



Beep Beep Bubbie

written by

Bonnie Sherr Klein

illustrated by

Élisabeth Eudes-Pascal

{ **What makes you different?** }

HANDS ON!

Name Some Objects that Are "Good Friends"

"Your scooter's a good friend, Bubbie," Kate says. "I think it needs a name." Do you have any objects in your household that make your life easier? Maybe they deserve names, too! Bubbie lets her grandchildren decorate her scooter, but you could just create name tags.

Supplies:

- Index cards
- Hole punch
- Ribbon or yarn
- Art supplies

Think about good names for some of the inanimate objects in your household. They could be names one might give a person, but they don't have to be. For example, you could name a clarinet Melody (or Claire Annette!), but you could also name it something like Toots.

Write the names for your household friends on the index cards. Add a few words about the reasons why this object has been a good friend.

Decorate the cards as you like, then punch holes on the top and tie a loop of ribbon or yarn into them.

Drape the name tags over your household objects. Now you can introduce everyone to your good friends!

Knocking Down the Blocks

Judaism teaches us to be inclusive. In the Torah (the first five books of the Bible), this mitzvah ("commandment" or good deed) is spelled out: "You shall not insult the deaf, or place a stumbling block before the blind." There are literal and symbolic ways to understand this teaching, but the most important idea is to remove obstacles that keep other people from participating in any aspect of community life. A ramp to provide wheelchair access to a synagogue or prayer books printed in Braille are examples of removing stumbling blocks. In this story, Gladys the Scooter helps Bubbie gets around any stumbling blocks in her way – so Gladys is a mitzvah-maker! To learn more, visit pjlibrary.org/beepeebubbie.

Be Brave

The Hebrew phrase for courage, *ometz lev*, literally means "strength of heart." When Bubbie faces a medical challenge, she has to summon all her *ometz lev* to adjust to her new reality. Kate observes sadly that "everything will be different now," but notice her grandmother's response: "Maybe different is good." Not only is Bubbie being brave, she's helping her grandchildren be brave, too. When Nate falls at the Granville Island market, Bubbie calms him down and takes him for a ride, turning her scooter into an asset. As Kate learns, fighting for equal rights and changing people's minds takes a lot of courage. There may be people who are impatient and grumpy, but there are also people like Bubbie who kindly make space for someone vulnerable.

It Takes All Kinds

Judaism holds that while the world is full of different people, each of us is created *b'tzelem Elohim*, in the image of God. There is even a special blessing that praises God as *meshaneh habriyot*, "the one who makes varied creations." As it says in *Pirkei Avot* (Ethics of the Ancestors, an ancient collection of rabbinic sayings), "Every person has their time and everything has its place." Catherine, Kate's new friend in a wheelchair, finds her time to play at the park on a windy day. Bubbie finds a place for herself on the bus and at the busy market. When we include everyone, we can celebrate all the things that make us different while also recognizing our essential sameness. At first Kate misses the old version of her grandmother, but comes to understand that "Bubbie was still Bubbie, even on the scooter."

TALK IT OVER WITH YOUR KIDS

LOOK closely at the illustrations. How is Kate feeling at the start of this story? How is she feeling at the end? What changes for her?

WHY does Kate give Bubbie's scooter the name "Gladys"? If you were going to name a bicycle or a scooter, what would you name it?

CAN you think of a time you tried to help someone who was different from you? What was easy or hard about that experience??