

# Embracing Differences

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**Lorelai loved reading and talking about books.  
So, when Mrs. Khan assigned partners for their  
book report on James and the Giant Peach, she was  
ecstatic!**



**“Lorelai you will be working with Finn” relayed Mrs. Davis. Lorelai looked over and gave a small nod and began to walk her chair next to Finn.**



**“Hi Finn!”, she greeted.  
Finn didn’t say anything, and just looked down at  
his shoes with a frown.**





Lorelai tried again.  
“Do you like the book?” she asked.  
Finn gave a small nod, but still did not reply.



**She began to work on the book report, however, she noticed a few things.**



**Finn used noise-cancelling headphones when the classroom got noisy.**



**He didn't look at her when she spoke and would tend to turn away.**



**And sometimes, he would need extra time before  
answering a question.**



**Lorelai felt exasperated.**  
**“How are we supposed to work together if he won’t**  
**even talk to me?” she complained to her friend**  
**Violet, during recess.**



**“ Mrs. Davis, can I work with someone else?” Lorelai asked the next day after another unsuccessful work session with Finn.**



**“ Why Lorelai, did something happen?” Mrs. Davis inquired.**

**“Well Finn doesn't talk to me, and I don't know how to work on this project alone” she admitted.**





**Mrs. Davis gave a gentle smile. “Finn has autism, Lorelai,” she said. Lorelai looked up at her puzzled.**

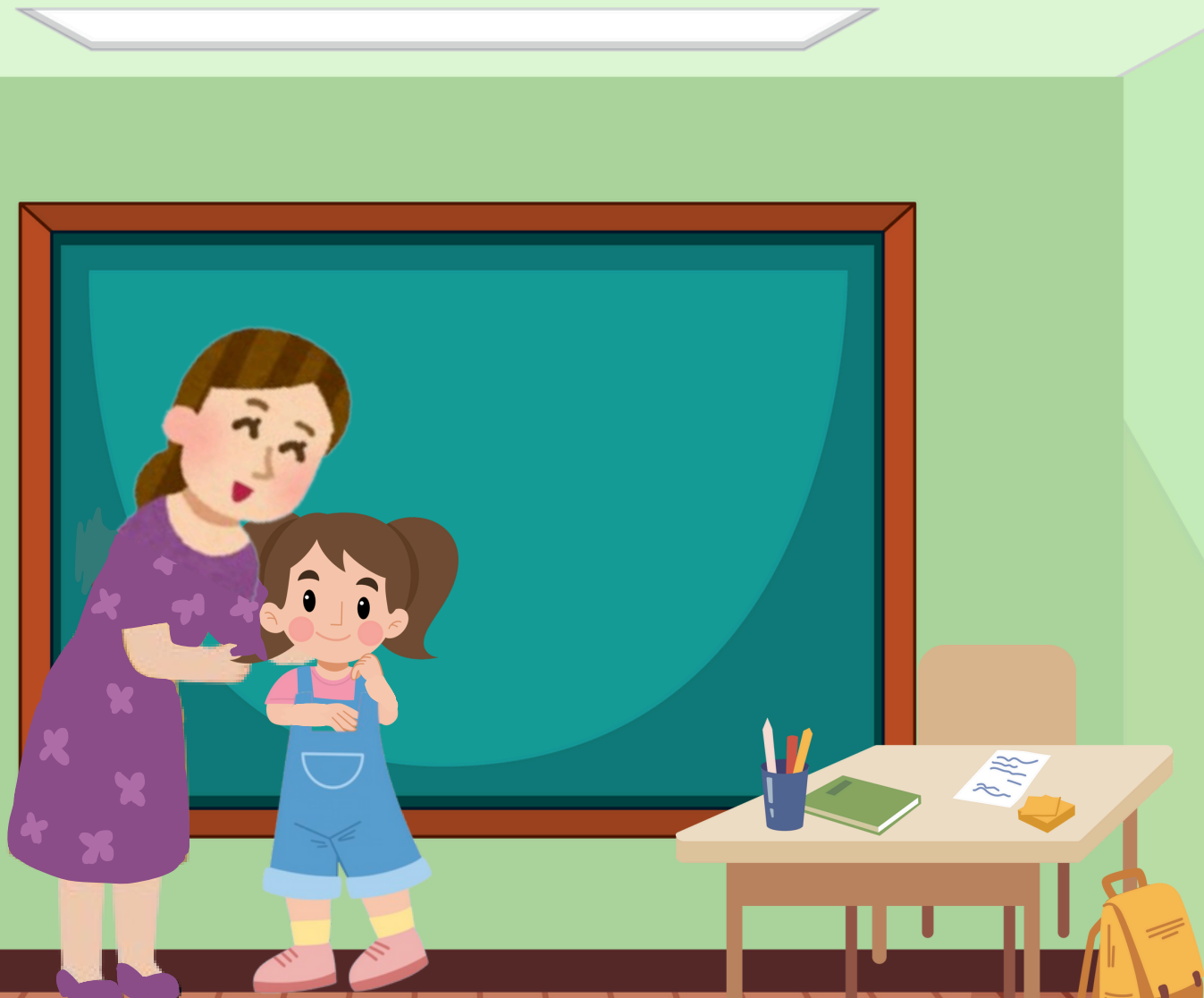


**“That means his brain works a little differently. So sometimes talking to people is hard for him, and loud noises can feel overwhelming” Mrs. Davis explained.**

**Lorelai tilted her head, “So what should I do?”**



**"Well there are many ways Finn communicates. Some kids with Autism use pictures, gestures, or even devices that help them talk. Finn likes writing things down instead of saying them out loud." Mrs. Davis suggested.**



**Lorelai went home and thought about this.**



The next day when she went to work with Finn, she didn't just ask about the book report.

Instead, she wrote on a sticky note:  
“What's your favorite part in the book? Personally I like the part where James meets the giant bugs.”  
She slid the note to Finn.



Finn's eyes lit up. He picked up his pencil and wrote back:  
"The grasshopper, I like when he plays the violin".  
Lorelai smiled.  
"That's a great part, do you play an instrument?" she  
asked.  
"The violin," he replied quietly.



**From that moment, working together became easier.**

**Finn still didn't talk a lot, but Lorelai learned that he liked making lists.**



**Instead of asking him to explain things out loud, she wrote down questions and let him write answers.**





**When the classroom got too noisy, Finn put on noise-canceling headphones.**

**Lorelai understood now—loud sounds could feel overwhelming to him.**



**When their report was finished, they turned it in with proud smiles. "Good job, you two!" Mrs. Davis said.**

**Finn gave Lorelai a small smile.  
"Thanks for working with me," he exclaimed.**



**Lorelai smiled back.**

**"Anytime, Finn. Want to sit together at lunch?" Finn  
nodded. And just like that, a book report turned  
into a brand-new friendship.**



# About Action Autism

**Action Autism is a student led organization that is dedicated to make a change to communities worldwide. Its purpose is to advocate and raise awareness for individuals who have Autism.**

**The group practices advocacy, research, and has a national media campaign to help educate the youth about Autism**



# About the Authors

**Anvesha Bhagat is a rising junior in highschool who is dedicated towards making an impact in the autism community. She strives to create an inclusive environment and wishes to empower individuals through her writing.**

**Arshia Singh is a rising senior who has a strong passion for autism. She actively engages advocacy, community outreaches, and on awareness campaigns to make a significant difference in her community.**





A short story written by two high schoolers  
who want to raise awareness for Autism. This  
story is tailored for young children  
but also can be read by anyone!  
We hope you enjoy!