

# Quiet Violet



Gabrielle Nidus

illustrated by Stephanie Dehennin

free spirit  
PUBLISHING®

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finds her  
**VOICE**

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For Boris, Isaac,  
Aaron, Lilabelle, and  
Mom, whose voices  
are an inspiration.

—G.N.

Violet Blandin made it a habit to blend in.

Her voice was a two-inch whisper.

Sometimes she was so quiet, people didn't even notice she was there.





today's lesson:  
Measurement

A teeny tiny  
"yay" slipped  
through  
Violet's lips.

One Monday, Ms. Sunday gathered the class. "This week, we're feeding our minds and our tummies," she announced.

# Dear Families and Caregivers,

It's not always easy being a quiet kid. Our world celebrates individuals who are outspoken—the kids who raise their hands to share in class, volunteer to lead groups, and have no qualms about quickly taking center stage. The voices of outgoing children are often the first ones we hear. However, quiet children have voices that are equally important. While some quiet children prefer the background, that doesn't mean they want



to be alone or go unnoticed. Many quiet kids are successful leaders with peers, and go on to be so in later careers. Just take these famous quiet kids for example: Mahatma Gandhi, Rosa Parks, Bill Gates. Quiet children are not automatically shy or introverted. Some quiet kids get energy and inspiration from others and enjoy being in groups, even if they remain quiet within the crowd. Other quiet kids find their energy and inspiration from within. They may prefer to work alone or may need to take frequent breaks from group work to replenish

their energy. Quiet children, like all children, benefit from learning about their preferred styles of learning and working—and from knowing their voices are valued.

Teaching quiet children the value of their voices doesn't mean “fixing” their quietness. Rather, it means ensuring they know they can be heard when they want or need to be and teaching them strategies for speaking up. So instead of attempting to change quiet children, help them embrace their authentic quiet selves and find their voices.

One way to do this is through nurturing kids' interests and passions. Following a passion can help quiet kids build confidence to express themselves and find their voice. Susan Cain, author of *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking*, says that individuals can find confidence and overcome inhibitions by speaking about something that excites them. When people are passionate about their ideas and thoughts, the need to communicate that passion overcomes inhibitions they might have. Helping children find their voices means supporting them in developing their interests and helping them see how the world needs their voices, be they loud or quiet.



## More Ideas to Help Quiet Kids Find Their Voices

**Check in.** Just because a child is quiet doesn't mean they don't want to communicate with you. While it is important to check in with all children regularly, it can be especially important and meaningful for quiet kids, who may be less likely to initiate conversation. Ask them how they are feeling, and give them time and space to respond.

**Allow various methods of communication.** Not all children want to express themselves verbally or in front of large groups. Quiet children may prefer to communicate through art, music, or even cooking. Allowing various methods of communication opens up new avenues for authentic communication.

**Share your passions.** Talk with children about your own passions and interests. How did you find your voice? Share your failures as well as your successes. And invite children to join you in exploring the things you love to do.

**Use role-play.** Talk through scenarios where a child might need to use their voice to express feelings or beliefs, and help them practice speaking up. What words might they say? How might their voice sound?

**Grow connections.** Help quiet children form connections with others. At home, you can organize playdates, help them join clubs or other community groups to explore interests, or volunteer together. In the classroom, you can help by building community among students. A sense of belonging and safety can boost children's confidence and help them be more comfortable sharing their voices with others.

## Talking About Violet's Story

Sometimes talking about a book or how a character in a story is feeling can be a vehicle for kids to talk about their own lives and feelings. You can use Violet's story as a springboard for discussing the challenges of being heard for both introverts and extroverts. Asking questions about Violet can reveal quite a bit about a child's emerging voice. Try these to start.



1. Why doesn't Violet say anything to her team in the beginning when they make mistakes with the recipes?
2. Why do you think Violet alerts the group to the mistake during the cookie recipe?
3. How does Violet's team react when she stops Jayden from adding too much salt to their cookies? How do you think they would describe Violet before this moment? What about after it?
4. Have you ever felt unnoticed or that your voice was not being heard? Describe the situation. How did you feel? What did you do?
5. Violet finds her voice and confidence with cookie-making. What makes you feel confident?

Every child, whether quiet or outgoing, has a voice that deserves recognition and encouragement. Finding ways for children to express themselves supports them in navigating the world with authenticity and confidence.