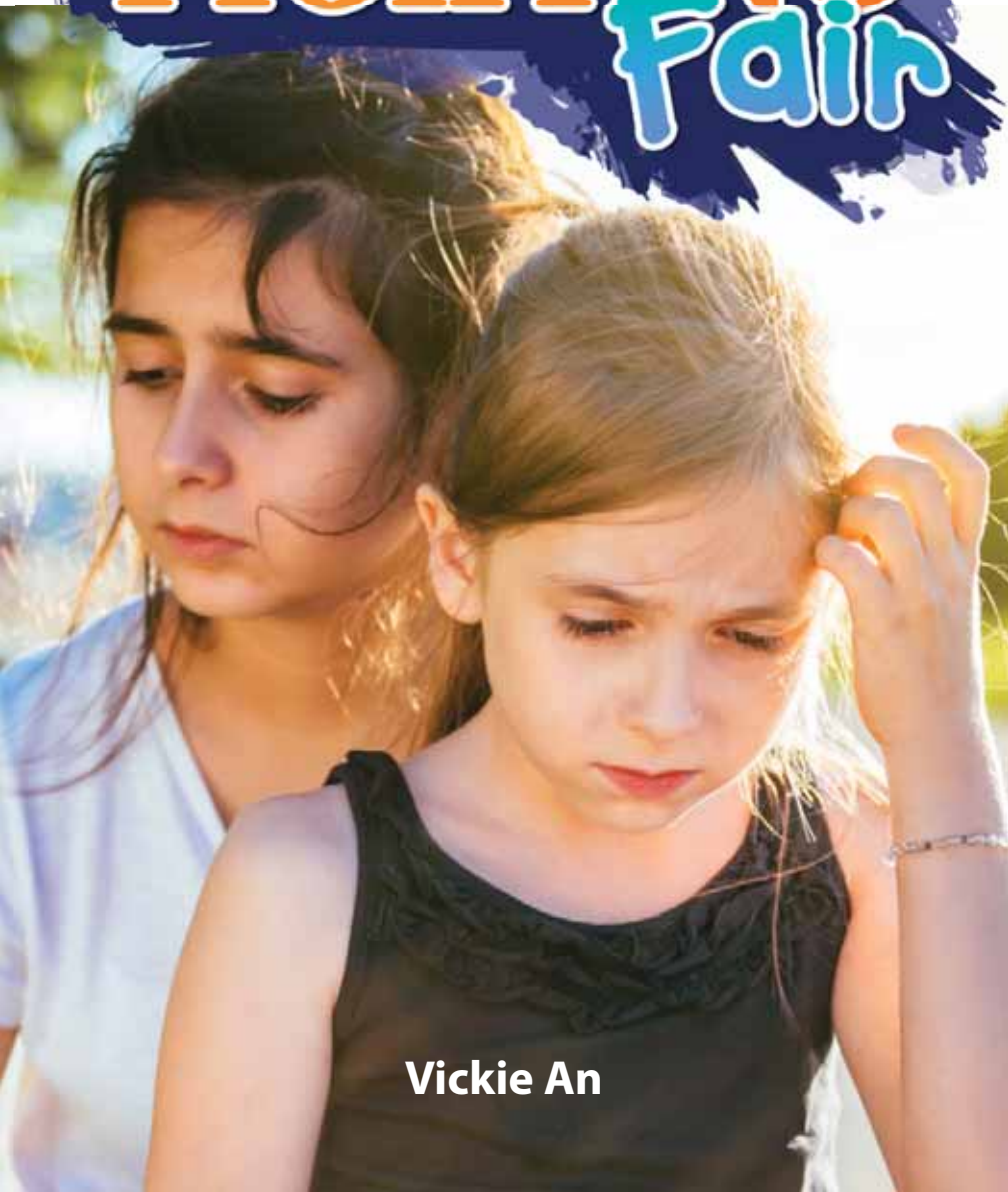
TIME FOR KIDS

Just Right Words

FIGHTING Fair



Vickie An

For teachers' inspection ONLY

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What Is Fair?

What is your favorite game at recess? Jeremy's favorite is basketball. When the bell rings, he races outside to scoop up a ball before they are all taken. But today, Jeremy and Noah both grab the last basketball at the same time.

"I was here first," Jeremy says.

"No, *I* was!" Noah replies. He **wrestles** the ball away and runs toward the court. "You're too slow!"

"That's not fair!" Jeremy shouts.

Responding the Right Way

Have you ever thought you were being treated unfairly? Sometimes these feelings bubble up when we disagree or when we do not get our way. But how we react to conflicts can make a difference in working them out. Most of all, it is important to fight fair.

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Defining "Fair"

Fairness can mean a number of things. It can mean playing by the rules or treating others the way you want to be treated. It can mean sharing or giving everyone the same chance. Fighting fair is when you solve a problem with kindness and respect.



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Share Your Feelings

When we disagree with others, bad feelings are sure to follow. It is normal to feel hurt or angry. It is also important to understand why. What do you feel is unfair? Think about what is bothering you. Then share your feelings.

Ground Rules for Fighting Fair

Follow these rules for a fair discussion. First, you must stay calm. Are you feeling worked up? Take some deep breaths, close your eyes, and count backward from 10. By calming your mind, you can stop yourself from saying things you will **regret** or cannot take back.



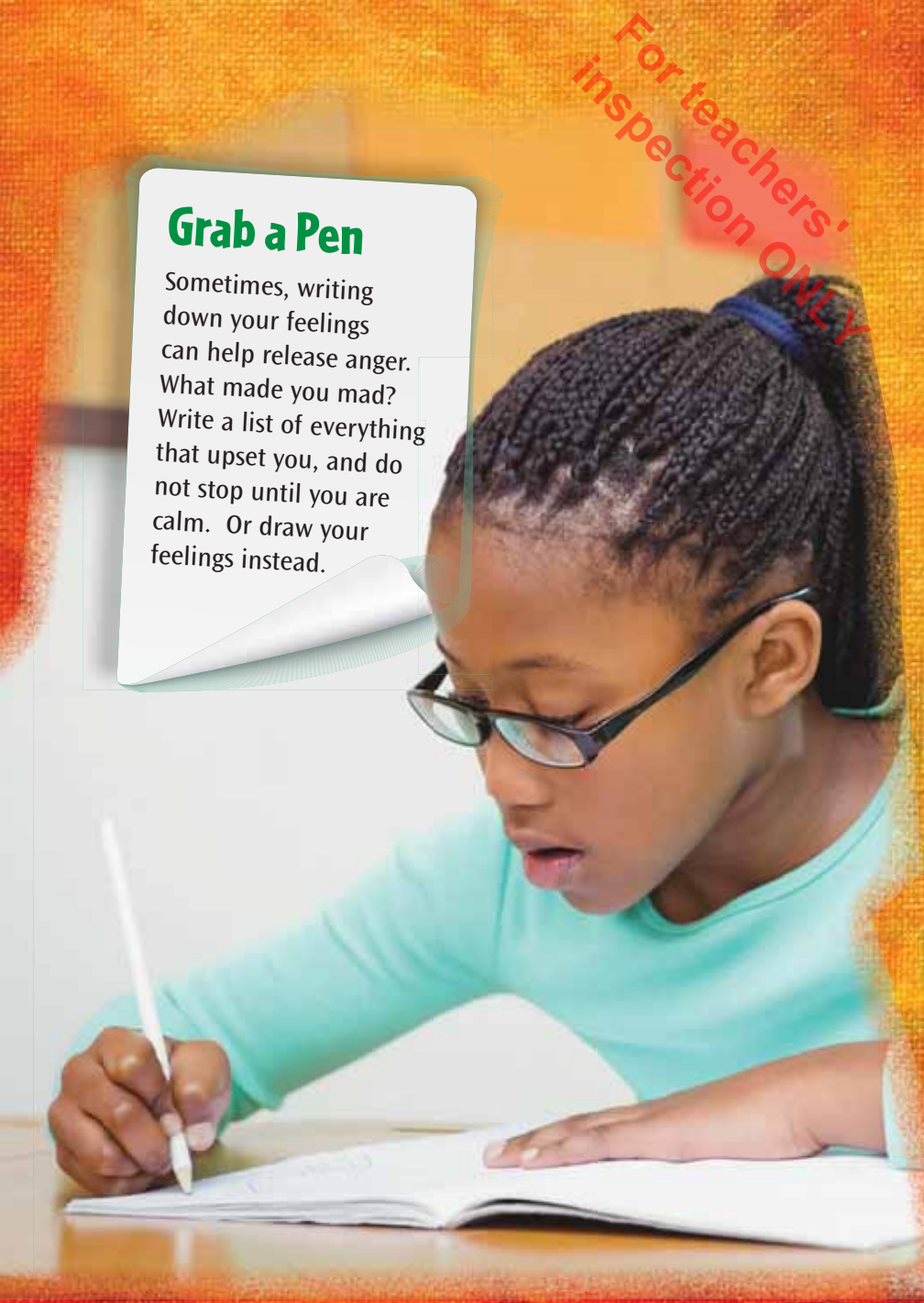
Get Your Anger Out

It's not wise to bottle up your anger. You might explode! When you are upset, you may feel like yelling, hitting, or breaking things. Instead, do some jumping jacks or run around to release some negative energy. Or shake off the anger by dancing!

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Grab a Pen

Sometimes, writing down your feelings can help release anger. What made you mad? Write a list of everything that upset you, and do not stop until you are calm. Or draw your feelings instead.



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Are you ready to have a calm discussion? That's great! Here is another tip to keep in mind. When explaining why you are upset, try to use words such as "I feel ____ when you ____ because ____." And remember, being honest is always best. So be as truthful as you can with the other person.

At the same time, do not be hurtful. You should not put others down or call them names. Do not yell or put your hands on them. Do not use excuses, and do not **accuse** people. Doing these things will only add to the problem. Being aggressive or mean will not help.

What will happen when Jeremy and Noah follow these ground rules for fighting fair? Let's find out.

You, You, You!

"*You* make me angry!" "*You* are wrong!" "*You* are a bad friend!" Using the word "you" like this can lead to hurt feelings. It is tempting to blame others during an argument. But pointing fingers will do more harm than good.



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"I Feel"

Using the words "I feel" can help you express your feelings. These words do not blame or accuse the other person. They can help get your message across in a more polite and kind way.

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Reader's Guide

1. What does "fighting fair" mean to you?
2. Why is it important to fight fair?
3. What would you do if you saw someone being treated unfairly?
4. Have you ever gotten into a fight with friends or family? How did you handle it? How would you handle it now?

