

## ***I Am Enough***

By Grace Byers

A common experience for both children and adults is bumping up against a challenging event and believing we are not enough. A child running a race in PE will tell himself that he is not fast enough. Another believes that she is not smart enough to finish the work. As children get older, they compare themselves with others and believe they are not pretty enough, strong enough, good enough or likeable enough. The chatter that goes on inside of our head has been found to have a profound influence on behavior and learning. Talking to ourselves in the third person is more effective than speaking in the first person. For example, it more effective to say, “She is smart enough to do this assignment,” versus, “I am smart enough to do this assignment.”

Children from hard places have a deep core of shame and believe themselves to be fundamentally flawed. When a teacher says, “Next we are going to...” it is common to see a child’s head go down and the negative chatter begins... “I can’t;” “I’m not smart enough...” “It’s too hard...” It is important to work toward changing a child’s negative view of self to one that is both positive and realistic.

### **Key Understandings**

- The voice in my head and the things that I tell myself have an influence on my behavior and learning.
- I need to speak positive affirmations in my head using the third person, “She can run fast enough.” “He is smart enough to do well on the test.”

### **Key Vocabulary**

- Soar: to fly high in the air with ease
- Dictate: to order or decisively tell someone something

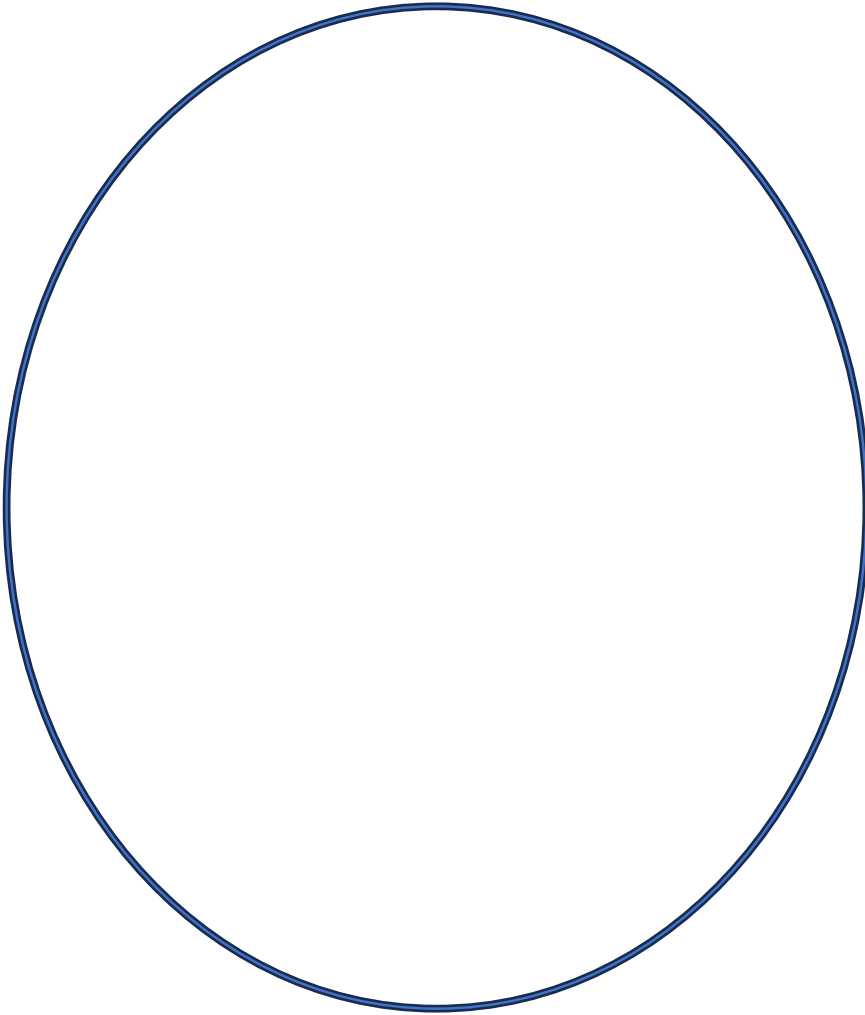
### **Discussion**

- Has anyone ever said, “You are not enough.” (Example: You can’t run fast enough. You are not smart enough.) How did that make you feel?
- Have you ever told yourself that you are not enough?
- Create a chart with two columns. Brainstorm the negative things they say to themselves and record on the left side of the chart. On the right-hand side turn the negative thought into a positive affirmation.

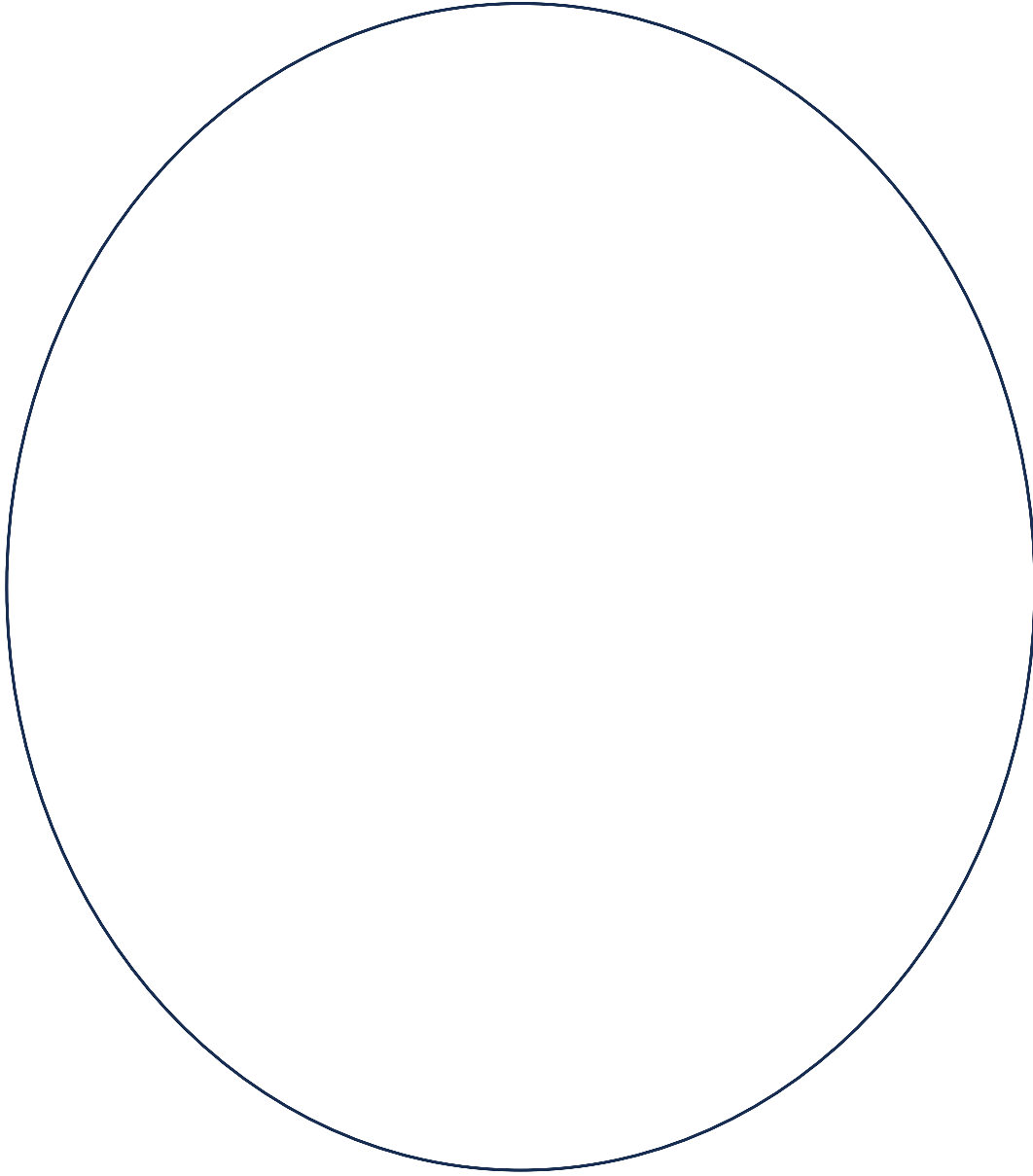
## Follow Up

- Give each child a copy of the “self-portrait” sheet and ask them to draw their face and cut it out.
- Cover the larger oval labeled, “mirror” with aluminum foil.
- Attach a tongue depressor for the handle to the mirror.
- Glue the self-portrait onto the mirror.
- Give each child a speech bubble to write positive self-affirmations.
- Display the self-portraits and affirmations on the bulletin board.
- When you see a child’s head go down, the hoodie go up or other indication of negative self-talk, ask the child to go to the board and read their own positive affirmations.

# Self Portrait



# Mirror



# Speech Bubble

