



Same Same or Different

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Let's  Read

 The Asia Foundation



Mamma put Sparrow's lunchbox into her schoolbag and folded her wings around her. "Have a good day, darling," she said. "Pay attention, be polite..." "Uff Mamma!" laughed Sparrow. "You say the same thing every day!"



"And remember," said Mamma. "Stay away from Snake - he's different." Sparrow wished Mamma hadn't said that. Snake was her best friend. But Mamma didn't approve of Snake. "His people eat our people!" she always said. "Sparrows and snakes can never be friends."



On the other side of town, Snake's Pappa was packing his lunchbox with birds' eggs.

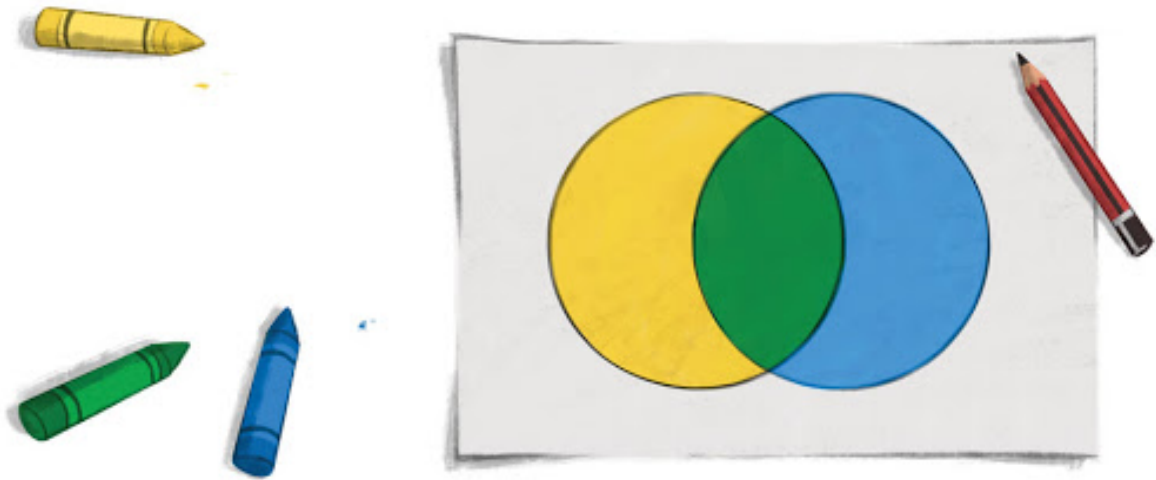
"Today's special, son!" he said proudly. "But I hate eggs, Pappa," groaned Snake.



"We've always eaten them in this family!" said Pappa sternly. "Now off you go. And remember, stay away from Sparrow!" Snake slithered away, feeling angry. "Sparrows are different," Pappa called after him. "You can't be friends with your food!"



When Snake met Sparrow at school, they knew. "Your Mamma said...?" asked Snake. Sparrow nodded. "Your Pappa too?" Snake nodded. "Our parents are wrong, Sparrow," said Snake. "Let's show them that we are more same-same than different."



"Great idea!" said Sparrow. "Let's!" She pulled out a sheet of paper and drew two circles on it - like this.



"In the yellow part of the left circle," said Sparrow, "we put down 'Just Sparrow' things. In the blue part of the right circle, 'Just Snake' things. These are all ways in which Snake and Sparrow are DIFFERENT." Snake was puzzled. "I thought we wanted to think of ways in which we are SAME!" "That's what the green part in the middle is for," smiled Sparrow.



"First, let's think about how we look," said Sparrow. "Same-same or different?" "VERY different," sighed Snake. "I'm long, hairless and thin. You're small, plump and soft." "You're right," said Sparrow. "I look like a powder puff," she drew a powder puff in the yellow crescent, "and you look like a rope-so-rough." She drew a rope in the blue crescent.



"Now," she said. "How do we move?" "VERY differently," Snake said, looking even sadder. "You fly through the air, flap-flapping. I slither along the ground, zig-zagging." "In other words," said Sparrow. "I move like a plane, and you move like a train."



Snake sighed. "Cheer up, Snake," said Sparrow briskly. "Let's see now, what do we eat?" "VERY different things," Snake's eyes filled with tears. "But I don't eat birds' eggs."



"I know," said Sparrow soothingly. But now she looked glum too. "Seeds and grass," she muttered, as she drew them in the yellow crescent. "Frogs and rats," she sputtered, and drew them in the blue crescent.



"Harrrrrump!" Snake and Sparrow jumped. It was Headmaster Elephant. "Why the long faces, kids?" he asked kindly. "Oh sir," sobbed Snake. "My Pappa and Sparrow's Mamma say we can't be friends because we are different." "We wanted to show them we were more same-same than different, sir," said Sparrow. "But it isn't working." Headmaster Elephant looked at the circles a long time. Then he began to laugh. Snake and Sparrow stared at him. What was so funny? "Don't you see, kids?" he said finally, wiping his tears. "You are doing this all wrong! Let me help you."



Headmaster Elephant settled down on a bench. "Now then, Snake," he said, "what do you like doing best?" "Playing and chatting, Sir," said Snake. "ESPECIALLY with Sparrow."



"And you, Sparrow?"

"Chatting and playing, Sir," said Sparrow.

"ESPECIALLY with Snake." "Right," said

Headmaster Elephant, "you like doing the

SAME things." And he drew something - in the

green part. "Next," said Headmaster Elephant,

"what makes you happy, kids?" "When Miss

lets me sit next to a friend, Sir," Snake began

to smile. "Same-same, Sir," clapped Sparrow.



"A-ha!" said Headmaster Elephant. "You both have the SAME happy place. Green!"

"All right, what makes you sad, Snake and Sparrow?" "That Pappa says I should stay away from Sparrow, sir," sighed Snake. "That Mamma says I should stay away from Snake, sir," sighed Sparrow. Headmaster Elephant frowned. "You are both sad," he said, "for the SAME reason - your parents don't let you choose your friends. Green again!"



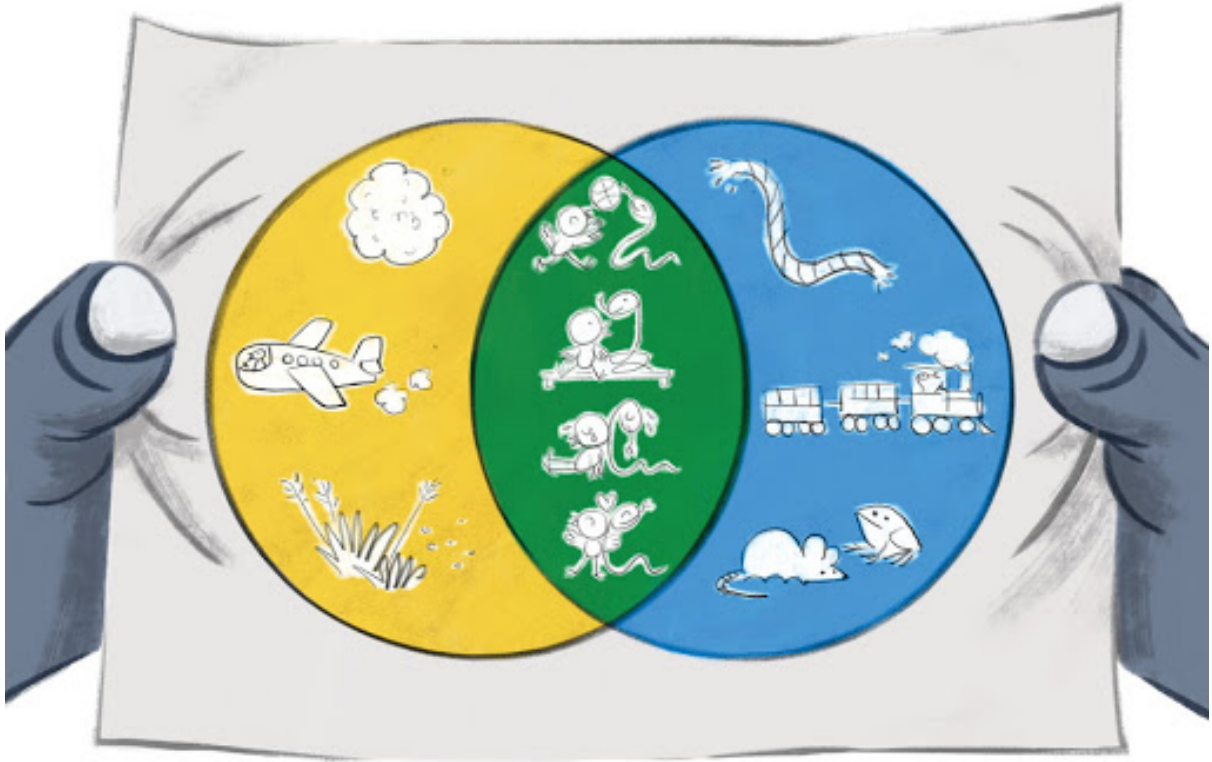
"Now then," said Headmaster Elephant, "who do you think is the best kind of friend?"

"Someone who loves you..." began Snake. "... even though

you are different!" finished Sparrow. "So you both agree," said Headmaster Elephant, "that a true friend loves you no matter what. That makes FOUR 'same-sames' and only THREE 'differents'. Same-sames win!"

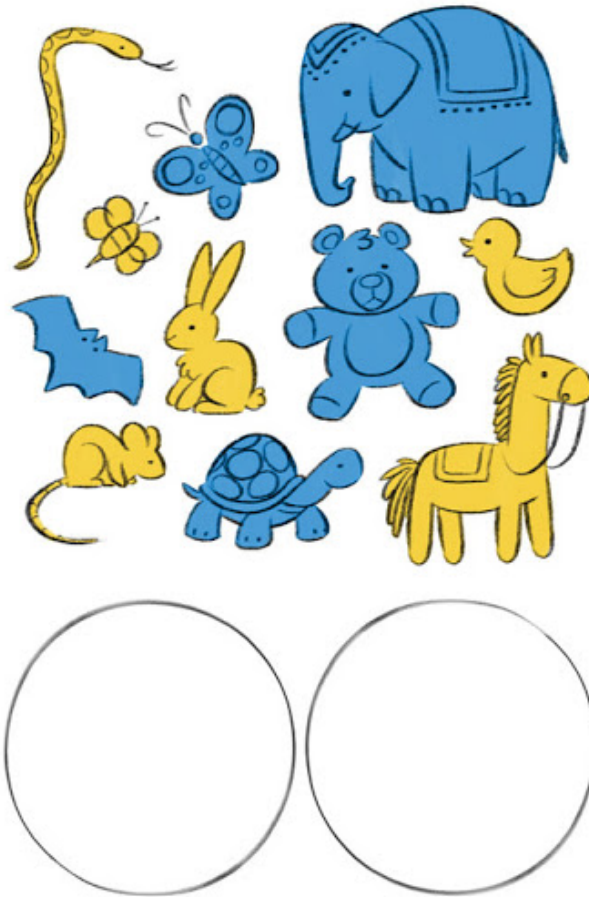


"Hurray!" said Snake and Sparrow. "Thank you, Headmaster Elephant!" "Harrumph!" said Headmaster Elephant. "One last thing..." "Yes, sir?" "Tell your parents I want to see them in my office. First thing tomorrow morning!" "And Headmaster Elephant marched away, looking very fierce indeed.





SORT IT OUT! Sorting and grouping are important skills in mathematics. To sort things, you have to ask yourself 'logic' questions like: 1. What things are same? What things are different? 2. How are the same things same? How are different things different? 3. Can the same things be sorted and grouped in more than one way?



Think about the many ways in which you can sort and group these toy animals. You can sort them: - According to their colour - blue animals in one circle, yellow in another. - According to their size - small animals in one circle, big ones in another. - According to how they move - animals that walk and animals that fly. Would the groups be different each time? Try it and see!

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