

# Sonia Snail Takes Time to Tuck and Think

Adapted 2012 by WestEd Teaching Pyramid  
from a scripted story to assist with teaching  
the “Turtle Technique”

Original By Rochelle Lentini March 2005

Artwork by Alejandro Castillon, 2011 WestEd



**Sonia Snail is a terrific snail. She likes to play with her friends at Wet Lake School.**



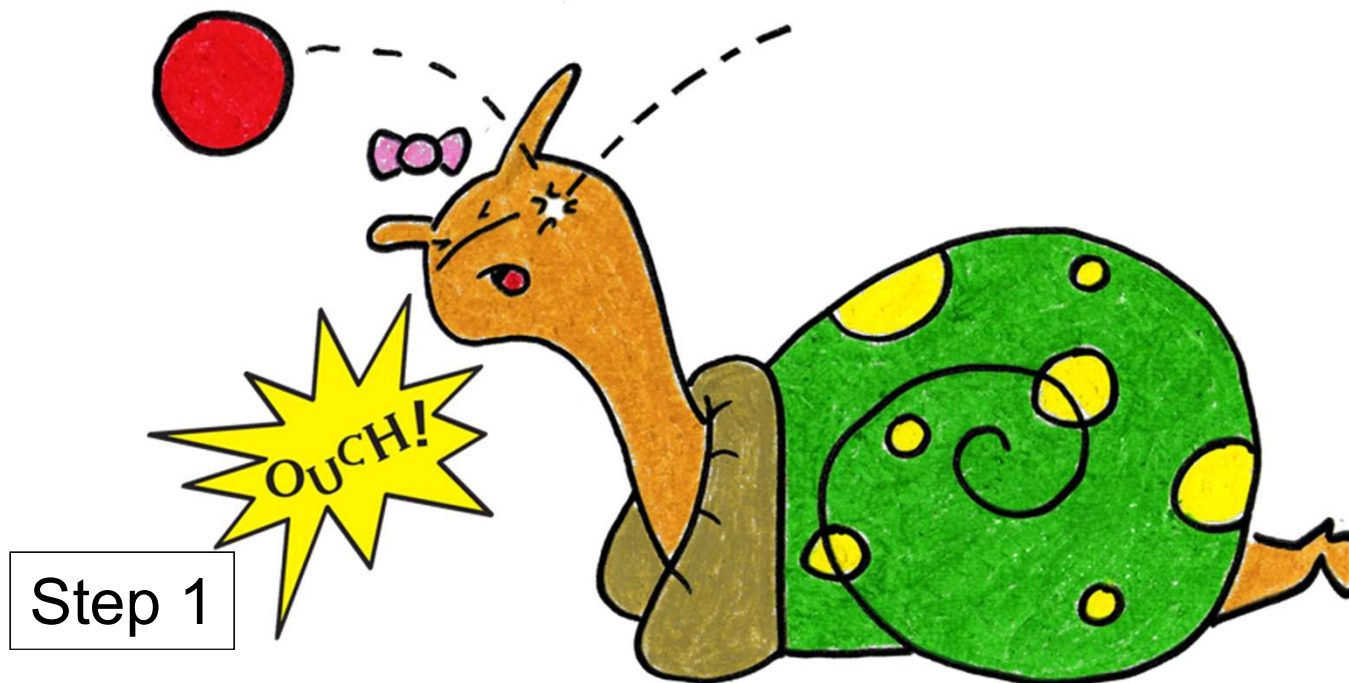
**But sometimes things happen that can make Sonia really mad.**



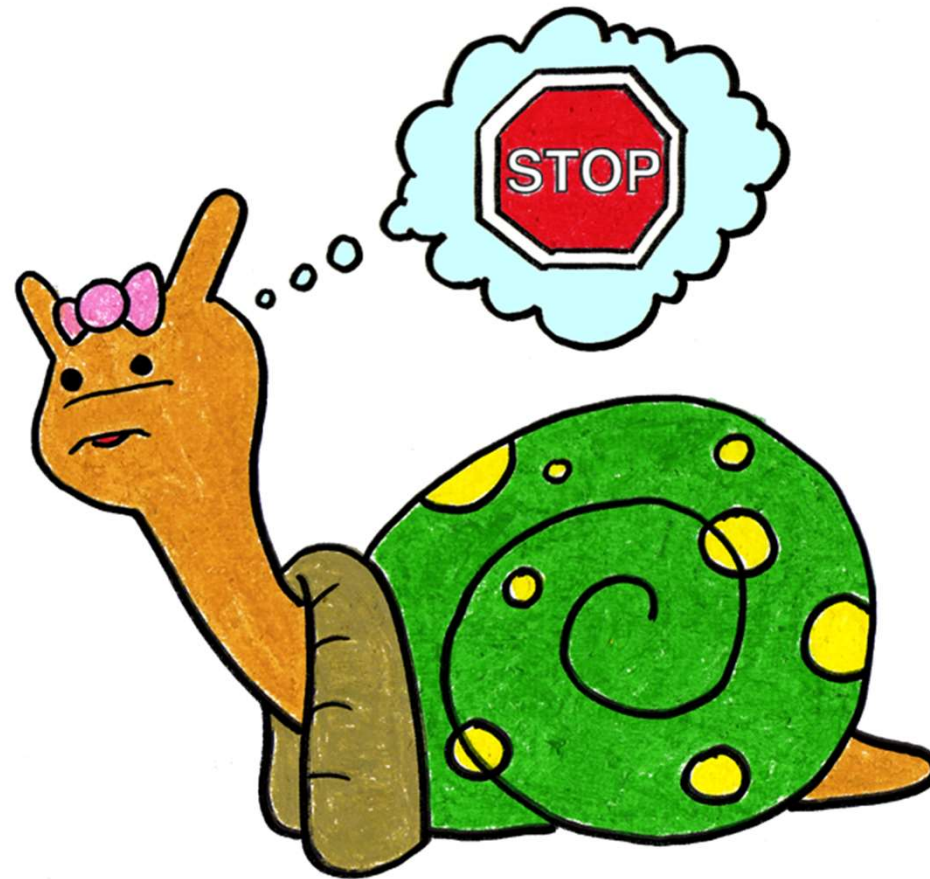
**When Sonia got mad, she used to hit, kick, or yell at her friends. Her friends would get mad or upset when she hit, kicked, or yelled at them.**



**Sonia now knows a new way to “think like a snail” when something happens to make her mad.**



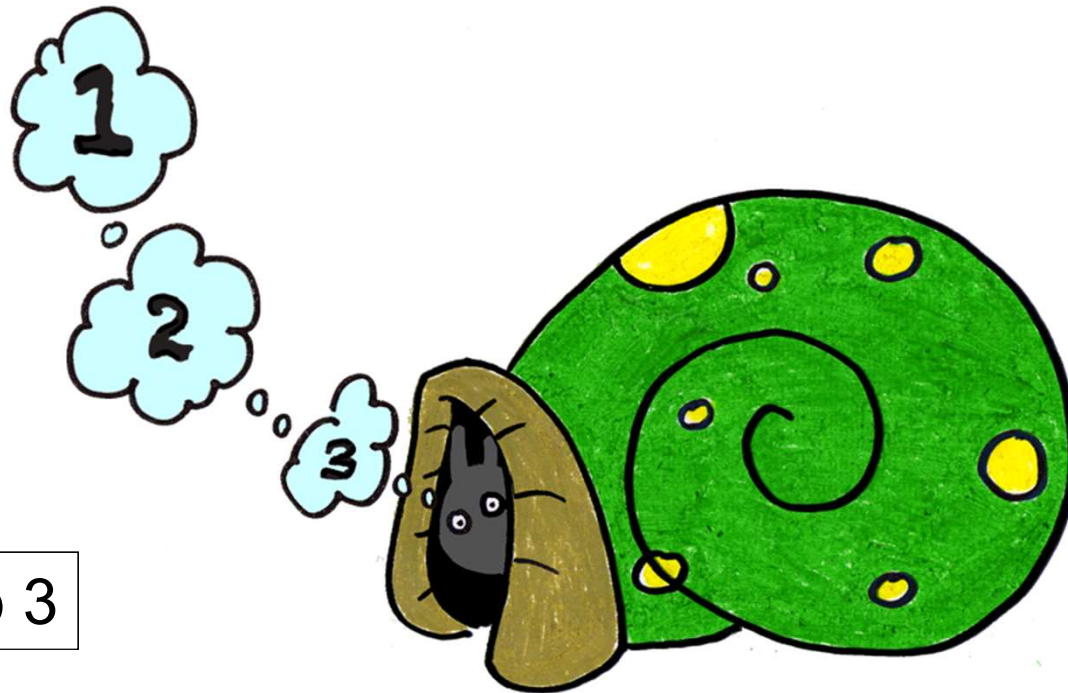
She can **stop** and keep her hands, body, and yelling to herself. She can think, “What am I feeling?” If she is angry, she can stomp her feet and say “I’m mad!”



Step 2



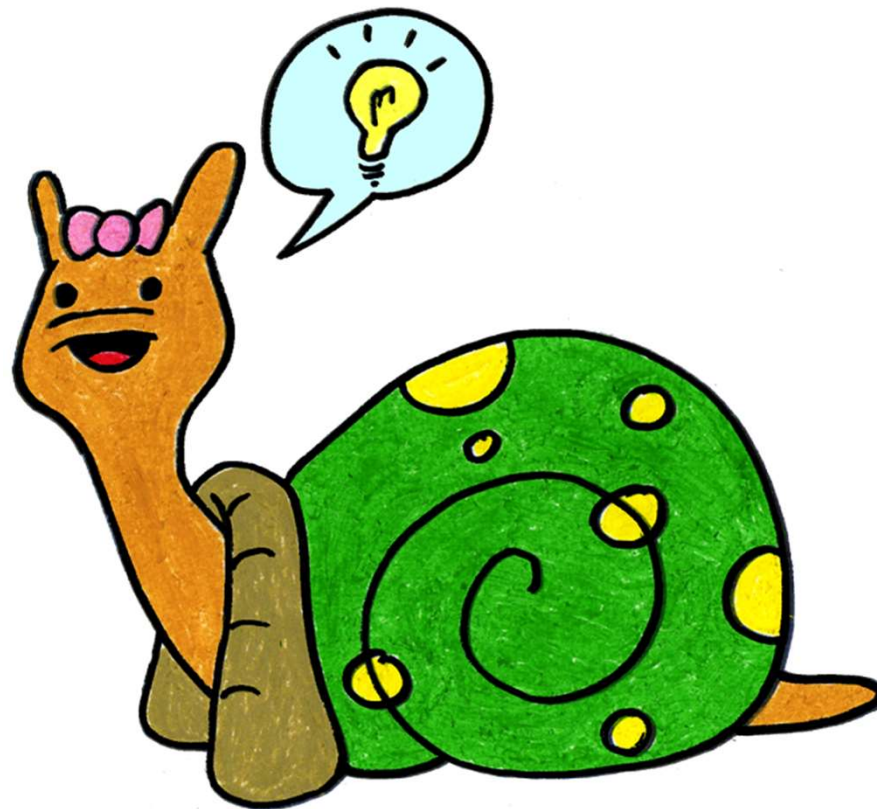
She can **tuck** inside her shell and take **3 belly breaths** to calm down.



Step 3



Sonia can come out of her shell, express her feelings, then **think of a solution** or a way to make it better.



Step 4



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**Sonia is happy when she plays with her friends and keeps her hands and body to herself. Friends also like it when Sonia stops and “thinks like a snail” when she gets mad.**



**If she forgets what to do, her teacher can help her when she is upset. Sonia has fun with her friends at Wet Lake School.**



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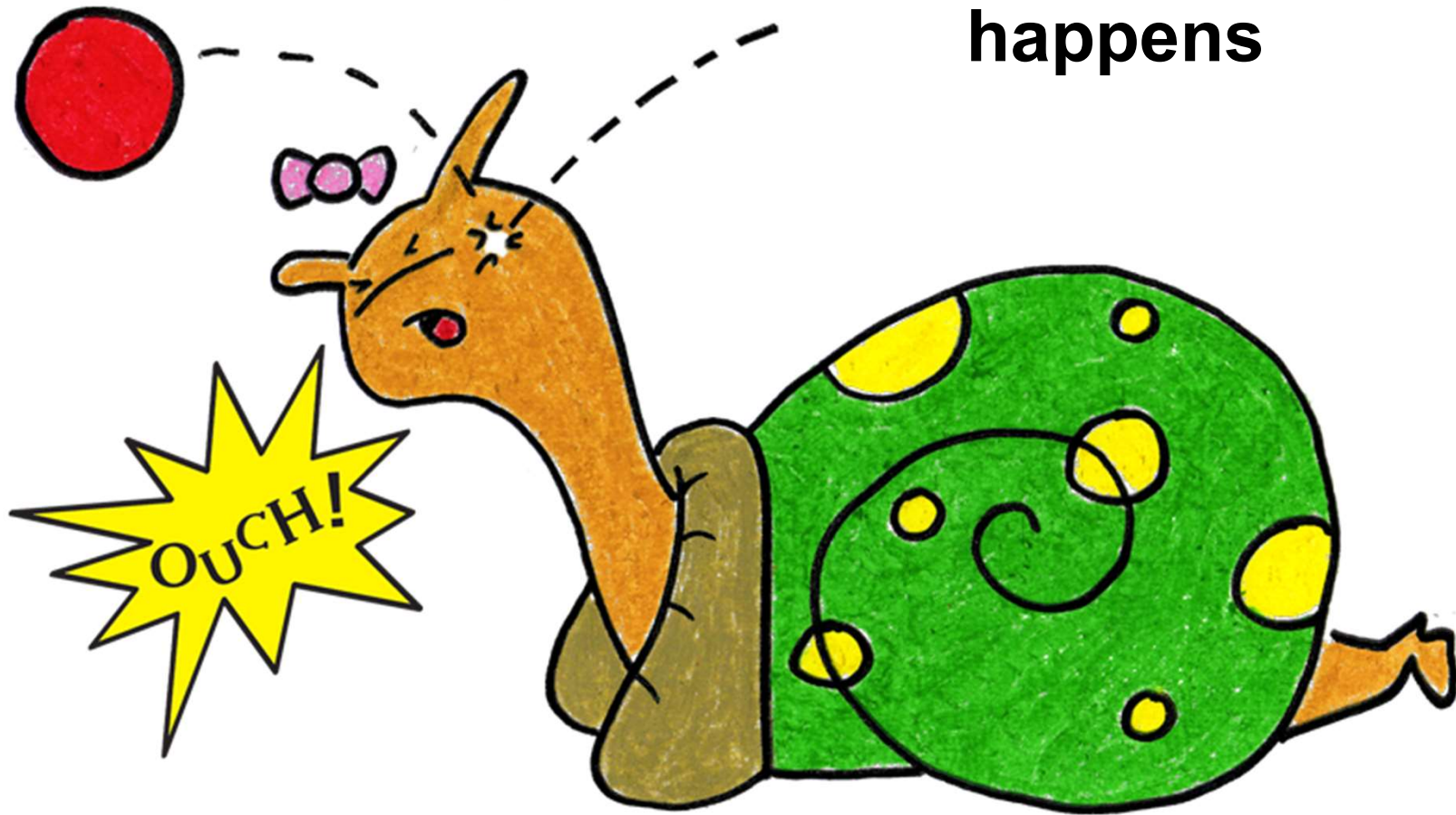
# The End!



Adapted by WestEd Teaching Pyramid – [www.CAinclusion.org/teachingpyramid](http://www.CAinclusion.org/teachingpyramid)



Something happens

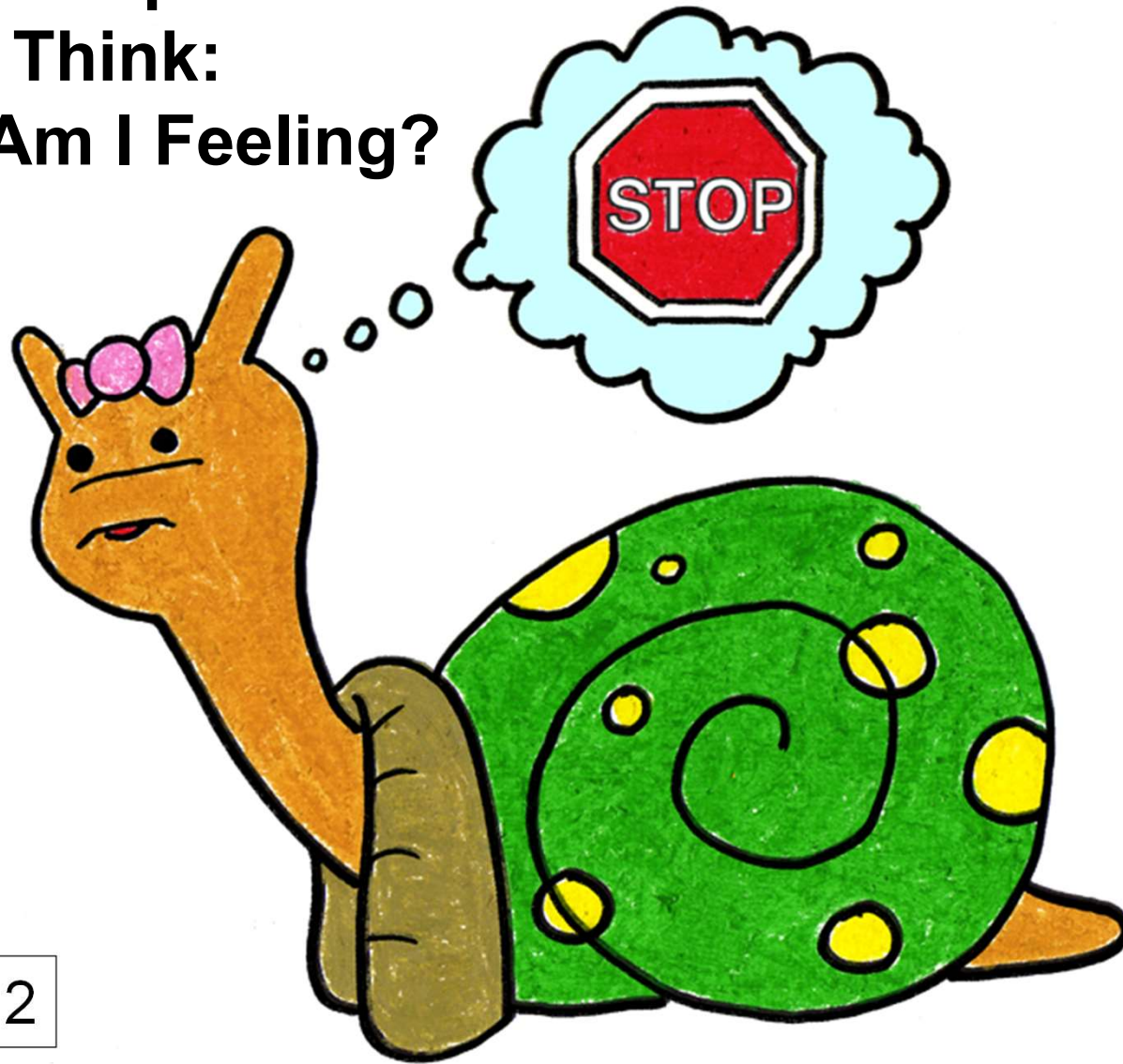


Step 1

Adapted by WestEd Teaching Pyramid – [www.CAinclusion.org/teachingpyramid](http://www.CAinclusion.org/teachingpyramid)



**Stop.  
Think:  
What Am I Feeling?**



Step 2

Adapted by WestEd Teaching Pyramid – [www.CAinclusion.org/teachingpyramid](http://www.CAinclusion.org/teachingpyramid)



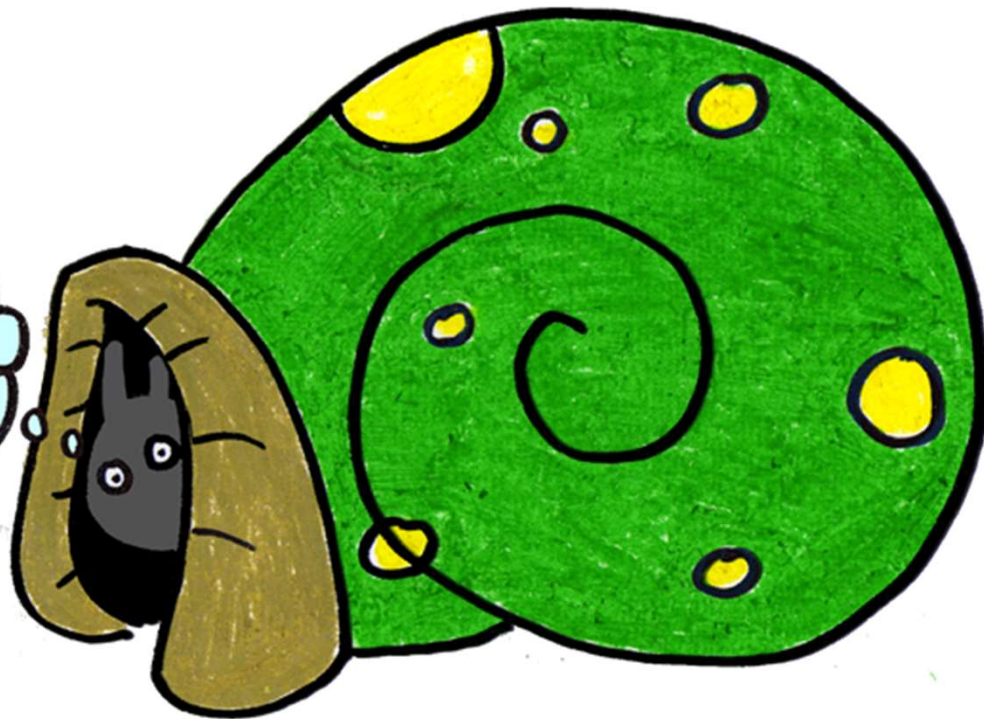
**Go into your shell.**

**Take 3 belly breaths and think  
calm thoughts.**

1

2

3

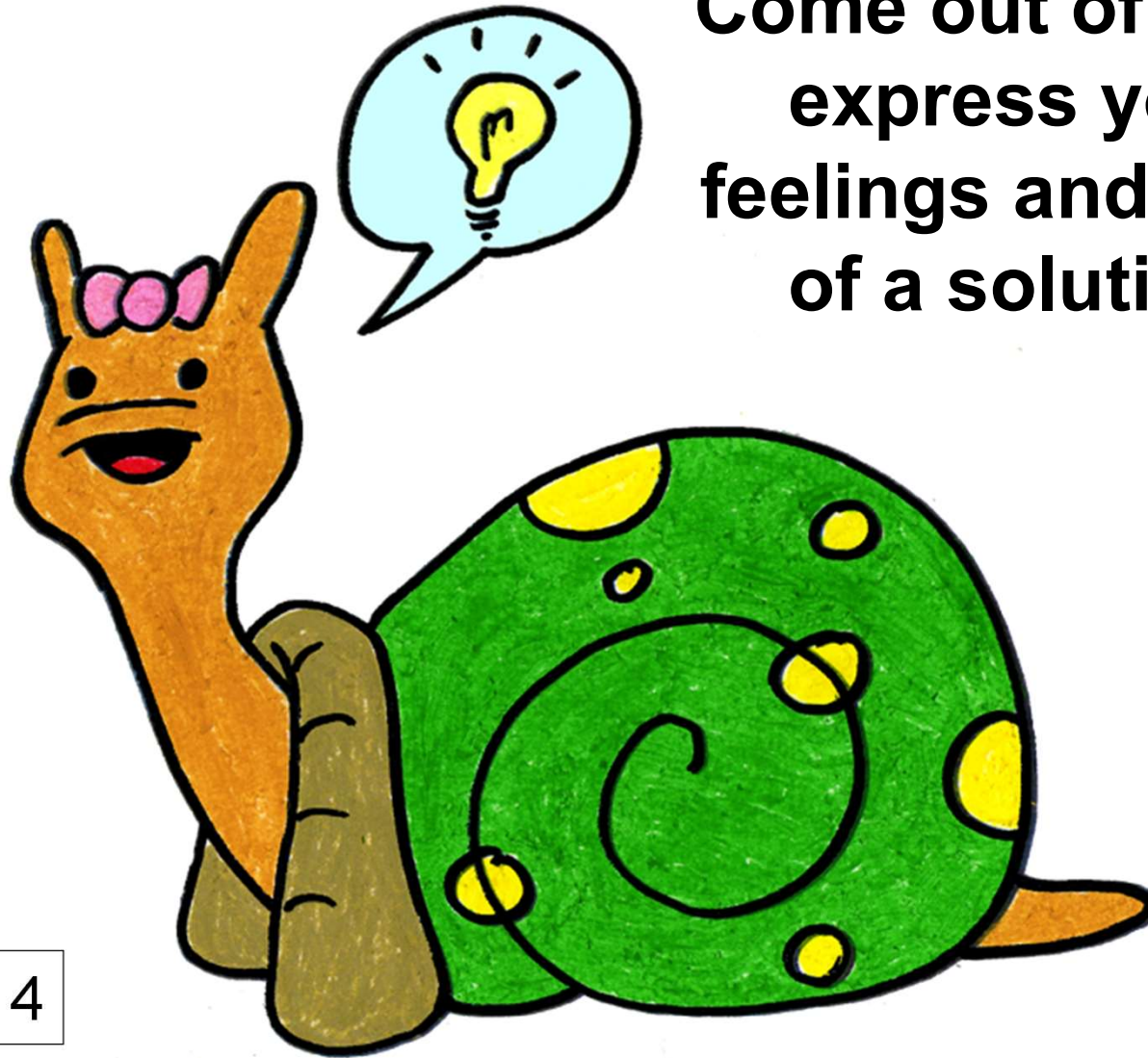


Step 3

Adapted by WestEd Teaching Pyramid – [www.CAinclusion.org/teachingpyramid](http://www.CAinclusion.org/teachingpyramid)



**Come out of shell,  
express your  
feelings and think  
of a solution.**



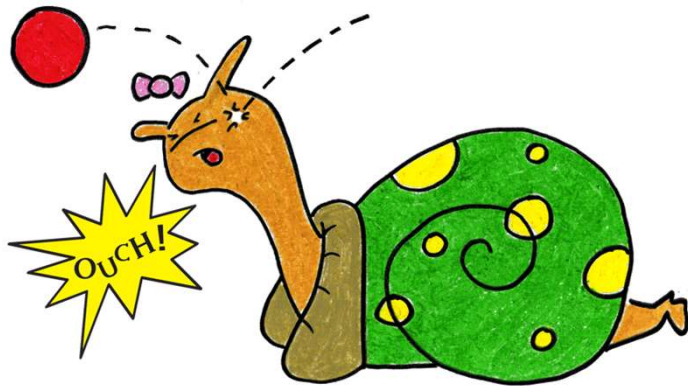
**Step 4**

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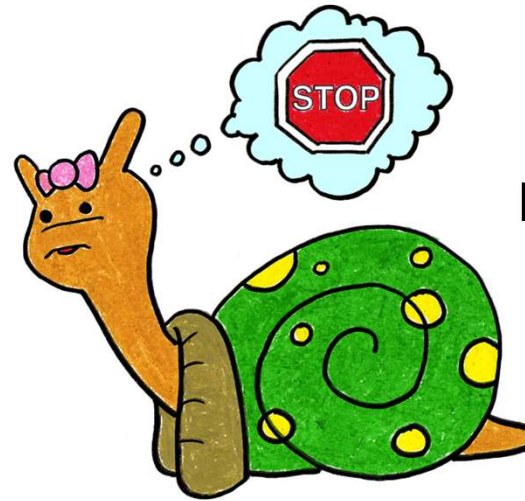


# Tucking Technique (CA CSEFEL)

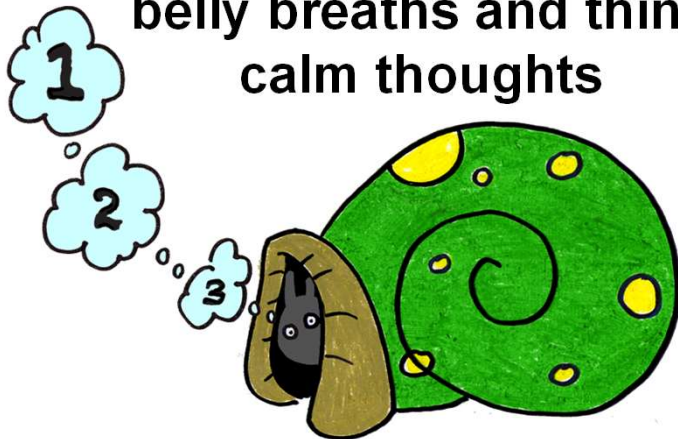
Something happens



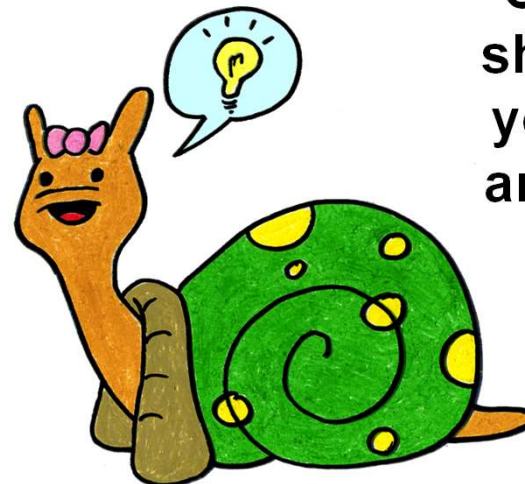
Stop.  
Think:  
What Am  
I Feeling?



Go into your shell. Take 3  
belly breaths and think  
calm thoughts



Come out of  
shell, express  
your feelings  
and think of a  
solution



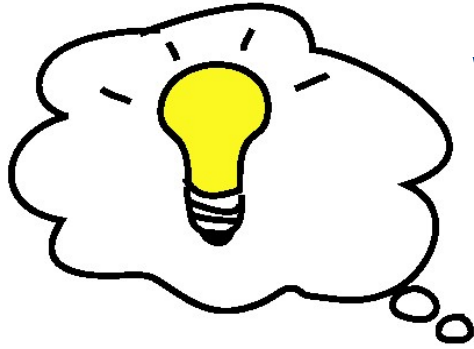
# Teacher Tips on the Tucking Technique

- Model remaining calm
- Teach the child the steps of how to manage feelings and calm down (“think like a snail”)
  - Step 1: Recognize that something happened.
  - Step 2: Stop. Think: what are you feeling? Acknowledge your feeling and maybe do something physical to let that feeling out.
  - Step 3: Tuck inside your “shell” and take 3 belly breaths to help you become calm.
  - Step 4: Come out, express your feelings, and think of a solution.
- Practice steps frequently (see cue cards outlining each step)
- Prepare for and help the child handle strong emotions and to think of a solution (see “What Can the Child Do?” list)
- Give encouragement and acknowledgement as children make efforts to do the steps
- Involve families – teach the “Snail Technique”

Adapted from Webster-Stratton, C. (1991). The teachers and children videotape series: Dina dinosaur school. Seattle, WA: The Incredible Years.



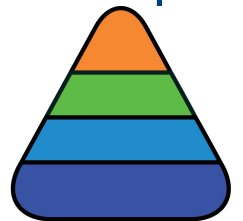




# What Can The Child Do?

Help the Child Think of a Possible Solution:  
*(These are from the Solution Kit)*

- Get a teacher
- Ask in a friendly way
- Ignore
- Play
- Say, “Please stop.”
- Say, “Please.”
- Share
- Trade a toy/item
- Wait and take turns
- Set a Timer



# Super Snail Letter



Dear Parent,

Billy was successful today with handling frustration and anger when we ran out of his favorite cracker at snack. When he felt himself getting upset, he stopped, took three belly breaths, and decided he would try one of the other crackers. That was a great solution and he really liked the new cracker, too!

You can help Billy at home by asking him what he did at school today when we ran out of his favorite cracker. Ask him how he calmed down. Comment on what a good problem solver he is. Tell him that you hope that he will do that again when he gets frustrated about something.

Thank you so much!

Ms. Laura

