

# Ish

Peter H. Reynolds  
2004  
Cambridge, MA: Candlewick Press

## LOYALTY

U.S.A.

Realistic Fiction

Reading Time: 4 minutes

### CONCEPTS

Loyalty  
Respect  
Encouragement

### SUMMARY

A young boy's joy in drawing quickly changes to frustration when his older brother ridicules his artwork. Then his younger sister, Marisol, helps Ramon reassess his artwork and see the value in being creative rather than getting things "just right." Thanks to Marisol's loyal support, Ramon's confidence and joy are restored. The author's watercolor, ink, and tea illustrations bring out the humor, warmth, and sensitivity of the story.

### OBJECTIVE

The student will be able to identify, define, and discuss loyalty, respect, and encouragement as they apply to the story and will explore ways of showing these attributes to others.

## Classroom Connections & Additional Activities

1. In small groups, role play the story with props such as pencils, markers, crayons, watercolor sets, paint brushes, tape, and crumpled sheets of paper. **LA**
2. Together write "Ish" poems or sound poems. List two-syllable words from the story such as savor, crumple, or flower. Read Ramon's poem, "Ponder," and follow his pattern with one of the list words. Write your own "ish" poems\* to post with your "Ish" drawings. (Activity #2) **LA**
3. Read *The Dot*, by Peter H. Reynolds. Compare the two stories on a large Venn diagram. **LA**
4. The author used tea to color some of his illustrations. Paint pictures with natural colors such as tea, instant coffee in water, juice from berries, or other natural dyes. (Keyword: natural Easter egg dyes) **ART**
5. With a parent or school volunteer, find images of Impressionist or post-Impressionist prints such as Picasso's "Vase With Flowers." (Keyword: Picasso, vase flowers) **ART**
6. Visit an art museum to look at famous art of Impressionists. If possible, take a tour with a docent. **ART**
7. Play and sing the song, "Sisters and Brothers" from the tape or CD *Free to Be You and Me* by Marlo Thomas and Friends. **MUSIC**

\* Visit [www.heartwoodethics.org](http://www.heartwoodethics.org) and choose Teaching Heartwood, Activities, Primary, for "Charlie Helps his Brother" illustrated story and "Ish Poem" instructions.

# After the Story

Ish

## DISCUSSION

1. Ramon loves to draw. What do you enjoy so much you would like to do it anytime?
2. Why does Ramon decide to stop drawing? What would you say to Ramon's brother, Leon? How do you feel when someone makes fun of something you make or do?
3. How is Marisol loyal to her brother? What would you say to Ramon to encourage him to keep drawing? Who encourages you?
4. How is Marisol respectful of Ramon's "ish-art"? What does it mean to see things "...in a whole new way"?
5. How do you think Ramon will treat Marisol when she feels discouraged? How do you show loyalty to your sisters, brothers, or other family members? Why is it important to be loyal to our families?

## ACTIVITIES

1. Locate the U.S.A. on the world map. Find your state and name the states it borders.
2. Make your own "Ish" drawings of family loyalty. Together make a list of ways to show loyalty in families. Choose from the list, draw your impressions, and color your drawing with markers, crayon, or paint. Post on a "Family-ish" bulletin board. Compliment each other's artwork.
3. Together read the illustrated story, "Charlie Helps His Brother."\* List ways you show loyalty to others.
4. Talk about the difference between put-downs and "lift-ups." Together list "lift-ups," such as "Good job!" and "You can do it!" For one week try giving encouraging messages to classmates daily. Meet to talk about the effects of this experiment.

## WRAP-UP

1. Draw a picture of someone you are loyal to who is loyal to you. Write his or her name on your drawing with help from your teacher or a school volunteer. Share with the class.
2. Together discuss reasons why art and creativity are important. Draw a picture of yourself creating something, and include someone encouraging you.

## EXTENSION

1. Complete Home Connection pages and take home to share with families.
2. Retell the story at home. With your family, create a "No Put-Downs" policy.

## VOCABULARY

haunted  
crumple  
sneer

snap  
gallery  
energized

inspire  
capture  
savor