

For Ages
4-7

Words Are Not for Hurting

Elizabeth Verdick
Illustrated by Marieka Heinlen



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free spirit
PUBLISHING®



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Dear Parents and Caregivers,

Children are known for saying whatever comes to mind. Their words—so often funny, surprising, and insightful—are a window into their feelings.

I'll never forget when my own daughter, at age four, was eating her first ice-cream sundae and announced with excitement, "Every day should be hot-fudge sundae—even Saturday!" This little nugget of wisdom still makes me laugh. There are times, though, when we hear children saying something mean or hurtful. They might tease another child, for example, or make unkind comments about someone's appearance. They might shout, or even swear. What's behind these words? Often feelings of anger, sadness, rejection, confusion, or fear. Just like adults, children may lash out with a raised voice or hurtful words.

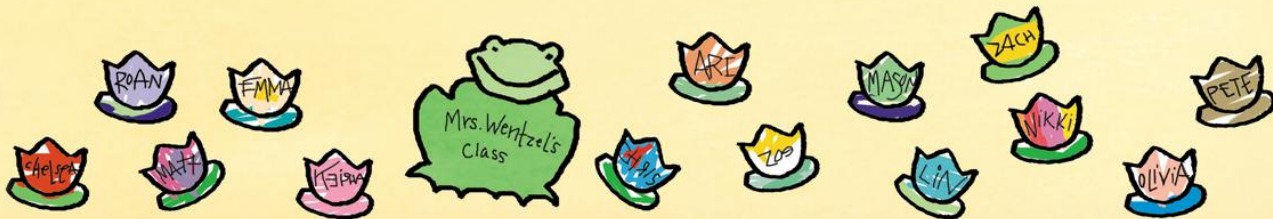
All of us—young and old alike—can learn to choose our words wisely. We can think before we speak and make an effort to use words that convey kindness and respect.

Most important, we can apologize when something we've said has hurt someone else. Those two little words, "I'm sorry," are sometimes so hard for us to say. But the more we practice, the better we get at it. And those two little words can make all the difference!

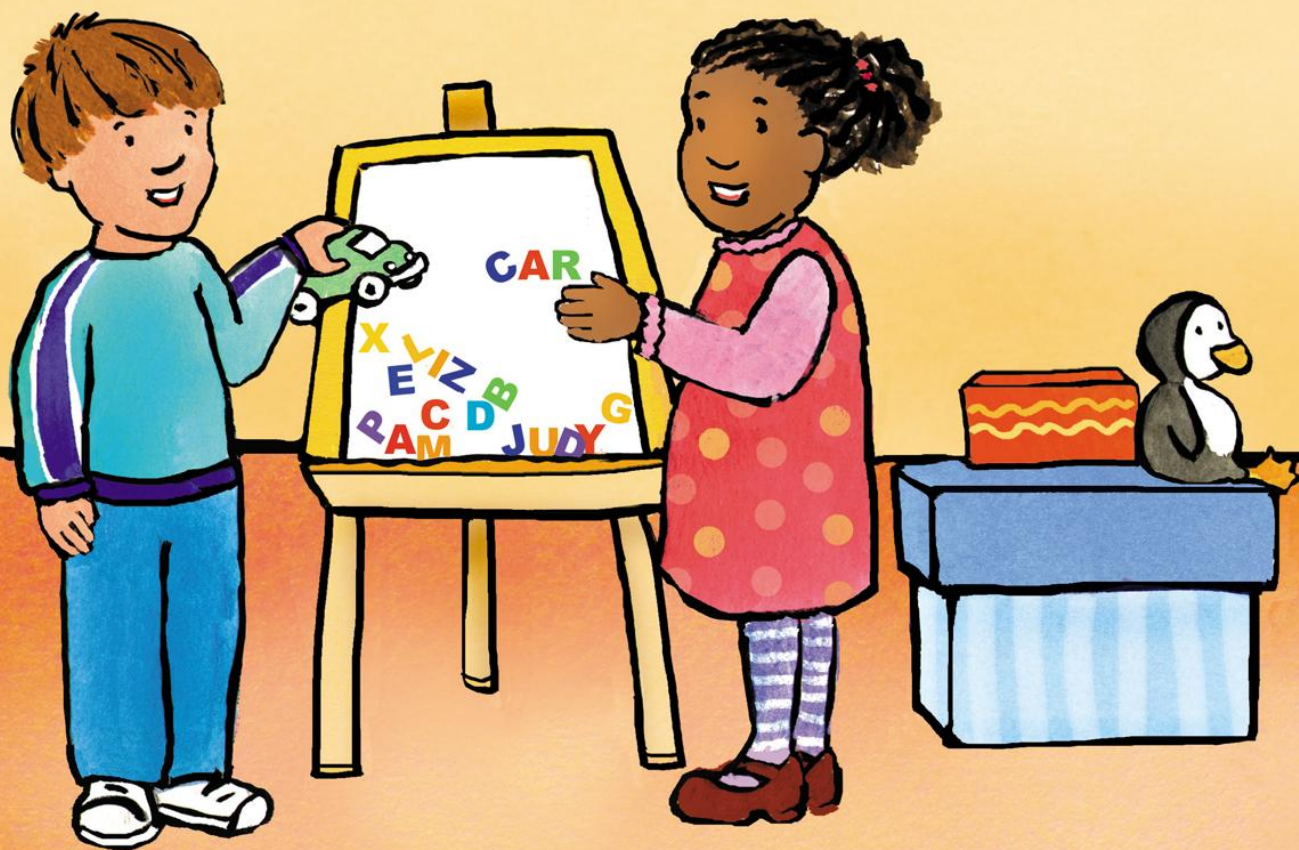


Elizabeth

P.S. On pages 28–32, you'll find activities, discussion starters, and other resources that reinforce the message of using helpful, not hurtful, words.



Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm



Did you know it takes only 26 letters
to make *millions* of words?

Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz



Some words are
super short:

"Hi!"

"No"

"Bye"

"Yes!"

Don't forget D-O-G.



Some words are really *loooong*:

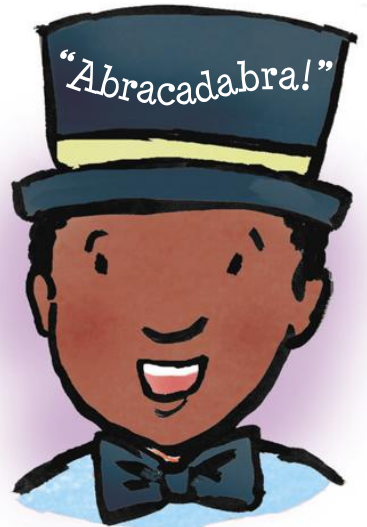
“Thingamajig”



“Mississippi”



“Abracadabra!”



And some are just plain silly:

“Wiggly Giggly”



“Cock-a-doodle-doo!”



Words help you say lots of
important things, like:



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