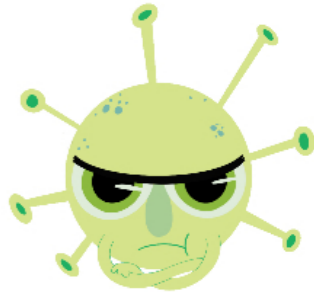


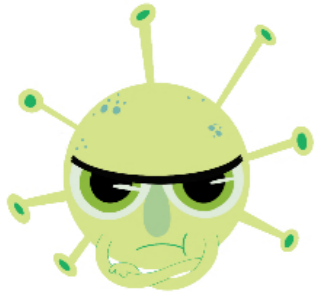
The Box



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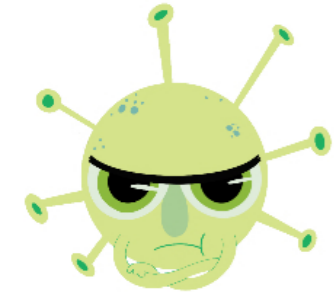
Diego and Maite are best friends. They have been friends since they were inside their mommies' bellies. They went to daycare and school together, and now they are classmates and inseparable friends.



One day, Maite and Diego did not go to school. Daddy explained to Maite that there was a little germ in the air that wanted people to get sick. Because of that, they were not able to go outside of their houses for a while.



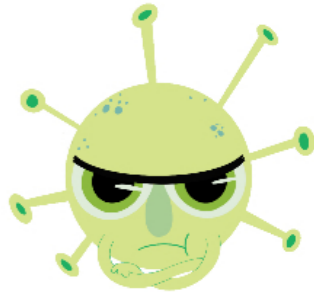
Diego's mom told him that he would not be able to go back to school or hang out with his friends or grandparents until the little germ was gone and away from their town.



During the first days, Maite enjoyed her new situation. Her parents stayed home, and she could play with her toys, get dressed up in her mom's clothes, and draw with all of her pencils.



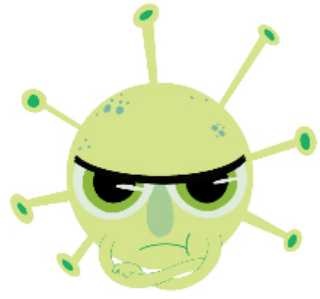
Diego played with his cars. He also played board games with his dad, helped his mom with cooking, and imagined he was a superhero that saved the whole town from the mean little germ.



As the days went by, Diego and Maite started to feel sad. Diego missed playing hide and seek during recess with Maite.

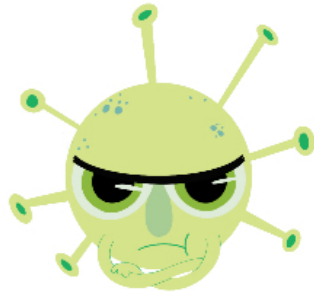


Maite missed laughing and joking with Diego. Being apart was so sad! They wanted to be together again.



Maite's mom called Diego's mom so the two friends could talk over the phone. In the beginning, it was awkward. Neither of them spoke. It was as if they did not have anything to tell each other.



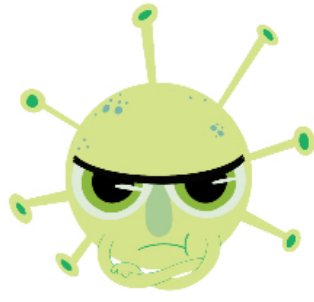


When they hung up, Diego worried that Maite was not the same person anymore. Maybe she felt they were no longer friends. Maite was also concerned that maybe Diego did not like her as a friend any longer and did not need her anymore.



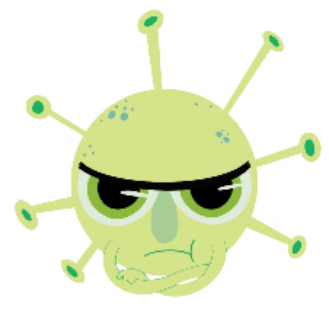
“What’s wrong Maite?” asked her dad.
“I am so sad. Diego doesn’t like me anymore,” she answered.

“Mom... Maite is no longer my friend,” said Diego.



Diego's mom gave him an empty box and said, "Let's do an experiment. Put something inside this box that reminds you of Maite and write a sentence about it. I am going to ask Maite's mom to do the same. When you both open your box, you will see what you are feeling about each other."

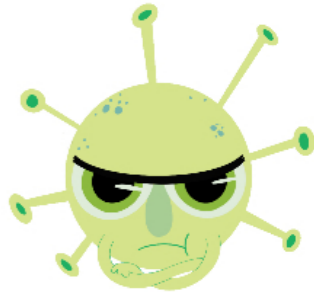




A couple of hours later, Maite received a red shoe box with stars on it. She immediately remembered Diego. His dream was to be an astronaut! When she opened the box, Maite was even more surprised. Inside was a picture of the two friends from the time they made cookies together and ended up covered in flour. Both were smiling and hugging. What a great day!

At the bottom of the box was a message in Diego's handwriting that said, "I want to hug you and play with you, but I am staying home, because as a superhero, I have a mission to take that little germ away from here."





Maite smiled. She understood why they did not see each other. It was not because they had forgotten about their friendship, but because they loved each other and did not want the other to catch the little germ. So, Maite prepared her box...

Continue the story:

- What did Maite put inside her box?
- What did Maite write to her friend Diego?
- Discuss the importance of their reencounter. How did their time apart become useful?



A large, empty rectangular box with a thick teal border, intended for writing a response or discussion.

