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The Storm Cloud by Frances Stickley and Emily Hamilton



Reading Guide and Activities for *The Storm Cloud* written by Frances Stickley and illustrated by Emily Hamilton Suitable for ages 5+

National Curriculum links: Supporting RSHE and PSHE in teaching children to identify and manage 'big feelings', develop empathy and build friendships.

Themes: *The Storm Cloud* is a meditative discussion around mental health and the role of positive relationships which uses metaphor to explore tricky concepts around the abstraction of feelings.

It's a wonderfully sunny day, but Bear has woken up to find a storm cloud hanging above his head and he just can't get rid of it. Can his friends help him find his way through the storm and back to happiness? This gentle and hopeful story is about experiencing sadness and the quiet support of friends.

The Storm Cloud

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Reading and Discussion:

1. Look at the front cover together and then discuss:

- What do you see on the cover?
- What do you think the book is going to be about?
- How does the cover illustration make you feel?



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2. Read the book together and then discuss:

- How do the illustrations reflect Bear's mood?
- Why do you think the illustrator chose to make Bear blue?
- Ask what other shapes and colours they associate with emotions, such as being happy, cross, anxious, lonely, scared, jealous.
- Ask if anyone has ever felt like Bear or experienced another big emotion, like being frightened or anxious.
- Try hot seating both Bear and then Squirrel – this is a great way to normalise responses and reactions, like not wanting to spend time with friends.
- Discuss ways in which you could all be more empathetic like Fox, Rabbit and Squirrel.
- Ask the children what things help to make them feel better when they're sad – a blanket, hot chocolate, a hug.

3. Use the following activities to explore the topic further:

- Activity 1: Collage Rainbow
- Activity 2: Today I am feeling . . .
- Activity 3: Can you see the cloud above my head?



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Collage Rainbow

Refer back to when you read the book and listed the shapes and colours the children associate with emotions. Ask the children to draw and colour or find images in magazines that are those shapes or colours. These can be cut out and stuck on the rainbow template below or make a larger classroom display.



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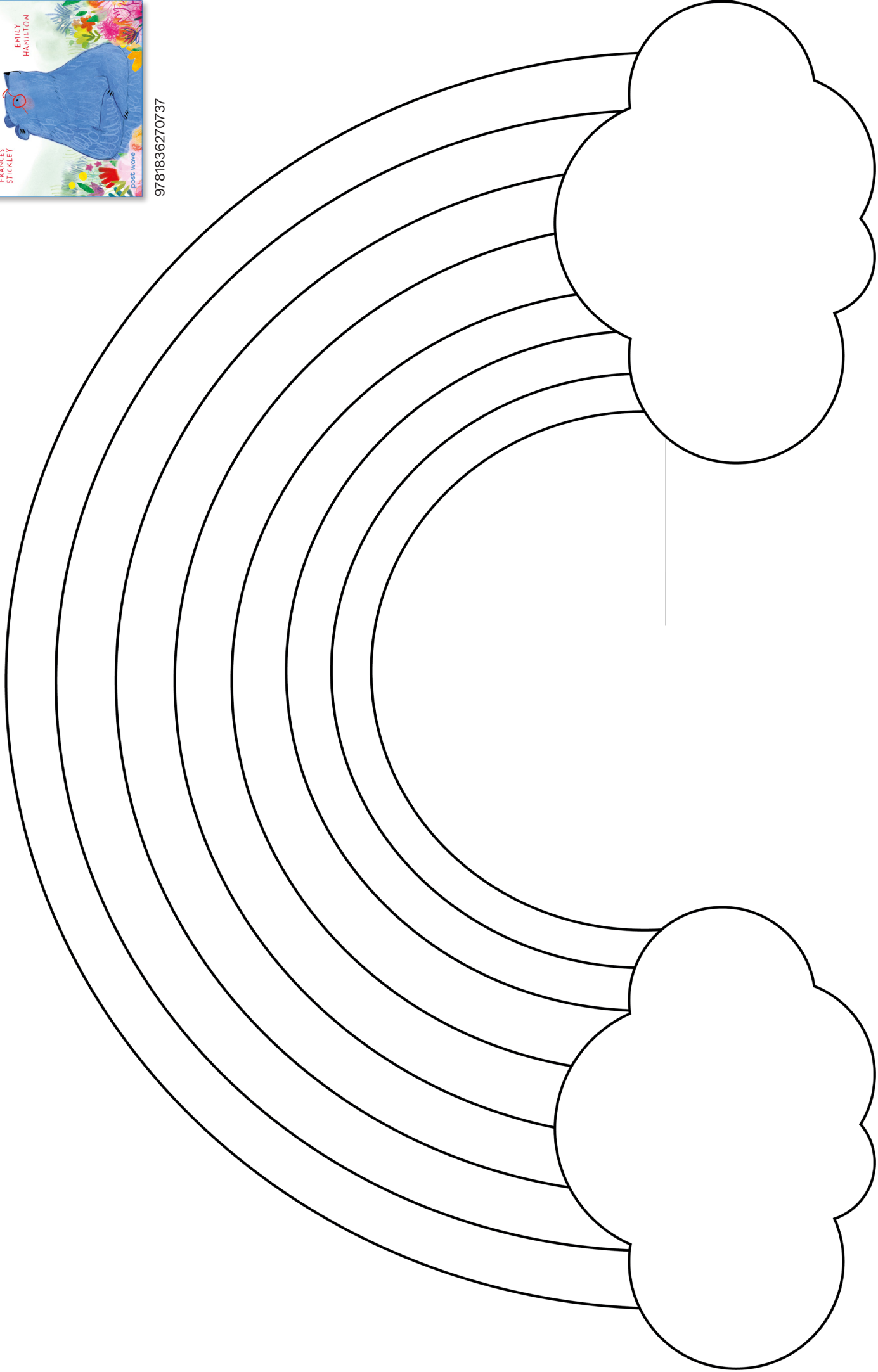
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Today I am feeling . . .

Ask the children to write down one thing that has made them feel blue like Bear today and one thing that has made them happy.



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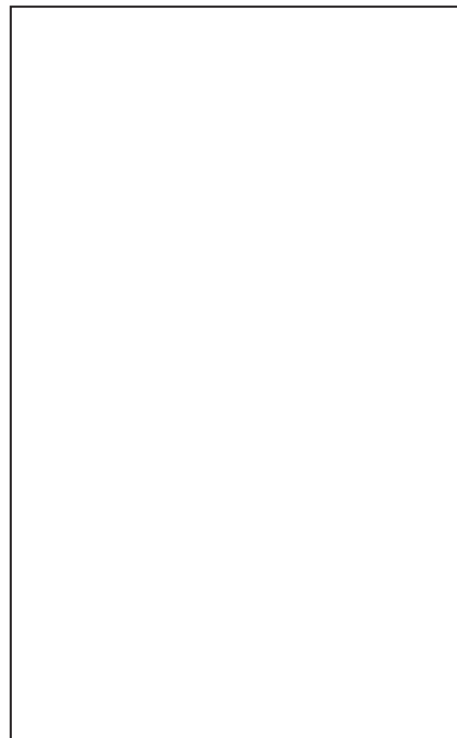
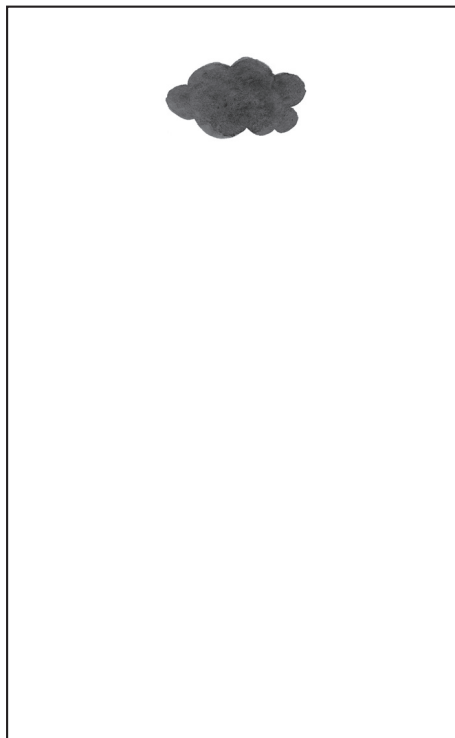


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Can you see the cloud above my head?

List and draw the things that might make your storm cloud get smaller or even disappear.



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