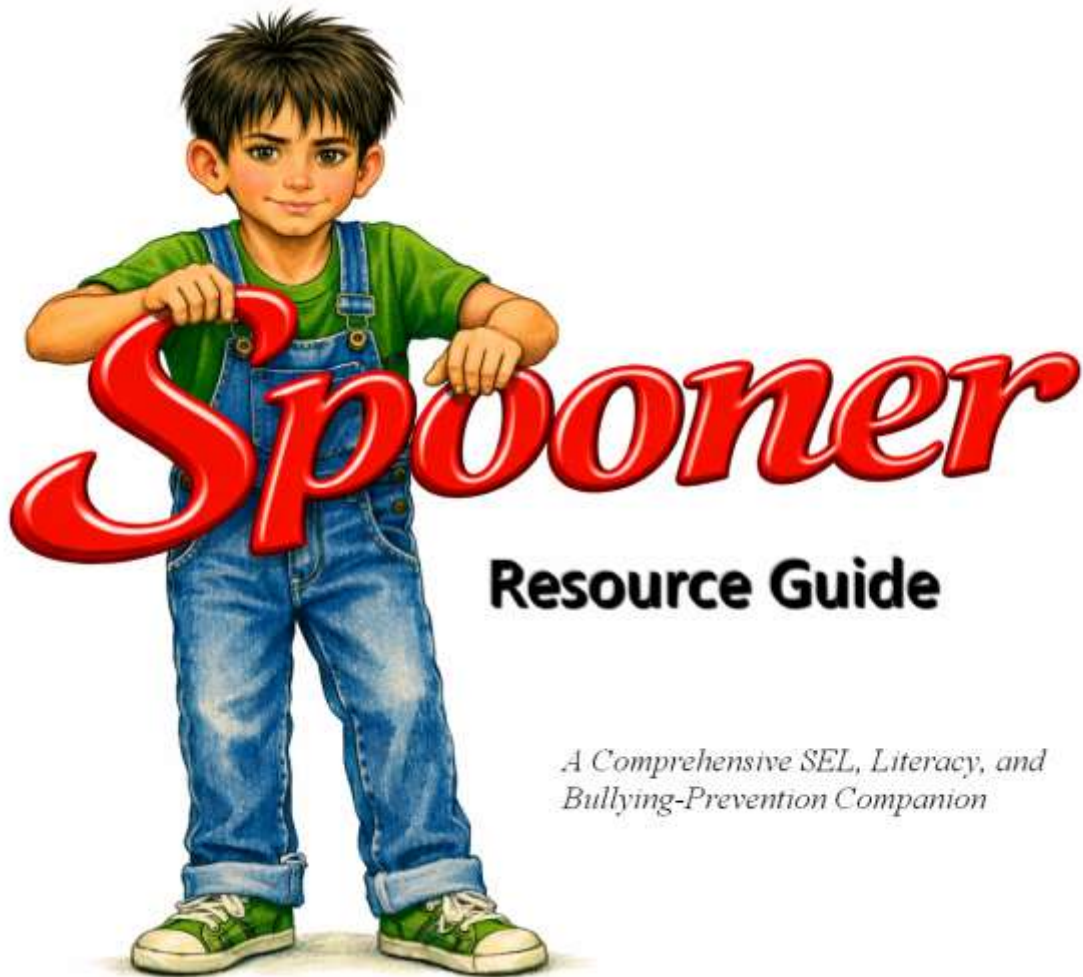




Teacher Overview

Purpose

The *Spooner Resource Guide* helps students explore language, empathy, and belonging through the story of **Tony Spooner**, a boy whose spoonerisms lead to both challenges and growth. These activities encourage creativity, kindness, and self-expression while reinforcing literacy and social-emotional learning (SEL) skills.

Learning Objectives

Students will:

- Understand spoonerisms and how wordplay enhances writing and humor.
- Develop empathy and kindness through reflection on Tony's experiences.
- Strengthen communication skills through writing, illustrating, and discussion.
- Practice perspective-taking using SEL-aligned activities.
- Connect story themes to real-life choices and respectful behavior.

Recommended Use

- Designed for grades 2–and up to middle school.
- Suitable for individual, small-group, or whole-class instruction.
- Ideal for Language Arts, Character Education, and Counseling lessons.
- Student work (poems, cartoons, kindness reflections) can be displayed on a classroom kindness board.

Materials Needed

- Paper, pencils, crayons or markers
- Construction paper for friendship chains and posters

Assessment Ideas

- Observe participation and collaboration during group activities.
- Review written responses for understanding of spoonerisms and kindness concepts.
- Use reflection questions to assess empathy and respect.

How to Use This Guide

The *Spooner Resource Guide* is designed to give teachers flexible, ready-to-use activities that support literacy, social-emotional learning, and classroom community. You may use the guide as a full unit, or select individual activities to fit your lesson goals.

1. Start With the Story

Begin by reading *Spooner* aloud or having students read it independently or in small groups. Pause to discuss Tony's spoonerisms, his feelings, and the challenges he faces. This sets the foundation for all activities that follow.

2. Choose Activities That Fit Your Classroom Needs

The guide is divided into clear sections:

- Spoonerism Wordplay — decoding, creating, and writing with spoonerisms
- Creative Writing & Illustration — poems, cartoons, and dialogue
- Kindness & Anti-Bullying Lessons — SEL-aligned activities that build empathy
- Discussion Questions — prompts for deeper reflection

You can use these activities:

- As literacy centers
- During morning meetings
- In counseling or SEL blocks

- As whole-class lessons
- For early finishers or enrichment

3. Encourage Student Creativity

Many activities invite students to draw, write, or create their own spoonerisms. Allow students to share their work with partners or the class to build confidence and community.

4. Integrate SEL Throughout

Use the kindness poems, cartoons, and Red-Yellow-Green Light activity to help students:

- Recognize emotions
- Understand respectful behavior
- Reflect on how words and actions affect others

These activities pair naturally with classroom expectations and character-building lessons.

5. Display Student Work

Create a Kindness Board, Friendship Wall, or Spoonerism Gallery to celebrate student creativity. Displaying their work reinforces positive behavior and builds a sense of belonging.

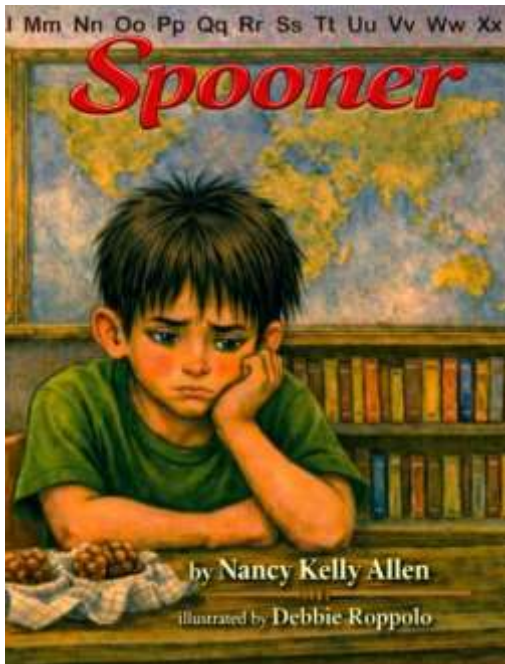
6. Extend the Learning

Use the journal prompts, thank-you cards, and kindness jar to continue the conversation beyond the book. These activities help students apply kindness in real-life situations.

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Spooner Classroom Activities



Tony Spooner carries on the family tradition of his long-ago cousin, William, as he wraps his tongue around words that spill out of his mouth, twisted and warped. Much to Tony's dismay, when he tries to say, "My tough luck," the twisted words "My lough tuck" pour out, reversing the first letters of two words. For Tony, spoonerisms, named in honor of William, is a curse, not an honor. The more concerned and upset Tony becomes, the more he twists words. Tony wants to win a trophy, any type of trophy. Each time he comes close to winning, a

bully intervenes, and Tony spews more spoonerisms. When a bully pushes him too far, his twisted words create havoc, but can he outwit the bully?

Writing and Illustrating Activities

Twisty-Turny Words

Tony's words get all twisty-turny when he's nervous! His family calls these silly mix-ups "spoonerisms." Can you help him untwist the topsy-turvy words below?

1. Beeping Sleauty _____
2. Spry to tin _____
3. Boppa Pear _____
4. Hoo tot to touch _____
5. The bree thears _____
6. You have mad banners _____
7. Pittle lig, pittle lig _____
8. The wig bad bolf _____
9. The lang geft _____
10. A lighty meap _____

Spoonerism Quick Write

Write 2 to 3 sentences using at least one spoonerism.

Spoonerism Mix-Up Page

Tony has a few more spoonerisms he needs your help with. There are a few extra lines for you to make your own spoonerisms. Check the spelling on some!

1. Care hut _____
2. Flutter by _____
3. Plaster man _____
4. Welling spords _____
5. Shake a tower _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

Write a spoonerism poem.

Example:

**Some days, you like to bead a rook.
Some days, you misten to lusic.
Some days, your words found sunny.
This is one of dose thays.**

You're the illustrator!



Cartoon with dialogue

- Draw a cartoon showing **two characters talking**.
- One character's speech should include a **spoonerism** — a funny mix-up of sounds (for example, "You hissed my mystery!" instead of "You missed my history!").

Cartoon with caption

- Draw another cartoon.
- Below your drawing, write a **caption** (a short statement or description) that uses a **spoonerism**.



Dialog:

Play with spoonerisms and have fun. They add humor to writing, and who doesn't love humor!

Write dialog between two characters with one of the characters using spoonerisms. Give your writing a beginning, middle, and ending.

Write the story and then re-read carefully to see where you can change words to spoonerisms. If that doesn't work, think of a spoonerism and insert them into the dialog.

Pass your writing to friends and see if they can figure out the spoonerisms. Most of all, have fun playing with words and creating your own spoonerisms.

Kindness Poetry Worksheet

Poems:

1. Write a poem about an act of kindness you did. Add a spoonerism, too.

2. Write a poem or story about an act of kindness you saw someone do.

3. Write an Acrostic Kindness poem. Use the first letters of each line that spells kindness:

K _____

I _____

N _____

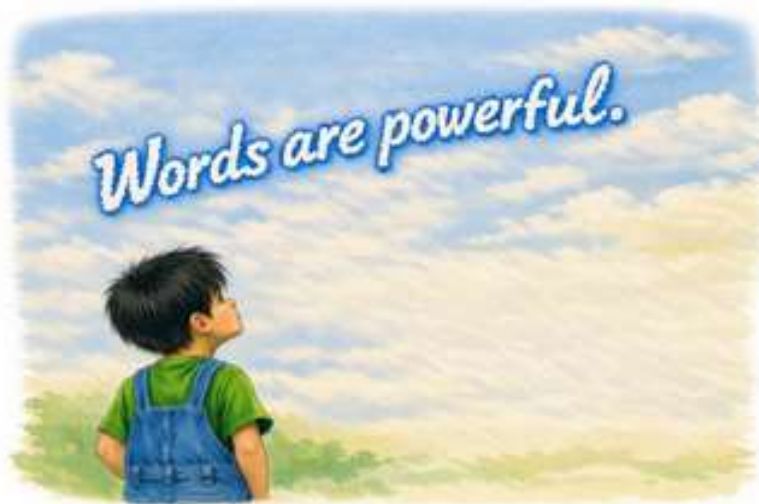
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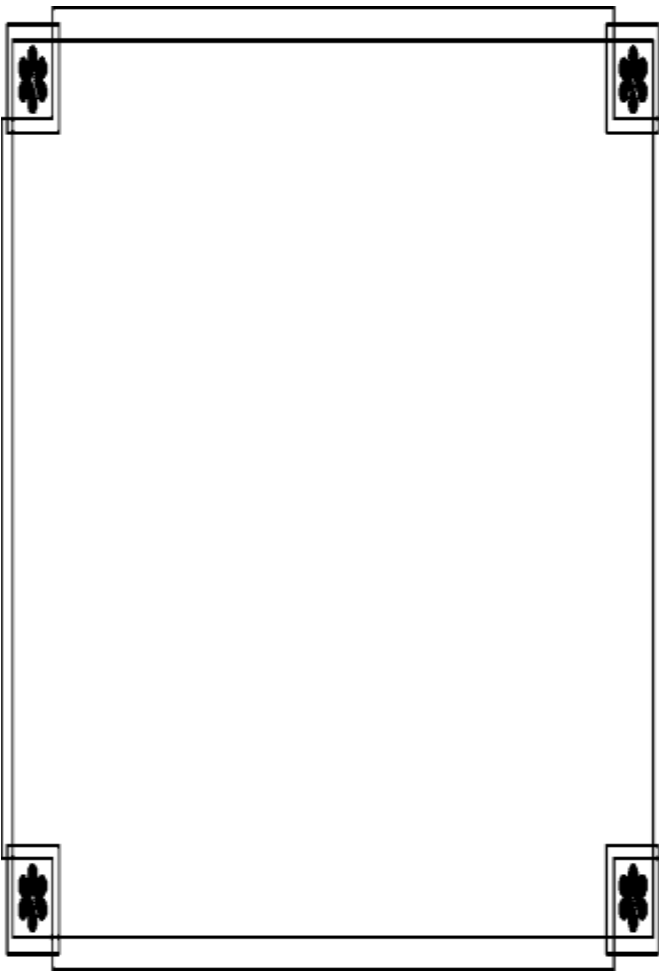
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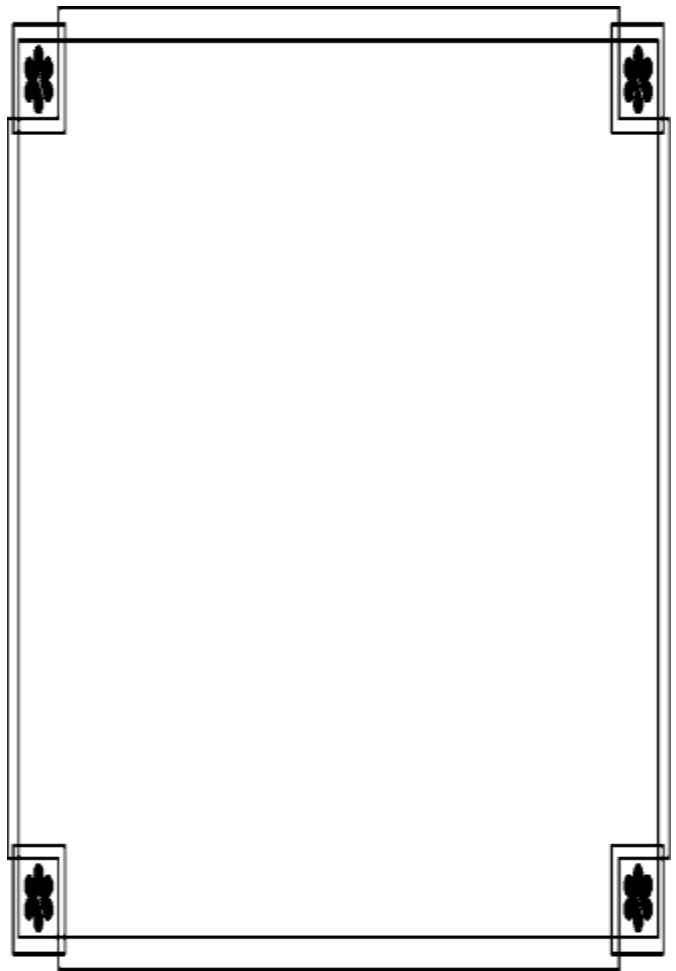


Cartoon it!

Draw a cartoon that shows an act of kindness. Then write a caption to explain what is happening.

Next, draw a cartoon that shows an example of bullying. Write a caption to describe the situation.





**Anti-Bullying activities
(also known as Kindness
and Belonging activities).**

Friendship chain:



Cut strips of construction paper in assorted colors. Write ways to make friends.

Examples: Smile, say hello, invite to play in group, share things, help them...

Wanted Poster:

Looking for a friend.



Create a wanted poster. On the poster, have the students list characteristics of a friend.

Examples of characteristics: loves to laugh, is kind, shares toys, likes to ride bikes, enjoys my odd sense of humor.

Talking Stick:



In small groups, only the person holding the stick has the floor. When they finish sharing their idea, they pass the stick to another group member so everyone has a chance to contribute. The stick supports students in practicing turn-taking, respectful listening, and sharing space with their peers.

Red Light — Yellow Light — Green Light: Respect & Kindness Activity

Stop

Caution

Go



This activity helps students reflect on how characters in *Spooner* show (or struggle to show) respect and kindness. Students sort characters into Red, Yellow, or Green categories based on their behavior in the story.

Instructions for Students

1. Review the Traffic-Light Meanings

- Red Light — *Stop*. These characters did not show respect or kindness.
- Yellow Light — *Caution*. These characters sometimes showed respect and kindness, but not always.

Green Light — *Go*. These characters consistently showed respect and kindness

2. Think About the Characters

Characters from *Spooner*:

Tony, Shanay, J.J., Hannah, Elbert, Emily

Students reflect on each character's actions, choices, and interactions.

3. Sort the Characters

Students place each character into one of the three categories:

- **Red Light Characters**
Which characters never showed respect or kindness?
- **Yellow Light Characters**
Which characters sometimes showed respect and kindness?
- **Green Light Characters**
Which characters always showed respect and kindness?

4. Discuss as a Group

Students share their choices and explain their reasoning using evidence from the story.

Encourage SEL language such as:

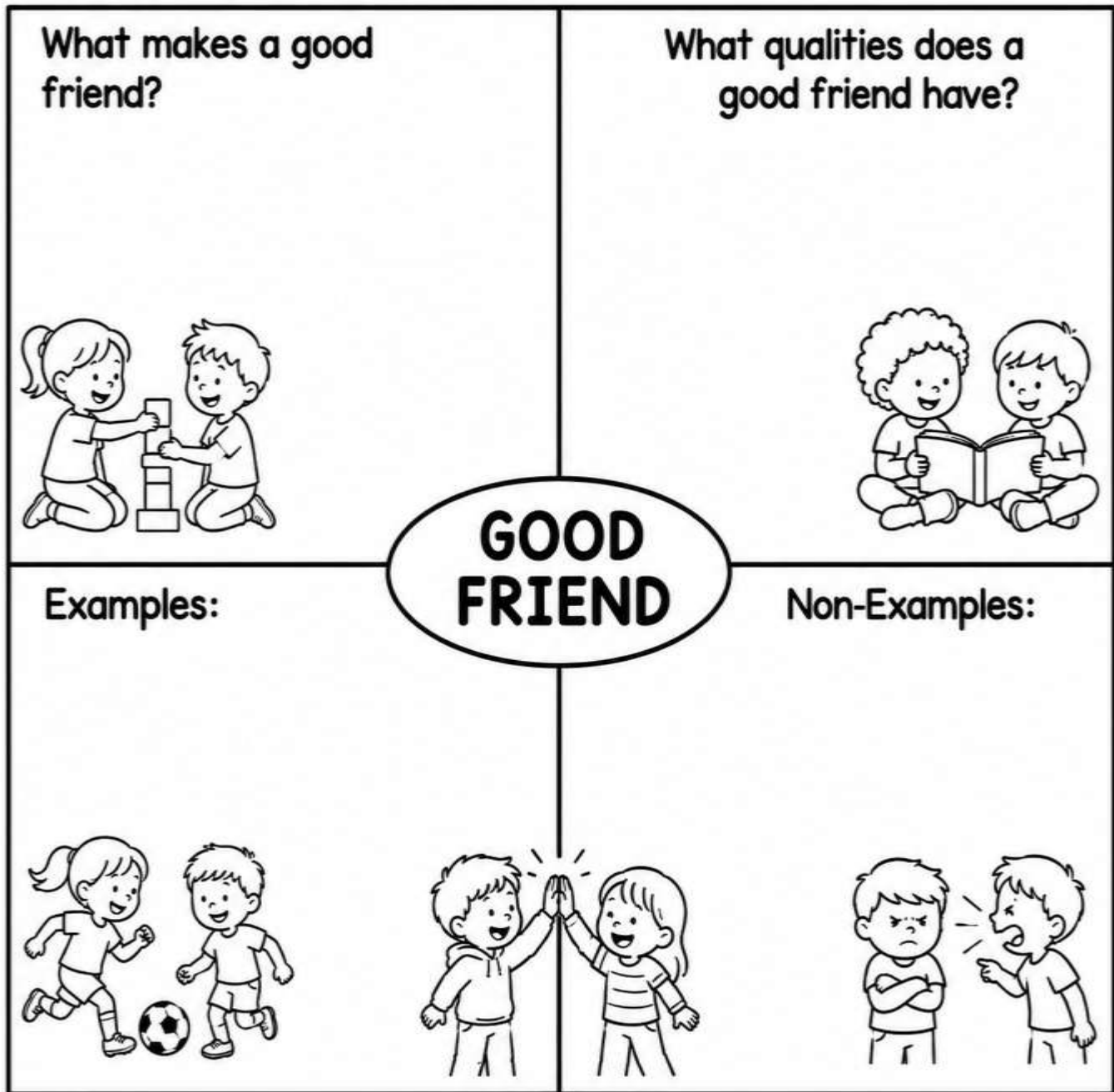
- *“I noticed...”*
- *“A respectful choice would have been...”*
- *“This character showed kindness when...”*

Learning Goals

- Build understanding of respectful and unkind behaviors
- Strengthen empathy and perspective-taking
- Practice evidence-based discussion
- Connect character actions to real-life choices

Friendship Anchor Chart:

Place students in teams. As a team, have them work together to brainstorm and write friendship words or phrases on a large chart paper. When they finish, hang the chart on the wall to create a shared class display.



Circle of Friendship:



One student begins by holding the ball and saying a word or phrase that represents friendship. They gently pass the ball to another student. The catcher shares a new friendship word or phrase, then passes the ball on. Continue the pattern until everyone has contributed.

Friendship video. Two or three students discuss the qualities of a friend. Two other students video the discussion. *Please check your school's policy about filming students.*

Journal Writing:



In a journal write one act of kindness you did yesterday or today.

- Why did you do the act of kindness?
- How did it make you feel?
- How do you think the other person felt?
- Who has been kind to you?
- What did the person do?
- How did you feel at the time? How do you feel about it no

Thank You card:

Fold paper in half to create a thank you card. Draw an illustration on the cover.

On the inside, write a note thanking someone for their act of kindness.

Kindness Jar:



Make a kindness jar by adding kindness notes on small pieces of paper. Place the papers in the jar. This can be done at home with every family member or in class or group with every member participating. At the end of the day or week, take out the papers and read them. Discuss how the acts showed kindness.

Awards:

Hand out kindness awards or stickers throughout the day. Create a Kindness Board where students post their awards.

Painted Rocks:

Paint rocks and add words to encourage kindness, such as “Be kind” and “Hello, friend.”

Celebrate World Kindness Day on November 13th.



Students,

Your school wants to be your safe place. So, let's work together to make it safe for all. Check the places you don't feel safe.

- ☐ Cafeteria
- ☐ Classroom
- ☐ Hallway
- ☐ Gym
- ☐ Playground
- ☐ Stairs
- ☐ School bus
- ☐ Walking home
- ☐ Other

Discussion Questions About Bullying

- 1. What does bullying mean? Give examples of Elbert bullying Tony.**
- 2. Why do you think Elbert bullied Tony?**
- 3. Elbert was a new kid in school. How do you think Elbert felt about his school? Do you think Elbert was happy?**
- 4. Should Tony have told an adult about Elbert?**
- 5. Why didn't Tony contact an adult after he was bullied?**
- 6. Should Tony's friends have told an adult about Elbert bullying Tony? Why or why not?**
- 7. Why did Tony finally stand up to Elbert?**

Discussion Questions About Kindness and Belonging

- 1. What makes you feel like you belong to a school or group?**
- 2. How can you make others feel included in games or work?**
- 3. How did Tony's friends show understanding when he was upset?**
- 4. How did Tony's friends show respect when he used spoonerisms?**
- 5. What can we do to make a new student feel welcome?**
- 6. If Tony and his friends had asked Elbert to join in an activity, do you think Elbert would have acted differently? Why or why not?**
- 7. Has anyone ever shown you a small act of kindness? How did it make you feel? What acts of kindness can we show others?**

