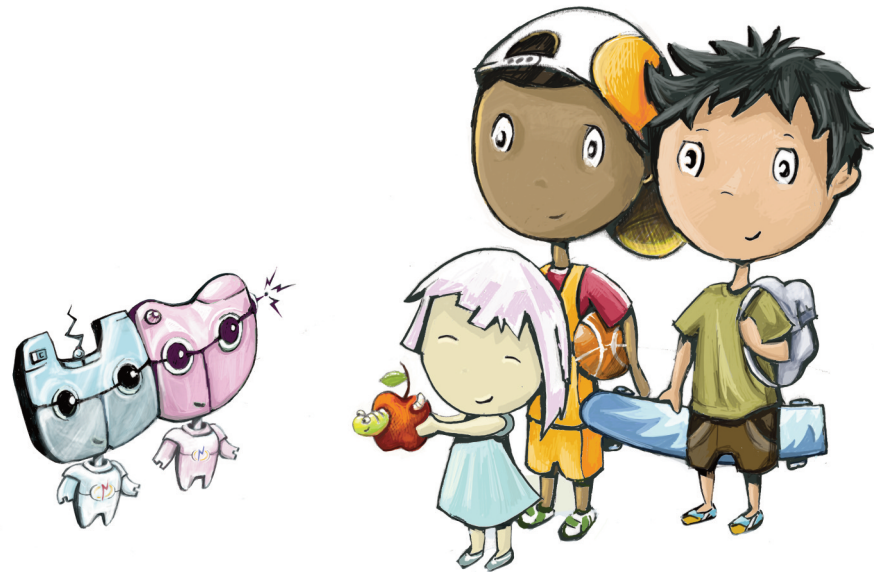


Margarita Christofidou

SO, WHAT IS THINKING?

TITA & TOTO'S THINKING ADVENTURES!



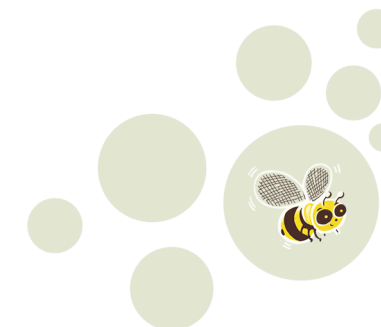
illustrated by Constantinos Pissourios

Margarita Christofidou

SO, WHAT IS THINKING?

TITA & TOTO'S
THINKING ADVENTURES!

CREDITS



About the book

Tita & Toto's Thinking Adventures aims to welcome children, families and educators to a broaden *Culture of Thinking*. Through the adventures of Tita and Toto on Earth, the author aspires to explain what thinking is all about and to support people's understanding of how certain conceptions of thinking are implemented daily in the classrooms, schools and communities that apply the Visible Thinking approach. Visible Thinking is an approach to teaching and learning that developed from Project Zero researchers at Harvard Graduate School of Education. This approach, highlights the use of thinking tools and documentation in order to make thinking more visible for all.

The book consists of 10 chapters, describing the explorations of Tita, Toto and their friends Mia, J.C. and Rob, on earth. At the end of the story, there is a short explanation of the purpose of each thinking tool used.

Margarita Christofidou was born on 05/18/1987 in Nicosia, Cyprus. She graduated with a price of excellence from a Greek-public high school and in 2005 she entered the University of Cyprus where she studied Science of Primary Education. During her studies, Margarita also participated in a European Students' Exchange Program and she successfully attended the University of La Coruna in Spain in 2008. Thereafter, she continued her graduate studies in Florida, US and she graduated with MS in Instructional Design and Diversity Education from Nova Southeastern University. She got her specialty in the field of Gifted and Talented Education. Her interaction with Visible Thinking approach started back in 2012, attending various related conferences and completing the online course "Making Learning Visible" from Harvard Graduate School of Education in 2015. During 2012-2016 she worked in the United States for a private educational company as a teacher, international coach and curriculum designer. In 2017, Margarita accepted the challenge to relocate to China where she currently works as a teacher and continues as a writer. Tita and Toto's Thinking Adventures is her first book that explains what thinking is and how we teach thinking to our young learners.





*To my parents who gave me wings;
to myself who learned how to fly...*



My deep gratitude and appreciation to all Visible Thinkers who inspired me to write this book. Special thanks to all my family, friends and mentors who believe in me, support me and constantly encouraging me to continue following my dreams!



- The sky must not be the limit; live a limitless life and dream big! -

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CHAPTER 1 TITA AND TOTO ON EARTH



IT WAS A SHINY SATURDAY MORNING AND MIA, J.C. AND ROB WERE PLAYING IN THE COLORFUL PLAYGROUND. THEIR LOVELY VOICES AND THEIR LOUD LAUGHTERS WERE FLYING IN THE AIR.

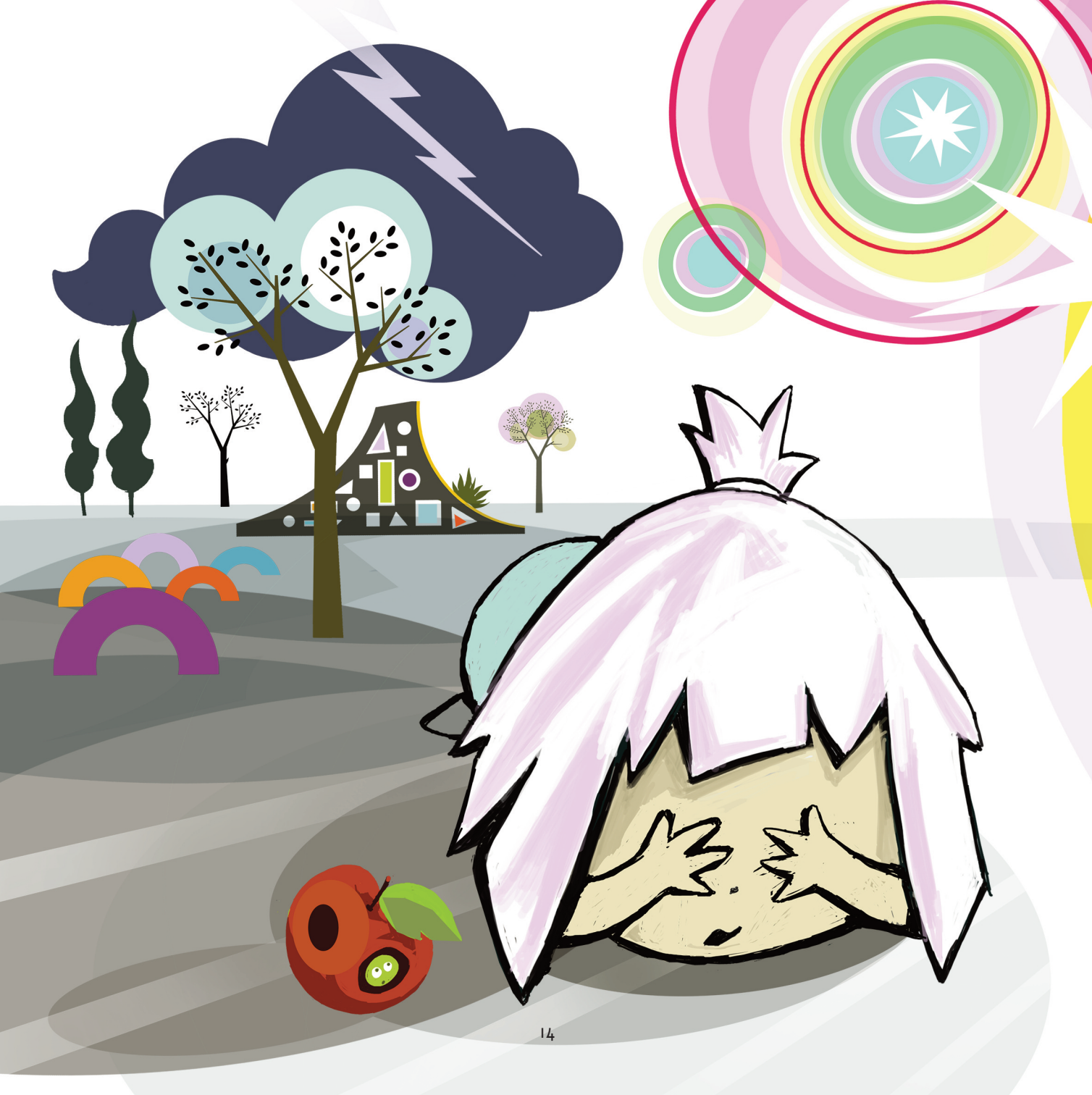


BUT SUDDENLY,
A GIANT GREY CLOUD
COVERED THE SKY...

IN JUST A FEW SECONDS,
THAT BRIGHT SPRING MORNING
TURNED INTO A STORMY NIGHT.



THE FRIGHTENED CHILDREN
RUN TO PROTECT THEMSELVES.



MIA CLOSED HER EYES IN FEAR...
UNTIL A MAGICAL GLOW APPEARED
AND ALL THE CLOUDS DISAPPEARED!!!



EVERYTHING WAS BACK TO NORMAL.
IT WAS AGAIN A SHINY SPRING MORNING
IN A COLORFUL PLAYGROUND.



ONLY ONE THING WAS DIFFERENT...
TWO LITTLE WEIRD CREATURES
WERE SITTING UNDER A TREE.

J.C., MIA AND ROB GOT CLOSER...

- Hello, who are you? Asked J.C.
- I am Tita and this is Toto.
Who are you?
Where are we?
- You are in our playground.
I am J.C. and here are my friends Mia and Rob.
You look so different. Where do you come from?



- We come from Nowonder.
- Nowonder??? What is that? Rob asked.
- You ask so many questions!
Nowonder is the planet that you don't wonder.



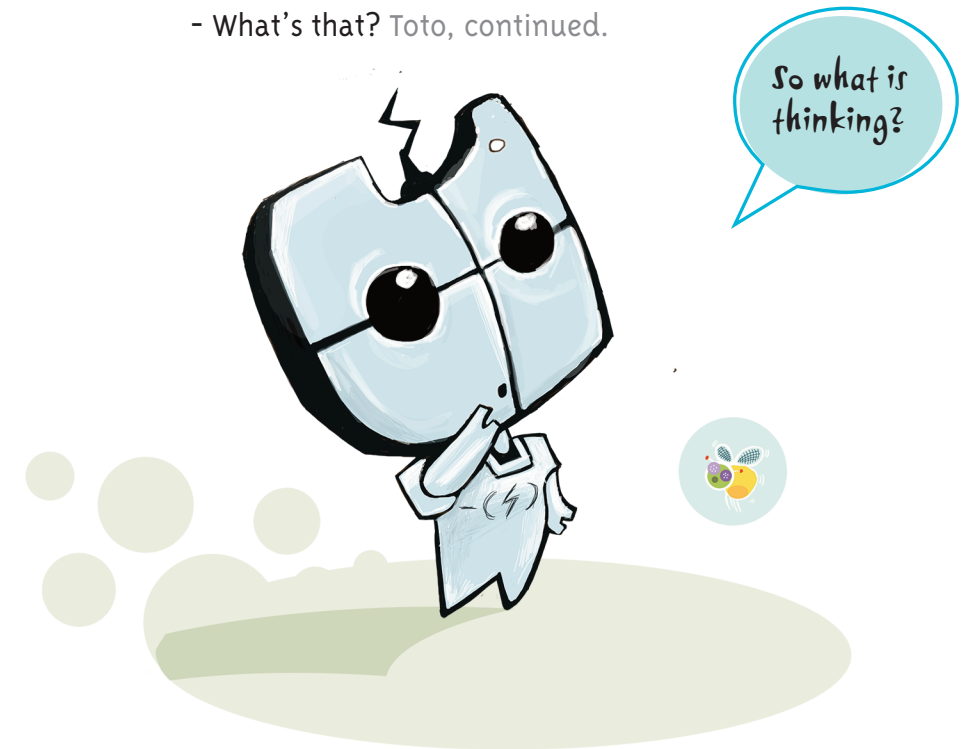
CHAPTER 2

SING, DANCE AND PLAY



- Nowonder? I've never heard that before, J.C. stated.
- And why don't you wonder? Mia kindly asked.
- Because we only sing, dance and play, Tita replied.

- We can sing, dance and play too, but we also wonder.
In other words, we are thinking, said Rob.
- Thinking??? Tita and Toto asked at the same time.
- What's that? Toto, continued.



- Thinking is a very complicated thing
and it can happen at any time, all the time, J.C. explained.
- Actually, just by asking what it is you were actually thinking, said Mia.
- Really? Toto asked again. That sounds interesting, he continued.
- So can you help us learn more about thinking? asked Tita.

CHAPTER 3

LIFE IN NOWONDER



- Sure we can!!! Shouted Mia, J.C. and Rob excited.
- I have an idea, said Mia: Let's start investigating life in Nowonder.
 - That's a great idea, said J.C.
- And we can do it by playing one of our thinking games, added Rob.
- Thinking games? That's new also. What kind of game is that? asked Tita.
 - There are lots of thinking games actually, yes!!! They are games that help us think, Mia explained!
- Ohhh, I want to play these games, said Toto enthusiastically.
- OK!!! Let's start our games by exploring life in Nowonder with the "X-Thinking Routine".

SO THE CHILDREN TOOK SOME COLOR CHALKS
AND THEY STARTED DRAWING ON THE PAVEMENT...

Life in Nowonder

How does life in Nowonder **look like**?

- Life in Nowonder looks like a silent heaven, said Tita.
- What makes you say that? asked J.C.
- Because we can sing, dance and play but we don't talk much, Tita replied.
- Also, it looks colorful. We have many colors in Nowonder, said Toto.

How does life in Nowonder **sound like**?

- You can hear laughter and musical instruments but other than that life in Nowonder is pretty much quite, Toto described.
- You don't listen to other things? Rob wondered.
- What about sounds of animals? Mia added.
- And what about sounds of construction vehicles? J.C. asked.
- You are so funny. We don't have any of these, Tita said.

What do **you want to know** about life in Nowonder?

- I want to know why we do not wonder, Tita said.
- And I want to know what is the difference when you do wonder, Toto continued.
- Hurray!!! shouted the children.
- Now you came up with many wonders! said J.C.

How does life in Nowonder **feel like**?

- It feels good because you sing, dance and play.
But sometimes it is also boring because you only sing, dance and play. Said Tita.
- Well, for me, it feels yummy because everything comes out of marshmallows, Toto continued.
- What???? shouted Rob.

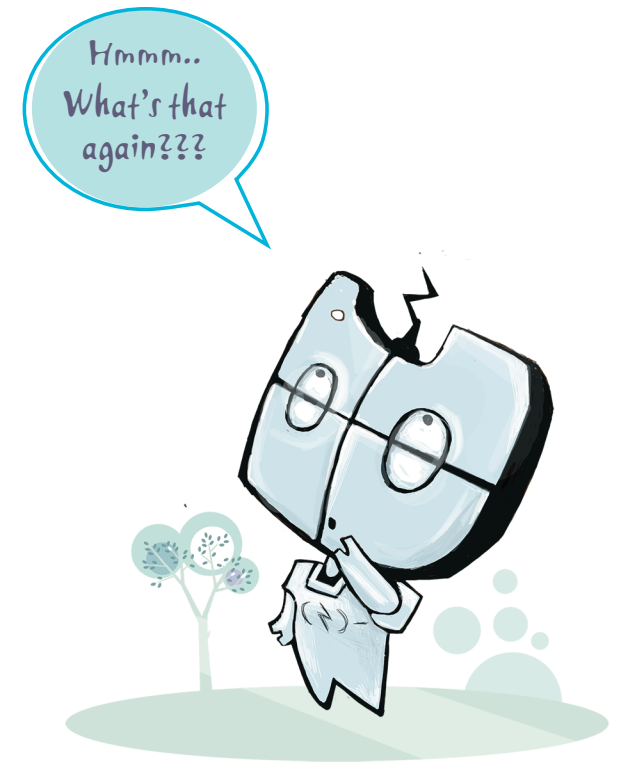


CHAPTER 4 TITA AND TOTO STARTED THINKING ABOUT THINKING!

- That was a nice game! And does that mean that we are thinking? asked Tita.
- Remember... Thinking is complex. You can say what is thinking in many ways and you have been always thinking! You just didn't know it, J.C. explained.
 - Wow!!! Maybe you are right, Tita said.
- So let's see!!! Do you want to play another thinking game? Rob asked.



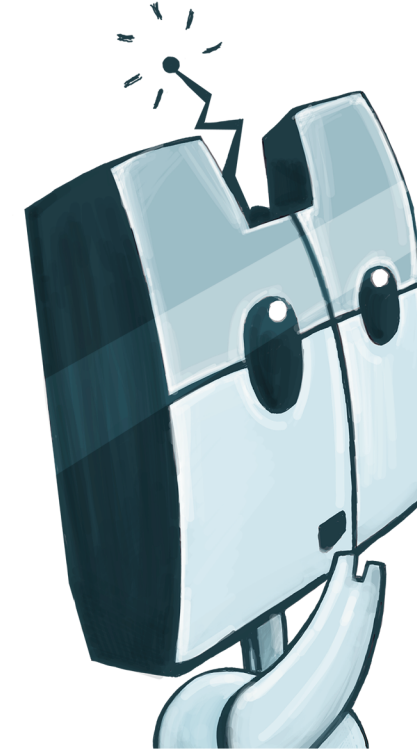
- So, before you used to think that singing, dancing and playing were all that mattered. Let's see what you think now, Mia said.
- And I know the perfect thinking game for that! Let's play with the routine "I used to think/Now I think" J.C. continued.



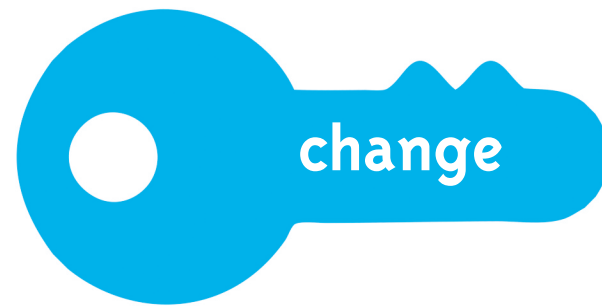
THE CHILDREN TOOK THEIR CHALKS AGAIN
AND THEY STARTED THEIR GAME...

You simply need to share with us
what you used to think
and what you think now, said Mia.

Wow!!!
So we are
thinking...?!?



- Think of what??? asked Toto,
- Haha!!! That's a good question. said J.C.
- Bravo Toto!!! You've just wondered!!! And remember... this is thinking.
Now you have to tell us what you used to think about life in Nowonder
and what do you think now, said Mia.



I Used to Think

- Tita: *I used to think that we were not thinking.
And I used to think that we could only sing, dance and play.*
- Toto: *And me...
Well, I used to think that we were not able to wonder and that was ok.*



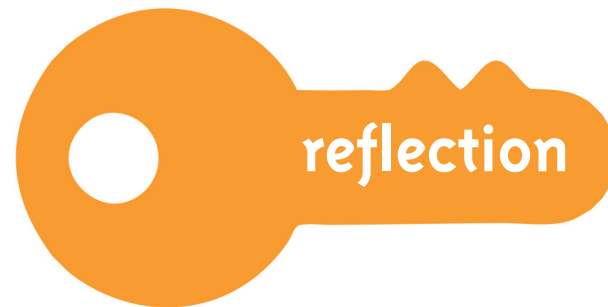
Now I Think

- Tita: *Now I think we are actually thinking.
And we can do more than just sing, dance and play.*
- Toto: *Now I think that not only are we able to wonder
but that it's also a fun thing to do!!!*

AND AS THE SUN CAME DOWN
AND THE STARS STARTED COMING OUT,
THE THREE LITTLE CHILDREN
SAID GOOD NIGHT TO THEIR NEW FRIENDS.



BUT BEFORE THEY LEFT, THEY GAVE A PROMISE...
THAT TOMORROW THEY WILL MEET AGAIN AT THE PLAYGROUND
AND THIS TIME THEY WILL BRING THEM **MARSHMALLOWS**
AS THEY THOUGHT THAT THEY WOULD BE HUNGRY BY THEN!!!



THAT SAME NIGHT, TITA AND TOTO
SAT UNDER THE STARS, TALKING AND WONDERING...



- These children seem really nice!!
- Yes, I like them!!! And I also like to wonder.
- Can you imagine? We can wonder!
- Wow! Do you think that now we are thinking?
- I actually think we are!!!

CHAPTER 5 SECOND DAY ON EARTH!

MIA, J.C. AND ROB WERE WALKING TO THE PLAYGROUND.

- Do you think they are still there? asked Rob.
- Of course!!! I think they are waiting for us... replied Mia.
- I think so too! They are waiting for their marshmallows; but I've also brought them some fruit! added J.C.



THE FIVE LITTLE FRIENDS WERE EXCITED TO BE TOGETHER AGAIN...



- Here are the marshmallows that we promised you! Said Rob.
- Hurayyyy!!!! Shouted Tita and Toto; We are so hungry.
- Well, now eat and you will feel stronger, Mia said.
- And I've brought you some fruit to try too, Rob continued.
- Fruit? Tita asked.
- Yes, now that you are on Earth you should try all new things, said J.C.

AND SO THEY SHARED WITH THEM
SOME STRAWBERRIES, APPLES, ORANGES AND BANANAS.





- Try them and tell us what you think, Mia suggested.
- Let's try them, Tita said excited!
- And we can actually play with another thinking game, J.C. added.
- Fruits and thinking game? How come? Toto wondered.
- Remember, thinking and thinking games can happen at any time, said J.C.
- OK! Eat and play sounds fun! said Tita.
- You see Toto, after all, it's not only sing, dance and play.
- Haha, you are right Tita; there are many combinations.
- Now it's going to be eat, play and think, said Rob.
- So what kind of game are we playing now? Toto asked.
- Let's try the "Connect-Extend-Challenge", said Rob.



Connect



How are fruits connected to something that you already know?

Extend



Let's extend by trying them. How do they taste?

Challenge



What questions do you have now?

Connect

- Mmmm...

Fruits connect to marshmallows because they can both be eaten, said Tita.

Extend

- *They taste different than marshmallows but they are also delicious!!!* Said Toto.

Challenge

- *I wonder where they come from,* Toto continued.

- *And I wonder what is the difference between marshmallows and fruits!* said Tita.



- Very nice questions, said Mia. Well, you are right! We can eat both marshmallows and fruits. But they belong to two different categories of food. Marshmallows are sweets or candies. Fruits are very healthy and can make you stronger.
 - Wowwwwww!!! said Toto.
 - And they belong to the broader category of plants, Rob continued.
 - And so we can eat more things than just marshmallows? Tita wondered.
 - Of course!!! Way more things, said J.C.
 - Hurray!!! shouted Tita and Toto.

CHAPTER 6

WE ARE ALL DIFFERENT BUT WE ARE ALL THE SAME

- So now you know what life is like in Nowonder.
How about life on earth? asked Tita.
- Well, Earth has so many things and that makes
the life of everyone so different, J.C. explained.

Hmmm...
In Nowonder
we all sing,
dance and play.

- Here on Earth, people are so different
but at the same time they are all the same, Mia continued.

- Good question Toto, said Rob.
To explain to you, we can all sing,
dance, play, eat, think, sleep,
dream and soooo much more...

How can you
be different
but the same?

BUT...

We
dream
different

We like
different
games

We have
different
toys

Not
everybody
thinks the
same way

We like
different
things

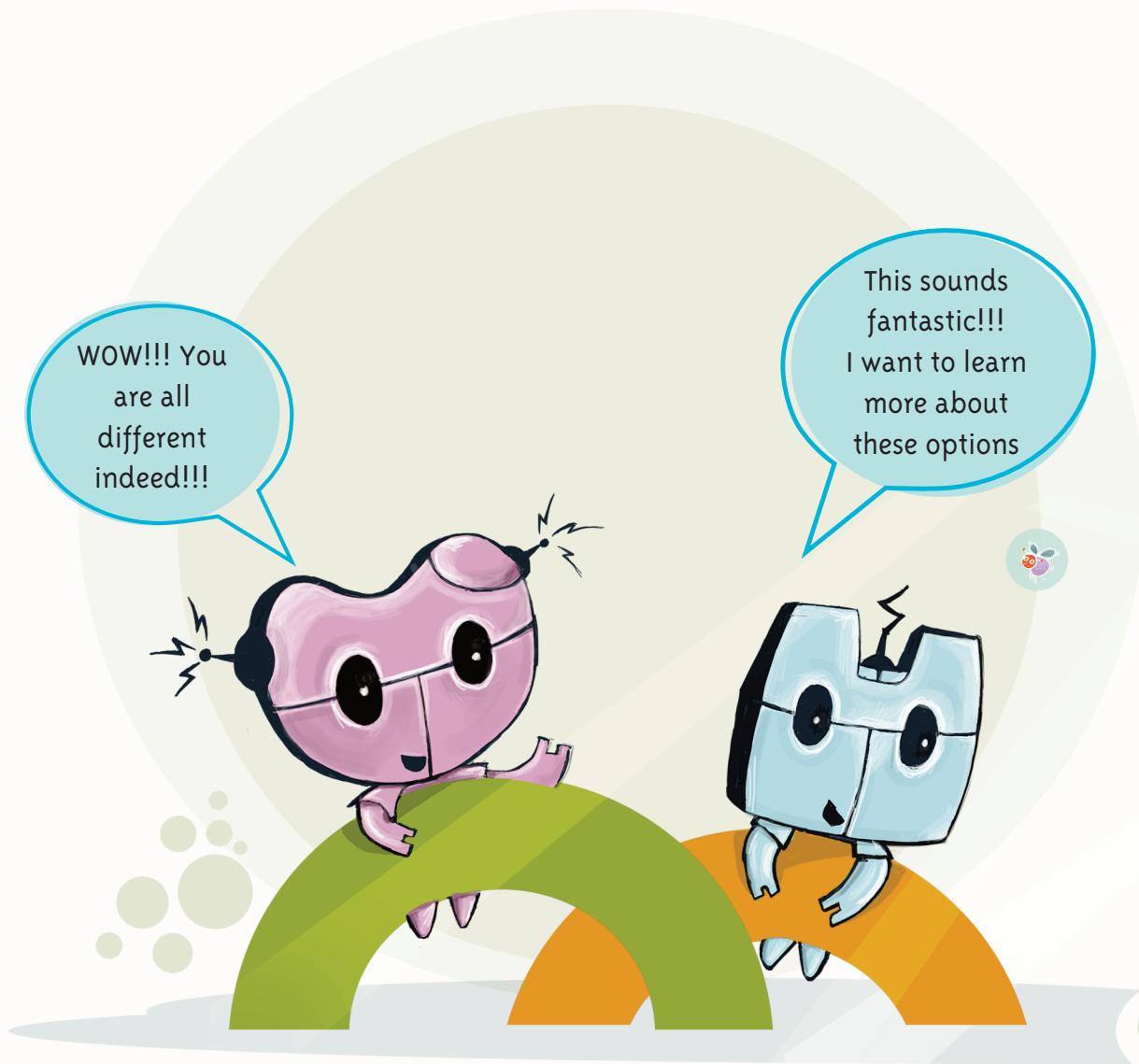
We eat
different
food

We talk in
different
languages

We
celebrate
different
things

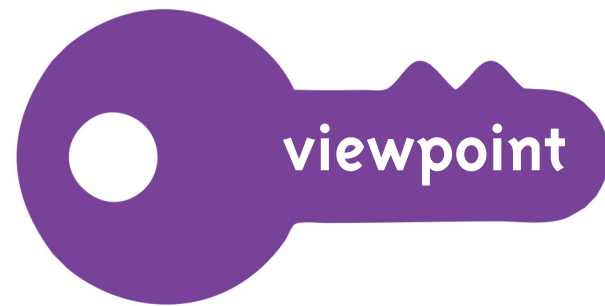
We sing
different
songs

- So you see?
We have many many options, said the children.



- Actually, that was another thinking game. We used the “Options Explosion” thinking routine to brainstorm our ideas! said Mia.

- Ohh!!! I like that game too, said Toto.



- How do you think you can help us learn more about these options? asked Tita.
- Another good question Tita! You are actually asking what we think, or in other words, what is our point of view, J.C. explained.
- Wow! You see Toto? I am thinking!!! said Tita excited and they all laughed!

Well, I believe
that the best way
is to describe our
own lives on Earth!



Good point Mia!
We can do small
investigations of
our own lives!

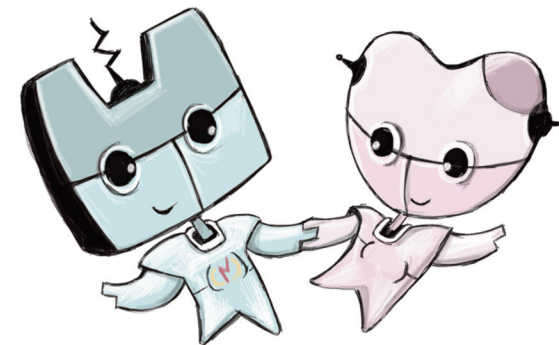


I like it too! In this
way Tita and Toto will
discover how we
are all the same
but different



And then you will
decide what you
like and what
you don't...

AND BECOME SAME BUT DIFFERENT



HURRAYYYY!!!!

CHAPTER 7 MIA'S LIFE ON EARTH

MIA, ROB, J.C., TITA AND TOTO MET AT THE PLAYGROUND THE DAY AFTER.

- Who is going to start then? asked Tita.

- I will go first! Said Mia willingly.

I brought some paper and crayons to describe my life to you, she continued.



MIA TOOK OUT THE PAPER AND THE CRAYONS AND STARTED SHARING THROUGH HER FAVORITE THINKING GAME; THE "See-Think-Wonder" ROUTINE.

See - Think - Wonder

See

In my life I see my daddy, my mommy and my little brother. I see my mom with her doctor's uniform and my dad with his suit going to the office. I see me and my little brother going to school. I also see our big dog. I see our house, streets, trees and more! I see Rob and J.C. in the playground!

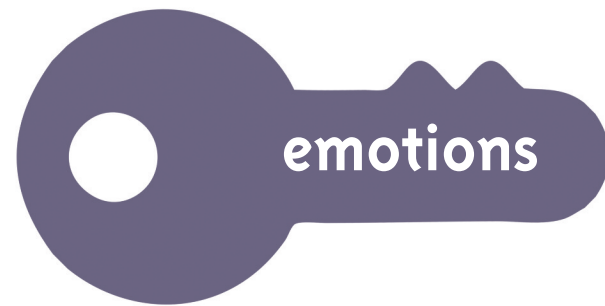
Think

I think that we are a happy family and I think that my mom is very happy to be a doctor as she helps people to get better. I think that my little brother loves me as I am helping him to do so many things and I am teaching him new ways all the time. I think that our dog is a good boy even though he is a little bit stubborn. I think J.C. and Rob are my best friends.

Wonder

I wonder if daddy is happy at the office and I wonder if my little brother is sometimes jealous because I know more things than him! I also wonder how my doggy feels when we are not at home. And I also wonder if I am Rob's and J.C.'s best friend too!





- Your mom is a doctor? What does that mean? Tita asked.
- And why she is happy about it? Toto continued.
- Well, here on Earth people do different jobs, Rob said.
- And my mom is a doctor. Her job is to take care of people they are sick. Mia explained.



STEP INSIDE

Oh, I don't feel good! My belly hurts and I am hot. I think I am sick.

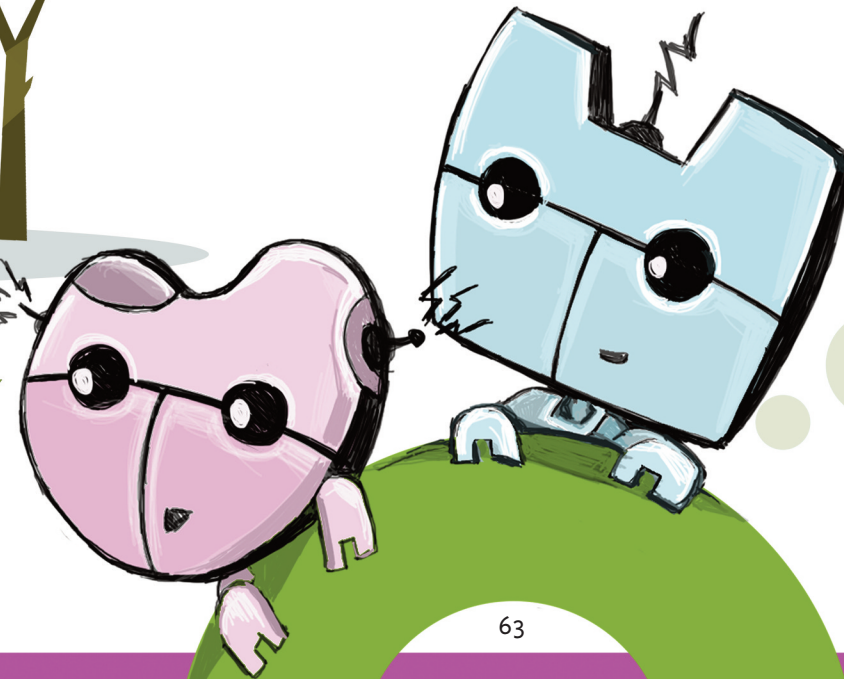


Don't worry sir! I am here to help you. I am a doctor. You will feel better soon! I am sure!!!



HOSPITAL

Step Inside?
That's a fun thing to do!!!



- Did you like it Tita and Toto? asked J.C.
- Yesss!!! Said both of them at the same time.



- So let's see what you think about doctors, said Mia.



And I think
I know the perfect
thinking game
for this too!!!

HURRAY!!!

Perceive



What can the doctor perceive?

Know



What does the doctor know about?

Care About



What does the doctor care about?

Perceive

- *Well a doctor perceives the pain of people.* Said Tita.

Know

- *And she knows how to make people feel better.* Said Toto.

- *And I think she knows a lot about how and why someone gets sick.* Said Tita.

Care About

- *She cares about other people,* Toto said.

- *And taking care of others,* said Tita cheerfully.



What makes you say that Tita?

Mmmm...
Because I think if she
knows how to treat
you when you are sick
then she knows what
made you sick!!!

WOW

WOW

THAT SAME DAY,
THE FIVE LITTLE FRIENDS
STAYED AT THE PLAYGROUND
PLAYING WITH THE THINKING GAMES
AND LOOKING AT DIFFERENT JOBS
THAT PEOPLE DO...



CHAPTER 8 ROB'S LIFE ON EARTH

- So who is sharing today? Toto asked.

- I will!!! said Rob joyfully.



I also brought some color pencils and paper to draw my life. I love my life and I hope you will love it too!

We will play with my favourite thinking game!!!

Look/Listen 10x2



1. My house



2. My mom



3. My dad



4. My sister



5. Our cat



6. My dad's car



7. My school



8. The school bus



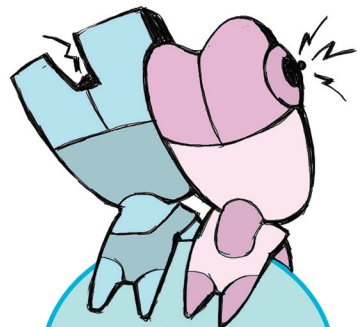
9. My teacher Nina



10. My friends

Look/Listen 10x2

Now let's see
what else
you want to
know...



We want to know
what you like!!!



11. *I like ice-cream*



12. *Playing with my sister*



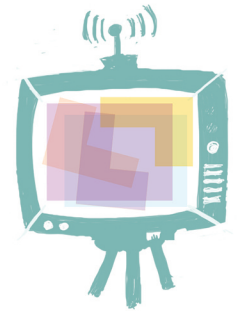
13. *Playing with friends*



14. *Talking*



15. *Books*



16. *Watching TV*



17. *Computers*



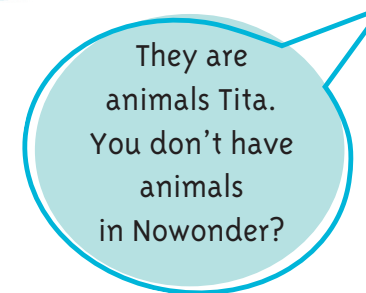
18. *Playground*



19. *Grandma's house*



20. *Playing with my cat*



Animals???



- Yes, animals, said Mia.

- No, we don't know what these are, Toto said.



- Animals are living things like us, J.C. explained.

- And how do they look like? asked Tita.

- There are many different animals and they look differently as well, Rob said.

- And we can categorize them in different groups. Like some animals live under water, some of them fly, some of them are wild and many more! Mia continued.

- Each animal is unique in its own way. Like us!!! J.C. added.



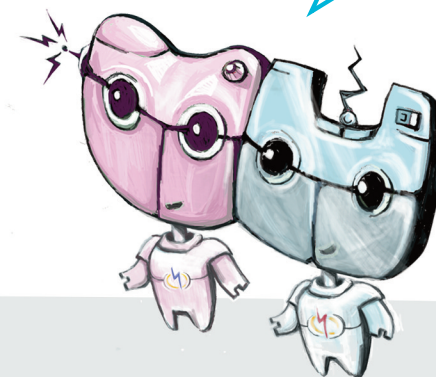
THE FIVE LITTLE FRIENDS SPENT THE WHOLE DAY OBSERVING
AND DESCRIBING ANIMALS FROM DIFFERENT GROUPS...



CHAPTER 9 J.C.'S LIFE ON EARTH



Today is my day!!!
And I am going to talk
about MY favorites
with my favorite
thinking game!!!



Hurray!!! We are
excited to listen to
your story J.C.!!!

J.C. TOOK A BLANK PAPER AND SOME MARKERS
AND STARTED DRAWING HIS FAVORITE PEOPLE IN HIS LIFE

WHAT IS MISSING



My aunt Christine and my uncle Paul



Grandpa and grandma



And of course Mia and Rob

Mom and dad



My cousin Maria





- Who are all these people? asked Tita.

- My friends and my family Tita, J.C. replied.

- And what relationship do you have with them? Toto continued asking.

- My grandpa and my grandma are my dad's parents.

My aunt Christine is my mom's sister and she has a daughter, Maria who is my cousin. And of course you know my favorite people, Rob and Mia! J.C. explained.

- Hmmm!!! Interesting... And I wonder what do you do with them, asked Tita.

- Well, I have another idea...Let me explain to you using another thinking game.

In this game I will share some facts and events of our lives and express some ideas and feelings. This thinking game is called "Reporter's Notebook".



Facts and Events

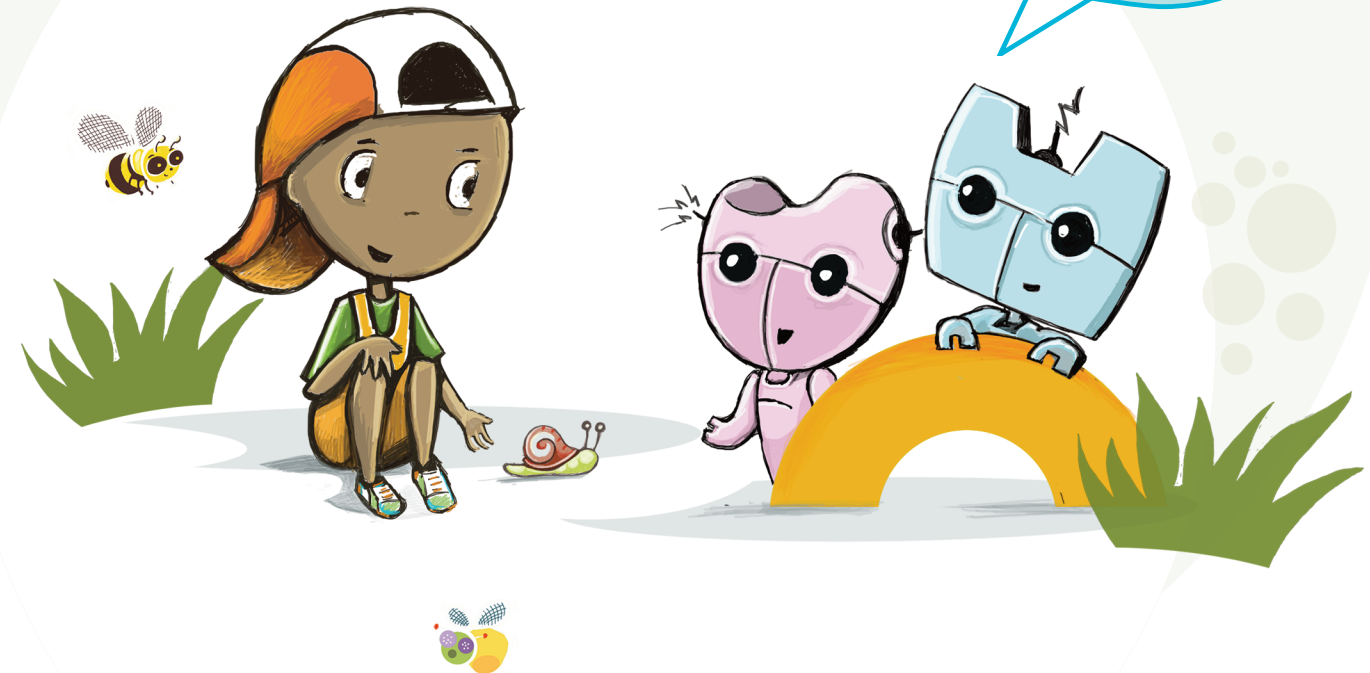
- *Grandpa and grandma are taking me to the park.*
- *With my parents I go on vacations.*
- *Sometimes, aunty, uncle and Maria come with us on vacations.*
- *When Maria comes to my house we play together with my toys.*
- *We all celebrate together special holidays.*
- *I always play thinking games with Mia and Rob.*

Ideas and Feelings

- *It feels nice to be with friends and family.*
- *Grandpa and grandma, mommy and daddy love me. Actually, everybody loves me!*
- *When I play with Maria, Mia and Rob, we are all happy.*
- *We are very excited when we celebrate.*
- *Mom and dad will be sad if we don't show responsibility and clean up after our play.*



- What is that? asked Toto.
- Responsibility is like doing your duty.
When you are responsible it means that
you choose to do the right thing.



UNTILL THE NIGHT CAME,
THE FIVE LITTLE FRIENDS
TALKED ABOUT THEIR FAMILIES
AND FRIENDS AND OF COURSE
ABOUT RESPOSIBILITIES...

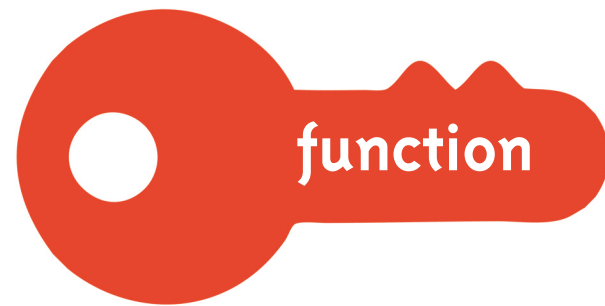


CHAPTER 10

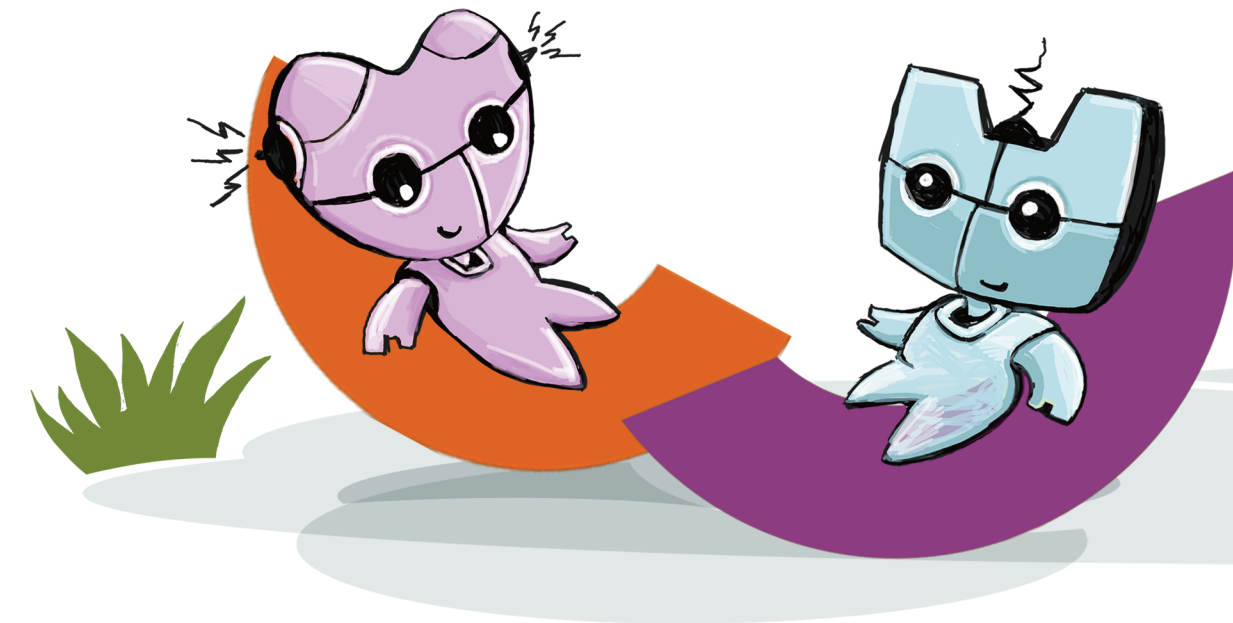
LAST DAY ON EARTH

AFTER FIVE DAYS OF DISCOVERING WHAT THINKING IS,
THE FIVE LITTLE FRIENDS DECIDED TO PLAY WITH THE TOYS IN THE PLAYGROUND.

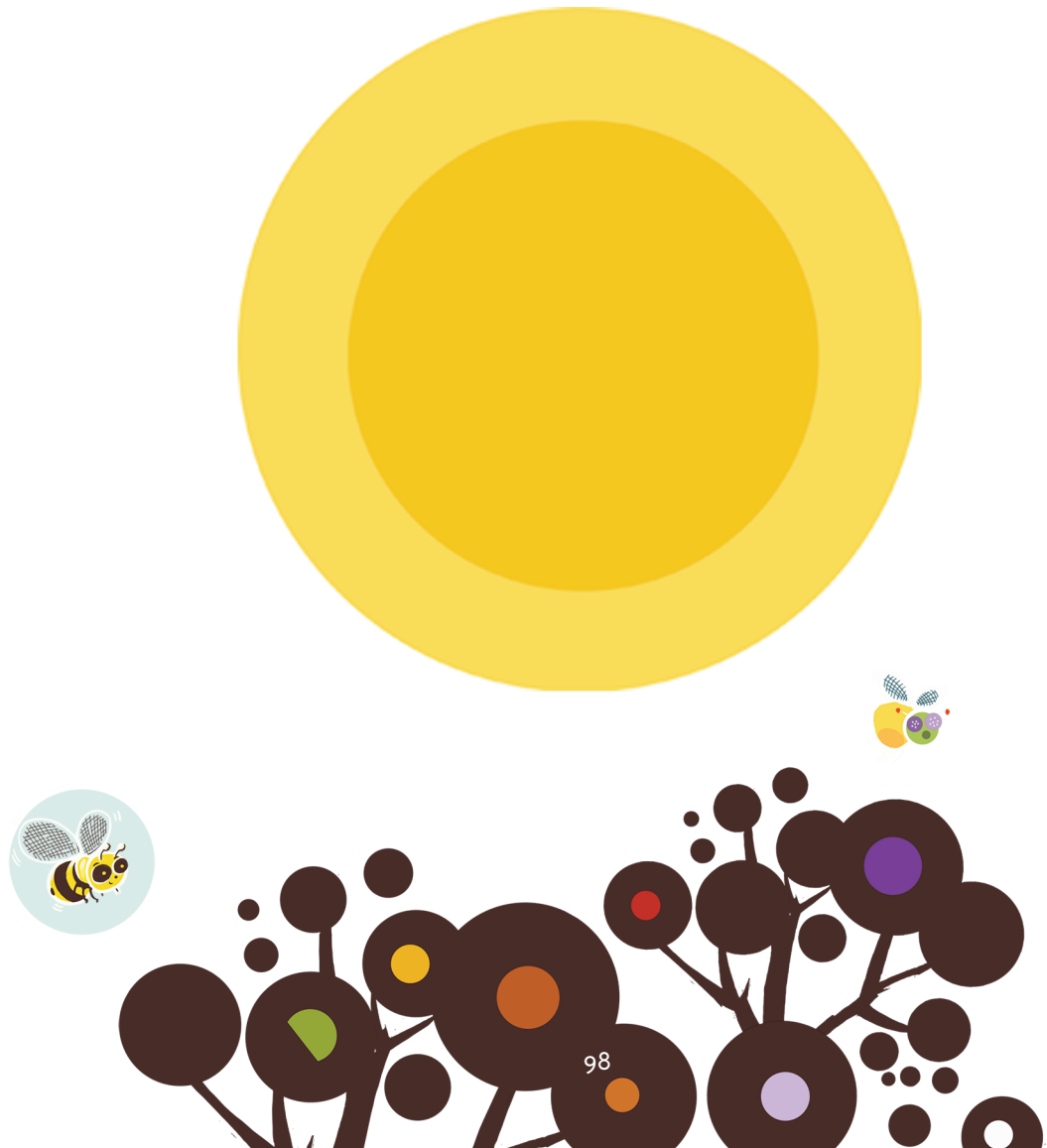




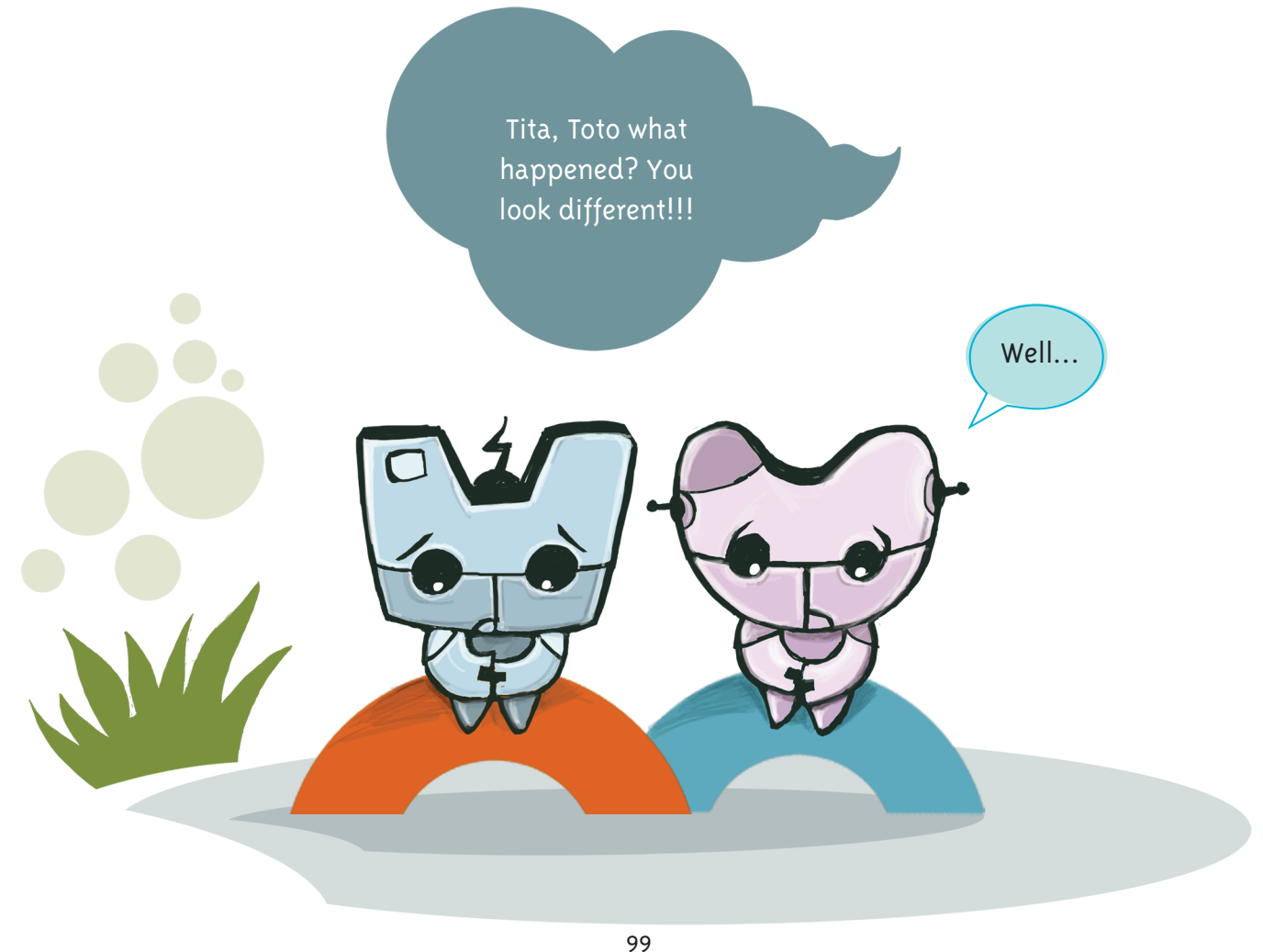
AND SO, THEY SPENT THEIR SIXTH DAY ON EARTH, IN THE PLAYGROUND;
EXPLORING AND PLAYING WITH DIFFERENT TOYS AND GAMES...

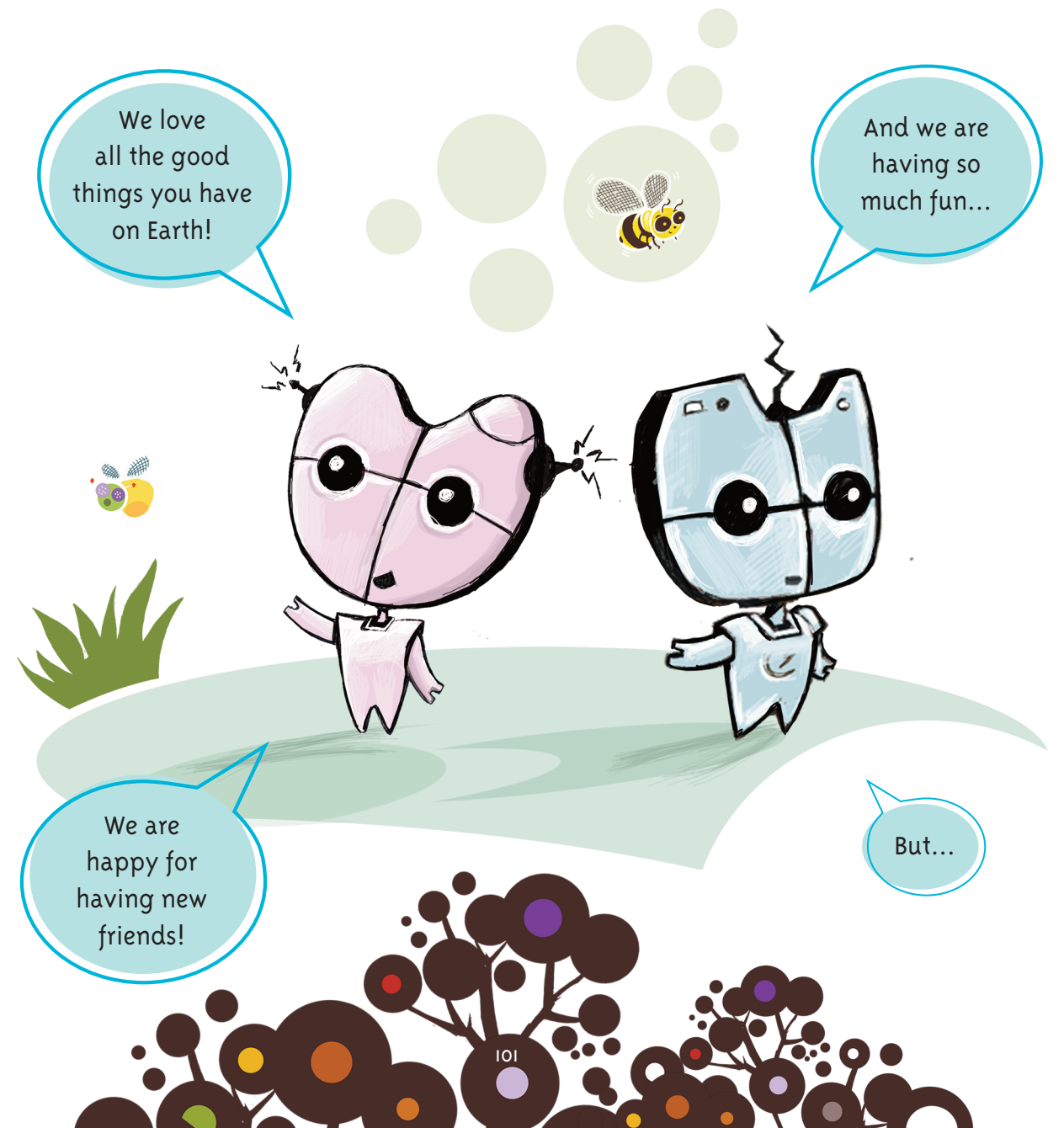


TITA AND TOTO'S SEVENTH DAY ON EARTH DAWNED SUNNY AND BLUE.
THE FIVE LITTLE FRIENDS MET AGAIN AT THE PLAYGROUND LIKE EVERY OTHER DAY...



BUT SOMETHING WAS DIFFERENT... TITA AND TOTO LOOKED SAD.



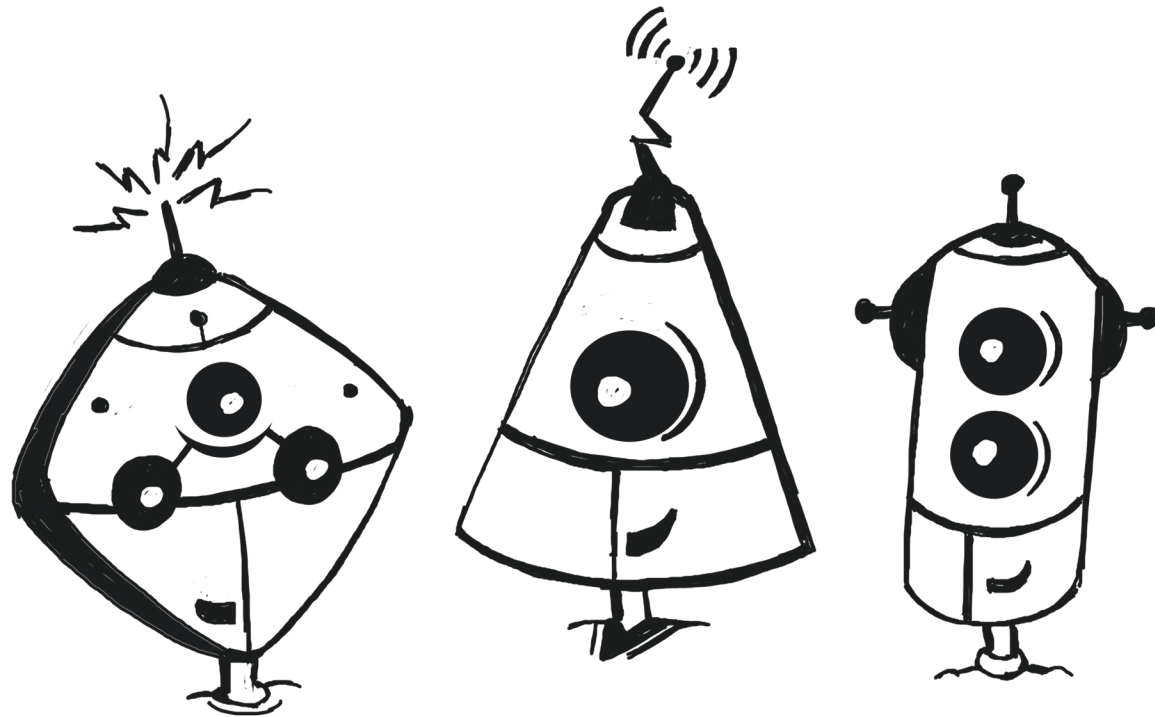


WE MISS

NOWONDER

- We miss our home, said Tita.

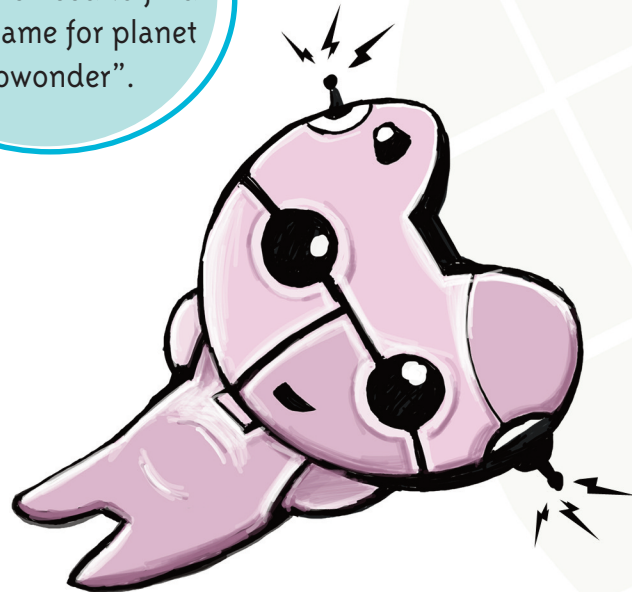
- And our friends, Toto continued. We miss Tata, Tete and Titi too.





So now you
will be able
to wonder!!!

As you will
continue wondering,
I think we need to find
a new name for planet
"Nowonder".



Of
course!!!



Hmmm...

Let's think of a new
name playing the
"Headline"
thinking game.



THE FIVE LITTLE FRIENDS STARTED BRAINSTORMING IDEAS UNTIL TITA SHOUTED...

WONDER



LAND!

THE FIVE LITTLE FRIENDS PUT THEIR HANDS TOGETHER AND CLOSED THEIR EYES.

THEY STARTED THE COUNTDOWN...

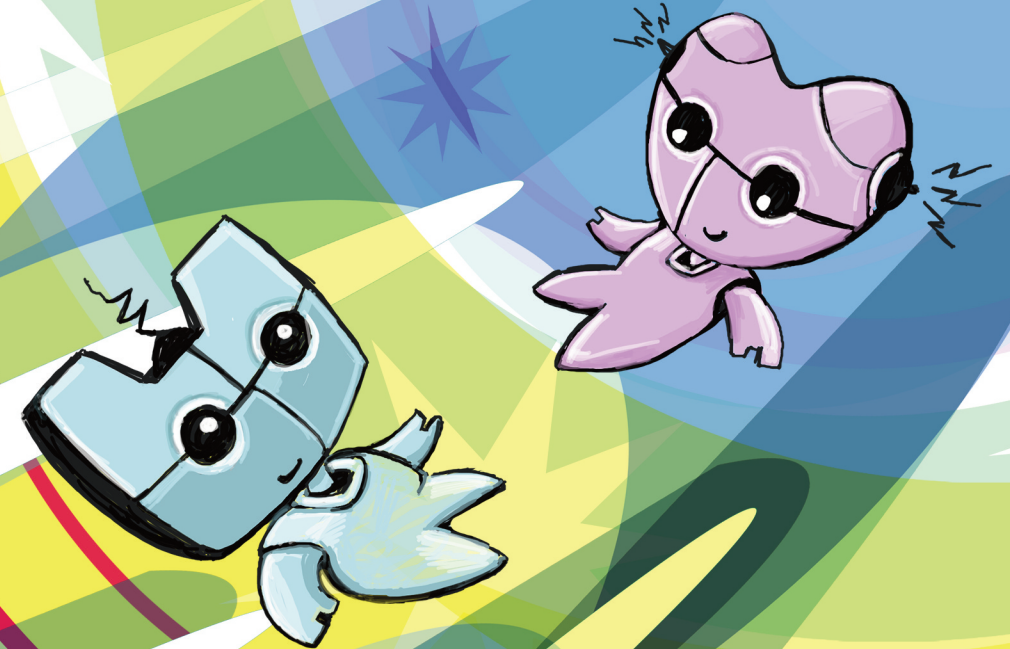
10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1



AND THE STORM STARTED.

BUT THIS TIME THEY WERE NOT SCARED
BECAUSE THEY KNEW THAT IT WOULD LAST
ONLY A FEW SECONDS AND BECAUSE THEY ALL KNEW
THAT IT WAS TIME FOR TITA AND TOTO
TO GO BACK TO **WONDERLAND!**

ON THEIR WAY BACK, TITA AND TOTO WERE TALKING ABOUT
HOW THEY WILL EXPLAIN TO THEIR FRIENDS WHAT THINKING IS ALL ABOUT...



SO WHAT

DISCOVERING

CONNECTING

QUESTIONING

WONDERING

HYPOTHESISING

EXPLAINING

CONSIDERING
PERSPECTIVES

PREDICTING

IS THINKING?

SCANNING

IMAGING

DESCRIBING

ENQUIRING

FEELING

REASONING

OBSERVING

REFLECTING

SYNTHESISING

The Purpose of Thinking Routines

X-Routine:

A routine for careful observation, making connections and descriptions.

I Used to Think/Now I Think:

A routine for reflecting on how and why our thinking has changed.

Connect-Extend-Challenge:

A routine for connecting new ideas to prior knowledge.

Options Explosion:

A routine for brainstorming and for creative decision-making.

See-Think-Wonder:

A routine to encourage careful observations and thoughtful interpretations, stimulate curiosity and sets the stage of inquiry.

Step Inside:

A routine for getting inside viewpoints.

Perceive-Know-Care About:

A routine for getting inside viewpoints and to consider perspectives.

What makes you say that:

Interpretation with justification routine.

Look/Listen 10x2:

A routine to promote careful observations.

What is Missing:

A routine to promote careful observations and helps to extend and analyze your thinking.

Reporter’s Notebook:

A routine for separating fact and feeling.

Headline:

A routine for capturing essence.

<http://www.pz.harvard.edu/projects/visible-thinking>

The Purpose of Thinking Keys

Reflection:

How do we know what we know?

Connection:

Relationship, similarities, differences, where again?

Viewpoint:

What are the points of view?

Change:

How do things change? Movement, adaptation, cycles, sequence, growth.

Emotions:

How does it feel? Expressiveness.

Form:

Observe, identify, describe, categorize.

Responsibility:

Choices, rights, values, justice, actions.

Function:

Purpose, role, behavior, pattern.

Cause-Effect:

Consequences, reasons, patterns.

BACK COVER