



## The Invisible Boy

By Trudy Ludwig

Being “seen” in the classroom is one of the greatest needs of a child. This is a heartwarming story about a boy named Brian who felt invisible to his classmates. He was a shy child who felt left out and overlooked. When a new child enters the classroom Brian finds a friend and his classmates begin to recognize his talents and include him in their activities.

### Themes

empathy, kindness, inclusion, exclusion, loneliness

### Menu of Questions

1. What does the word “invisible” mean?
2. Why were Nathan and Sophie always noticed by the teacher and their classmates? Are they noticed for good reasons or for not so good reasons? What does it mean when the author says Nathan and Sophie “take up a lot of space?”
3. What do you notice about the illustrations of Brian as the story progresses? What was the author trying to communicate through the drawings?
4. Pause when you get to the part in the story where Mrs. Carlotti asks the class to choose a partner for a project. What do you think is going to happen?
5. Have you ever felt unnoticed? How does it make you feel?
6. What would you like people to notice about you?
7. Would you rather feel unnoticed or be laughed at?
8. Have you ever not been picked to be on someone’s team? Do you think allowing children to pick classmates to be on teams is a good way to divide up the class? Why or why not?
9. When Justin arrived in the class the author says the children determined if he was “cool enough” to be their friend? What does it mean to be “cool?” is this a good way to determine if a person should be your friend?

10. Why do you think some children are excluded by others?

11. What can you do when you see someone being excluded?

### **Menu of Follow-up Activities**

#### 1. The Power of Kind Words

- On a white, half sheet of paper draw a happy face with a white crayon. Make one for each child.
- After reading the story give each a happy face paper and a marker.
- Tell the children that there is an invisible child on their paper. Have the children say kind things to their “invisible child.” As they express positive thoughts to the “invisible boy” ask them to cover their page with the marker. As they color over the page, the happy face will become more visible.
- Talk about the power of words and how positive affirmations help children to feel “seen.”

#### 2. Being “Seen”

- Using the handout provided, have children write a sentence or a brief paragraph identifying characteristics about themselves that they would like to be noticed by others.

#### 3. Anonymous Reflection (older children)

- Ask the children to write about a child in their class that they think is “unseen.” Ask them to identify what they can do to help the child be “seen” in positive ways in the classroom.
- Use the insight from the children to guide your interaction with “unseen” children.

#### 4. Y Chart

- Divide the class up into groups and give each group a Y cart (provided). Have them brainstorm the three different ways of being “seen” in a classroom.
- Come together and have children share their ideas.

## 5. Choosing Teams

- Divide the class into groups and have them brainstorm effective ways to divide up a class for team play or teamwork.
- Create a poster of their ideas to display in the classroom. (Examples: number off; Eeny, Meannie, Miny Moe or other chant; Put children's names on tongue depressors and pull out names for different teams; write farm animal names or pictures on index cards and give each child a card. Each animal is listed as many times as the number of children you want in a group. For example, if you want five in a group make five cards for pigs, five for cows etc. When the teacher says, "start" have the children begin making the animal noise indicated on their card. They listen for their animal and cluster in animal groups.

# What does it look like to be “seen” in the classroom?

Feels Like

Sounds Like

Looks Like