

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## The Tale of Max and the Volcano Inside

Max was a bright and curious fourth grader who loved dinosaurs, video games, and peanut butter sandwiches. But Max had one little problem: he had a volcano inside him. It wasn't a real volcano, of course, but whenever Max got really mad, he could feel it rumbling and ready to explode.

One day, during recess, Max was building a tall block tower with his best friend, Emma. Just as they were putting on the final block, their classmate Liam rushed over, tripped, and-CRASH!-the tower tumbled down.

Max's cheeks turned red. The volcano started to rumble. "Why did you do that?!" he shouted at Liam.

Liam looked startled. "I didn't mean to. It was an accident," he said, but Max's volcano was ready to blow.

Emma tapped Max's shoulder. "Hey, Max, remember what Ms. Lopez taught us about handling our anger? The ABCs?"

Max stopped and frowned. "What ABCs?"

"A is for 'Ask yourself what you're feeling.' B is for 'Breathe.' And C is for 'Choose what to do next,'" Emma explained, mimicking their teacher's calm voice.

Max grumbled. He didn't want to think about the ABCs right now. He just wanted to yell! But then he looked at Liam, who seemed really sorry.

"Fine," Max muttered. He closed his eyes and asked himself, What am I feeling? He realized he wasn't just mad-he was sad that their tower was gone.

Next, he took three big breaths. "One...two...three..." He felt the rumbling inside him calm down, just a little.

Finally, Max thought about what to do next. He could yell and stomp off, but that wouldn't fix the tower. Or he could ask Liam to help rebuild it. Max made his choice.

"Hey, Liam, want to help us rebuild it?" he asked.

Liam's face brightened. "Really? Sure!" Together, the three of them started stacking the blocks again. This time, they built an even bigger tower, one with a secret tunnel at the bottom and a flag on top.

When Ms. Lopez came by, Max told her all about how he stopped his volcano from erupting. She gave him a big thumbs-up and said, "Way to go, Max! You're mastering the ABCs of anger."

From then on, whenever Max felt his volcano rumble, he remembered to ask, breathe, and choose. And while he still got mad sometimes-after all, everyone does-he learned that staying calm helped him feel a lot better in the end.

