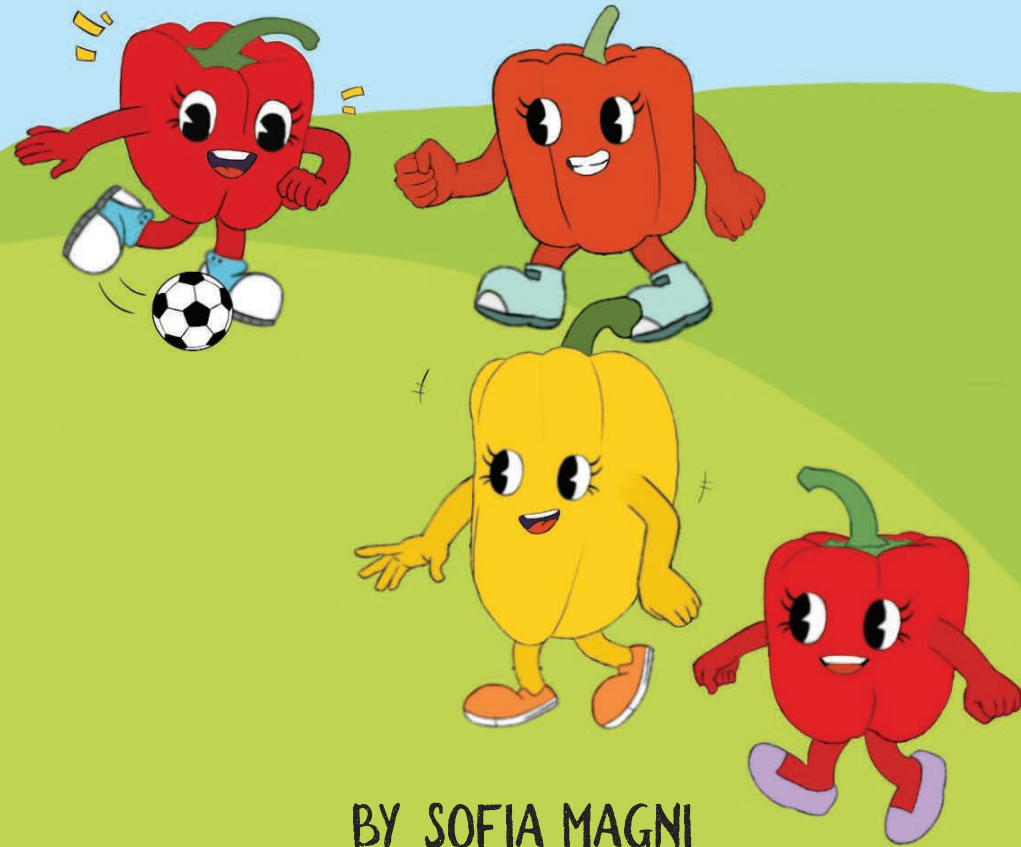


COLORS DON'T MATTER



BY SOFIA MAGNI

- 4th grade -

SACRED HEART SCHOOL

Kevin Crivelli, Teacher
Stanislaus County

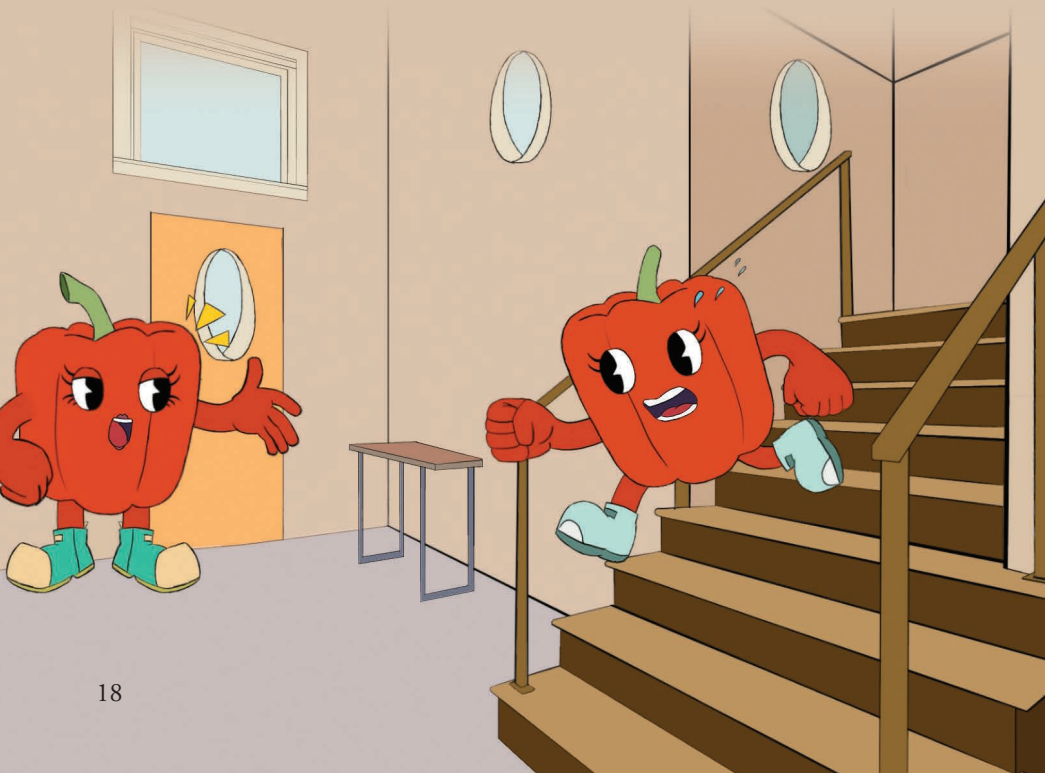
Illustrated by Woodland High School

In Riverside, California, a red bell pepper named Isabella was peacefully sleeping when her alarm went off.

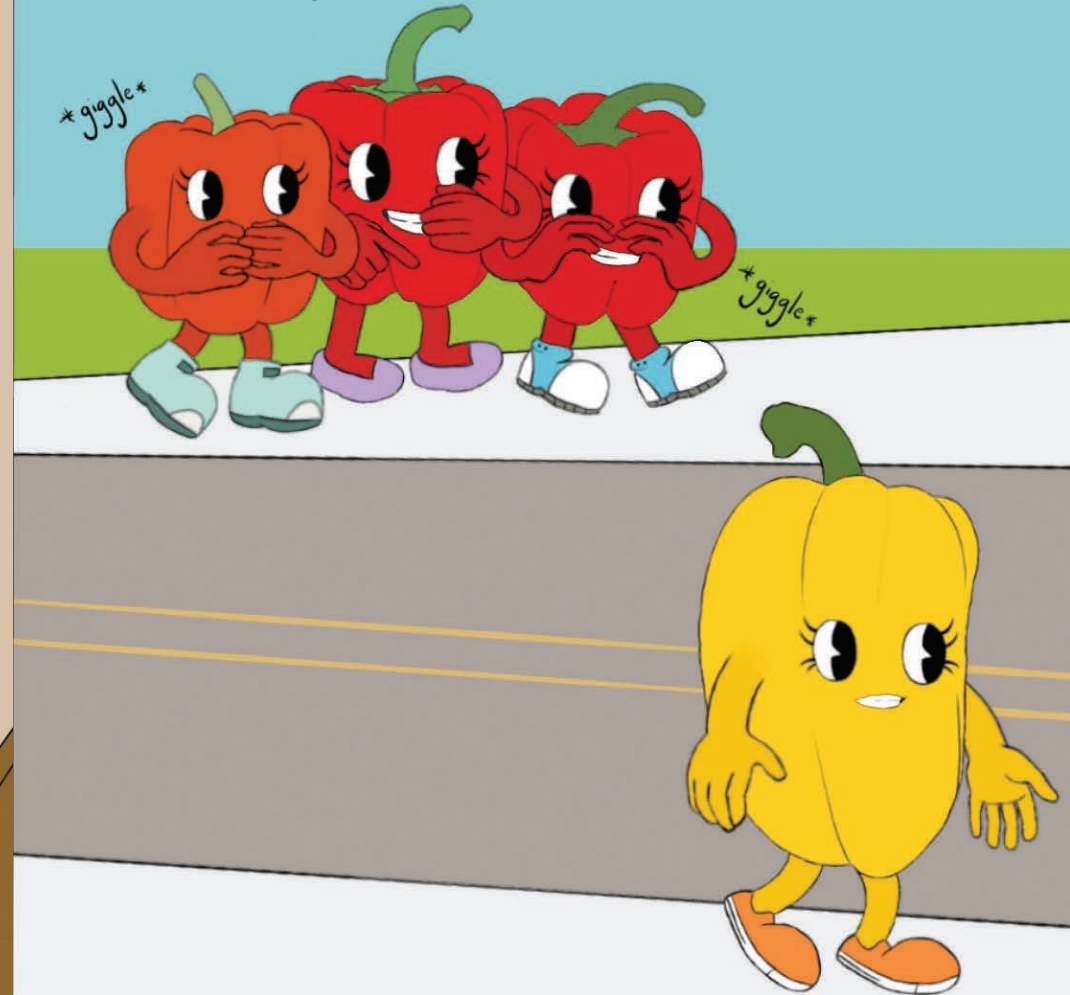
She sat up and screamed, "I better get ready for school." She hurried downstairs where her parents were waiting for her.

Her mom said, "Hurry! Your friends are waiting for you."

"Okay."



As Isabella and her friends were walking to school, they giggled when they saw a yellow bell pepper across the street. When Isabella sat in her first period class, an unexpected girl walked in. She was the yellow pepper she had seen while walking to school.



You may not know, but different-colored bell peppers cannot hang out together. However, as soon as Isabella saw this girl, she wanted to talk to her.

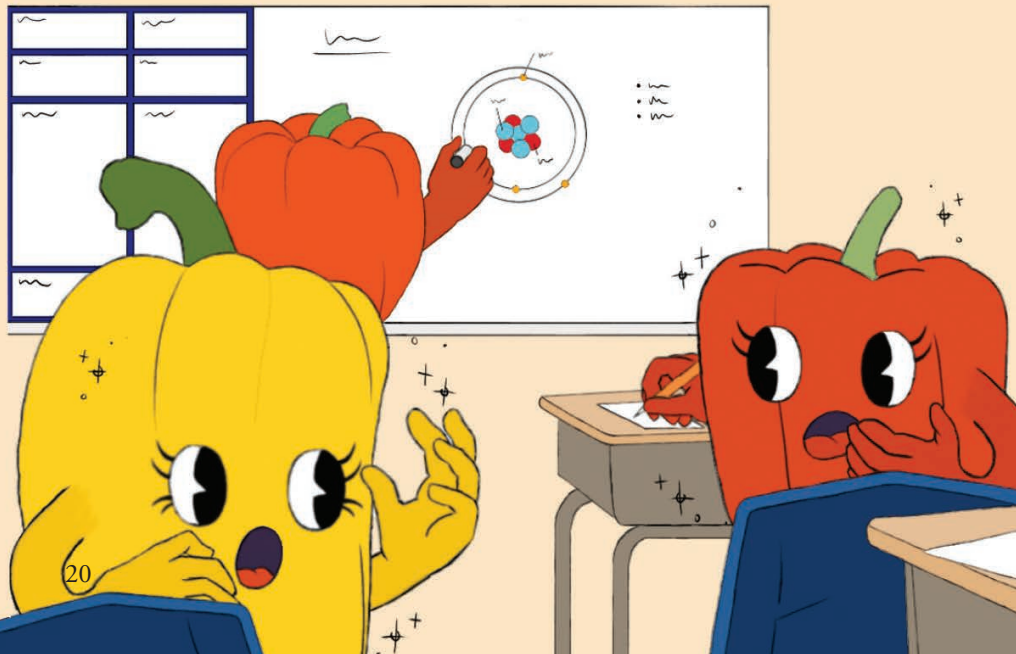
Isabella really went against the rule and asked the yellow bell pepper her name.

“My name is Kennedy,” she whispered.

Isabella really wanted to talk to Kennedy some more, but she knew better than to talk during science class. Miss Maggie reminded us that on these hot days, we need to be careful.

She said, “Bell peppers are susceptible to sunscald, which occurs when ripening fruit is not adequately shaded by leaf cover.”

I made sure to take notes because I don’t want my beautiful red skin to turn ugly from the sun.



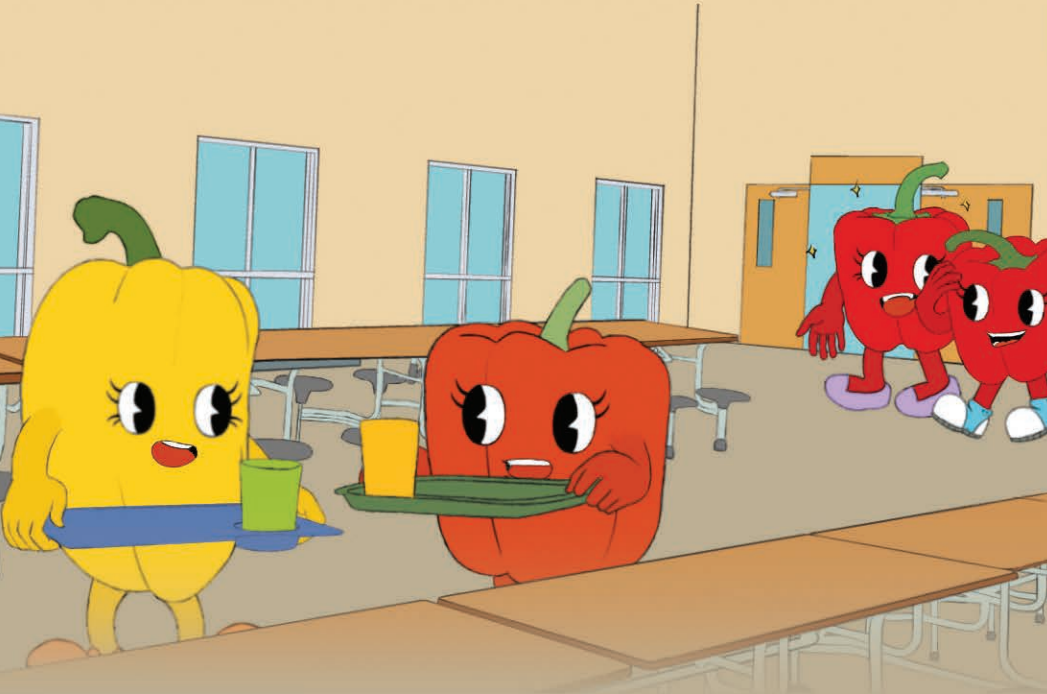
In her second period history class, Isabella saw Kennedy again. She really wanted to talk to her, but was worried that her friends would see her talking to a yellow pepper. In history, Isabella took more notes. Mr. Gregory always talked a lot and expected us to write everything he said. Today, we wrote about the explorers.

Bell peppers were carried throughout the world by Spanish and Portuguese explorers. The misleading name “pepper” was given by Europeans when Christopher Columbus brought the plant back to Europe.



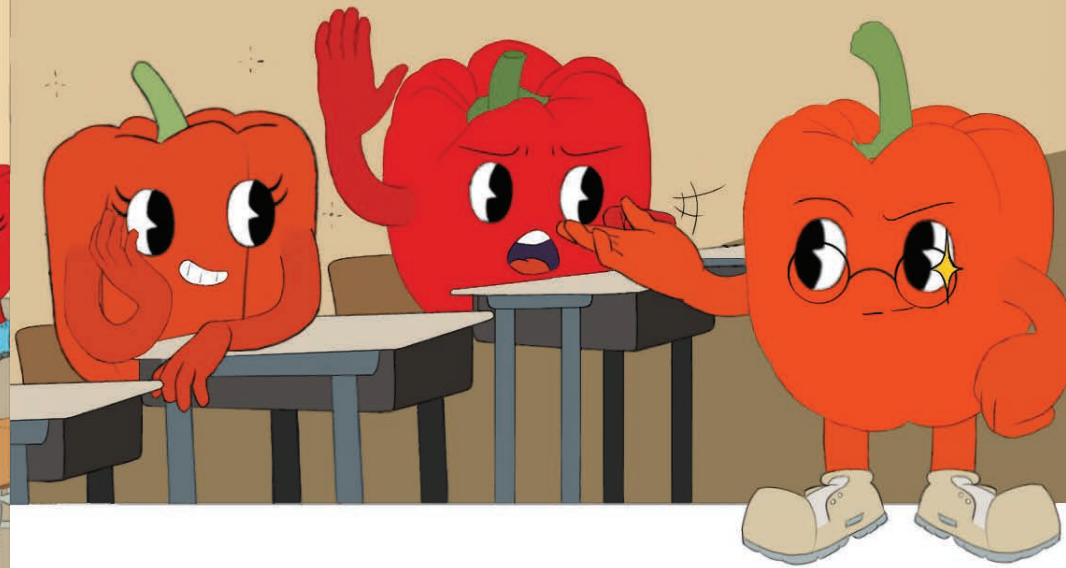
After history, the day started to go by quicker, except for the incident at lunch. Isabella saw Kennedy in the cafeteria and said, "Let's talk after school. Meet at Star Bush. No one can see us."

As she finished saying this, Isabella saw her friends, so she said, "Gotta go," and ran off.



In her last class, Mr. Krivelli asked if everyone was ready to share facts for the research paper they were writing. Of course, Johnny just blurted out his fact.

"There are nearly 200 different varieties of bell peppers grown throughout California for both fresh market and processing."



Mr. Krivelli said, "Excuuuusse me!" Do you need five minutes just to have the Johnny Rooney show? Or, may we continue working without your interruption?"

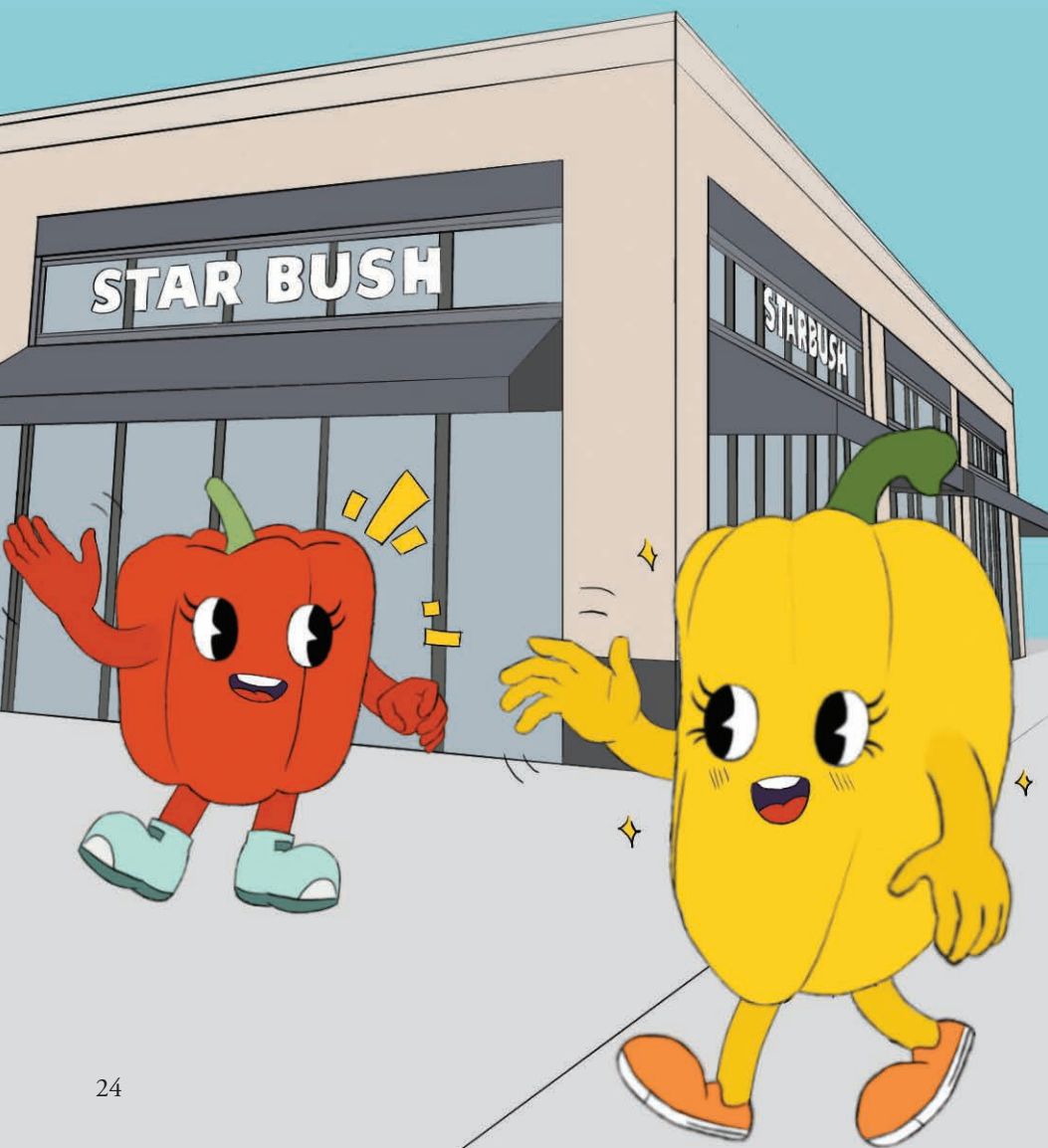
Even though Mr. Krivelli always makes me laugh, I was anxious to leave so I could talk to Kennedy.

Finally, the bell rang. I went to Star Bush right away. I waited five minutes, but I was patient because I wanted to talk to Kennedy so badly. When she arrived, I asked her if she'd like to hang out with me.

She said, "We're not allowed to hang out with other colors, but I really want to hang out with you."

I said, "Yes! Let's hang out, but we have to keep it a secret."

She said, "Yes! Let's go to your field."

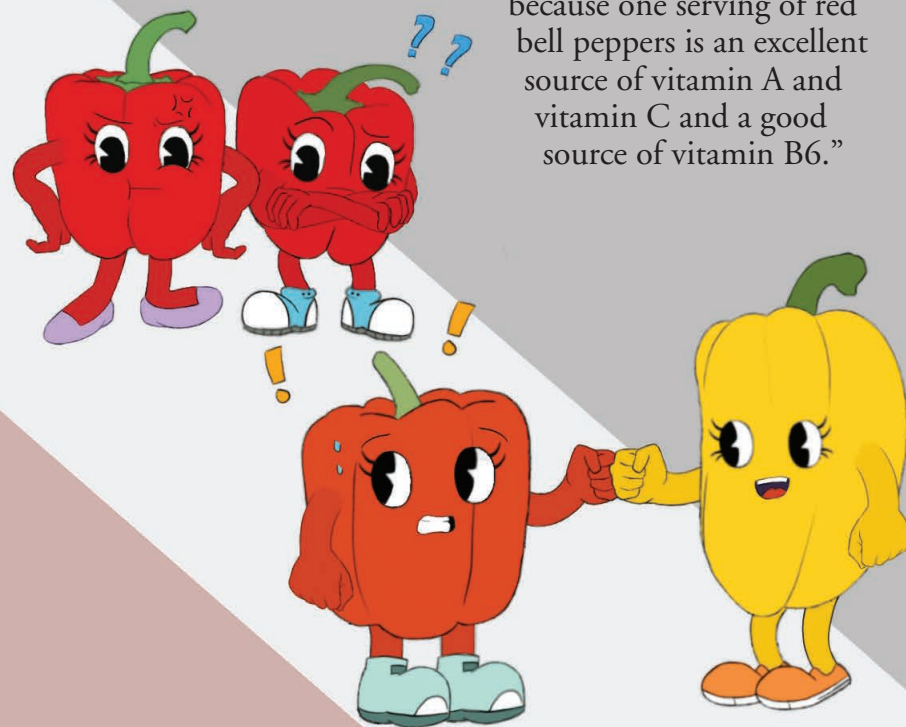


We stem-bumped and both said, "Mission accomplished!" But, when we turned around, we knew we spoke too soon. We saw my friends walking toward us.

They asked, "Why are you hanging out with this yellow pepper?"

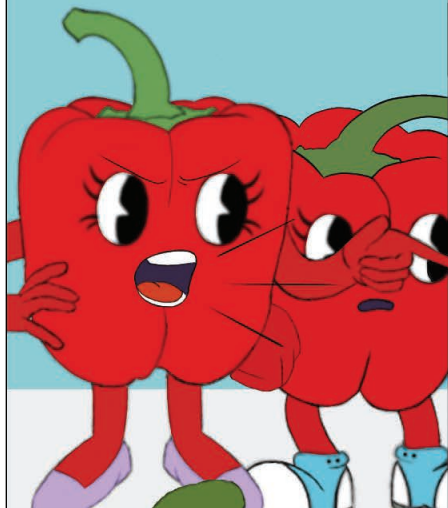
I said, "She's nice."

My friend Mia explained in a sassy voice, "You know red bell peppers are better than yellow because one serving of red bell peppers is an excellent source of vitamin A and vitamin C and a good source of vitamin B6."



Kennedy quickly said back, "You're ridiculous! Don't you know that all bell peppers are an excellent source of dietary fiber and provide small amounts of several other vitamins and minerals?"

"No, I didn't. Stop trying to be a smart aleck," Mia said.

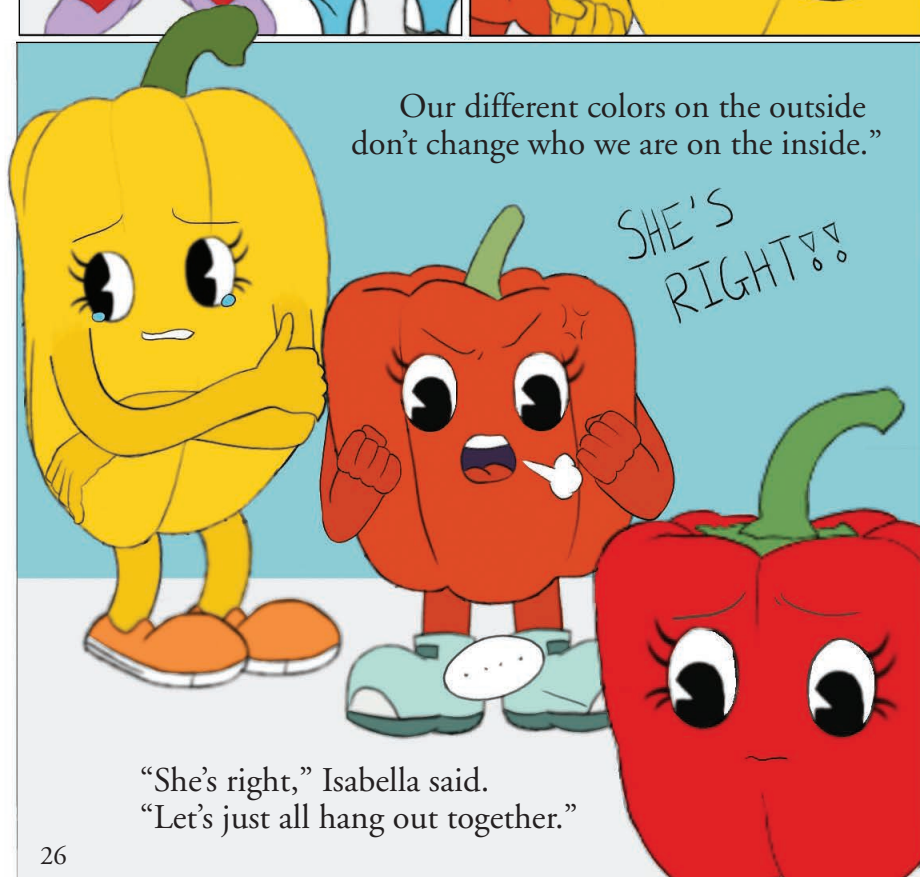


"I'm not. I just want to hang out with your friend Isabella. We can all hang out together because we have more in common than you think."



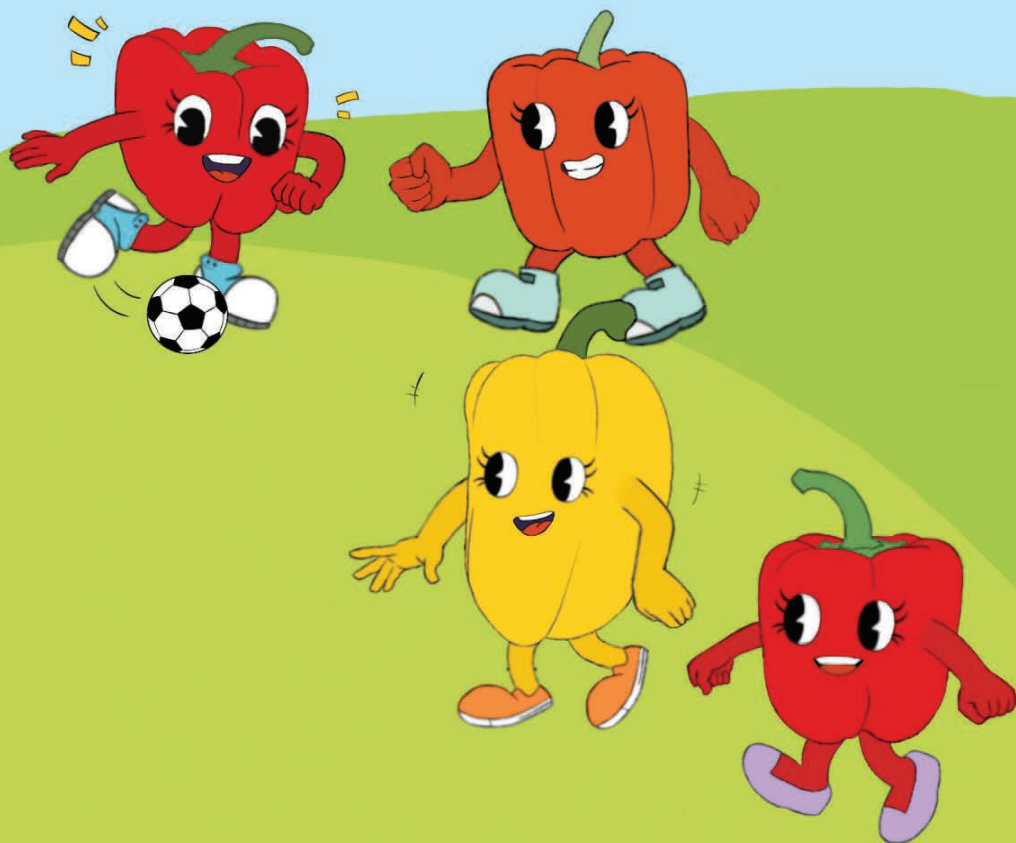
"Our different colors on the outside don't change who we are on the inside."

SHE'S RIGHT!!



"She's right," Isabella said.
"Let's just all hang out together."

The girls decided Kennedy was right, so they all went to Isabella's field and played together. They continued to play together often and other bell peppers living around them also learned that colors don't matter because anyone can be a good friend.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR:



SOFIA MAGNI, AGE 9

The inspiration for Sofia's story came from studying Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and the importance of being kind. Her writing process began with imagining different types of story ideas and researching agricultural information at LearnAboutAg.org.

She put twists on the names of her teacher, family, and friends and included some funny stories that really did happen in her class. Sofia really enjoyed learning about agriculture, especially bell peppers, while writing her story!

She hopes that readers will also enjoy learning about agriculture. Sofia is looking forward to becoming a published author and cannot wait to see her story in a book!

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR:



MAYA ZENDEJAS

WOODLAND HIGH SCHOOL | ALYSSA TAKAHASHI, ART TEACHER

Before reading the story, all that Maya knew about the story was that it focused on bell peppers. After reading *Colors Don't Matter*, she learned a lot more about bell peppers and thought the story was very creative with a strong message behind it. She started by creating an illustration plan, researching bell peppers, and deciding how the illustrations would break up the story. Next, she sketched the illustrations and then added color to bring them to life. Maya used digital applications to create the illustrations. Maya's favorite part about the illustration process was creating the characters and she really enjoyed illustrating the story.