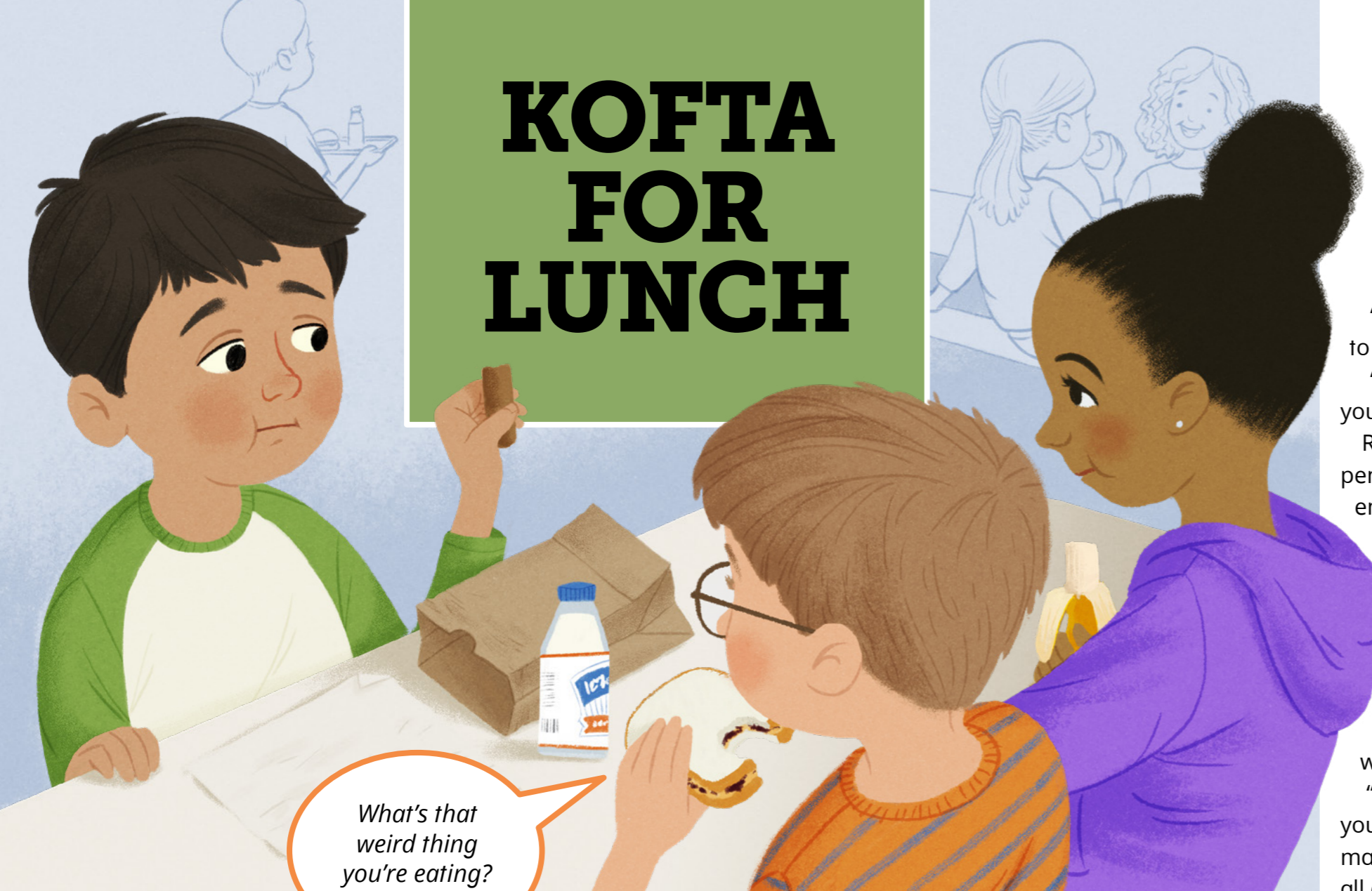


# KOFTA FOR LUNCH



What's that weird thing you're eating?

By Katrina McPheters  
(Based on a true story)

This story took place in the USA.

Roy sat down at the table and opened his lunch bag. His family had just moved, and this was his first day at his new school. His mom had made his favorite Armenian food, kofta. He was excited to eat it!

Roy unrolled the wax paper wrapped around the kofta. It was like a long, skinny meatball. He loved the smell of the spices baked into the meat. And the hole in the middle made it like a little whistle. He put

it to his lips and blew. Then he took a bite. Delicious!

"Hey," said a boy across the table. "What's that weird thing you're eating?"

Roy felt his cheeks flush. "It's my lunch."

"Well, it doesn't look very good." The boy laughed.

Roy didn't know what to say. He didn't know that no one else here ate kofta. He didn't want them to think he was weird! So he put away his lunch and ran outside for recess.

After school, Roy found Mom unpacking boxes.

"I don't want to take kofta to school anymore," Roy said.

"Why?" Mom asked. "It's your favorite."

Roy told her what happened at school. "It was so embarrassing!"

"I'm sorry that happened," Mom said. "Most people here have never had kofta. What if we gave the other kids a chance to try some?"

"Why?" Roy asked. "They won't eat it."

"Well, you can't know unless you ask! I know it's hard to make new friends. But we are all children of God. Sometimes we just have to get to know

more about each other."

Roy thought about it. He didn't want to be laughed at. But he did want to give the kids at lunch a better chance to understand. And kofta really was tasty.

He nodded. "OK. Let's make more."

The next day at lunch, Roy took a deep breath. He sat down next to the boy who had laughed at him.

Roy opened his lunch bag. "Would any of you like to try some Armenian food?"

The other kids gathered around as Roy unwrapped the kofta.

"I'll try some," the boy said.

"Me too," a girl added. Roy passed around the kofta so everyone could try it. Then they all took a bite.

"This is really good!" the boy said. "What's it called?"

"Kofta," Roy said.

"Cool!" The boy smiled. "I'm John. Want to play at recess?"

Roy could only nod with a full mouth. His mom was right—they were all children of God too! And sharing helped him make friends after all. ●

## MAKE YOUR OWN KOFTA TO SHARE!

Mix **1 pound (0.5 kg) ground lamb or beef, 1 onion** (chopped), **1/4 cup bulgur wheat or bread crumbs, 2 cloves garlic** (minced), and **1 teaspoon each of cumin, ground coriander, paprika, cinnamon, and salt**. Roll mixture into logs and stick a metal skewer through each one. (If you use wooden sticks, soak them in water for 30 minutes first.) Bake at 350°F (180°C) for 20 minutes or until meat is cooked through.

