

Think and write

Activity 1 of 3

Eli and the Empty Seat

Ages 9-12 | Do it on your own or with a grownup. You can leave anything blank.

1 Write a thought you have had that felt very sure.

2 What do you actually know about it? What are you only guessing?

3 Write one other thing that could be true.

Your answers are yours. Share them only if you want to.

Grownup conversation guide

Activity 2 of 3

Eli and the Empty Seat

Read the story together first. Take turns. Listen more than you advise.

- 1 When Eli sat alone, what do you think his body was telling him?
- 2 Can you remember a time a worry turned out to be only a guess?
Share one of yours first.
- 3 What small step could Eli have taken first? What small step could you take?
- 4 How can we notice a loud thought at our house without teasing each other?
- 5 What is one way you like us to help when a thought feels too big?

Tip: let your child pass on any question. Praise the effort of noticing, not a perfect answer. If worry, anger or sadness stays strong for weeks or gets in the way of daily life, talk with your child's doctor, school or a trusted professional.

Eli and the Empty Seat

Cut out the card, or copy it onto an index card, and keep it where you will see it.

Eli's Thought Check

1. Notice the thought. Say it out loud or write it down. A thought can feel very sure and still be only a guess.
2. Sort it. What do I actually know? What am I guessing? What else could be true?
3. Choose one small step. Pick something you can do even while the thought is still there, like saying hello or asking a question.
4. Tell someone you trust. A cousin, a parent or a teacher can help you see more than your worried mind can.

A loud thought is not always a true thought.

Draw a time you could use this tool: