Topic: First Day in a New School

Pictures given: Bus, Children raising hands in a class, a boy clutching his stomach

By Melissa Liew, Primary 6, 2016

Sam spoke with a stammer. Despite his condition, he was an outgoing boy and was never afraid to try new things. He strongly believed that when there is a will, there is a way.

Finally, the day for him to attend primary school arrived. He was a little worried and afraid but he did not let his feelings affect his positive learning attitude. As he entered the school gate of Flora Primary School, the hustle and bustle of the school greeted him. Students in the canteen were either munching away on their finger-licking food or talking nineteen to a dozen.

Soon, the school bell rang and it was time for the students to return to their respective classes. Peace was restored in the canteen as the students left one by one. On Sam’s way back to class, he met the principal, Mr. Teo. “Have a great first day in school, Sam! I am sure you will have lots of fun here,” wished Mr. Teo. He gave a reassuring pat on Sam’s back. The pat was all he needed to calm himself down as he felt he was ready to face the other students belonging to the same class as him.

In no time, the students of Sam’s class were back in their comfortable seats. Sam was asked to introduce himself. “Bu…but Mrs. Ta…Tan, I spe…speak wi…with a stam….stammer. The oth…other pup…pupils will defin…definitely ma…make fu…fun of m…me,” Sam stammered as an immense surge of panic and worry began to set in him. “I’m sure they will understand your condition. Just go ahead and take your time,” Mrs. Tan assured him as a smile appeared on her face.

Beads of cold sweat formed on Sam’s forehead as he introduced himself to the class. It was terrifying. Forty pairs of eyes were glued onto him when he began his speech. “Calm down Sam, calm down,” a voice broke out. Phew! It was just Mrs. Tan. At this juncture, he was already trembling like a leaf.

“Ha ha! Ha ha! Big baby Sam needs a teacher to calm him down and speaks with such a weird stammer. He should go back to preschool and learn how to speak,” a few boys who were a little too tall for their age started to jeer at him. Upon hearing that, the entire class except Tom erupted into peals of laughter.
Tom was the only boy sitting in the front row with thick nerdy glasses. He empathised with Sam’s condition. Tears welled up in Sam’s eyes at this very moment while the rest of the class continued laughing hysterically. Overcome by shame, Sam scurried back to his seat, clutching a piece of napkin in his right hand. Instantly, Tom walked towards Sam and comforted him, “Don’t worry Sam. I understand your condition. This class does not have respect at all.” After which, he put his arm around Sam’s shoulder.

Thud!

The sound emitted by Mrs. Tan when she slammed the dictionary on the table ricocheted throughout the entire classroom. It scared the living daylights out of everyone and silence was restored before Mrs. Tan went ballistic. She reprimanded the class for jeering at Sam. With their heads hung low in extreme shame, the boys apologized vehemently to Sam. Sam accepted their apology as he disliked holding grudges on people. That day after lessons, he chanced upon Mrs. Tan as he made his way towards the school gate. She smiled at him and began, “Sam, I know of your condition, my own son suffers from it too. Just take your time to learn. Approach me if you require any additional coaching, I would be more than pleased to help.” Sam replied obligingly, “I…I… will Mrs. Tan, I will p-p-put in all my ef-effort. T-t-hank you for your unwavering faith in m-m-me.”

From that day onwards, the class refrained from making fun of anyone as they did not want to get detention and another one of those tongue-lashings from their very fierce form teacher.