

**The Semicolon Worksheet:**  
**Building Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Skills for Young Readers**

**Suggested age range:** 6-9 years

**Target skills:** Empathy, emotional awareness, emotional literacy

This worksheet may be printed or duplicated for personal or classroom use only. Due to the book's difficult themes and potential for questions about the subject matter, *all Reader Activities for children are intended to be completed with an accompanying adult.*

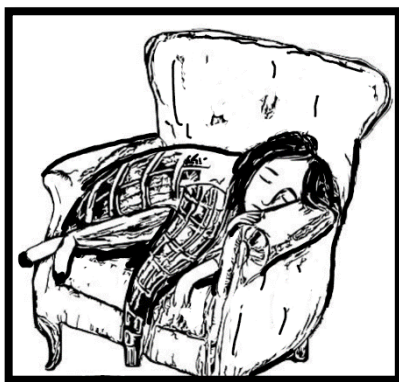
**Recognizing what is not being said**

In *The Semicolon*, the main character never says "I'm sad." Sometimes it's hard to talk about our feelings, even with people who love us. Other times, we may not know what we are feeling. We might even feel many things at once.

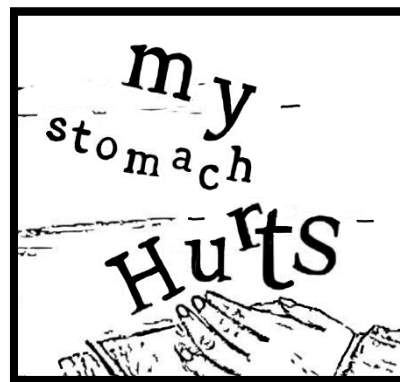
**1.) Many clues in the book tell us the main character is going through a hard time. Write down 3 clues that you found from the words or pictures:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

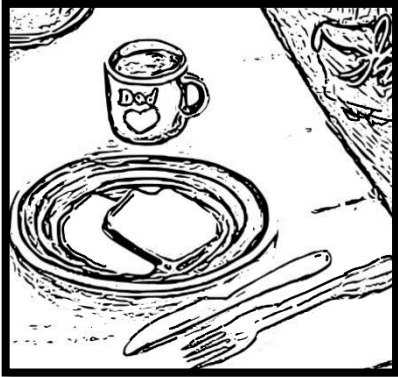
**2.) Some clues are hard to spot! Here are a few sneaky clues that the main character is unhappy at the start of the book. Can you find each one? Circle each box when you find its match in the book's pictures:**



**Sleeping in Dad's chair**



**Stomachache**



**Not eating (full plate left on table)**



**Not wanting to play (soccer ball in corner)**

**3.) By the end of the book, the main character is starting to feel better. Read the last few pages of the story again and look closely at the pictures. Which of these clues did you find that the main character is happier? Check them off here:**

Happy memories of Dad

Talking to Mr. Smeechie

Imagining good things for the future  
(wearing graduation cap and robes)

Smiling

Nightmare ends

Playing soccer with friends

**Optional add-on: Topics for discussion**

1.) Being able to talk about our feelings is important, but it's not always easy. In the book, the main character could not "put words together" to explain what was wrong to Mr. Smeechie or ask for help. Has there ever been a time when you did not know what you were feeling, or how to say it? It's okay to need time or help to figure out emotions and what to do with them.

2.) If you had a friend, classmate, or loved one who was going through a hard time, what could you do to help them feel better? Some ideas are: asking if they want to talk, doing something nice for them, and being a good listener if they open up. If you are very worried about them, it's okay to ask an adult for help.