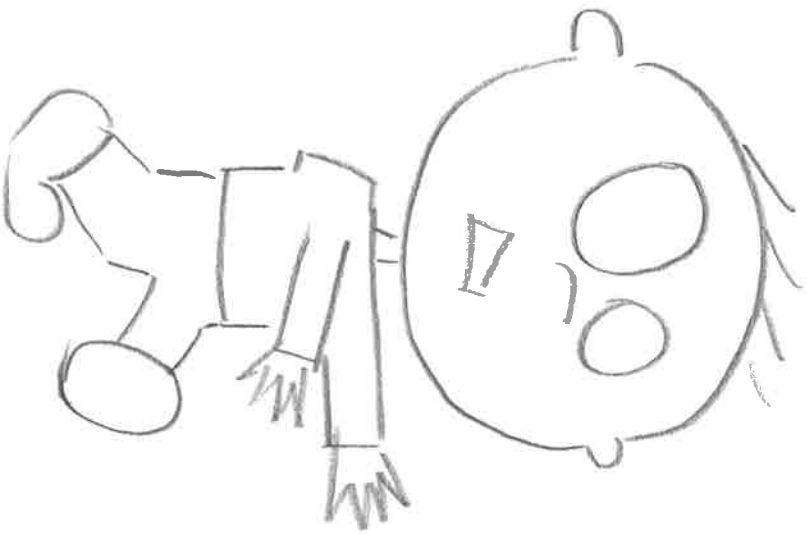


Feelings
**Ted the
Zombie**



By Eric Elias

This is Ted. Ted is a Zombie



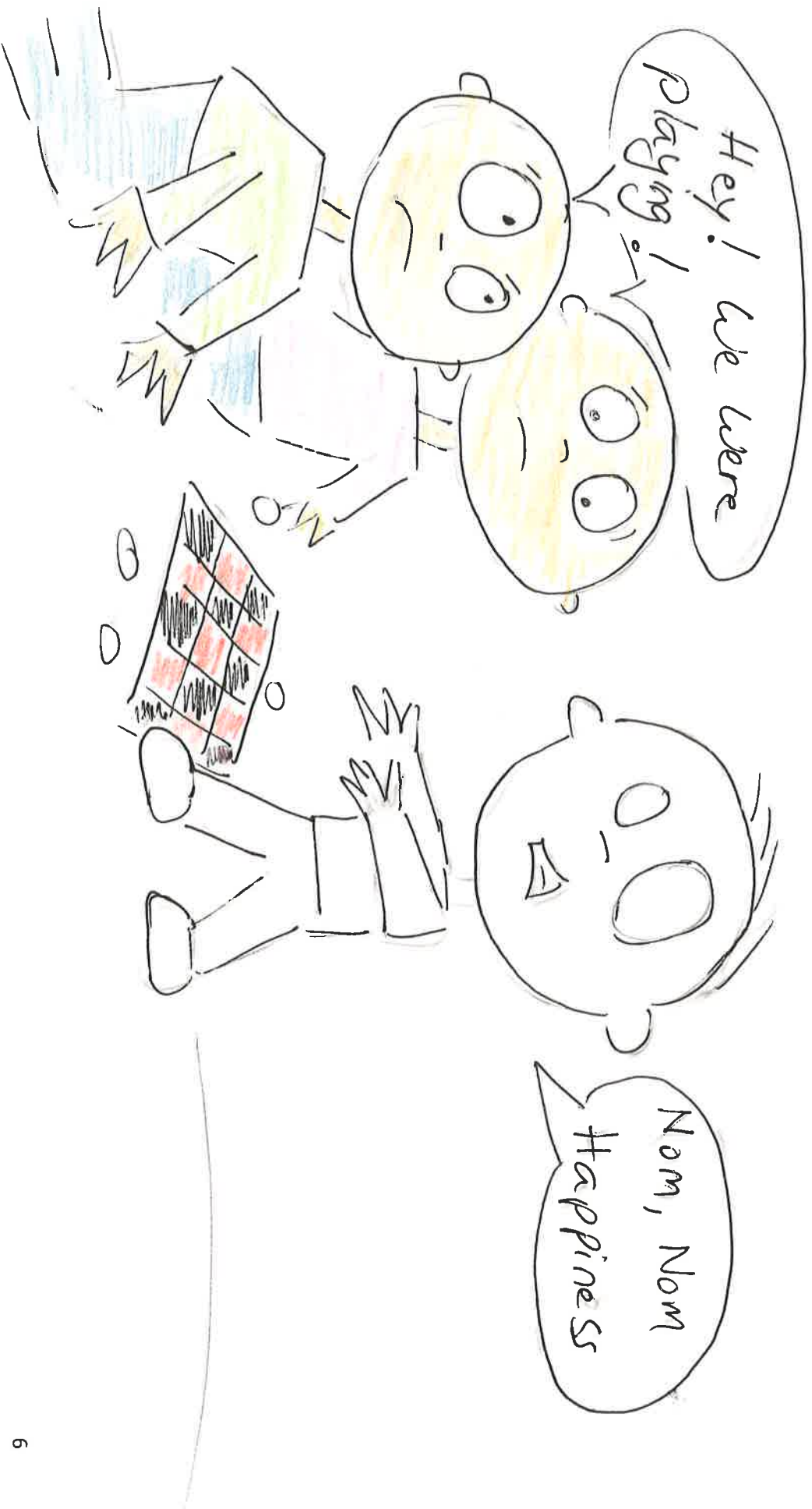
...well not the creepy, brain-eating zombie, but a feelings-zombie.



What's a feelings-zombie? You ask. A feelings-zombie is someone who feels unhappy and eats up the good feelings of others to try to make him or herself feel happy again.



How can someone gobble up other people's feelings? Well, they don't really gobble them up. They might make fun of others, interrupt people's games and work, or hit and push.



What made Ted turn into a feelings-zombie?



One day Ted forgot what it felt like to feel happy and slowly his negative feelings took over. Maybe he was sad, or scared, or lonely.



It might have been because many people stopped being kind to Ted. Maybe it was because he needed a hug. Maybe Ted simply got up on the wrong side of the zombie bed and just stayed there.



Whatever the reason, Ted began to think that the only way to become happy again was to try to gobble up everyone else's good feelings.



He did that by interrupting other people's fun.



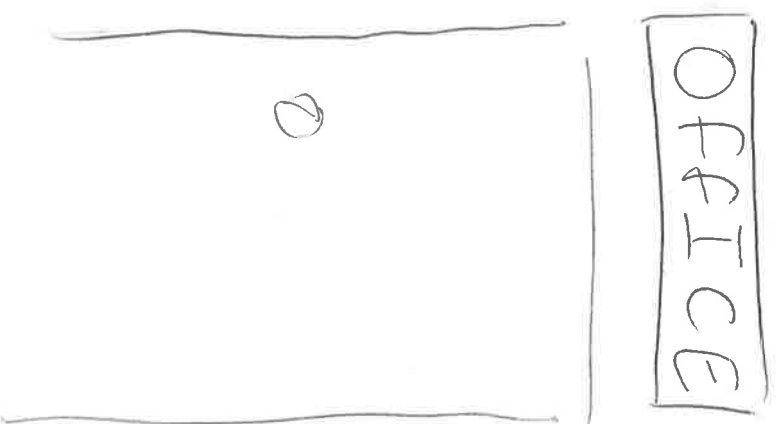
He did that by yelling at people.



He did that by putting people down, fighting and arguing.



This started a pattern where Ted would feel bad and misbehave, then he would get in trouble and feel bad all over again. He had a problem. He was becoming a feelings-zombie.



Sometimes, Ted would try to gobble up other people's feelings and *they* would feel so badly that they would turn into feelings-zombies too. What if everyone felt badly and no one got along? It could turn into a feelings-zombie apocalypse!

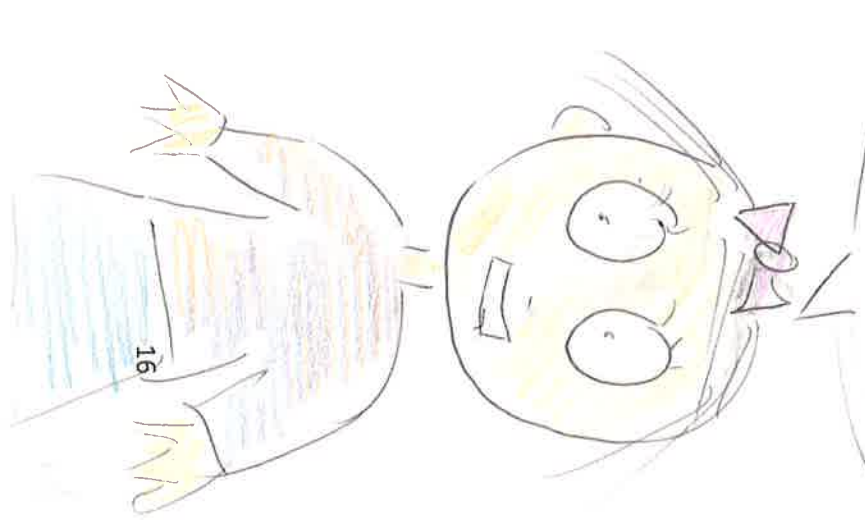


Ted's friends and family decided that enough was enough. Ted needed to stop trying to gobble up other people's feelings and learn to get along.

We NEED TO HELP Ted!



Great Idea!



They decided that the way to help a feelings-zombie was to begin helping them to feel happy again. They began including him in their games.



They decided to tell him what they like about him.



As Ted started to feel better, he started to return to his normal self. He began to stop trying to gobble up other people's good feelings. He also began to say and do kind things for other people.



The feelings-zombie apocalypse was avoided and no one was hurt!



The next time you are feeling grouchy, remember that you can't be happy by gobbling up other people's good feelings. That's being a feeling-zombie. You can save the world from the feelings-zombie apocalypse by just being kind!



Concepts, ideas and questions for discussion

Social emotional learning programs suggest that emotional understanding, social skills and coping skills can be taught. If students are having social or behavioral difficulty, there may be a skills deficit that can be addressed through support. Typical progression for developing skills would be initially to identify feelings in isolation. Can students recognize what people are feeling from other's facial expressions and body-language? Identifying one's own feelings and recognizing particular circumstances that affect them would follow. Developing empathy for others and developing social understanding (relationship skills) follow the progression. Problem solving and coping skills are an additional set of skills to be taught.

The book *Ted the Feelings Zombie* is all about Ted having difficulty getting along. Facilitate discussions regarding empathy, social problem solving, coping skills and bullying. Discuss how students can help others feel included. Discuss what upset Ted and how he could have handled things better. Is bothering other people okay when we're mad? Discuss with students things that bother them and how they work through problems with friends. Did the students notice that before Ted was "in touch" with his feelings, his world was black and white, once he became more comfortable with his emotions, his world became more colorful. Ask the students what they think a "feelings zombie" is. Is this someone who is "numb" to their feelings? Have they ever had novocaine at the dentist? What does it mean to feel numb? The feelings faces can facilitate discussion regarding affect recognition. Students can also draw and discuss their own feelings on the printable worksheet. Discuss with students what skills help them calm down when upset.

Coping Skills

Do you know what helps you calm down and feel better?

Here are some things that work for people.

1. Figure out what you are really feeling: Sometimes we are really feeling is embarrassed or worried, but we call it anger.
2. Take a break: step away from what's bothering you. You can ask your teacher for a break, or your teacher might tell you to take a walk, get a drink, take a message to the office. This can help you get away from what's bothering you for a few minutes and relax.
3. Talk it out: sometimes talking with a friend or a grown up can help you. If you are angry or scared you can talk about what is upsetting you and maybe figure out a solution.
4. Count to 10: when you are angry or frustrated, counting to 10 gives your brain a break and gives you some time to think.
5. Take deep breaths: taking 5 deep breaths (in through your nose, out through your mouth) helps your body calm down.
6. Solve the problem: Figuring out what happened or what is happening and finding a solution may help you relax. Keep things in perspective. That means consider other peoples' ideas and perspectives.
7. Fix the problem: did something happen that you might need to apologize for? Sometimes fixing the problem helps bring things back to normal.
8. What works for you?

How Do You Feel Today? Draw Your Picture:



Zombie Angry



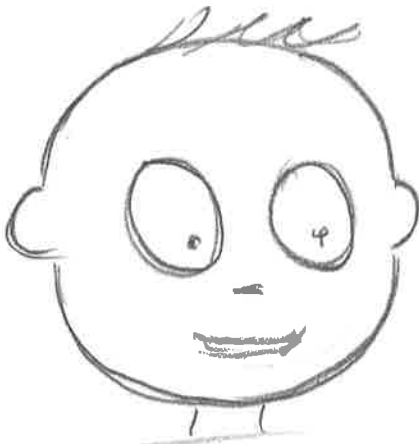
SAD



Happy



CONFUSED



Calm



Scared