

Blue set resource sheet: Year 1

Jealous

India seemed to have it all. She was good at just about everything, she wore the coolest clothes and was always surrounded by loads of friends. Amber was one of India's friends, although she was very different from her. India was noisy and confident; Amber was so quiet and shy that sometimes the others would forget she was there. Amber thought India was wonderful. She was proud to go around with her.

Amber's winning poem

What you see
is me,
a small,
quiet,
shy
me,
like a shadow.
That is the me you see.
But inside that me
I am bigger than
mountains,
I am louder than the wind,
I shine like a star,
I am as brave as a hero
No one can see the other me,
Not yet.

One day, the headteacher came into India and Amber's class. She looked very pleased as she said to the children: 'I have some very good news for you. The winner of the poetry competition that you all went in for is not only from our school, but from this class. I am very proud indeed that one of you has shown such talent. The judges said that the winning poem is so good that it is going to be published in a book of children's poetry.'

All the children looked at each other. Who could it be? Lots of them looked at India. After all, India was good at everything. Then the headteacher said: 'Amber, congratulations. You are the winner. Maybe one day you will be a famous author.'

Amber stood up and the headteacher and the teacher shook her hand. The children clapped.

Amber didn't know whether she would curl up with embarrassment or burst with pride. She looked round at all the children's faces. Most of them were smiling and happy for her but India wasn't even looking. She and her two closest friends were whispering and sniggering as if they didn't care at all about Amber winning anything. Amber's heart sank, but that was not the end of it.

When Amber sat down, India and her friends hardly talked to her, but they made sure she could hear what they were saying. First she heard words like 'show-off' and 'stuck-up' and 'big-head' as they giggled and whispered behind their hands. Then they kept looking her up and down and laughing about her clothes and her shoes. Amber tried to ignore them, until India whispered to her: 'I expect they made a mistake. It was probably someone else called Amber. After all when did you ever do anything good?'

After that, although other children came up to Amber and said nice things to her about winning the competition, everything was ruined. All her pleasure and pride were destroyed.

Ask the children:

- What was Amber feeling?
- What was India feeling?
- What was making India behave as she did?
- What does jealousy feel like?

Zak and Suzy, who sat on Amber's table, saw what India was doing and how upset Amber was. They tried to cheer Amber up. Zak let her use his new felts and Suzy said to her: 'I wish I was as good a writer as you.' Amber smiled gratefully, but she was so hurt and confused that inside she felt more like crying. Suzy and Zak looked at each other. Something had to be done.

Later that day the headteacher came into the room for the second time. She smiled at the children, called Amber the school's famous author, and then said that she wanted to speak to India for a few minutes. India did not look bothered. She was always being asked to do special things. Outside the classroom the headteacher gave India a very long look. She was not smiling now. India began to feel uncomfortable.

Then the headteacher said: 'India, I have always thought of you as a very fortunate girl. You have many things that other children don't have and you are good at many things. Would you agree?' India nodded. She couldn't think what might come next. The headteacher continued: 'Do you have friends, India?' India nodded again. 'Well, I wonder how you would feel if your friends were unkind to you simply because you are good at your work, or because your parents buy you nice things?' India hung her head. Her heart was beating uncomfortably.

There was a long silence, then the headteacher said: 'What Amber did was wonderful, India, and it does not hurt you in any way. It doesn't make you less good at things or less popular. What hurts you is how you are behaving to her. That behaviour is unkind. Are you proud of yourself?' India shook her head. She felt ashamed and miserable. The headteacher said very gently: 'I want you to think very hard about why you are behaving like that towards Amber, who has always been your friend, and I want you to come and see me tomorrow and tell me about it.'

India did not know how she got back in the classroom or through the rest of the day. She kept looking over to Amber, but Amber just looked away.

That night India sat in her room and thought. She thought about her own feelings and she thought about Amber. Then she wrote her thoughts down. The next day she took two pieces of writing to school. The first she gave to the headteacher who read it carefully and then smiled at India and sent her back to the classroom. The second she gave to Amber. It was in an envelope. Amber hardly dared to open it in case India was doing something else to hurt her. Inside the envelope was a card which said:

Dear Amber,

I am very, very sorry I was mean to you yesterday. It was because I was jealous that you had won the competition. I am really ashamed of how I was to you and I hope you will forgive me. I am so proud of you and hope you will still be my friend.

Love India.

Ask the children:

- What do you think Amber did when she read India's card?
- What would you have done?
- Zak and Suzy told the headteacher about India's behaviour. Do you think that was a good thing to do? What might you have done instead?
- What do you think India wrote for the headteacher?
- How did India manage to deal with her jealous feelings?
- Do you think that India was right to tell Amber that she had been jealous?