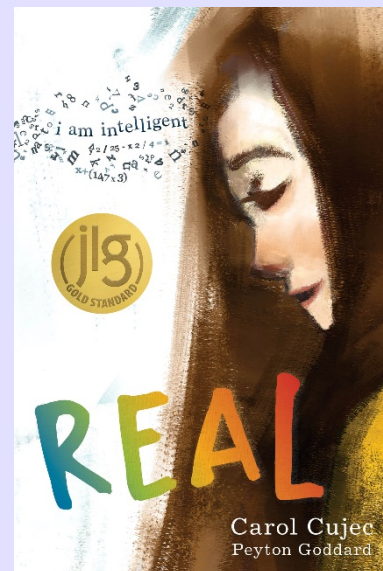


# Tips on Making Friends with Kids who are Different from You

by Carol Cujec and Peyton Goddard, authors of *REAL*

*Peyton reminds us that all people need friends. Find ways to become friends with kids who are different. We all benefit from having diverse friends!*

1. **SMILE** and learn their name.
2. Say **hello!** Don't be afraid to talk to someone who's different. Even if they can't say it back, they will probably appreciate it.
3. **Ask** or **observe** to see what they like to do. Can you join them in doing something they like to do?
4. **Be yourself.** Are you good at telling jokes? Singing? Do you love animals? Share something about yourself or a story from your day.
5. For some kids, their body works in a different way than yours. **Don't make assumptions** about them based only on body language. For example:
  - If someone is not looking at me, they are not listening.
  - If someone is frowning, they are sad or mad.
  - If someone is jumping and clapping, they are happy.
5. **Ask questions** (if they have an aide, you can ask them too.) For example:
  - Can I give you a high five?
  - Do you like this music?
  - Do you want to eat lunch with us?
  - What's your favorite game?
6. **Watch your volume.** Some people like soft voices instead of loud.
7. **Be patient**, especially if your classmate speaks slowly or communicates in a different way.
8. **Find ways to include them** in an activity. For example, can they help set up for the activity, help you hand out the equipment, can you think of how they might participate using a unique skill they have?
9. Remember that everyone, including you, has times when they are upset or prefer to be alone. That's okay—you can **try again tomorrow**. You will be happy you did. They will be happy you did not give up trying.



*What are some other ideas you have?*