

BECAUSE
OF



OLIVER

BY JULIE CAUSTON, PH.D.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY
SHERRILL KNEZEL



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Illustrations by SHERRILL KNEZEL

[INCLUSIVE
schooling]

Visit www.inclusiveschooling.com to connect to Julie and her work.

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Dedicated to
YOU.



Our school is better
because of YOU!

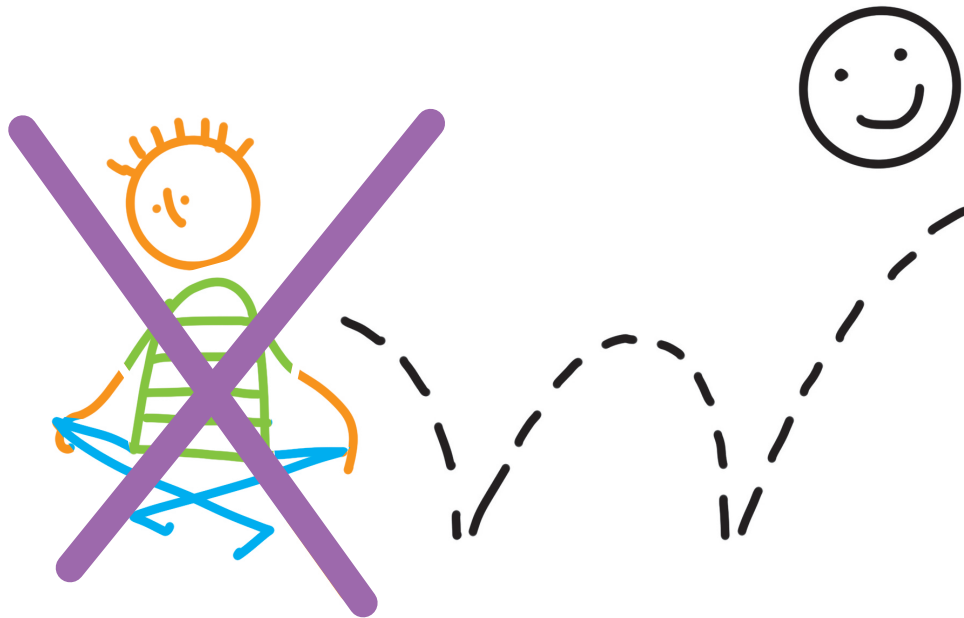
Here is Oliver.



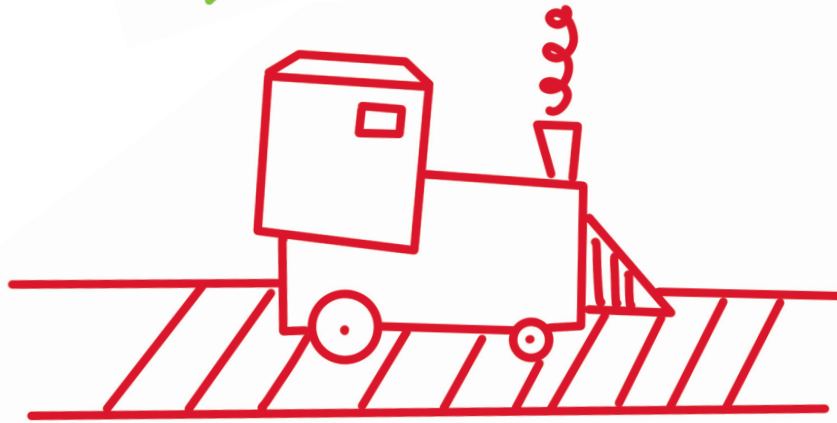
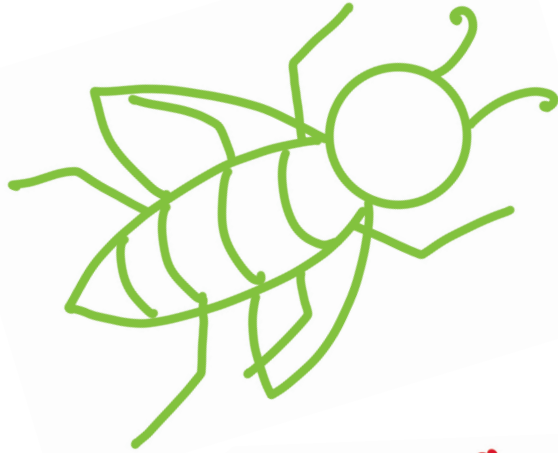
He loves being at school with his friends.
He is very very busy. He likes to walk
while he learns, and sometimes
he hums.




Sitting is
not his favorite activity
and he really enjoys bouncing.



He is fascinated
by both insects and trains.



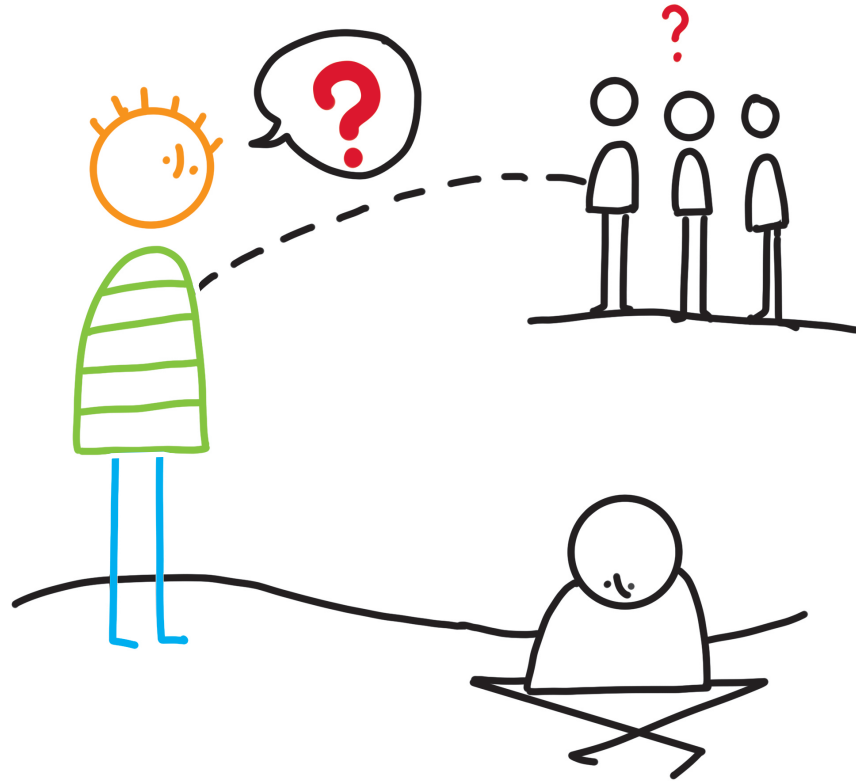


He used to
be in a room for students
who had similar characteristics.



His particular room was labeled Autism. When
he was in that labeled room, it made the
hard parts even harder.

It was harder to talk
with others who struggled to talk.

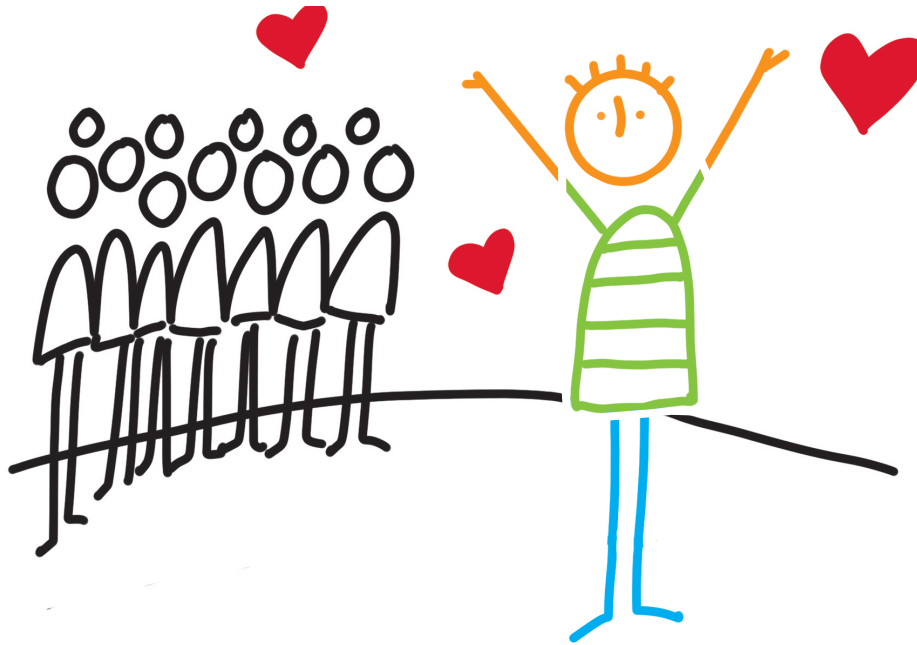


It was harder to make friends with others who struggled to
make friends. He could not learn from and make friends
with other students in other rooms. And worse yet,
students from other rooms could not learn
from and make friends with him.



But now
Oliver is in a 2nd grade
inclusive classroom with 32 students
where lines are not drawn between students.

2nd GRADE!



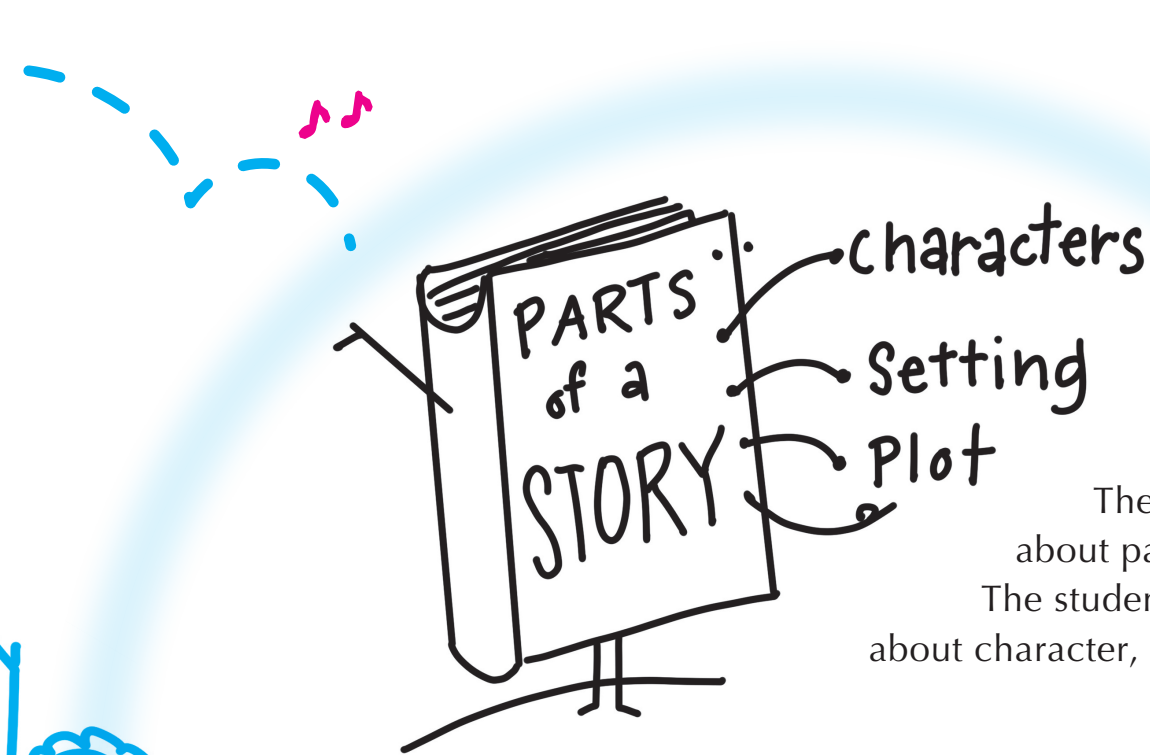
In this classroom every person is valued
for the ways they are different
and alike.

Oliver's class
has two teachers...Ms. Olaya
and Ms. Mazel. And as you already know,
teachers are the most creative sort of people.



This story is about what happens when these
two teachers change a lesson—
all because of Oliver.





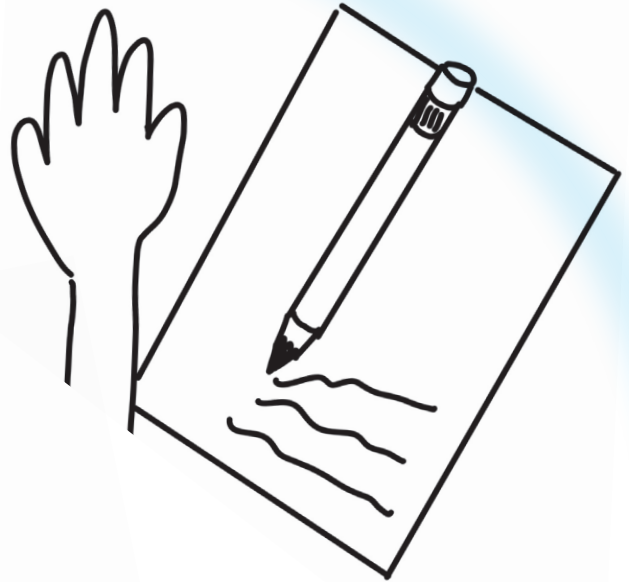
The lesson was about parts of a story. The students would learn about character, setting and plot.

The teachers had some plans.



They would have the students sit criss-cross applesauce on the floor and Ms. Mazel would read a book about a monster under the bed, and Ms. Olaya would act out some of the very best parts.

Students would raise their hands and answer the questions and write with a pencil about the plot.



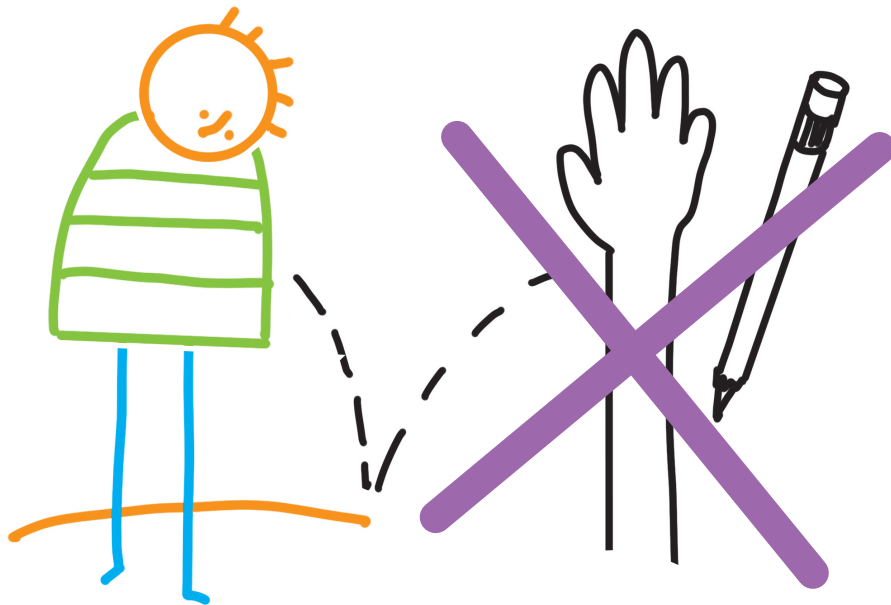
Then they would each draw the monster from the book.



It was going to be a good lesson.



But as Oliver's teachers
thought about their plan, they realized
that lesson might not work for someone who
does not like to sit, or can't raise his hand or answer
questions, and does not write with a pencil.




Luckily,
Oliver's teachers both
know about the creative magic of ...

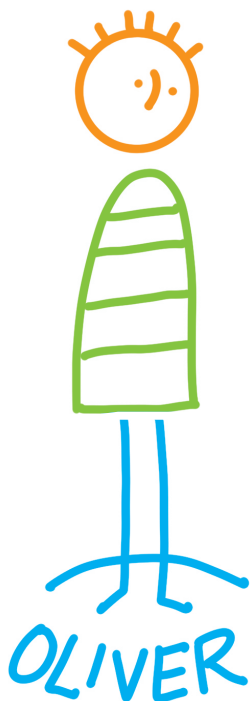


They believe that when they
plan a lesson for their class,
they are planning for
everyone in their
class.





So the teachers
got together and changed the lesson—
because of Oliver.



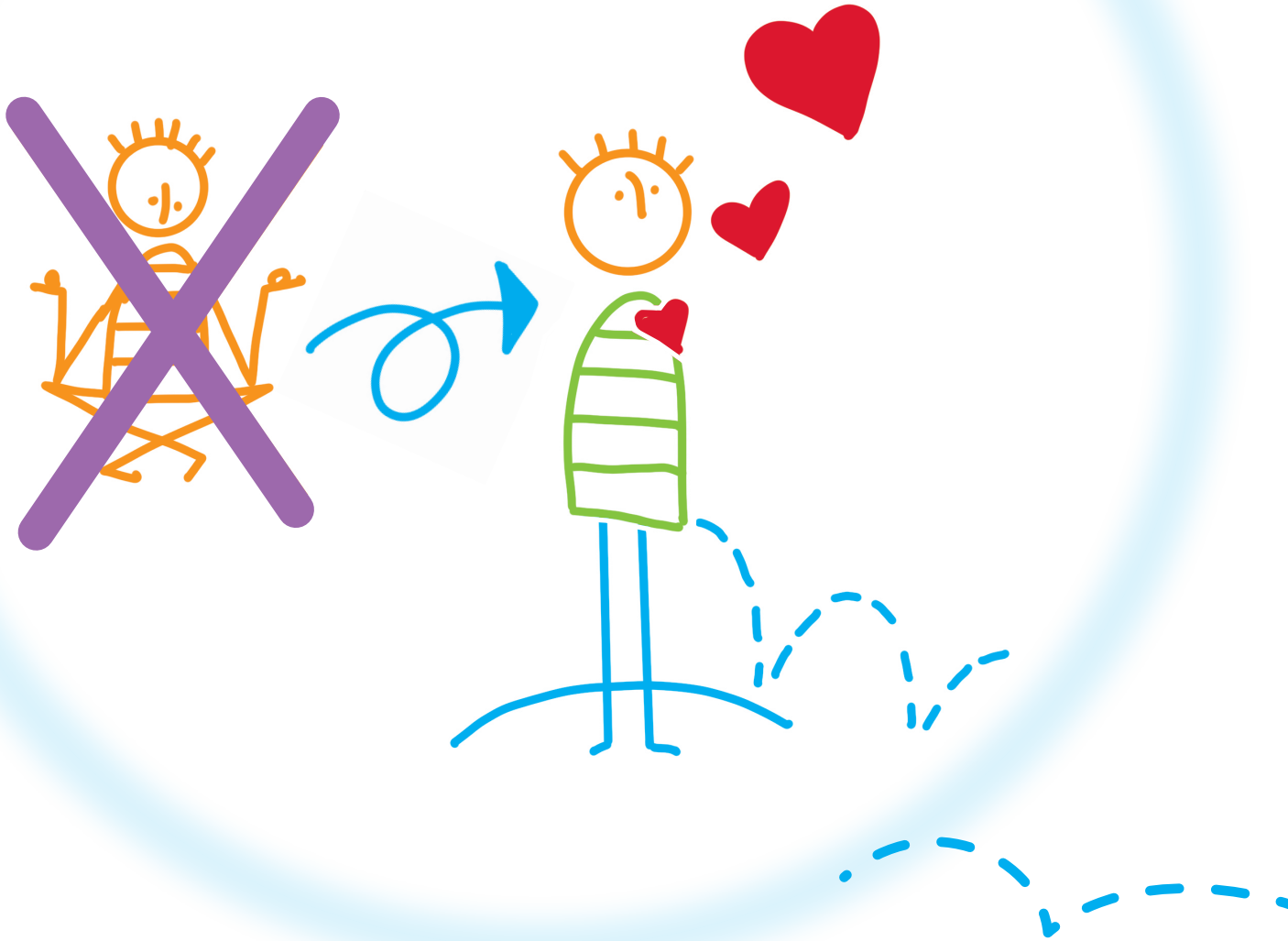
They first wrote a list and crossed out what Oliver can't do and circled what he can do. They took the negative list that came with Oliver and changed them into "cans."

From...

"Oliver can't sit."

to...

"Oliver loves to move."

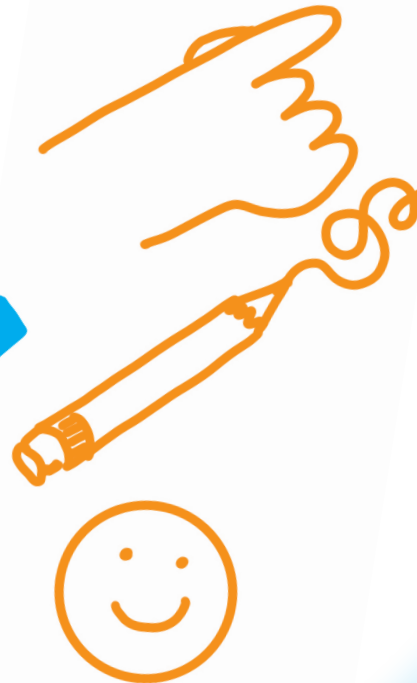


From...

"He does not talk."

to...

**"He can point, draw and smile
to communicate."**



From...

"He won't sit still."

to...

**"He works best when standing
and bouncing."**





From...

"He does not write."

to...

**"He is starting to type on
a keyboard."**

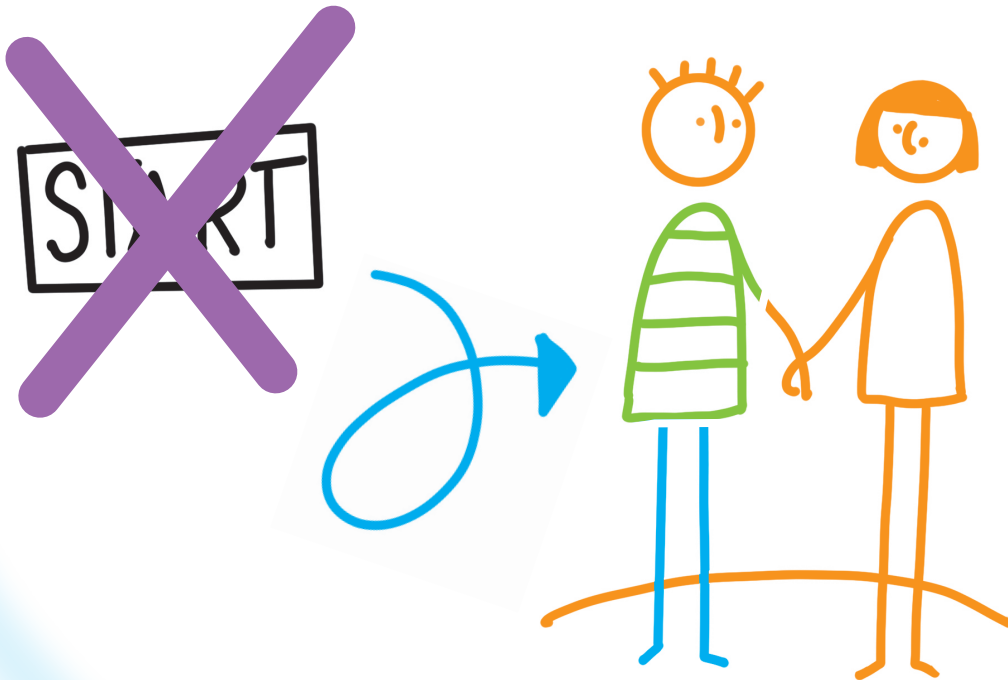


From...

"He has trouble starting a task."

to...

**"Starts a task with the help
of a friend."**



From...

"Focuses on trains."

to...

"Is an expert on trains."

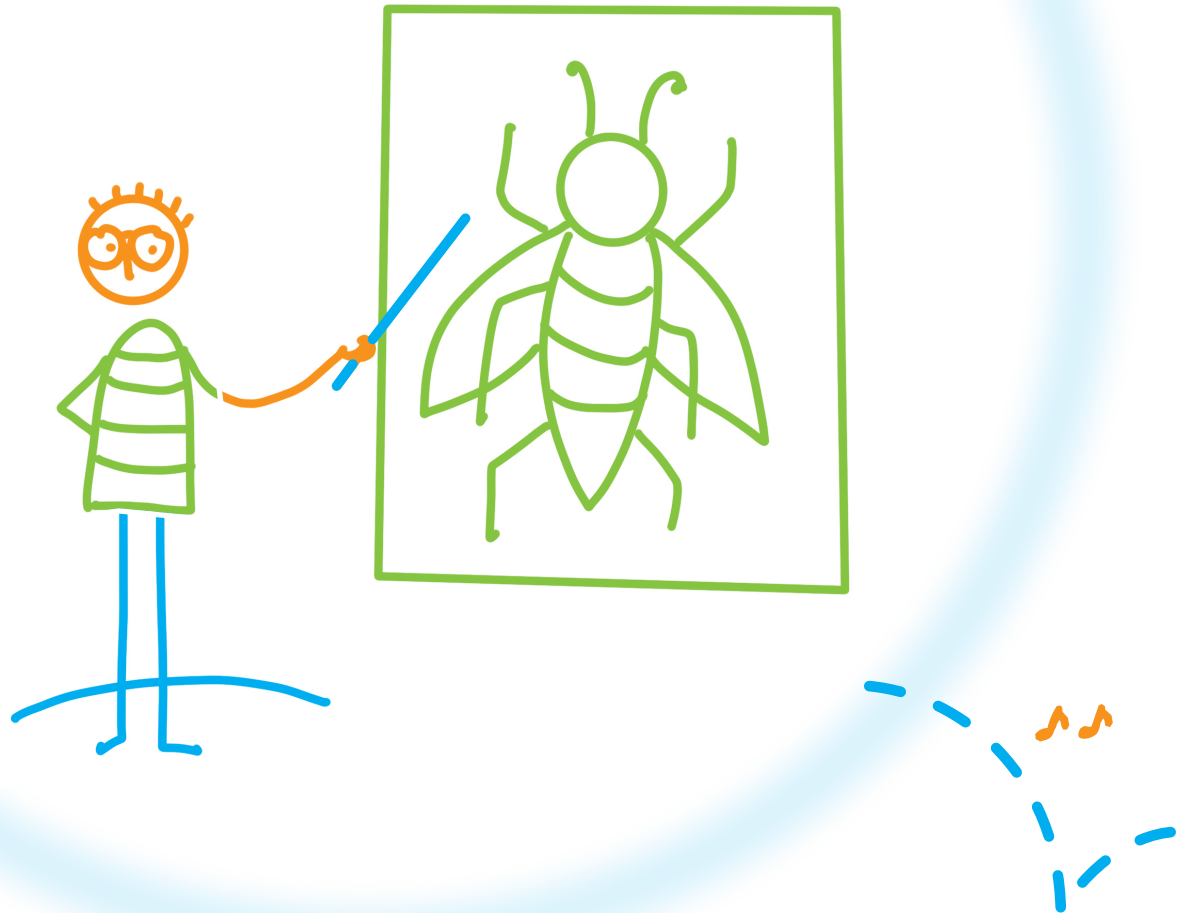



From...

"Obsessed by insects."

to...

"Is an insect scholar."





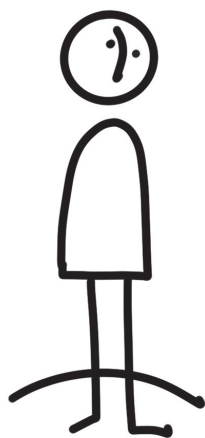
Starting with
these circles, the teachers have
created access points.



Access points are just a student's best way of learning. Now
these teachers had almost everything they needed to
plan this new inclusive lesson.

Next, they had to change the rules of the lesson. They crossed out the old rules and circled the new rules.

RULES:



OR



From...

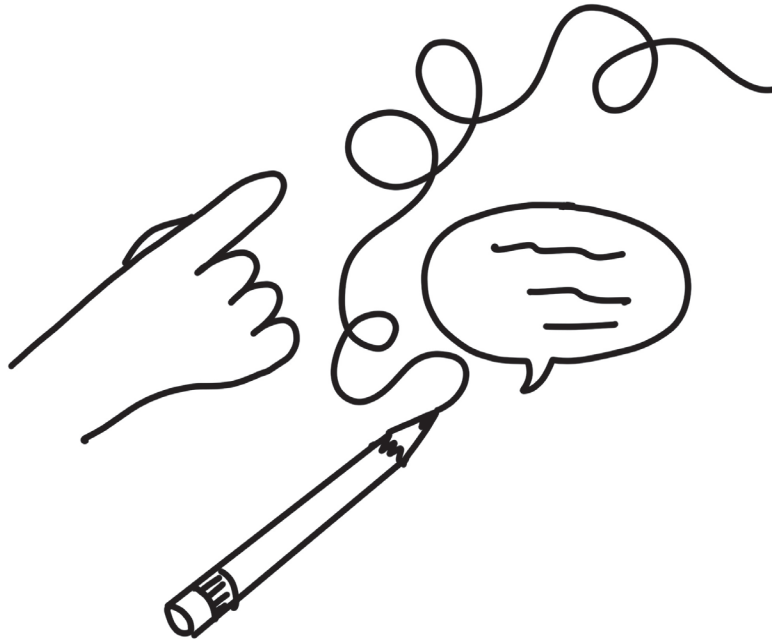
"Students must sit criss-cross applesauce."

to...

**"Students can sit, stand
or bounce to listen."**



RULES:



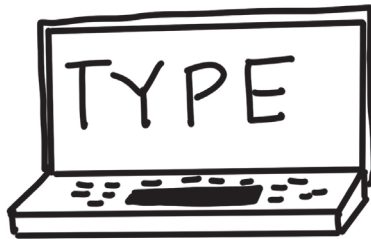
From...

"Raise hands to answer each question."

to...

**"Students can point to an answer,
tell a friend or draw
their answer."**

RULES:



From...

"Students must write with a pencil."

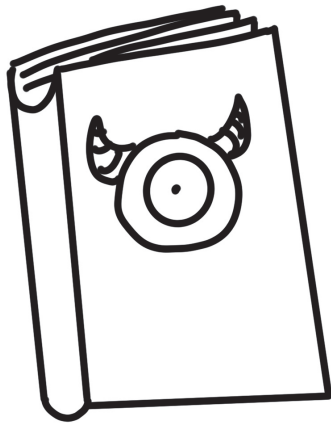
to...

**"Students can write with a pencil,
crayon, marker or type."**





RULES:



CREATE
YOUR
OWN!

From...

"Students must draw the monster in the book."

to...

"Students can create their very
own monster using their
favorite things."

RULES:



From...

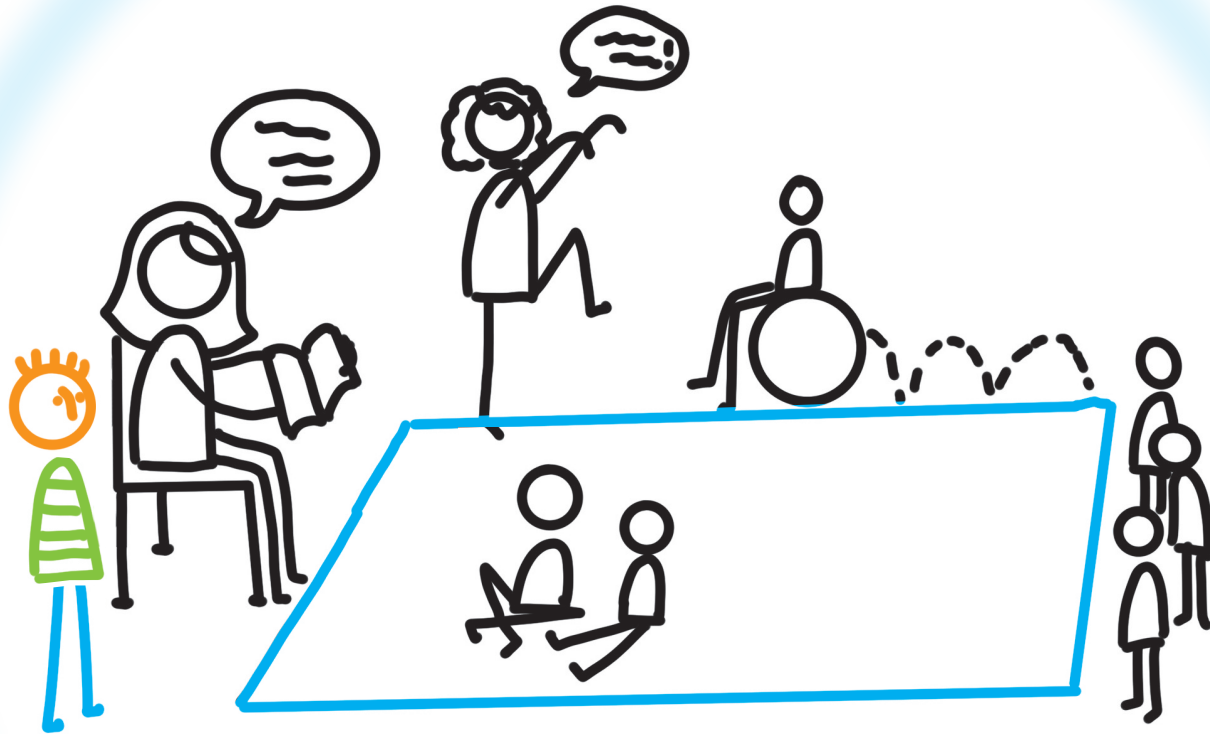
"Students must do things independently."

to...

**"Students can get help
from their friends."**

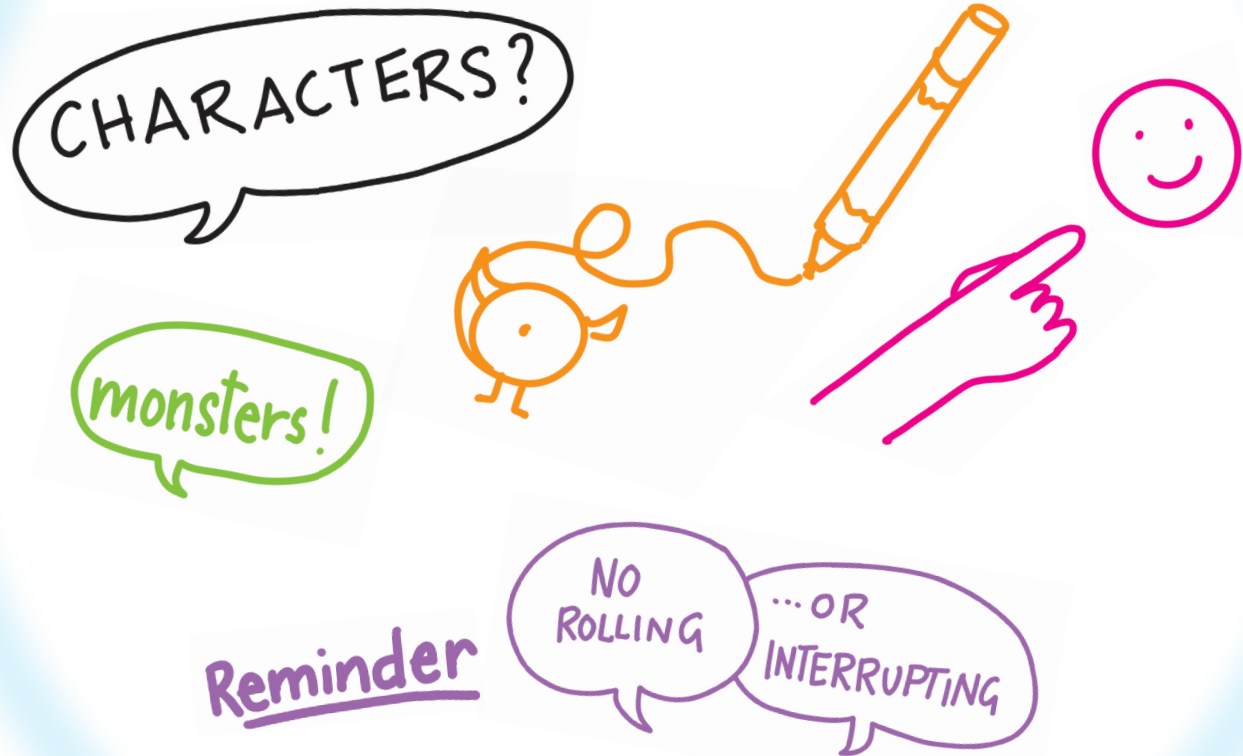


Let's watch
this new lesson in action.




When the monster lesson began Oliver chose to stand just to the side of the teacher. It turns out some students sat on the floor, one sat on a ball and bounced and several students stood near the back of the rug. Oliver stood and watched as Ms. Mazel read the story and Ms. Olaya acted out the very best parts.

Next,
it was time for questions.
The teachers asked, "who were the
characters?" Most students turned to a friend
and said their answer. Three students drew their
answer, one student pointed to an answer and smiled.

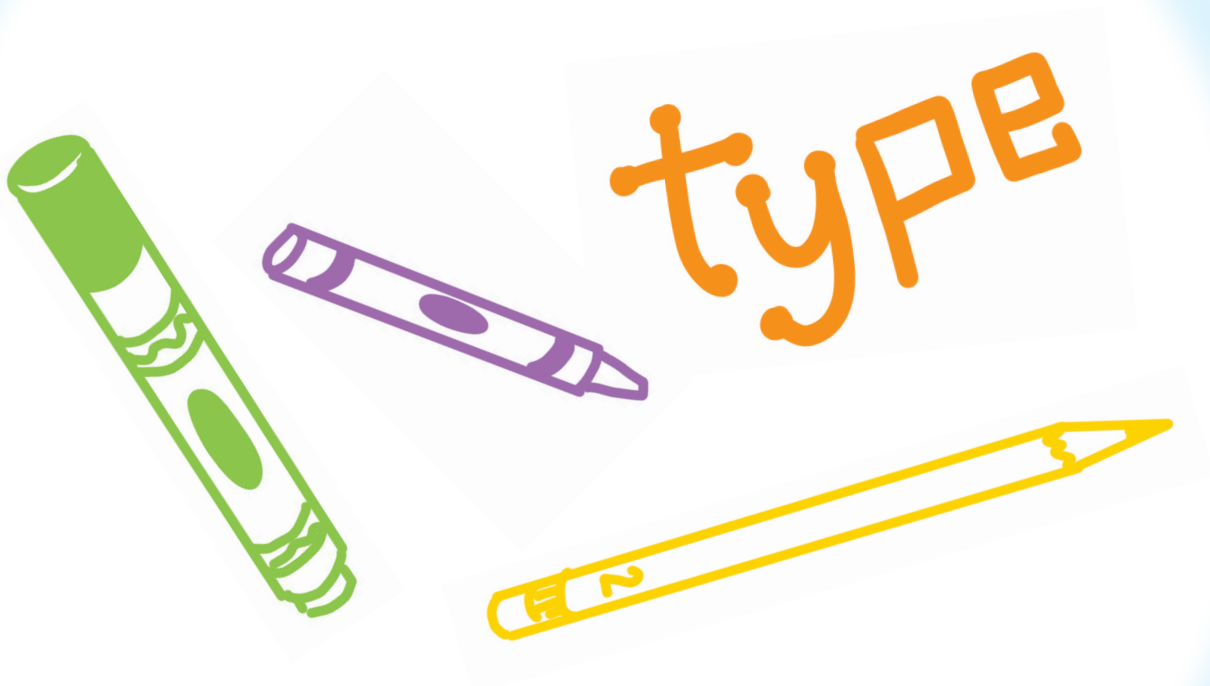


Two students needed a reminder not to roll on the
carpet and one student needed a reminder not
to interrupt.



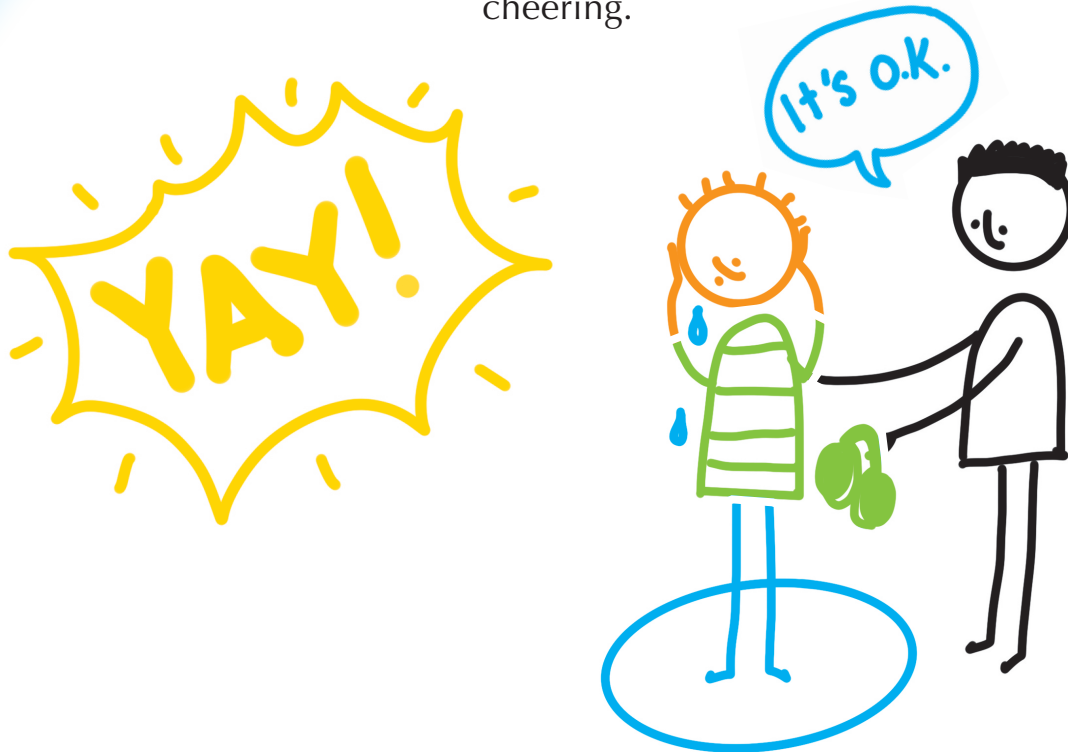


Next it was time
to write the plot. Petra chose
a bright green marker (her favorite color).



Oliver and Sam both typed their answers in their very favorite
fonts. Chloe used a fresh orange crayon because she loves
the smell of new crayons. And Stanley B was
the only one who chose to use a
pencil, a sharpened number
2 pencil.

When the students learned that they could create their very own monster they cheered with delight. However, Oliver did not like the loud noise of the cheering.



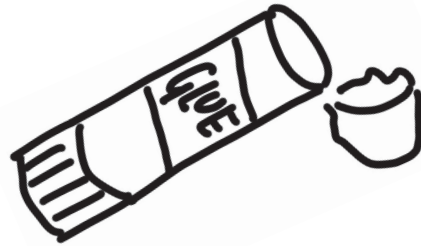
He covered his ears, and began to cry. Trayvon put his hand on Oliver's back, and grabbed his noise blocking headphones and handed them to Oliver. He told Oliver it would be OK. Oliver slowly uncovered his ears and put his headphones on and stopped crying.

Oliver did not
start making his monster at first
but Aiden reminded him to get started.



Turns out Chloe and Daniel both
needed reminders from their
friends too.

Stanley helped
Rosie when her glue stick broke.



GLITTER?



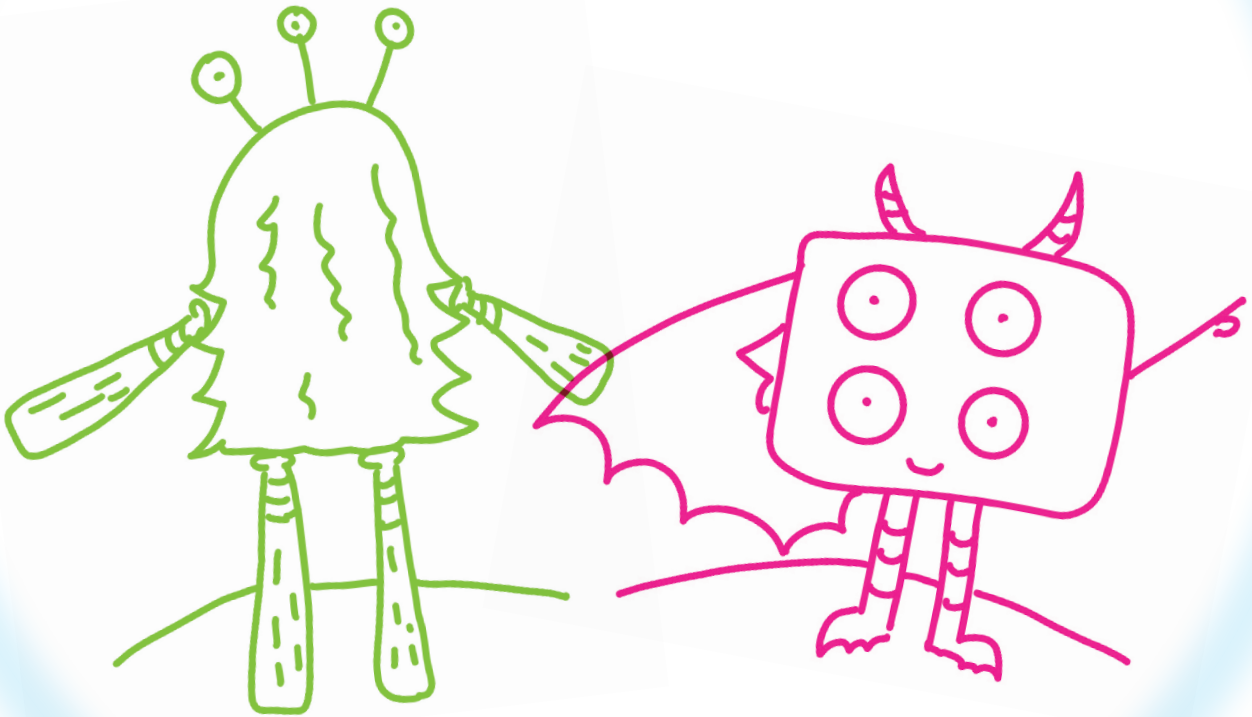
Oliver helped Ellie. He typed "the box"
when Ellie asked him where
the glitter was.



Oliver bounced
and hummed loudly as he worked.
Chloe asked him to hum quieter, and he did.



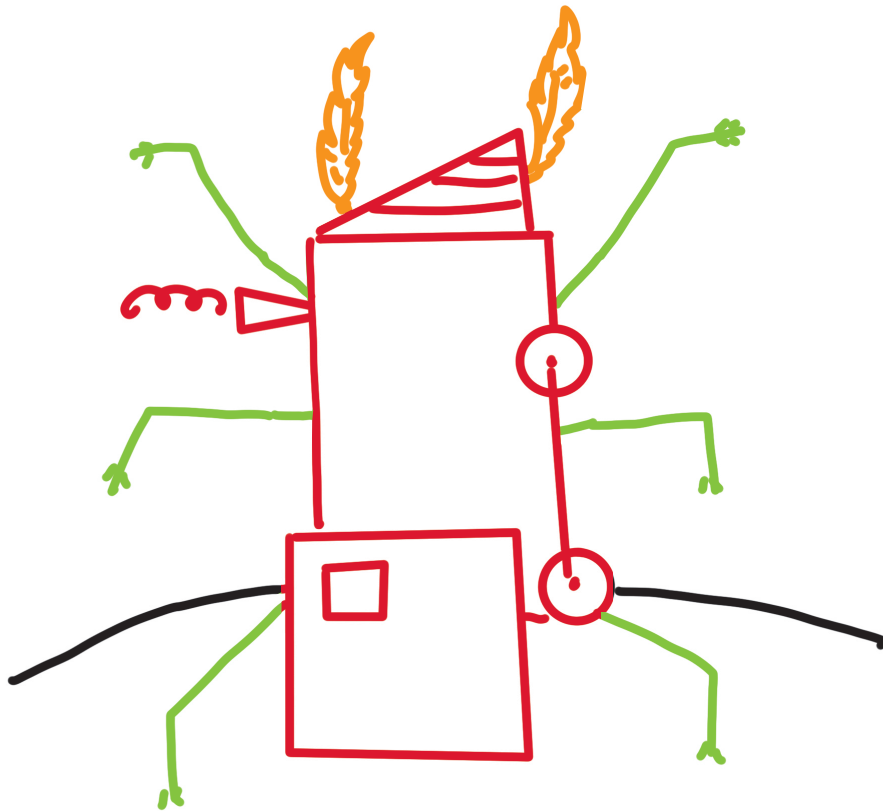
Everyone got
to use any materials from the art
table to create their own monster. Rosie's
had baseball bat arms and legs. Douglas' was pink
and wore a superhero cape. Ruthie's looked quite a bit
like her new puppy.



And Oliver's had...



...you guessed it!



Six insect legs, a real train body and
a set of feathery antennae.

The old lesson was good.
But this new lesson turned out to
be better...much better...

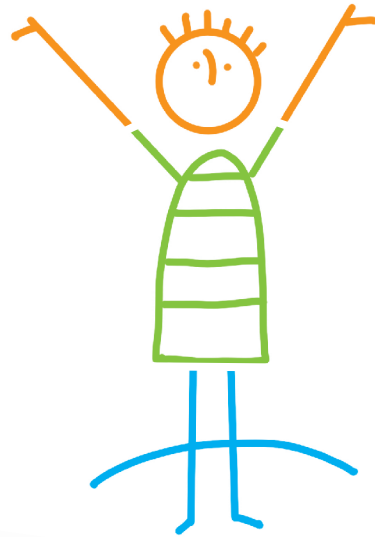


...better for Rosie, Treyvon, Petra, both Stanleys, Sam,
Daniel, Ammi and Chloe. Better for everyone,
and this new lesson was much
better for Oliver.



It turns out
this lesson, this class and
this school are all so much better...

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ABOUT THE BOOK

Our Meet Oliver and learn about the magic that happens inside the circle! The second in a series, this book takes a playful look at what is possible when we think differently about human difference. Intended to inspire teachers everywhere to widen our school communities to include Oliver.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Julie Causton has spent her life making circles or teaching circle making. She is founder and CEO of Inclusive Schooling. She is a former Professor in the Inclusive and Special Education Program at Syracuse University. She has spent the past 20 years studying best practices for inclusive education and as a former elementary, middle and high school special education teacher herself, she knows firsthand how inclusion leads to better lives and outcomes for students. She is an educational consultant and works with administrators, teachers, paraprofessionals and families across the country to help them promote and improve inclusive practices. Her dynamic presentations focus on engaging ways to educate all students within the context of general education. Julie is the author of the children's book *The Too Much Unicorn* and the author of many books about inclusive education. She has published articles in over thirty educational research and practitioner journals. She lives in Upstate NY with her fabulous family—her wife, two teenage children, dogs and three cats.

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