Building RESPECT

By Noelle Lambert Barrus
(Based on a true story)

This story took place in Australia.

Noah helped his sister Claire hang a fuzzy blanket over the chairs.

"Should we put this one here?" he asked. He held up the blue blanket with the whales on it.

"Yeah! And we can use this as the door." Claire pointed to one side of the fort.

"Time for school!" Mom called.

Noah looked at his sister. "Maybe we can finish our fort after school?"

Don't say that, please.

"And we can ask Mom and Dad if we can play games inside it," Claire said.

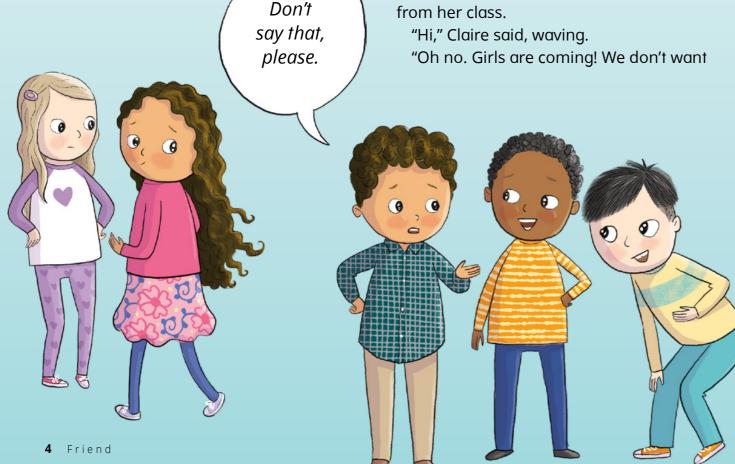Noah smiled and nodded. He was glad he could build forts and play with his big sister!

That day at recess, Noah played with his friends Ty and Mark.

"Let's hop on one foot," Ty said.

"OK," said Noah. "Let's see who can hop the longest!"

The boys started hopping. Noah laughed when he crashed into Mark.

Just then, Claire walked by with some girls from her class.

"Hi," Claire said, waving.

"Oh no. Girls are coming! We don't want to play with *them*," Ty said. Then he called Claire and her friends a mean name.

Noah didn't like how the words made him feel. It wasn't nice to call people mean names.

He watched Claire and her friends ignore Ty and walk away.

Noah thought he should stand up for Claire, even if she didn't really need him to. She was his sister, and he loved her.

Noah took a deep breath. "Hey, don't say that, please," he told Ty. "She doesn't like it when you say that. And I don't either."

"OK. Fine," Ty said with a shrug.

Noah sighed. He felt a lot better now.

That night, Noah and Claire played games in their fort with Mom and Dad.

"How was school today?" Dad asked as he put a card on the pile.

"Today during recess, Ty called Claire a mean name," Noah said. "I told him to stop."

Claire looked up from her cards. "You did?" she asked.

Noah nodded. "Yeah. I knew what he said wasn't kind or true."

Mom, Dad, and Claire smiled.

"Thanks," Claire said.

"I'm glad you showed respect for your sister," said Mom.

"Yeah, that was very brave," Dad said. "It's important to show respect for each other. Even if we have to stand up to our friends."

Noah smiled back. He felt good knowing he had done the right thing. ●

Act out the story! What would you say if a friend called someone a mean name?