

## *Siku's New Friend*

### Lesson Plan

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**Summary:** Sometimes it's harder to have two "best" friends than it is to have one. Because threesomes can result in one person feeling left out. When a new dog moves in next door, Siku and Kamik's friendship is tested when Kamik seems too rough and too big to-play. This story teaches children about the importance of friendship and how to find ways to include everyone.

**Author:** Kaitlin Tremblay is Canadian a writer, narrative designer, and independent game developer who is committed to fostering compassion, empathy, diversity, and inclusivity in

all aspects of her work. She lives in Toronto and is the co-editor of the speculative fiction anthology *Those Who Make Us: Canadian Creature, Myth, and Monster Stories*

**Illustrator:** Andrew Trabbold, a texture and concept artist with 15 years' experience. He illustrated this book for Inhabit Education (Iqaluit, Nunavut)

**WITS Connections: Inclusion,** Walk Away can help you to think about what is not working!, Talk it Out (using your inner voice) can help to work out a problem even if you are a dog!

**Language Arts Connections:** Engage actively as listeners, viewers, and readers, as appropriate, to develop understanding of self, and others. Great dog images with feelings and expressions to draw. Show causal connections between getting hurt and stopping the play!

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## Pre-reading Activities

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1. **Pair/share:** Working in pairs, ask students to tell their partner if they have or have had a pet, if so what kind and how do their pets play. Any student who does not have a pet should describe the pet they would really like to have. Advise students to listen carefully to each other as at the end of a minute, they may be asked to share what they learned about their partner. After a minute or two, ask a few students to tell what their partner told them.
2. This book is set in Iqaluit! Iqaluit meaning "place of fish". It is the capital of the Canadian territory of Nunavut, its largest community, and its only city. See if you can find it on a map of Canada. Learn something about the language (**Inuktitut** pronounced: *ee-kha-loo-eet*. What do you think it would be like to live there (climate, daylight hours)?
3. Show students the cover of the book. Ask them what they notice in the drawing. (There are three dogs. There is snow on the ground. The sky is blue. There are some brown buildings in the background.) Ask them where the story might take place. Accept all answers. This looks like many places in Canada and The US.
4. The three dogs on the cover are not feeling the same feeling. How can we tell? (The two dogs are together in front and are smiling; one is behind and looks sad or worried.) Why do you think the dog in the back is not happy? (Let's see!)

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## Reading Activities

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1. p. 2-5 The brown buildings are houses. Our houses sit right on the ground or on top of a basement. Why do you think these houses are raised up from the ground in Iqaluit? (The ground is frozen all year in some places.)
2. Can you see the two dogs, **Siku** and **Kamik** in the window? **Siku** is an Inuit name meaning Ice. **Kamik** is a soft boot, traditionally made of caribou skin or sealskin.

These boots are also called mukluks. Do you think these are good names for these dogs? Why or why not? They are best friends! What does it mean to be “best friends”? (You play together, you like each other best, you understand each other, if you fight, you make up...) Turn the page to see how Siku and Kamik are best friends. Show a couple of minutes of this video of dogs playing in the snow <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bDjGJzBdAwY>.

3. p. 6-10 At first Siku and Kamik are excited to see a new dog in their community. They show they are happy by perking up their ears. What else do dogs do when they are happy? (Wag tails, jump, run in circles) The new dog, Mittens, is the same size as Siku. Show a minute or two of this video of two big dogs playing. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cSd5gYfRgoY> Is one dog too rough in this video (no they seem to be balancing their play together and it goes on for a long time? What happens when Kamik tries to play with Mittens? (The play stops because Mittens gets hurt).
4. p. 12-25 How can you tell that Kamik is sad on p. 14? (His tail is between his legs, he is hunched, his face looks sad.) p. 16 Does he know he was too rough with Mittens? Does he know how to behave next time? p. 19-23 Siku is happy to see Kamik when he comes to the new boy’s house. Who is not happy? (The boy, maybe Mittens.) Have you ever had a fight with your best friend? How did that feel? Were you able to fix the problem – how?”
5. p. 26-32 Kamik is a good dog most of the time and this time he learned a valuable lesson from making a mistake. Help students make a connection to their own experience. (We all make mistakes, but that does not mean we are bad people. We can think of often solutions if we walk away and take some time out and think about it. Or we can talk to an adult who might have some good ideas for us.)

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### *After Reading Activities*

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1. **Learn to greet each other in Inuituk! Ullaakuut** (oo-laa-koot) means “good morning” and is used as a general greeting. You can also say **ullukuut** (oo-loo-koot) for “good afternoon.” Use this new greeting for a week. Oo-laa-koot children!

2. Ask students what they think it would be like to go to a new school and neighbourhood. Make a list of all the feelings they suggest. (Excited, nervous, shy.) How can we tell when others are feeling each of these feelings? (Facial expression, body language, words.) Help the children to share their stories about their experiences with moves – what helped them feel welcomed in the new school or enighbourhood.
3. Think, pair, share: How can we help new people feel safe, comfortable and included? Think: Give students 30 seconds of complete silence to come up with some ideas, followed by another 30-60 seconds to share their idea(s) with a partner. Students must listen to each other very carefully because they will be asked to share their partners idea, not their own. Have students share their ideas and write them on the board.
4. **How does Kamik learns to play more gently.** (He goes to the news neighbours and tries to be allowed to play at Mitten’s house but they won’t let him in. He Walks Away and thinks about his problem with being too rough and he decides he will be gentler so he would not be left out of the fun). Sometimes when we are too rough people can get hurt too even if it isn’t on purpose. How can we fix things when other people are angry with us about playing too rough? (Apologize, help the person who is hurt, try to fix things or get an adult to help).
5. Can you think about a time when a friend of yours got hurt by accident? Think about how we can be gentler when we play so people don’t get hurt– (move slowly, don’t rush, don’t run into people, take turns, share equipment, don’t grab things).
6. **Rules of the Game!** In all team sports like soccer, basketballs, rugby, baseball, and hockey there are rules to follow that are designed so no one gets hurt and has to stop playing the game! A referee makes sure everyone uses the same rules! Have your student’s think of rules in the games they play or that they have seen on TV that keep the players safe. (e. g. fouls in soccer and hockey that give penalties for tripping or even yellow cards or suspensions for being too rough!)
7. Invent a playground game – skipping, frozen tag – can your students think of their own rules to keep peoples safe and keep the play going.