

All Kinds of Friends, Even Green!

By Even Green

In school, Moses and the rest of his class are asked to choose a friend to write about. Moses thinks of his friends and what they share together. Some are like Jimmy, who says funny things, or Manuel, who races with Moses on the playground. Other friends are grown-ups like his mom and dad, and teachers. Neighbors can be friends too, like Kate, his babysitter. Kate owns two pet iguanas. One of the iguanas, Zaki, is missing some toes. Moses decides to write about Zaki because they have something in common. Moses and Zaki both have special needs.



Discussion and Questions:

- Tell me something interesting or special about your best friend.
- What do you like to do with your friends?
- In the story, why do you think Zaki needed to learn new ways to move around? What new things have you learned from your friends?
- Moses and Zaki both share special things about themselves in the book. What makes you special?

Activities:

- **All About Me!**
 - In a home or group setting, ask children to gather items, pictures, or create artwork to describe themselves. These items can be related to their family, favorite places, friends, unique characteristics about themselves or their family, or anything important to the child. Once they have these items, ask the child to describe what the items are and why they are important to them. This activity can be modified to match the child's age and development.
 - Extended ideas and activities for All About Me! can be found at: <https://www.kidssoup.com/activity/all-about-me-activities-crafts-and-lessons-plans>
- **Kindness Shelf**
 - Within homes and classrooms create a shelf or space with books and images showing kindness. Place a mailbox on this shelf and encourage children to write words of kindness or draw pictures displaying kindness to 'mail' to their friends or family members. At the end of each day, read aloud the words of kindness as a family or group.
 - Additional information for kindness activities can be found at: <https://teaching2and3yearolds.com/how-to-teach-kindness-in-the-preschool-classroom/>
- **Circle of Friends sign**
 - Creating art as a group can support peer friendships. Materials needed for this activity include poster board, colored paints, paintbrushes, and a marker.
 - Draw a large circle on the poster board and assist children in 'stamping' their handprints inside the circle. Once the handprints dry, children can add their names. At the end of this activity, all of the children will have their handprint and name included on the sign.
 - Additional information can be found at: <https://blog.reallygoodstuff.com/preschool-friendship-lesson-ideas/>
- **The Compliment Game**
 - This game can be played in a variety of different ways. For a group of more than two people, sit in a circle. A pair of individuals can sit facing one another. As one person tosses or passes a stuffed toy or soft ball to their partner, they should say something positive or complimentary about the

individual to whom they are passing the object. Encourage children to mention things that are both on the inside and the outside of a person.

- This activity enables children to receive and give compliments and positive statements to others.
- This activity can be modified for different age groups. For example, with elementary-aged children, the group could name a positive trait about someone in the group by letter of the alphabet (i.e., A = Amazing; B = Bright, etc.).
- Additional activities can be found at:
<https://www.healthline.com/health/parenting/friendship-activities#Middle-School-Friendship-Activities>