

Teammate Trouble

By: Samuel Hwang

Tweet tweet! It was a beautiful Monday at Rastor County. Dogs were being walked, people were exercising, birds were singing and Piotr Barton was standing outside his school, taking everything in.

His school, Churpshill Street Elementary School, was boring on the outside but on the inside it was perfect to Piotr. Its teachers were nice and not very strict, the students were kind and helpful and the building itself felt like home.

The only problem was science, where there were so many PBLs. He didn't like PBLs much. He preferred listening better. He learned best this way. Suddenly, he saw his best friend, Cletus, and yelled to him,

"Come over here, Cletus!"

"Hey Pi, what's up?" responded Cletus, as he ruffled Piotr's messy hair. They both walked toward the building together, sharing stories about their weekend.

"And I couldn't believe that they would do something like that!" Cletus finished.

"Hey, Piotr," Wanda said smoothly.

"Hello? I'm here too!" Cletus said, acting outraged. Wanda used to have a crush on Piotr in 2nd grade but only some of it went away and Wanda didn't know that Piotr knew. They all had science together, so they walked down the hall and into the science lab.

“Hello, class! Today, we are going to become scientists and become experts about an organism that lives in the sea,” Professor Charles stated when everyone got in the room. “ You will be working with three partners. I will now call out the groups. Charlie, James and Peter. Cletus, Madeline and Samuel. Thomas, Nathaniel and Pennilope. Piotr, Wanda and Niku. Zelda, Micah and Aiden. Remember, it is good to give everyone a job so that it will be organized. That will be all. You have 30 minutes to work today. Tomorrow you will have 40 minutes and then we will present. Get started!”

When Professor Charles yelled “Get started!”, everyone was in a big hurry. Pencils went flying. People were screaming and Piotr and his group met up.

“Alright, what should our project be about?” asked Piotr to his group.

“It should be about plants because they're cool!” suggested Niku.

“No, it should be about cute animals!” argued Wanda.

“ No, plants are the best! Earth day is coming up too!”

“No way! It’s the animals, definitely!”

“ Guys, I see what we need. A compromise!” cut in Piotr as they glared daggers at each other.

“We won’t need a compromise if Niku just agrees animals are better because they are!” argued Wanda.

“No, you’re wrong, the plants are better, obviously!” Niku hit in. “You’re the tiebreaker, Piotr. Which one?”

“Just keep in your mind that animals are better,” Wanda whispered to him.

“Hey, no persuasion!” Niku yelled at her. “But just so you know, plants are better,”

“Hey! Hypocrite!” screamed Wanda.

“Guys? What happened to the compromise? It would be good. Both of you would get what you want.”

“Fine, but what could we do for a compromise?” asked Wanda. They already had wasted 27 minutes of their time, so they were kind of desperate.

“Ummmm. Maybe a kind of fish-plant?” suggested Piotr. He was so out of ideas, he wanted to search Google for an answer. Their time was up and they all went home angry at each other.

Then, the next day, after Professor Charles said they had to finish up details and then they were going to present, Professor Charles came over and asked,

“Are you having any problems?” Then Niku, Wanda and Piotr all started talking at once.

“We were going to...”

“But they won’t agree...”

“I’m trying to...”

“Remember what I said about jobs yesterday?” Professor Charlie said, winking.

“But all of us want to do the choosing. How are we going to decide?” asked Wanda.

“Choose the person who is undecided.” suggested Professor Charlie.

“That's a great idea! How about I'm the chooser and you guys make the project!” Niku exclaimed.

“No way! I'll be the chooser thank you very much,” argued Wanda

“How about Piotr chooses who the chooser is,” Niku suggested. “Me or her?”

“No wait! We should talk this through and eventually we will get a solution.”
suggested Piotr.

“ Fine,” said Wanda. “I think I should be the chooser because I obviously have the best reasons.”

“Well I think I should be the chooser because I am the one with the best grades. Wait! It should be Piotr! He doesn't have an opinion of plants or animals.” argued Niku

“Alright, that works for me.” added Wanda. “We'll do the presentation.”

Piotr racked his brain if he had ever heard of a fish-plant but then he remembered what he learned in 4th grade.

“I got it! It's a plankton!” exclaimed Piotr.

“Great, let's do it!” exclaimed Wanda. They finished up their project and there were a few stumble ups in the poster like the title, but they felt good about how everything turned out.

Cletus's group went first. They chose the blanket octopus. It was an octopus that used jellyfish tentacles for defense. Next went Charlie's group. They were talking about the pom-pom crab. It was a crab that held onto little pom-pom looking things and it actually looked kind of cute. Lastly, his group went. They rushed a bit and some parts didn't work out as they had wanted, but in the end, it all worked out. The rest of the

groups went past in a blur. All Piotr could think about was how they pulled it off by talking, compromising and using I statements.

“You all did great! A+ for all of you!” Professor Charlie said to everyone. And this time, Piotr went home happy. Piotr had felt angry at his teammates when they were arguing, but with a push in the right direction, his teammates learned to communicate and work together.