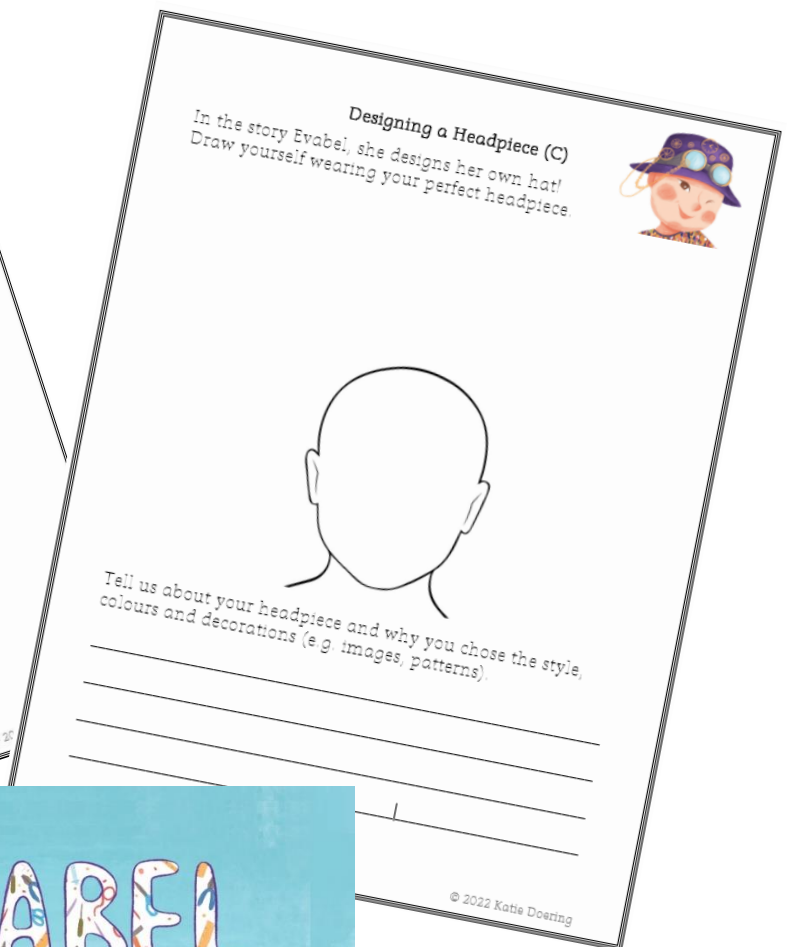
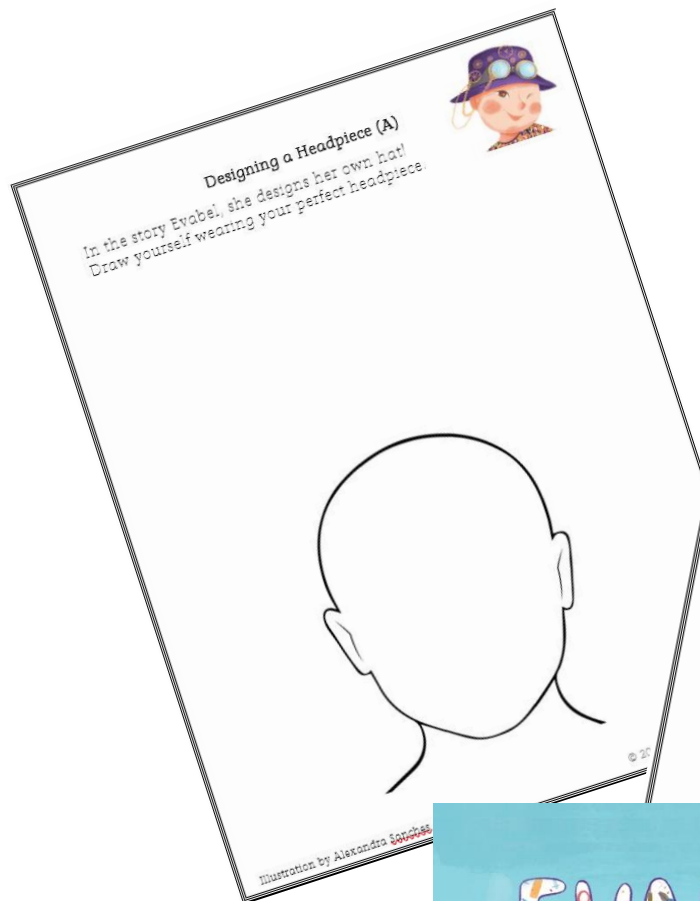
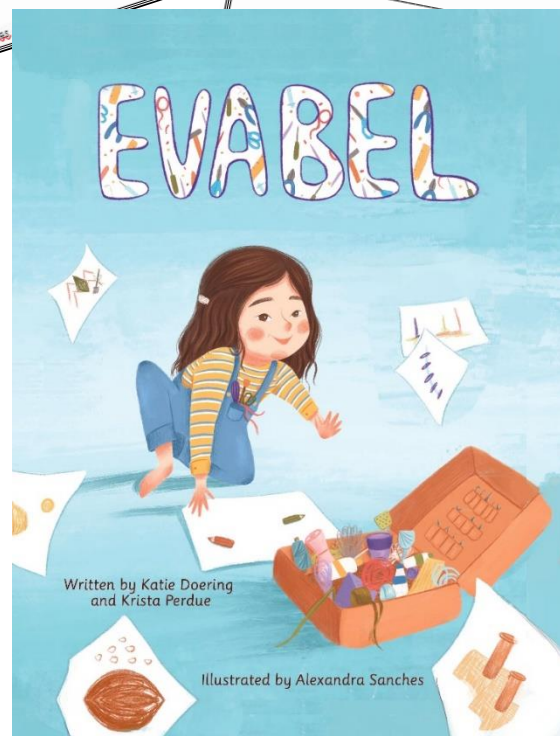


HEALTH TEACHING RESOURCES



Created by author and educator Katie Doering, this guide contains lesson plans and differentiated worksheets that connect to Ontario Curriculum Health expectations and CCSS Language tandards.



About the Author

Katie Doering is an educator who has taught students from preschool to university level. Highlights of her career include:

- establishing a private school for children with medical needs and their siblings; teaching and leading for nearly two decades in this setting
- completing her PhD in Curriculum, Teaching and Learning, with a thesis focussed on inclusivity in children's literature
- teaching undergraduate and graduate courses at various universities within Canada focused on literacy, creative arts and inclusive education
- co-authoring the children's picturebook *Evabel* to increase the representation of children with cancer in literature and normalize illness experiences

Using This Resource

Each lesson is set up in the following way:

- Background – This section provides information that the educator may require in order to successfully teach the lesson, such as definitions, descriptions and references to curriculum topics.
- Lesson – This section provides suggestions for how to lead the lesson including interactive activities, guiding questions and ways an educator can check for children's understanding.
- Worksheets/Activities – This section provides suggestions for follow-up activities to respond to the lesson.
 - When included worksheets are labelled from A-C or A-D and progress with difficulty.
 - In some lessons, there are additional worksheets labelled A1-C1 or A1-D1. These worksheets have been designed for children who are currently experiencing illness.

Questions/Comments

Thank you for so much downloading this product from my store. If you, your child, or your students are enjoying it, please leave some positive feedback on my product by visiting "my purchases" on your TpT. If you have any questions about this resource, please feel free to contact me at katie.doering@utoronto.ca

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Health Teaching Resources

Activity One – Understanding Cancer: Cells in the Body

Background – In the beginning of this book, Evabel is diagnosed with cancer. Within the story, Dr. Hui describes cancer in the following way: “Cancer is a disease. Right now, a lot of sick cells are growing in your body, so there’s not enough room for the healthy ones.” Other kid-friendly definitions of cancer include:

- “Cancer happens when cells that are not normal grow and spread very fast. Normal body cells grow and divide and know to stop growing. Over time, they also die. Unlike these normal cells, cancer cells just continue to grow and divide out of control and don't die when they're supposed to.” (Nemours KidsHealth, 2016)
- “Cancer is a disease that happens when bad cells stop the good cells from doing their job. These bad cells can grow into a lump and can spread to other parts of the body.” (Cancer Council NSW, 2021)
- “An illness of unhealthy cells that grow in the body. Cancer happens when unhealthy cells keep dividing quickly. Wherever the cancer cells are, they can make it difficult for that part of the body to work the way it needs to. There are many different types of cancer with their own name and unique kind of medicine or treatment. Cancers are different because of the place in the body they are found, what they look like, and the way they grow.” (St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital, n.d.)

Lesson – Talk about Evabel as a person listing everything that we learn about Evabel in the story. For example, she loves to tinker, she likes making people laugh, she is a sister, she has cancer. This helps children see Evabel as a multidimensional character who is coping with cancer, not someone who is defined by her illness.

Indicate that today we will be discussing cancer, the disease Evabel has in the story. Ask the following questions:

- Have you heard the word cancer before?
- What is cancer?
- Do you know anyone who has or who had cancer? How did having cancer affect them?

Validate children’s sharing, confirming accurate explanations and offer more information when necessary based on the information listed above (background).

Explain that today, we are going to learn more about the disease cancer, and specifically how cancer cells are different from healthy cells. Share or draw pictures

of cancer cells and healthy cells. Here is a suggested resource where you can find images and more information:

- Eldridge, L. (2022, July 4). Cancer cells vs. normal cells – how are they different? <https://www.verywellhealth.com/cancer-cells-vs-normal-cells-2248794>

You can also choose to show the page within the book Evabel when Dr. Hui shares Evabel's diagnosis as leukemia cells are pictured here. Talk about how the healthy and unhealthy cells are different from one another, discussing attributes like shape and size.

Activities/Worksheets - Next, provide children with any of the following materials and challenge them to create models of unhealthy and healthy cells:

- playdough or clay
- paper, writing utensils
- paper, scissors, glue, craft materials
- access to drawing apps like ProCreate

Allow them time to create their own cells.

Once students have created model cells, explain that another way cancer cells are different from healthy cells is how they grow. Healthy cells divide but they stop dividing once they have filled up a space. Cancer cells keep dividing. Show the following video developed by CancerEd Curriculum (2017) to explain cell division: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9XK8phiQw3k>

Summarize that cancer is a disease that someone gets when unhealthy cells grow and divide quickly in their body.

References

Cancer Council NSW (2021). Cancer words for kids. <https://www.cancercouncil.com.au/>

CancerEd Curriculum (2017, June 3). Cells and cell division. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9XK8phiQw3k>

Eldridge, L. (2022, July 4). Cancer cells vs. normal cells – how are they different? <https://www.verywellhealth.com/cancer-cells-vs-normal-cells-2248794>

Nemours KidsHealth (2016). What is cancer? <https://kidshealth.org/>

St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital (n.d.). Child-friendly definitions of cancer-related words. <http://www.stjude.org>

Activity Two – Understanding Cancer – Questions and Experiences

Background - When talking to children about serious illness, children are often concerned with the 4Cs:

- Can I catch it?
- Did I cause it?
- Can I cure it?
- Who will take care of me?

Although children may not voice these concerns directly, when discussing a book like *Evabel* it is important to address them, especially if a child in your family/group or an extended family member/friend of a child in your family/group is currently experiencing cancer. This will aid in their comfort level in terms of interacting with the ill person, and decrease overall anxiety about cancer. Here are suggested ways in which these questions can be answered:

- **Can I catch it?** Cancer is a disease that happens in your body when unhealthy cells grow and divide quickly. Cancer is not like a cold, flu or COVID-19. You cannot catch it by sharing the same space with someone.
- **Did I cause it?** Sometimes what you say and do can have an impact on the people in your life. For example, if your sibling takes your toy and you yell at them, they could cry. What you say or do cannot cause someone to get cancer.
- **Can I cure it?** If you have cancer or someone you know has cancer, you cannot cure it yourself by acting a certain way or saying certain things. You can help yourself or your family member get better by following the instructions that your family and their healthcare team gives.
- **Who will take care of me?** If you have cancer, you might be worried about who will take care of you or who will take care of the rest of your family while you are at the hospital. Your family members and the healthcare team at the hospital (e.g. doctors, social workers, volunteers) will make a plan to ensure everyone is taken care of. If you have questions, do not hesitate to ask.

Lesson – Review learning from the previous day about cancer cells versus healthy cells. Explain that today we are going to spend some time learning more about cancer and the questions that people often have about cancer.

Depending on the abilities/interests/preferences of your group, introduce the 4Cs in one of the following ways:

- **Option 1** – Ask the group if they have any questions about cancer. Answer the questions as best you can, writing down any that you cannot answer to investigate as a group or on your own later. If the 4Cs do not come up,

explain them using the background information above. To bring them up, feel free to introduce a curious puppet who wants to ask questions.

- Option 2 – Write the four questions on paper or in a shared online document. Divide the class into groups assigning each group a question. Ask them to brainstorm answers to the question they have been given. Come back together as a whole group and share answers, providing any clarification that may be needed.

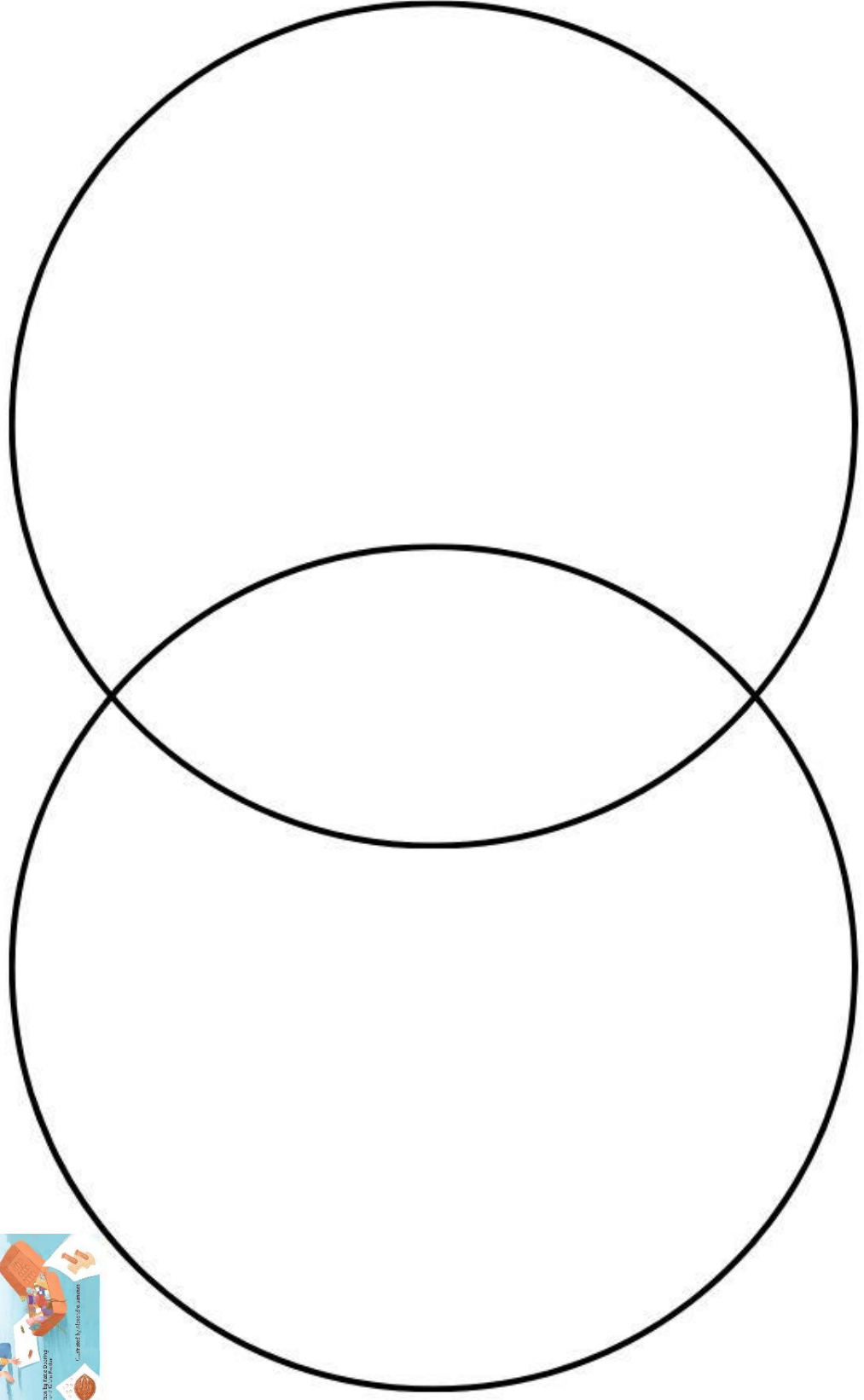
Next, state that another question people often have about cancer is what is your life like when you have cancer? Explain that the story Evabel shows us one experience of cancer. Evabel gets sick, she goes to the hospital, she gets treatment to get better. She has good days and bad days. This is one story about cancer, but there are many others. Not everyone's experience is the same. Emphasize the diversity of cancer stories by doing one or more of the following:

- If someone in the class has lived experience with cancer (e.g. they have/had cancer, a family member has/had cancer), invite them to share what that experience is like.
- Show a video about cancer and talk about how the main character's experiences are the same or different from Evabel's. Here is a suggested video:
 - Nemours KidsHealth (2017). A Boy Named Finn.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lw3vHPHox7U&t=447s>
- Read other picturebooks about cancer and talk about how the main character's experiences are the same or different from Evabel's. Here are some suggested texts:
 - The Can in Cancer (Cook, 2013)
 - When a Kid Like Me Fights Cancer (Stier, 2019)
 - My Cancer Days (Filigenzi, 2015)
 - The Lemonade Club (Polacco, 2007)

Activities/Worksheets – Provide children with one of the following Venn diagrams to compare cancer experiences. Depending on abilities/interest/preferences children can draw pictures, write words or write sentences in the VENN diagram.

Summarize that cancer is not something that we catch, cause or can cure on our own right now. When someone has cancer, some parts of their experiences are the same and other parts are different. Having a better understanding of cancer and the experiences people have can help us be better friends/siblings/classmates to someone who has cancer.







A large graphic consisting of three overlapping circles. Each circle contains five vertical lines, providing a template for writing. The circles are arranged in a triangular pattern, with one circle at the top and two at the bottom, overlapping in the center.

Activity Three – Understanding Cancer Treatments/Side-Effects

Background – In the previous activities, children examined cancer cells and experiences. Within the books and videos suggested for reference, treatments are discussed such as surgery, radiation and chemotherapy. Hair loss is referred to in all of the suggested resources.

Hair loss is typical when individuals get chemotherapy. As a side effect of chemotherapy treatment, many children lose their hair. Just like cancer cells, hair follicle cells grow and divide quickly. This is why chemotherapy often leads to hair loss as it targets the same type of cells.

Contrary to how hair loss is often portrayed in books and in the media, this process does not happen all at once. On pages 13-14, readers can see how Evabel loses her hair. When co-author Katie interviewed children about their experiences with cancer, they talked specifically about two different moments in their hair loss journeys that were impactful - finding strands of hair on their pillows when they woke up; brushing their hair and clumps of hair falling to the ground. Evabel experiences both of these things.

Although certainly not the only side effect of having cancer, losing one's hair is often seen in books about cancer as hair loss serves as a visual signal denoting illness and hair regrowth recovery. Additionally, the emotional impact of hair loss can be significant adding impact to the narrative.

When responding to hair loss, children may wear hats, wigs, headscarves or choose not to cover their heads. In the story Evabel, she chooses to create a hat for herself, and then works with the other children to help create headpieces that match their personalities. Pages 17-18 show the results! Notably one child is not wearing anything on their head, honouring the fact that many people prefer not to cover their heads.

Lesson – Talk with students about how chemotherapy is one way doctors get rid of cancer cells in the body to make people better. Explain that the cells that make your hair grow also grow quickly just like cancer cells. When people get chemo, the medicine attacks cells that grow quickly like cancer and hair cells. This is why people often lose their hair when they undergo chemotherapy treatment.

Depending on abilities/interests/preferences, you may choose to show this video which provides a multi-modal explanation of how cells divide quickly and how treatments impact them:

- Zaidan, G. (2012). How do cancer cells behave differently from healthy ones? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BmFEoCFDi-w&t=230s>

Show the pages in the story when Evabel is losing her hair and emphasize the process. Ask children the following questions (adjusting wording if working with a child who has lost their hair due to cancer):

- How do you think Evabel is feeling in these pictures?
- How would you feel if your hair fell out?
- Why do you think Evabel decides to make her own hat?
- When you look at Evabel's hat, what does it say about her likes/dislikes?

Turn to the pages in the story that show all of the headpieces Evabel made for her friends. Ask the children:

- If you lost your hair, would you wear something on your head? Why or why not?
- What headpiece do you like the best? Why?
- What are all of the different kinds of headpieces you can see on this page?
- What other headpieces are there?
- Do you often wear something on your head? Can you tell us why you wear it?

Activities/Worksheets - Explain to the students that today they will have the opportunity to design a headpiece for themselves. Prepare one of the following activities based on the resources you have available:

- Worksheets (below) and colouring supplies
- Plain baseball caps and/or scarves and fabric markers
- Paper plates and craft materials
- Paper, scissors, glue
 - For an idea for a three-dimensional hat made solely from paper, check out the following resource:
Voight, J. (2010). Cut paper – collage hats.
<http://www.artforsmallhands.com/2010/08/cut-paper-collage-hats.html>

Worksheet List

- Designing a Headpiece (A-C)

Alternative Activity - Explain to the students that today they will have the opportunity to design a headpiece for someone else in the group:

- Have children get into partners and interview their partners about their likes/dislikes using questions such as:
 - What are your favourite colours?
 - What is your favourite animal?

- What kind of headpiece do you prefer (e.g. hat, scarf, wig)?
- Do you wear a specific item on your head due to your religion or culture (e.g. hijab, kippah)?

Next, have the children design a headpiece for their partners using the materials suggested above.

References

Voight, J. (2010). Cut paper – collage hats.

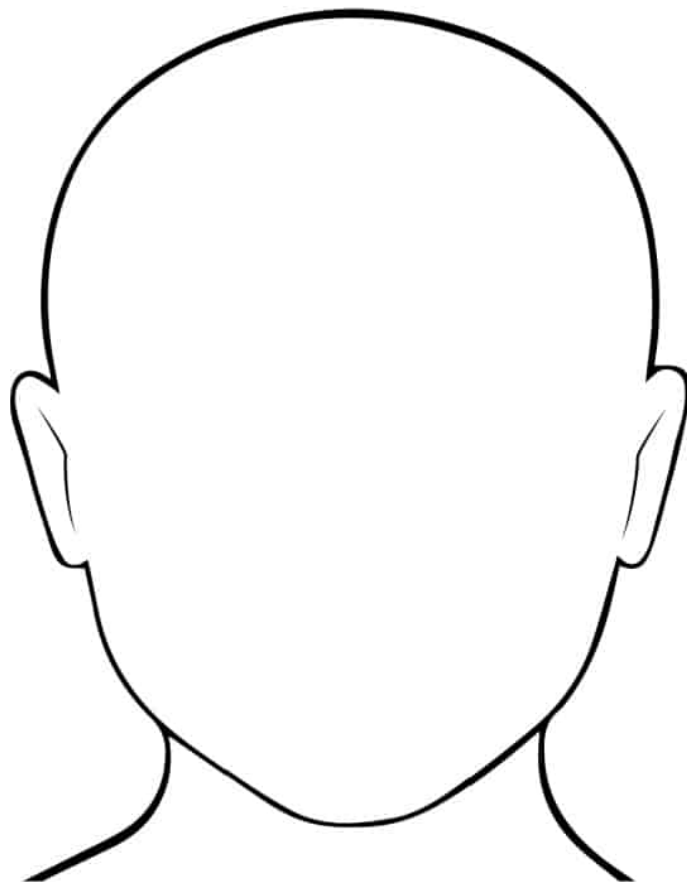
<http://www.artforsmallhands.com/2010/08/cut-paper-collage-hats.html>.

Zaidan, G. (2012). How do cancer cells behave differently from healthy ones?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BmFEoCFDi-w&t=230s>

Designing a Headpiece (A)

In the story Evabel, she designs her own hat!
Draw yourself wearing your perfect headpiece.



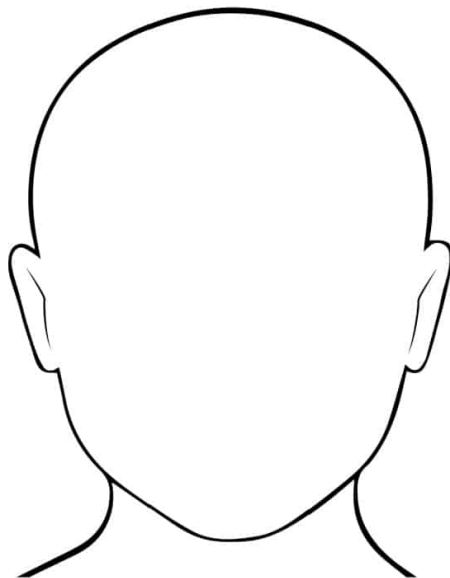
Designing a Headpiece (B)



In the story Evabel, she designs her own hat! There are many types of headpieces people wear on their heads based on their needs, interests, religion or culture. Draw as many as you can think of.

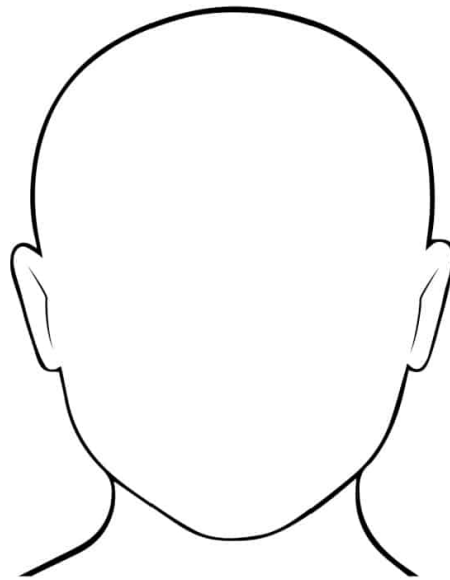
A large, empty rounded rectangular box with a black border, intended for drawing various types of headpieces.

Determine the type of headpiece that would be best for you. Draw yourself wearing your perfect headpiece.



Designing a Headpiece (C)

In the story Evabel, she designs her own hat!
Draw yourself wearing your perfect headpiece.



Tell us about your headpiece and why you chose the style,
colours and decorations (e.g. images, patterns).
