

DIFFERENT BUT THE SAME



BY [CHILDBOOK.AI](https://childbook.ai)

Leo swung high on the swings, watching a girl sit alone by the sandbox. She wore a bright scarf and held a drawing pad. Leo hopped off and walked over. "Hi! I'm Leo. Are you new here?" The girl looked up shyly. "I'm Maya. We just moved here." Leo smiled. "Want to see something cool?" He pointed at a ladybug crawling nearby. Maya's eyes lit up with excitement, and she leaned in closer to look.



"My family eats dinner on the floor with our hands," Maya said, drawing the ladybug. Leo blinked. "We use forks and sit at a table!" "I speak two languages at home," Maya added. "I only speak one," Leo laughed. They stared at each other, unsure what to say next. "We're really different," Leo said quietly. Maya nodded, but kept drawing. Something about her careful lines made Leo curious, so he sat down beside her to watch.



"I love dinosaurs!" Maya suddenly said, flipping her pad to show a T-Rex drawing. Leo gasped. "Me too! I have a dinosaur backpack!" "I collect dinosaur rocks," Maya said, grinning. "I build dinosaur towers with blocks!" Leo shouted. They both laughed loudly. "We like the same silly jokes too?" Maya asked, telling one. Leo giggled so hard he fell backward in the sand. Maya laughed even harder, pointing at him. Suddenly, being different didn't feel so different any more.



Leo and Maya spent the whole afternoon drawing dinosaurs together in the sand. "You're the first friend I've made here," Maya said softly. Leo smiled. "Best friends can be different and the same, right?" Maya nodded happily. "Same favorite dinosaur, different favorite color!" she laughed. They shook hands like grown-ups, then burst into giggles. As the sun set, they promised to meet again tomorrow, already planning their next dinosaur adventure together.



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