Zoya and the Empty Speech Bubble

A comic needs the other person's voice.



AGES 4-7 | AN ORIGINAL MIMOMANGO STORY



Zoya drew a comic about her friend Ellis. In the first picture, Ellis stared at a huge puddle. Zoya gave him a speech bubble: "I am frightened!"



Ellis looked at the page. "But I wasn't frightened," he said. "I was wondering how deep it was." Zoya looked from her picture to her friend.



She rubbed out the words. The empty speech bubble looked strangely large. "Your face looked worried," she said. Ellis wrinkled his nose. "That is my thinking face."



Zoya drew another picture. This time, Ellis was quiet beside the slide. She began to write "I am sad", then stopped her pencil in mid-air.



"What were you thinking there?" she asked. "I was deciding whether to go down again," Ellis said. "My socks were slipping inside my shoes."



Zoya put his own words into the bubble. The comic became funnier. She drew a small sock wriggle under the slide. Ellis laughed and added a shoelace.



For the third picture, Ellis drew Zoya holding a broken crayon. He left her speech bubble empty. "Your turn," he said. "What happened inside your head?"



"I was relieved," Zoya said. Ellis blinked. "Relieved?" She nodded. "Now we had two red pieces. We both needed red, and the pieces still worked."



Ellis wrote that down. Their comic had a puddle, a slide and a broken crayon. But the important parts were things the pictures alone could not tell.



They showed it to their club leader. She read every bubble. "You asked each other," she noticed. Zoya nodded. Her pencil could draw a face, but not read a mind.



At the bottom, they added one last panel. Two friends sat at a table. Between them floated a very big question mark, shaped like a curious hook.



"What are you thinking?" the last bubble asked. They left room underneath for an answer. Some of their best stories, Zoya decided, began with an empty space.

The End

A little story. A moment to share.

Why did Zoya's first bubble need changing?

What could you ask instead of guessing how someone feels?

Choose a favourite moment and draw what happened next.

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