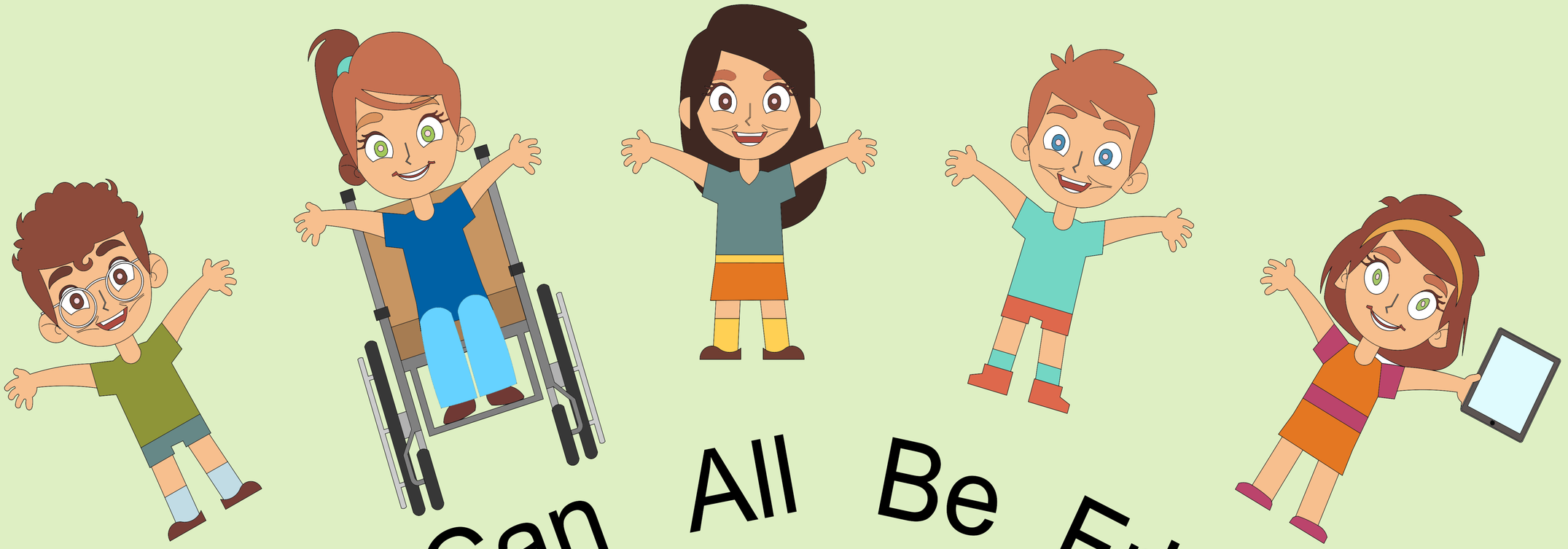
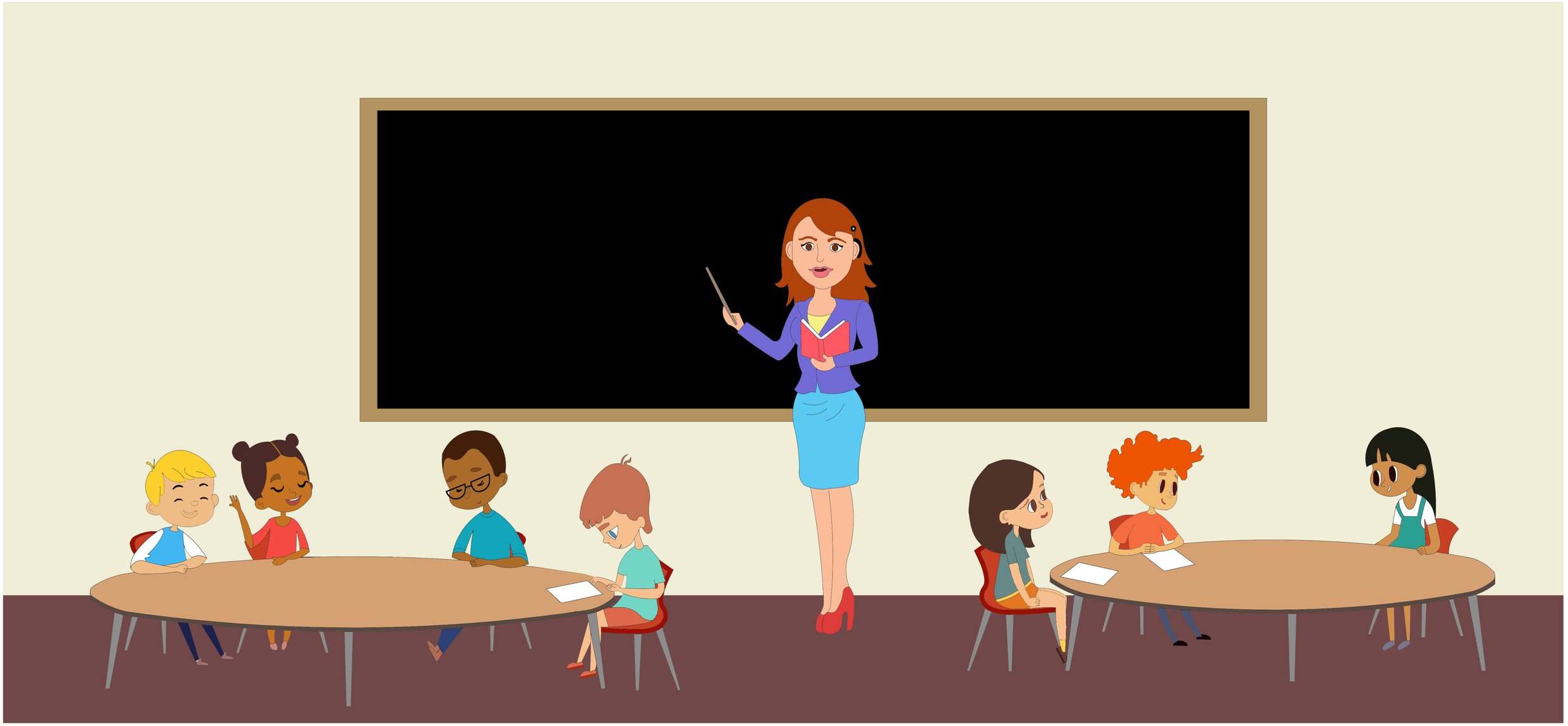


We Can All Be Friends

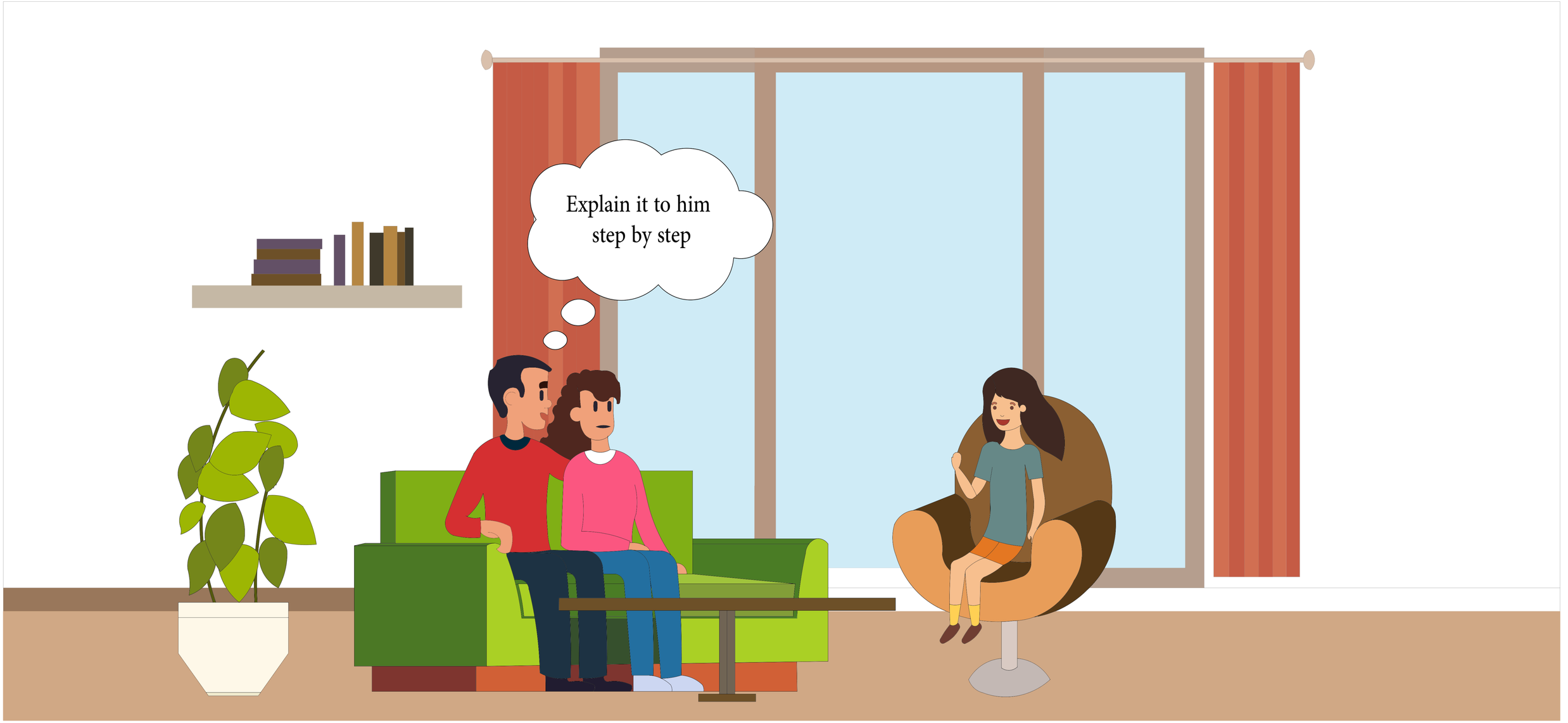
Written by: Yara El Amine

Illustrated by: Elie Abou Rjeily

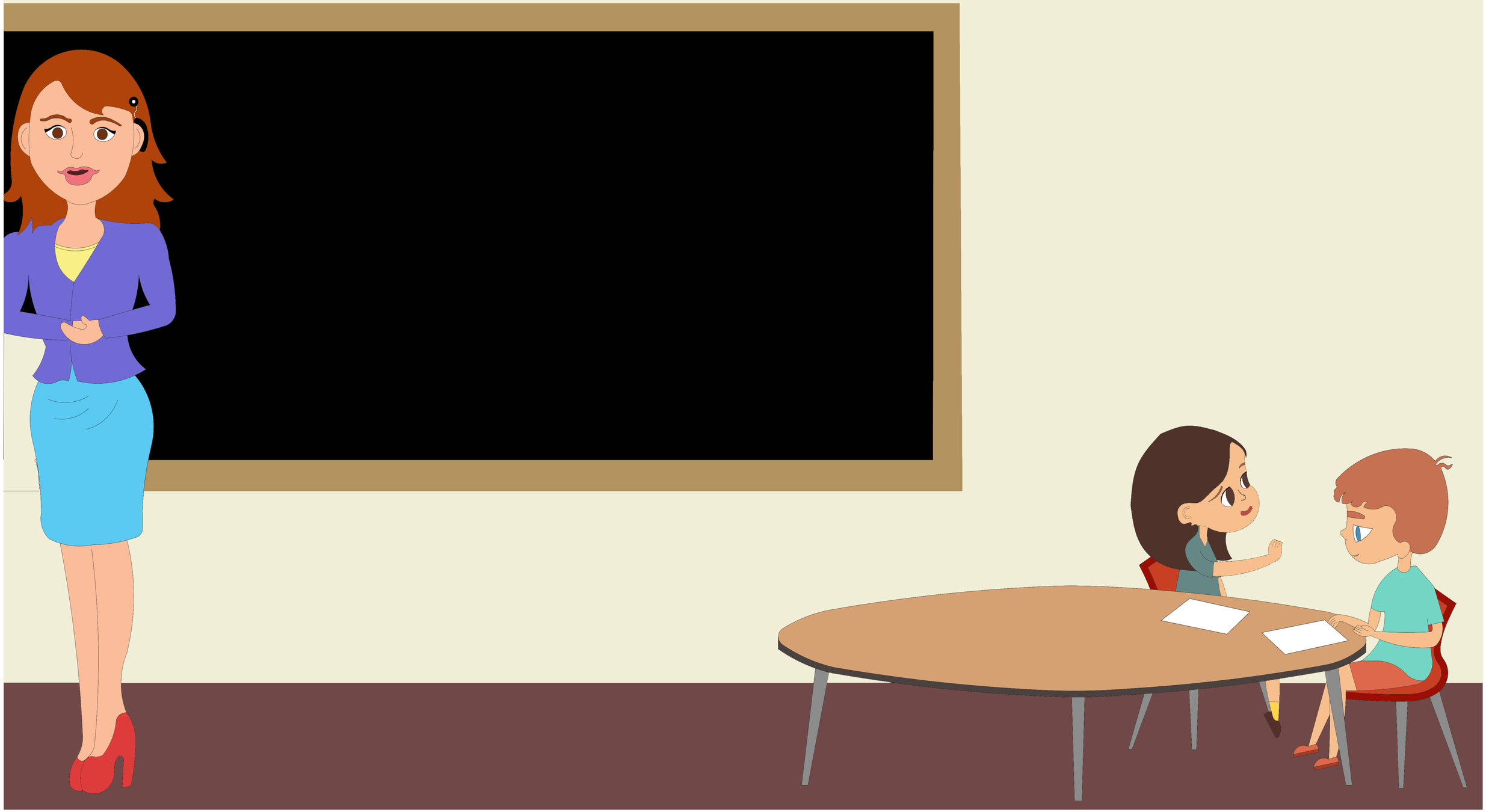
One Monday, Rama went to school and noticed that there is a new student in class, Karim, who wasn't able to keep up with the teacher's explanation and couldn't really understand the rules of the game when they explained it to him during the break.



So Rama went home that day and asked her parents to help her in knowing how to explain things to Karim. Her mother suggested to try and show him how the game works, Her father said, "explain it to him step by step." They also told Rama that everybody is different, but that doesn't mean that we cannot spend fun times with them.

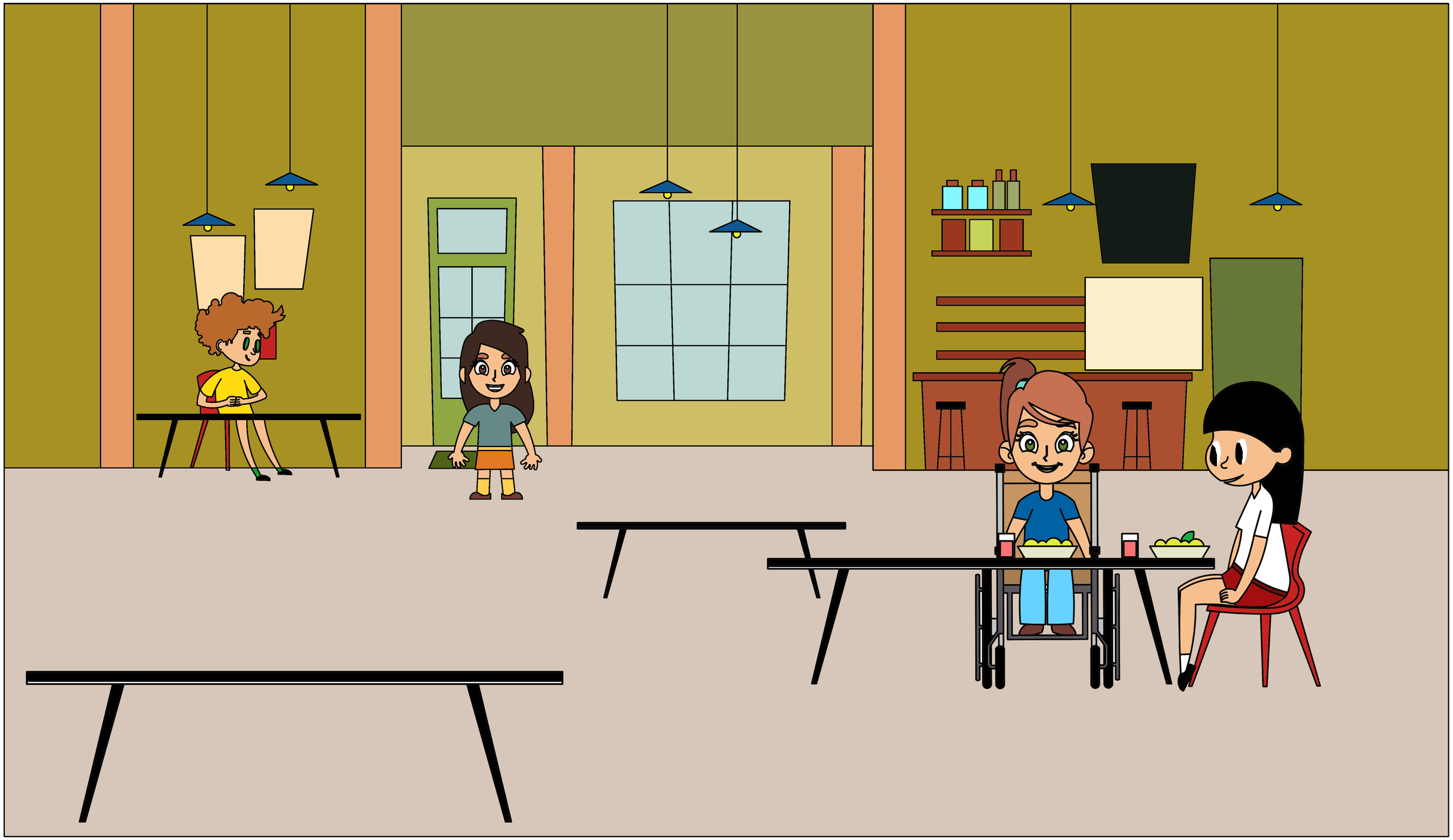


So the next day, Tuesday, Rama Went to school and sat next to Karim in class. She remembered what her parents told her and explained the exercices to him by showing how to do it step by step.

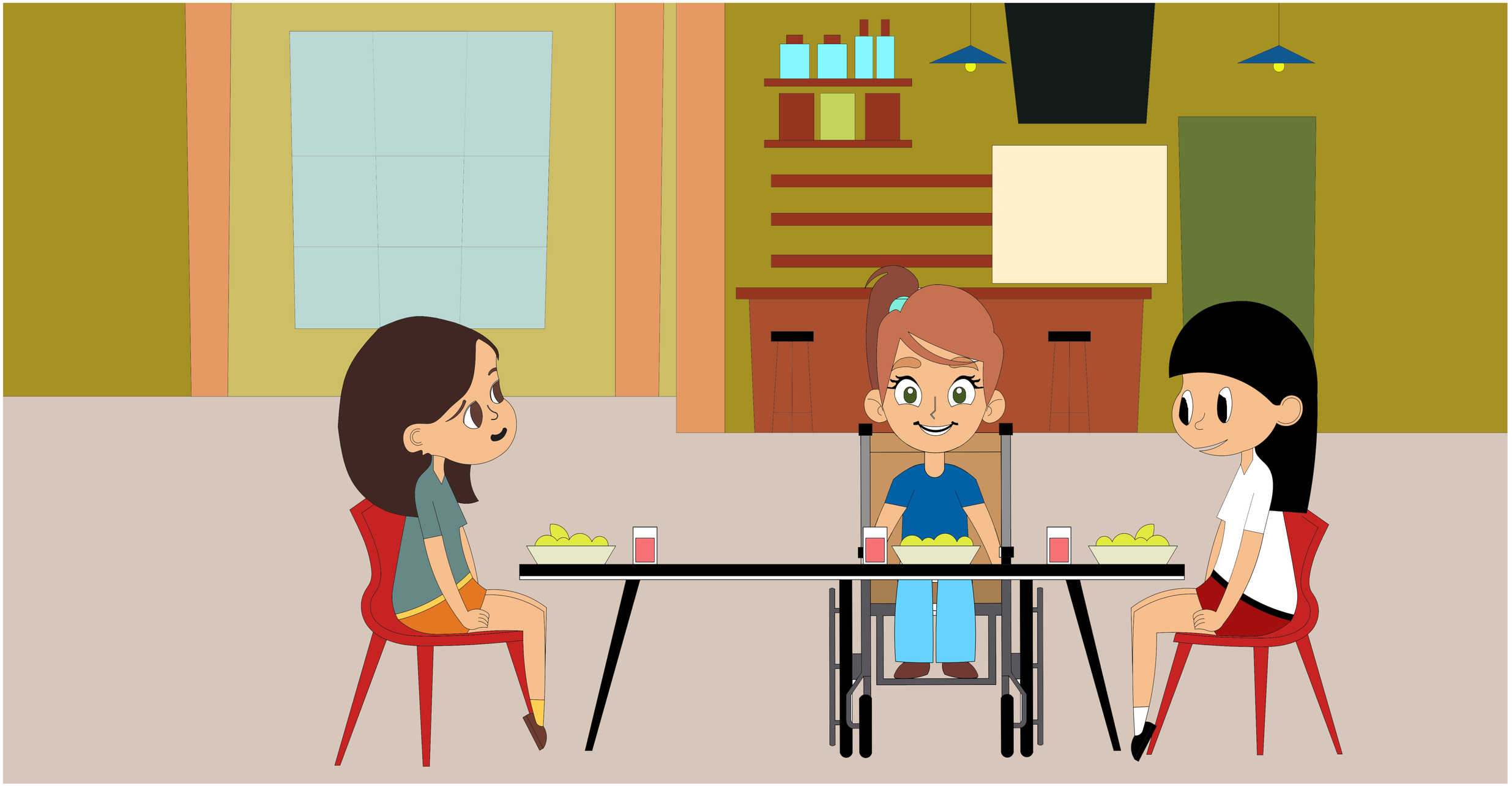


In the playground, Rama showed Karim the steps of the game they will be playing, step by step, and Karim was able to enjoy his break time with his classmates !

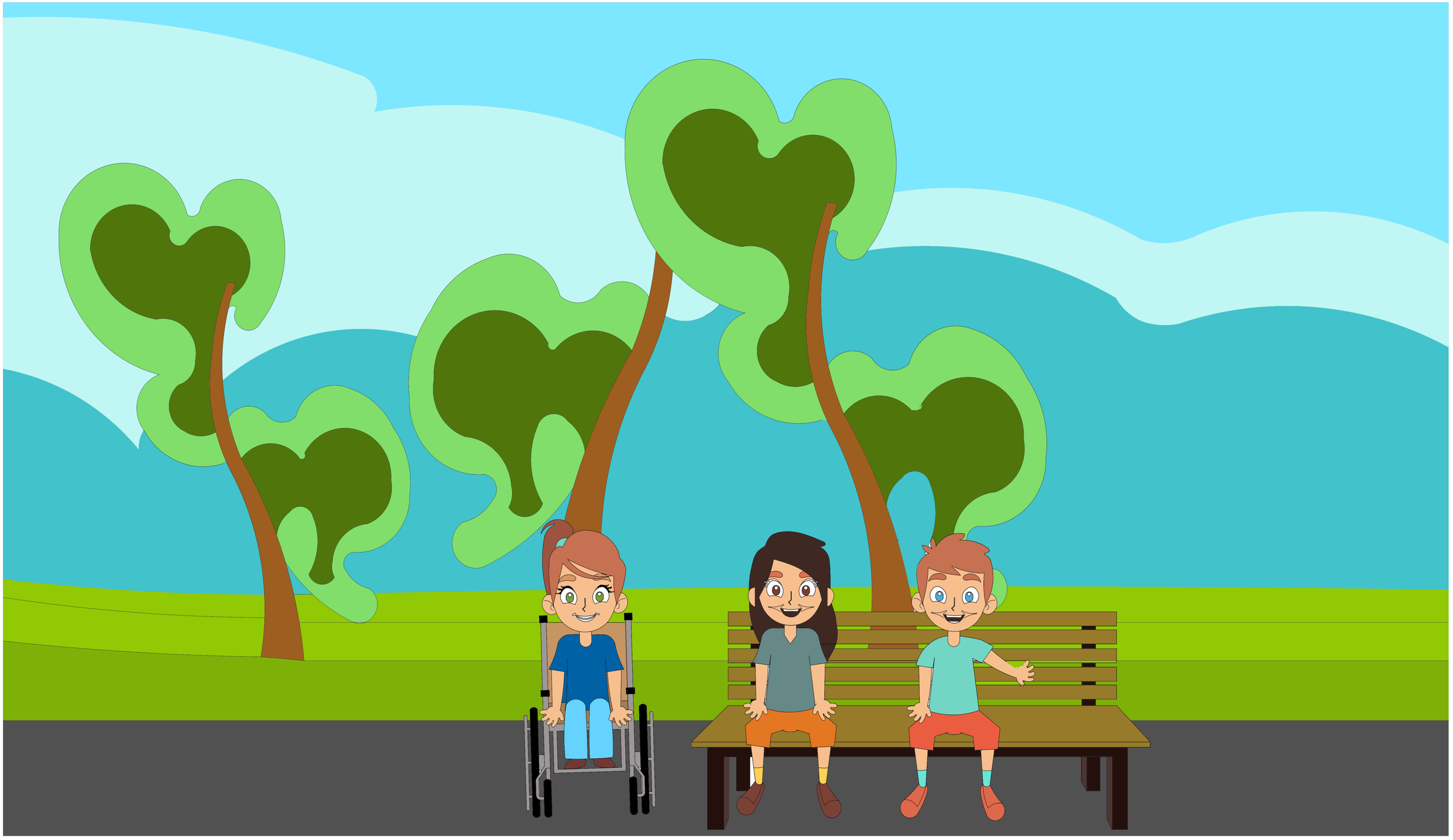
Rama went to school on Wednesday and had an amazing day. When it was lunch time, she noticed a girl her age sitting in a wheelchair with an adult next to her. So, she decided that she wanted to sit with them.



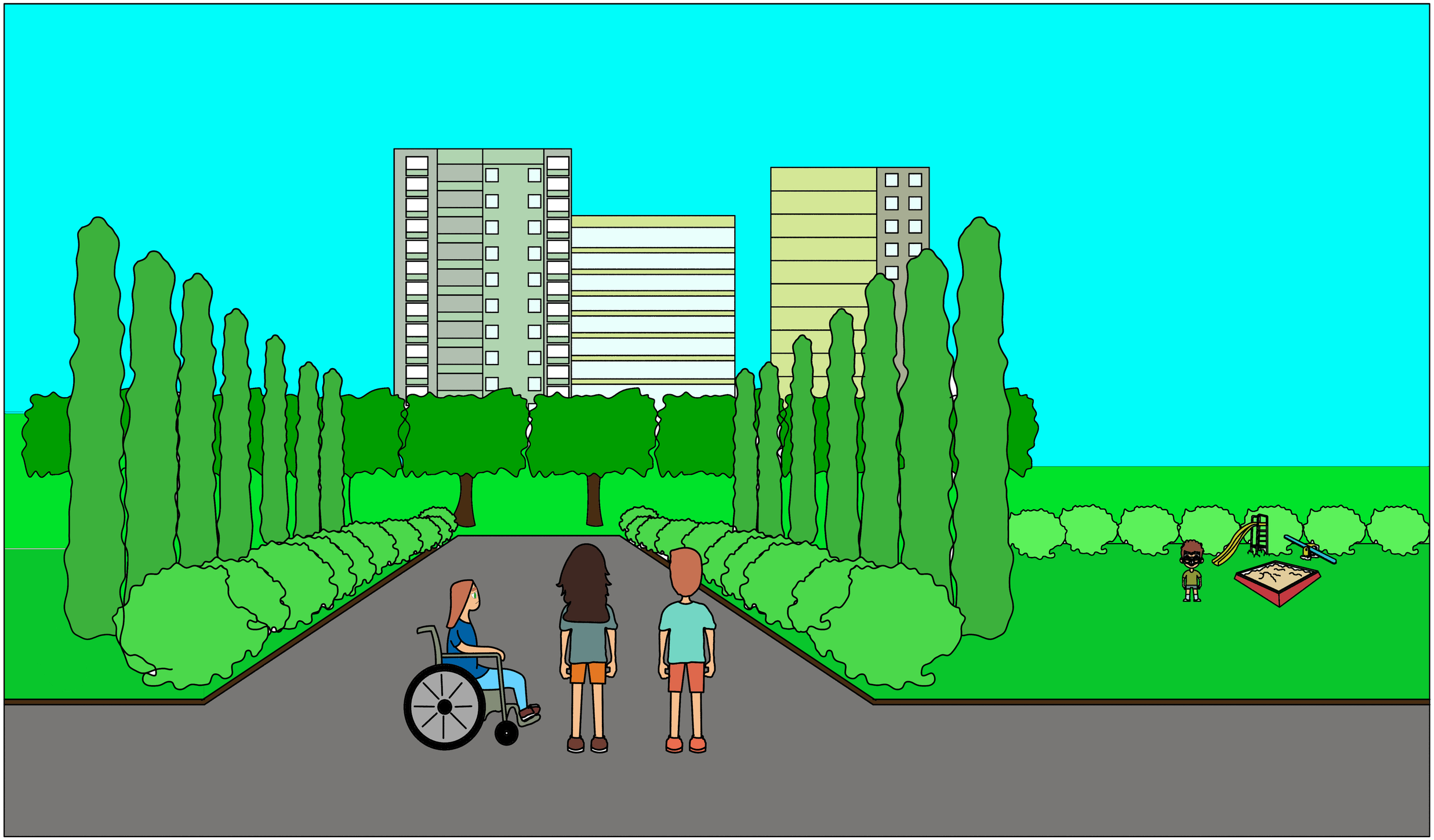
Rama started chatting with the girl and found out that her name was Yasmina. Yasmina had cerebral palsy and used her wheelchair to get around. Yasmina also needs someone to help her eat sometimes since she was born with weak muscles and has shaky movements. This is why Yasmina had an adult, Sara, with her.



Rama was very happy to spend her time with Yasmina and continued her break chatting with Yasmina and Karim while Sara kept an eye on them from afar.



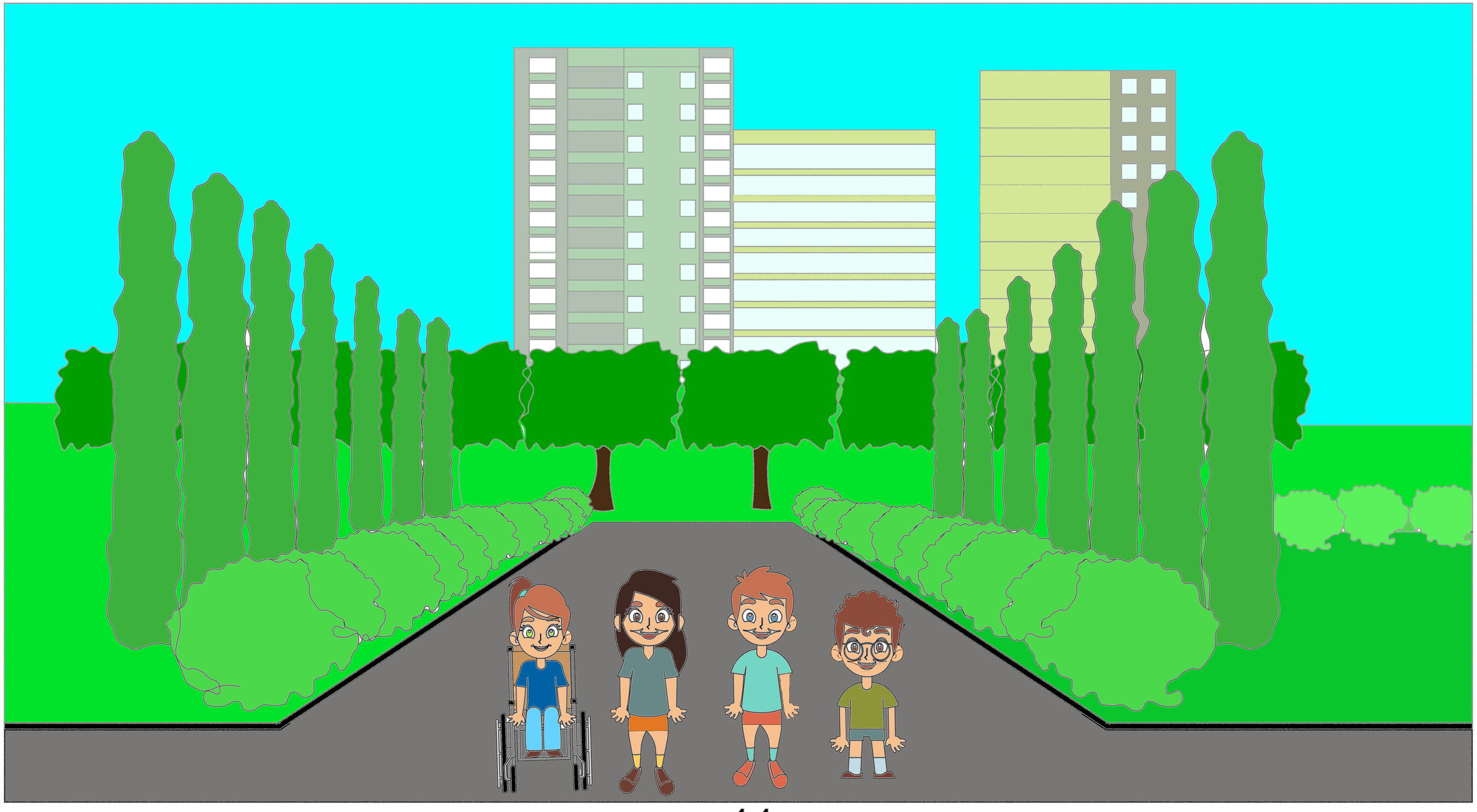
On Thursday afterschool, Rama went to the Sanayeh Park in Beirut with Karim and Yasmina.They saw a boy playing alone in one section of the park, and decided to play with him.



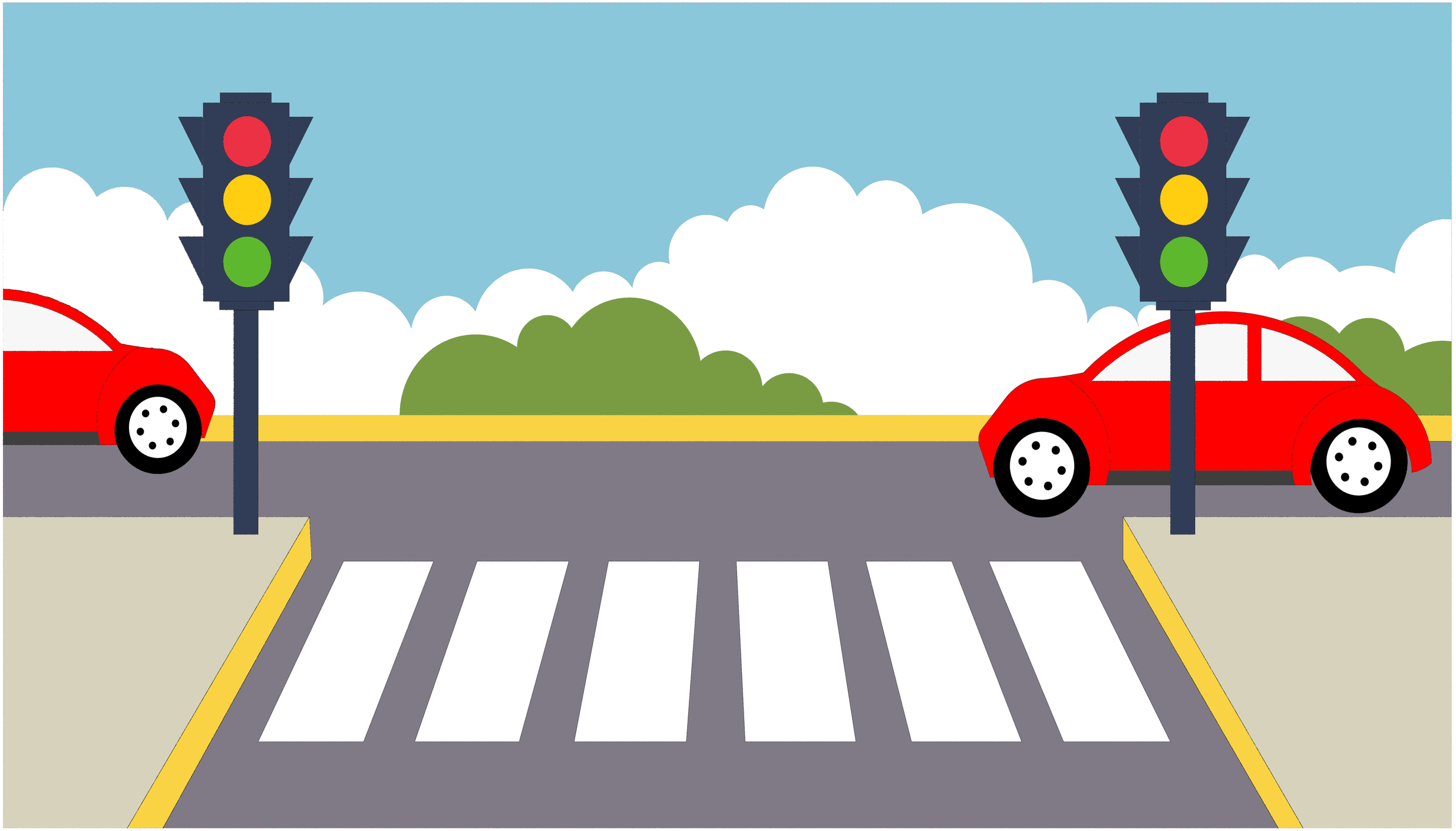
When they went closer, they noticed the boy looked different. He had narrow eyes, a wide space between his eyes, and a small nose.He was born with Downs Syndrome, a condition where he has an extra chromosome.He had a huge smile on his face, and was very eager and excited to make friends.

When he saw the 3 children approach him, he started running towards them.
"My name is Nadim" he told them."Would you play with me?" Nadim asked.
Rama, Karim and Yasmina introduced themselves to Nadim and
told him that they would love to play with him.

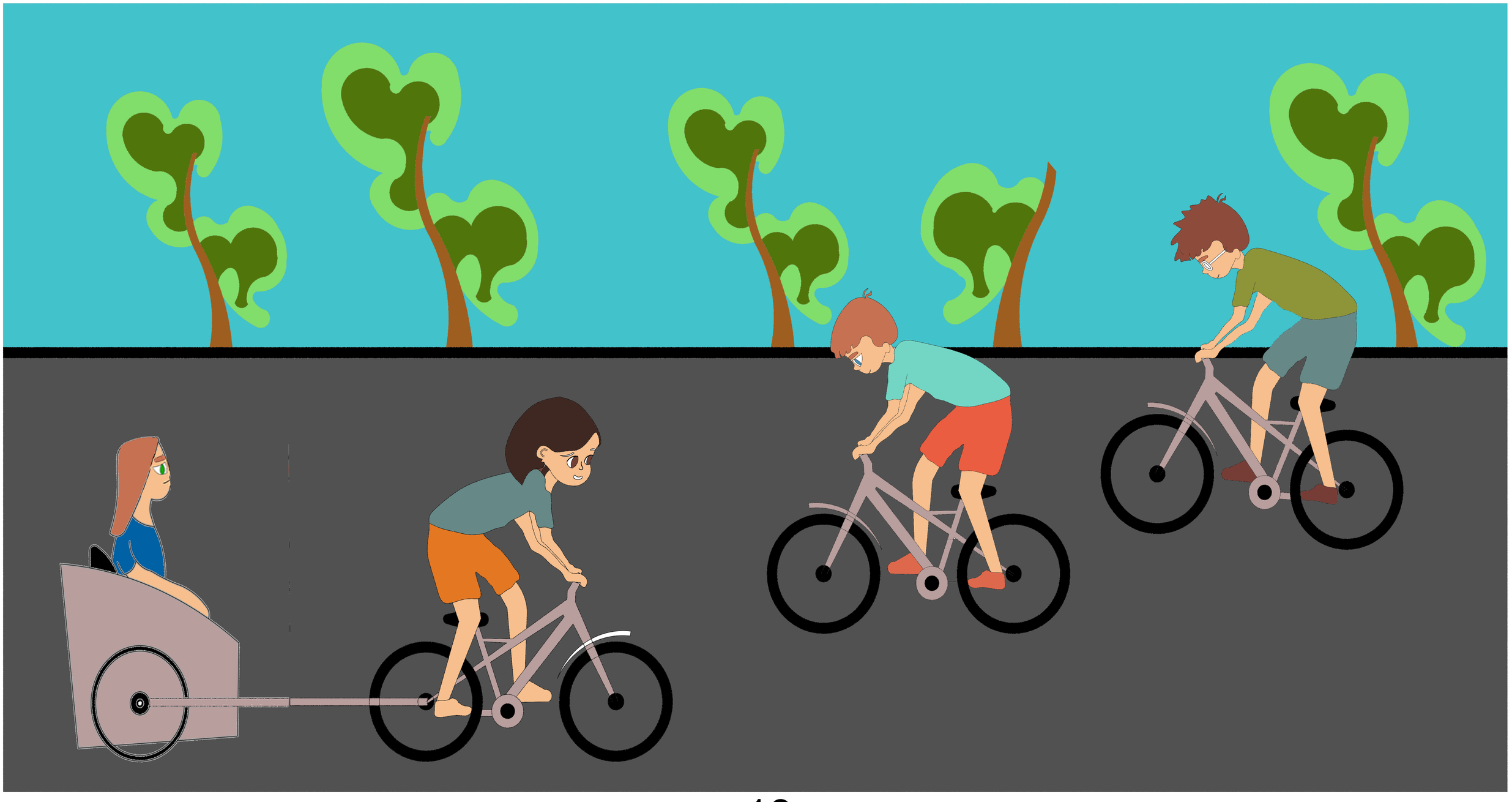
The four children had a blast that afternoon, but soon it was time for them to go home as they had school the next day. They all agreed that on Friday afternoon, they will go to Beirut by Bike and ride bicycles close to the Corniche.



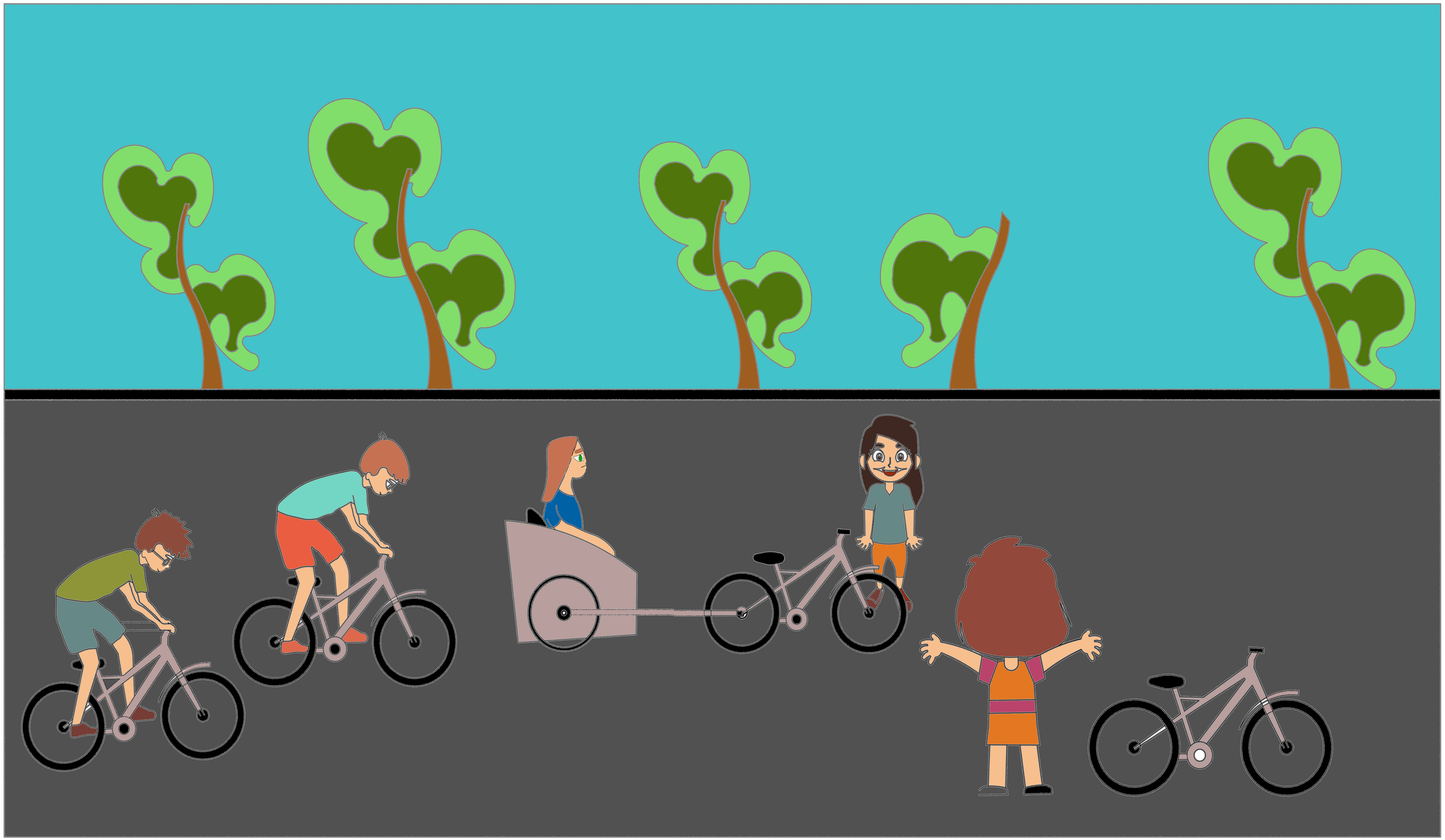
Friday passed by really quickly at school. The kids went home, had their lunch, and enthusiastically ran to their cars so that their parents would take them to Beirut by Bike.



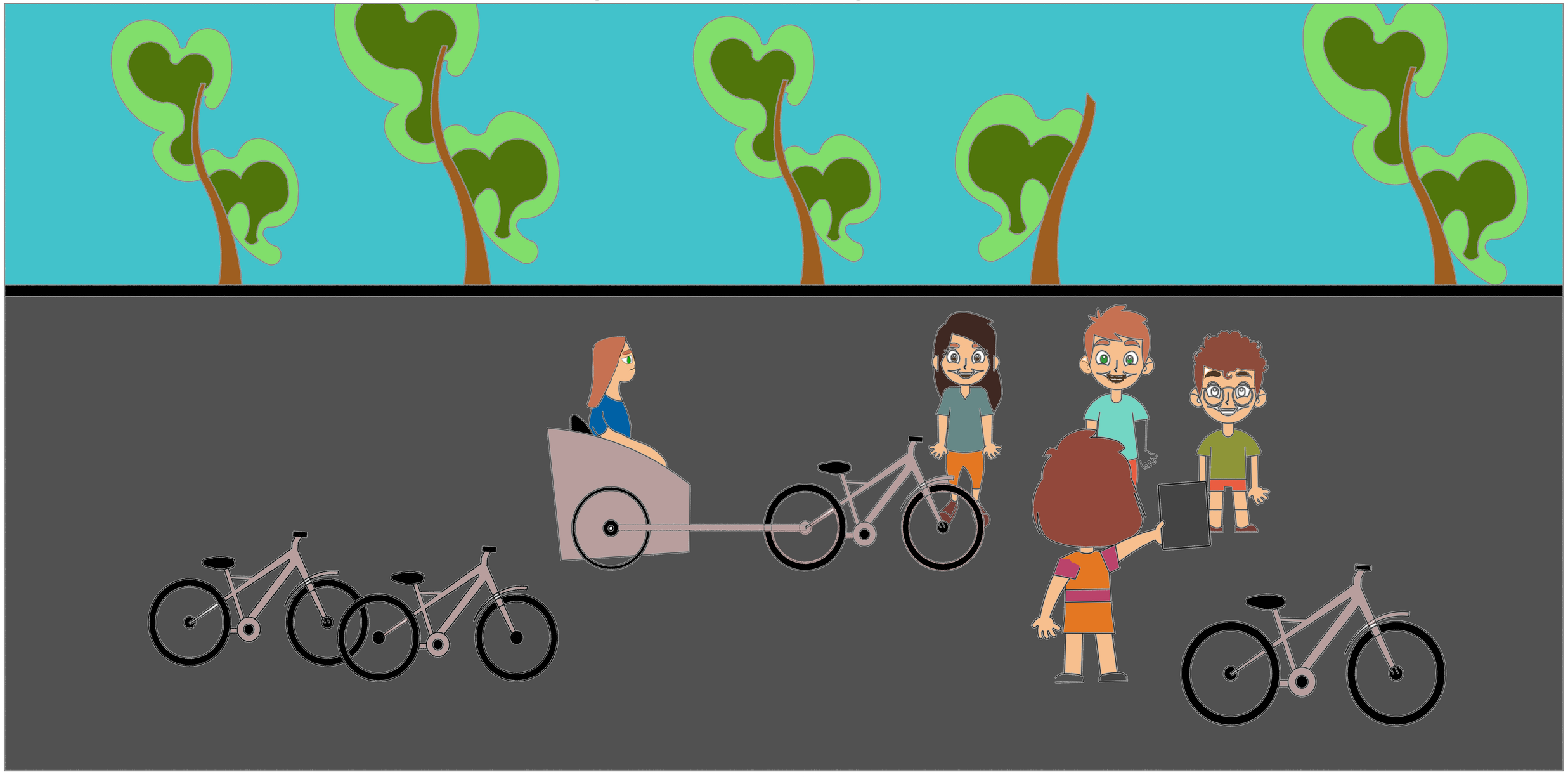
When the kids met, they greeted each other in a big group hug.They got three bikes, one of which has a bench behind the biker for someone to sit on so that Yasmina can enjoy the bike rides too, since she cannot use her legs to drive the bike, and sped off with each other.They all took turns driving the bike yasmina was sitting on.



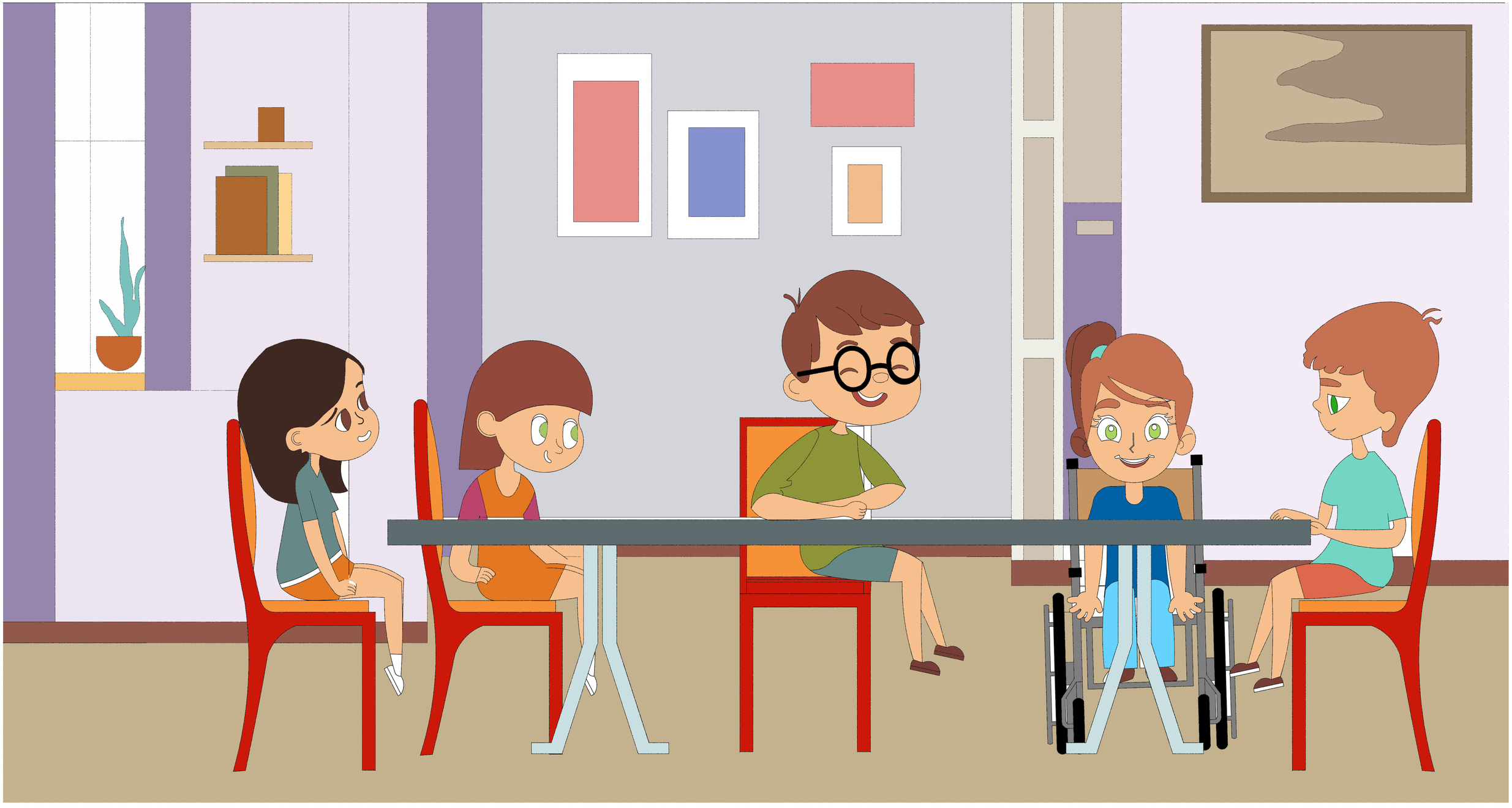
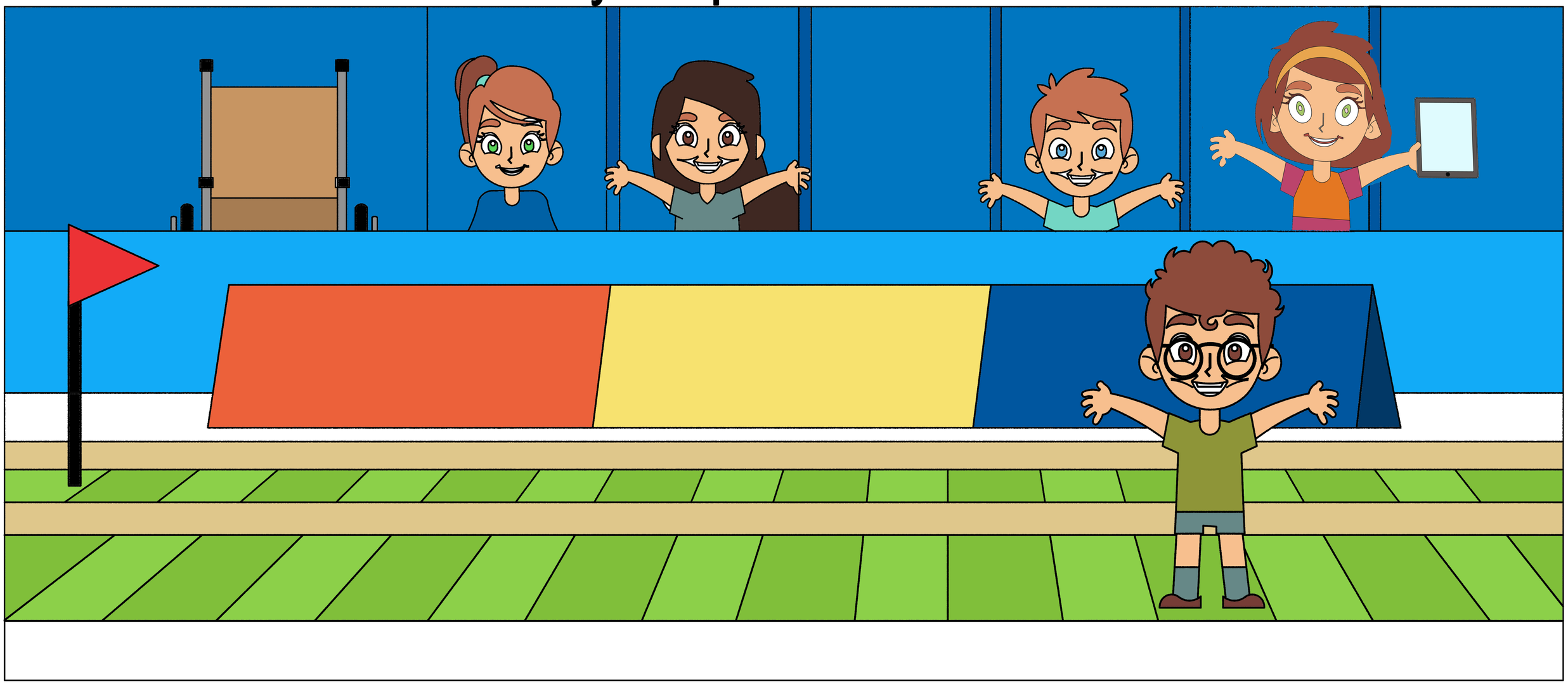
They were having a really fun time, until they almost crashed with another girl driving her bike. The four friends stopped their bikes and asked the girl if she was fine and apologized for almost crashing into her.



The girl went back to her bike and got something that looked like an IPad out of it. She opened it and pressed on it for while. The other children were confused. About a minute later, the Tablet in her hands spoke."Hi, my name is Lara. Don't worry about having almost crashed into me, it's fine," The Tablet read aloud "The Tablet is the way I talk to people, I cannot talk with my mouth like you can."



Rama, Yasmina, Karim, and Nadim, spent time chatting with Lara through her IPad. They really enjoyed the conversation with her and asked her to join them for frozen yogurt in Pinkberry. Lara asked her parents, and they agreed. So Rama, Yasmina, Karim, Nadim, and Lara went to Zeitouna Bay and became closer over frozen yogurt.



During this week, Rama made so many new friends and learned that nothing can get in the way of friendship. Nothing is stronger than the bonds that friends create with each other. Rama, Yasmina, Karim,and Nadim, and Lara became closer than ever and always encouraged each other. They were super proud of Lara when she said her first word, they all went with Yasmina to her physical therapy when she was about to take her first steps, they were really excited while watching Nadim play his first football game, and Rama and Karim always helped each other out in the classroom.