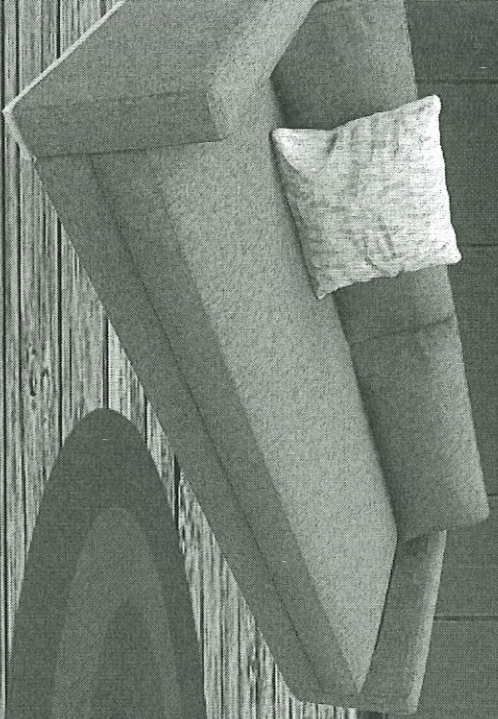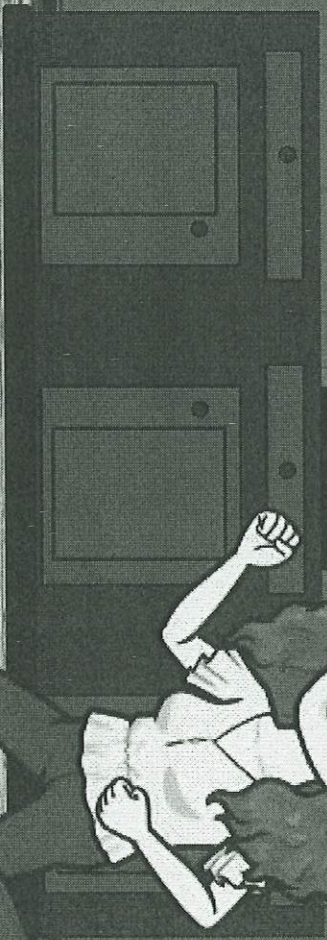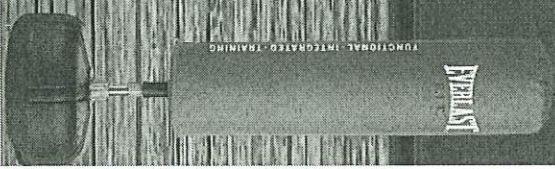
REST AREA

Front Desk

Break Room

Strategies

Tell Me About The Blue Room

IRA CRUMB Feels the Feelings

The WORRYSAURUS

Disappointed

Hurty Feelings

FEELING SAD
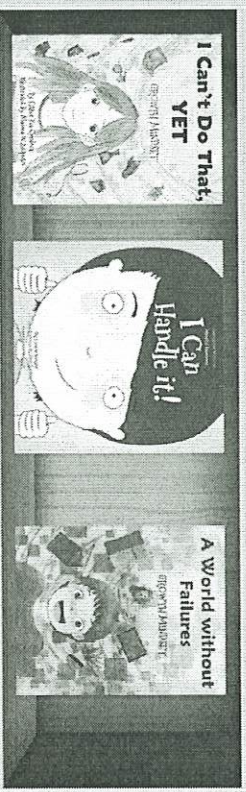
MR. GRUMPY

The Pout-Pout Fish

SLOW
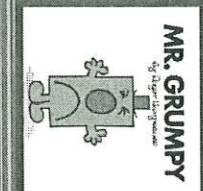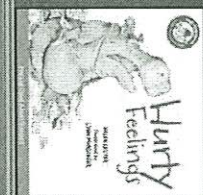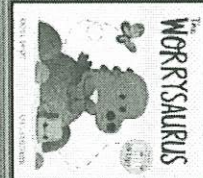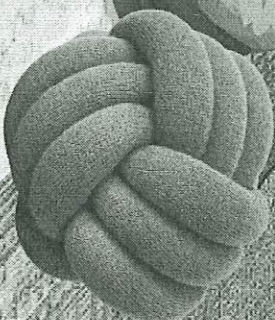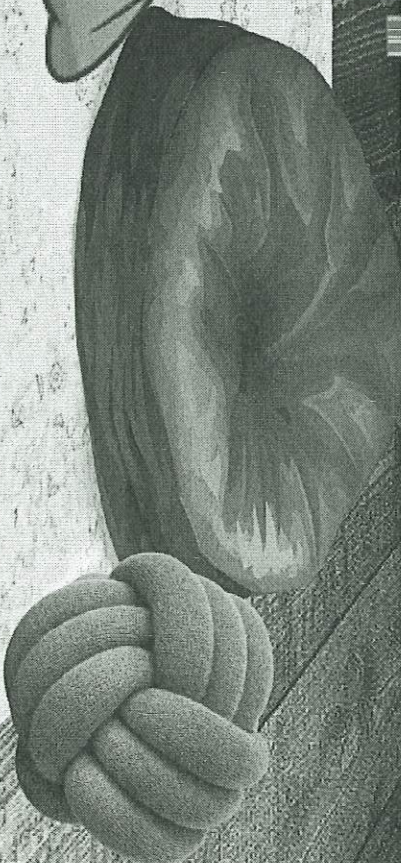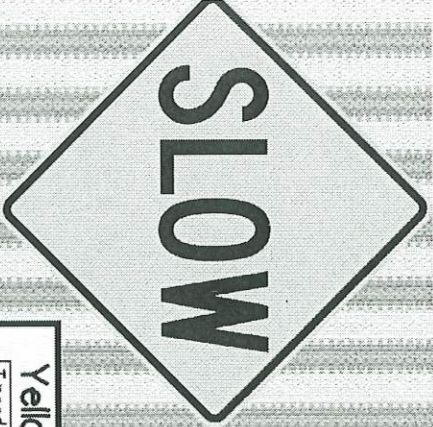
Break Room
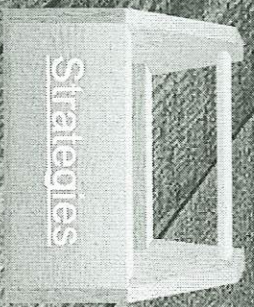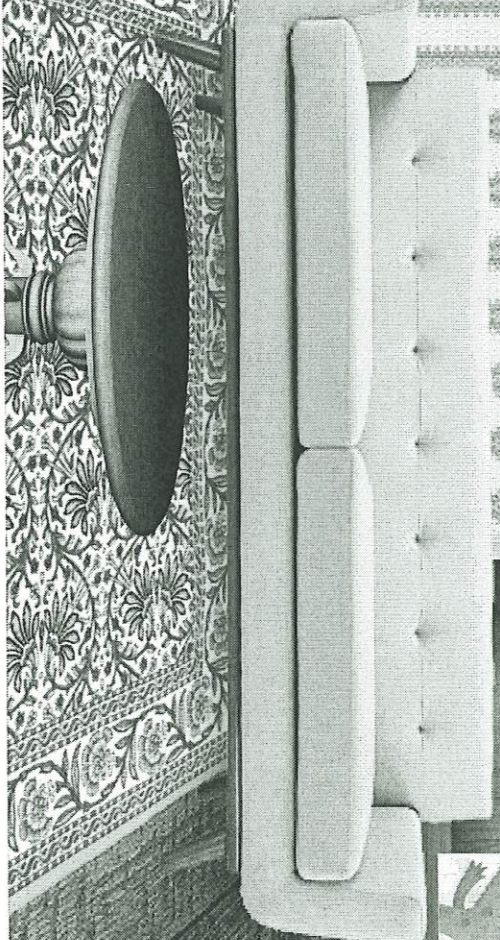
Front Desk

Yellow Zone

I need to take caution.

Worried   Nervous   Annoyed   Upset

I can try these tools:

Take a break   Get a drink   Walk

Tell Me About The Yellow Room

Strategies

WORRY MONSTERS

THE GIRL WHO NEVER MADE MISTAKES

I Can't Do That, YET

I Can Handle it!

A World without Failures

RUBY FINDS A WORRY

A LITTLE SPOT OF ANXIETY

What Were You Thinking?

SENSORY ROOM

Sensory Room

This is a space to learn about how to:
- Listen to our bodies, and what's around us
- Learn about what shifts us from Zone to Zone
- Discover ways to help us return to the Green Zone for learning and peace.
- Try new things
- Move our bodies in purposeful, positive ways

Mindful Coloring

headspace

GoNoodle

COSMIC KIDS!

Front Desk