

Mia and the Lost Lunchbox



Mia and the Lost Lunchbox

Sometimes a small problem can feel very big.

by

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Preface

Sometimes a small problem can feel very big.

For Mia, that happens when her special lunchbox suddenly goes missing at school. At first, she feels worried and wants to find it right away. But Mia soon discovers that solving a problem takes more than rushing around and hoping for an answer.

With the help of her **Good Idea Book**, her teacher, and her classmates, Mia learns to slow down, think carefully, ask questions, and follow clues. Along the way, she also learns that mistakes can happen, asking for help is a smart choice, and kindness can make difficult situations easier to solve.

Mia and the Lost Lunchbox is a story about problem-solving, patience, responsibility, and understanding others. It reminds young readers that they do not have to solve every problem at once—or solve every problem alone.

Mia's favorite words are:

“Let’s make a plan—and try one small step.”

As you read Mia’s adventure, think about the problems you have solved and the people who have helped you along the way.

Sometimes one small step can lead to a very good idea.

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With her lunchbox safely returned, Mia reflects on everything she learned. She creates a new routine and discovers that responsibility, kindness, and small steps can help solve everyday problems.

Chapter 1:

Where Is My Lunchbox?



Chapter 1: Where Is My Lunchbox?

Mia woke up smiling.

Today would be a good day.

She got dressed and picked up the small yellow notebook from her desk.

Across the front were the words:

MIA'S GOOD IDEA BOOK

Mia used the notebook whenever she had a question, a problem, or an idea. Sometimes she made lists. Sometimes she drew pictures.

And sometimes her plans did not work.

That was okay.

Mia liked trying again.

She slipped the Good Idea Book into her backpack and hurried downstairs.

Her mom was packing lunch.

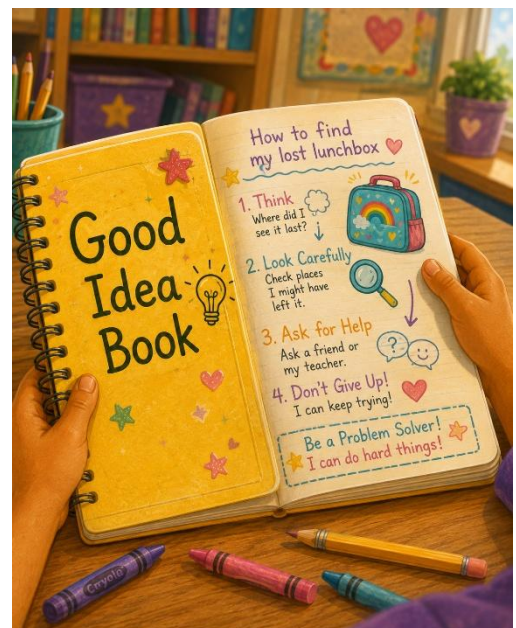
Mia's bright blue-and-pink lunchbox sat on the counter. A colorful rainbow decorated the front.

Mia loved it because it had been a special gift from her family.

"Don't forget your lunchbox," Mom said.

"I won't!" Mia promised.

She picked it up and headed for school.



The classroom was busy when Mia arrived.

Children put away backpacks and talked with friends.

Mia placed her backpack near her cubby.

Then her teacher handed her a note.

“Mia, could you please take this to the school office?”

“Sure!”

Mia carried the note down the hallway.

On her way back, she stopped near the library.

A colorful book with a giant green frog was on display.

“I want to read that someday,” Mia whispered.

Then she hurried back to class.

The morning passed quickly.

The class read stories, practiced spelling, and worked on writing.

Soon, the teacher announced, “It’s lunchtime!”

Mia smiled.

She was hungry.

She walked to her backpack and opened it.

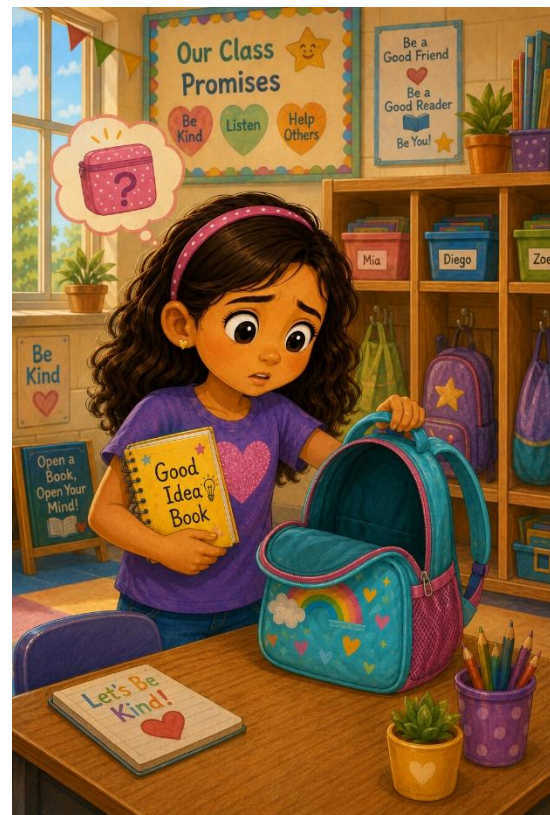
Her Good Idea Book was there.

Her reading folder was there.

Her pencil case was there.

But—

Mia stopped.



Her lunchbox was gone.

She looked again.

Nothing.

She checked under her desk.

Nothing.

She checked her cubby.

Still nothing.

“Where is it?” Mia whispered.

She searched her backpack again.

No lunchbox.

Mia began to worry.

The lunchbox was special.

What if she had lost it?

What if she never found it?

“Mia?” her teacher asked. “Is something wrong?”

“My lunchbox is missing.”

Together, they checked Mia’s backpack, desk, and cubby.

It was nowhere to be found.

“I don’t understand,” Mia said. “I had it this morning.”

Her teacher nodded.

“That gives us a place to start.”

Mia looked confused.

“A place to start?”



When something goes wrong,” her teacher explained, “the first thing we can do is stay calm and think.”

Mia took a slow breath.

She wanted to run through the school looking everywhere.

But that would probably make things harder.

Then she remembered something.

“My Good Idea Book!”

Mia pulled out the yellow notebook and opened to a clean page.

At the top she wrote:

THE LOST LUNCHBOX

She thought about her morning.

She remembered bringing the lunchbox to school.

She remembered going to the office.

She remembered stopping near the library.

Those were places she could check.

The school suddenly did not seem quite so big.

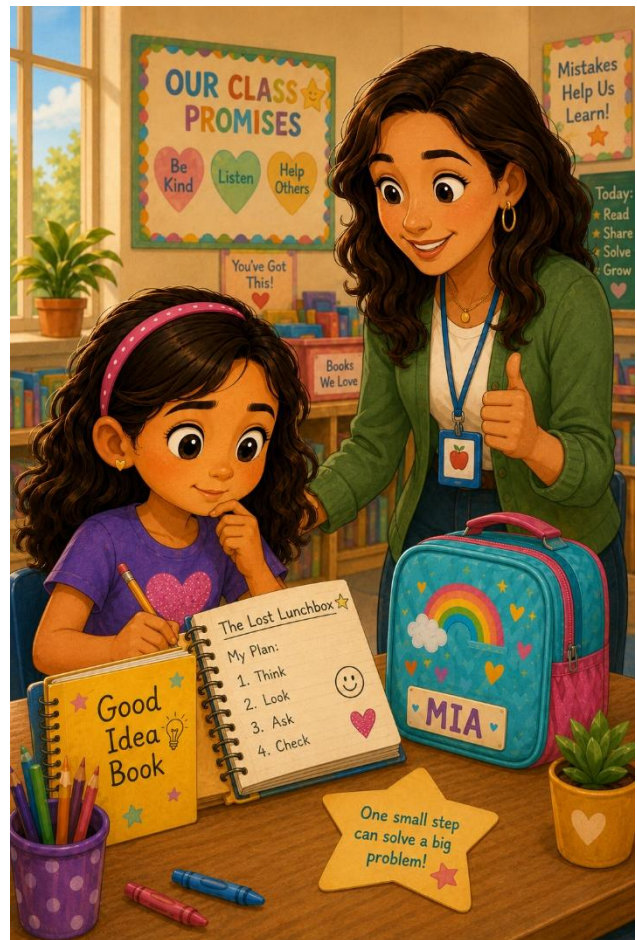
Mia picked up her pencil.

She still did not know where the lunchbox was.

But she knew what she could do next.

She smiled and said her favorite words:

“Let’s make a plan—and try one small step.”



Her teacher smiled.

“That sounds like a good place to begin.”

Mia wrote one big word in her notebook:

PLAN

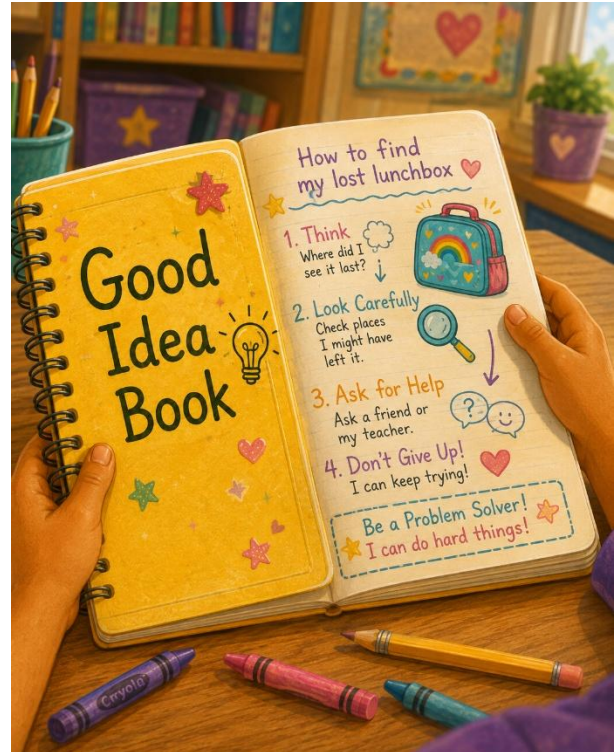
Then she began to think.

Her lunchbox was still missing.

But Mia was no longer panicking.

She had a problem.

And problems could be solved one small step at a time.



What Mia Learned

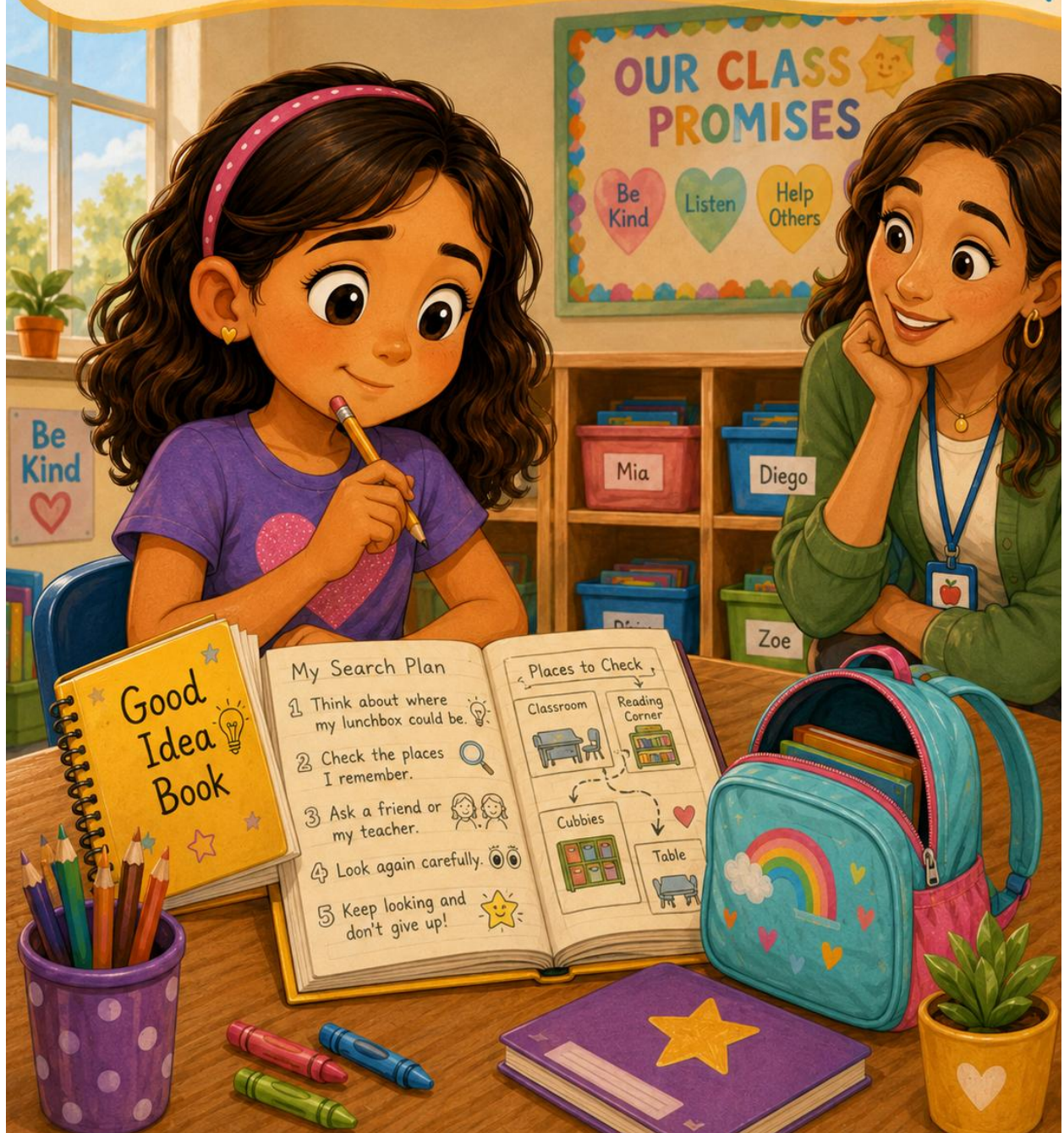
When something goes wrong, getting upset can make the problem feel even bigger.

Sometimes the best first step is simple:

Stop. Stay calm. Think about what to do next.

Chapter 2:

Mia Makes a Search Plan



Chapter 2: Mia Makes a Search Plan

Mia sat at her desk with her **Good Idea Book** open.

At the top of the page she had written:

THE LOST LUNCHBOX

Under it, she wrote:

PLAN

“I need a search plan,” Mia said.

Her teacher nodded. “That sounds like a smart idea.”

Mia thought carefully.

Then she wrote:

- 1. Check the classroom.**
- 2. Retrace my steps.**
- 3. Ask people if they saw my lunchbox.**

Mia smiled.

Three steps seemed much easier than searching the whole school at once.

“I’ll start with step one.”



Mia checked under her desk.

Nothing.

She looked near the reading corner.

Nothing.

She checked the shelves, the classroom door, and her cubby.

Still no lunchbox.

Mia frowned.

“Step one didn’t work.”

Her teacher smiled gently.

“That’s okay. What comes next?”

Mia looked at her notebook.

“Retrace my steps.”

She thought about her morning.

First, she came into the classroom.

Then she took a note to the school office.

On the way back, she stopped near the library.

Mia drew a tiny map in her Good Idea Book.

“Classroom, office, library,” she said.

Her teacher looked at the page.

“You remembered a lot.”



Together, they walked into the hallway.

Mia checked near the wall.

She looked beside the drinking fountain.

She searched near the library door.

No lunchbox.

Mia crossed her arms.

“This is taking forever.”

Her teacher stopped beside her.

“Some problems take more than one try.”

“But I made a plan,” Mia said.

“You did.”

“And it still isn’t working.”

Her teacher smiled.

“A good plan does not always solve the problem right away. Sometimes it simply tells you what to try next.”

Mia thought about that.

She had learned where the lunchbox was **not**.

That was still useful.



Back in the classroom, Mia looked at step three.

Ask people if they saw my lunchbox.

She asked one student.

“I don’t remember,” the student said.

She asked another.

“I’m not sure.”

Mia sighed.

“This plan isn’t working either.”

She felt herself getting impatient.

Then she remembered what she had already learned.

Stay calm.

Mia took a slow breath.

“What should I do now?” she wondered.

Her teacher pointed to the Good Idea Book.

“What happens when one idea doesn’t work?”

Mia knew the answer.

“You try another.”

“Exactly.”

Mia picked up her pencil.

Under her plan, she wrote:

DON'T GIVE UP TOO FAST.

Then she smiled.

“I’ll keep asking.”



Mia opened to a clean page and wrote:

What do I know?

Underneath she added:

My lunchbox is not in the classroom.

It is not near the library door.

I had it when I came to school.

Mia looked at the three facts.

“They’re clues,” she said.

Her teacher nodded.

“And clues can help you get closer to an answer.”

Mia looked around at her classmates.

Someone might remember seeing the lunchbox.

She was not finished yet.

Mia picked up her pencil and said:

“Let’s make a plan—and try one small step.”

This time she understood something new.

Sometimes one small step was not enough.

Sometimes you had to take another.

And another.

Until you found the answer.

What Mia Learned

A good plan does not always work right away.

Solving a problem can take **patience, careful thinking, and more than one try.**

When the first idea does not work:

Stay calm. Keep thinking. Try another small step.



Chapter 3: Following the Clues



Chapter 3: Following the Clues

Mia opened her **Good Idea Book**.

Her lunchbox was still missing, but now she had a few facts:

It is not in the classroom.

It is not near the library door.

I had it when I came to school.

Mia looked at the last step in her search plan:

Ask people if they saw my lunchbox.

“I’m going to keep asking,” she said.

Her teacher smiled. “Good idea.”



Mia walked over to her friend Elena.

“Do you remember seeing my lunchbox this morning?”

Elena thought for a moment.

“I think you had it when you came into school.”

Mia’s eyes widened.

“You do?”

Elena nodded.

Mia hurried back to her notebook and wrote:

CLUE #1: I had my lunchbox when I arrived at school.

“That means I didn’t leave it at home!” Mia said.

“One clue already,” her teacher said.

Mia smiled.

She was getting somewhere.

Mia asked another classmate.

“I remember seeing you near the library,” the student said.

“The library?” Mia asked.

“Yes. You were looking at the books by the door.”

Mia remembered the book with the giant green frog.

“Did I have my lunchbox?”

“I think so.”

Mia quickly wrote:

CLUE #2: I may have had my lunchbox near the library.



She studied the words.

“If I had it there, then I must have lost it later.”

“Maybe,” her teacher said. “What else happened that morning?”

Mia thought.

Then she remembered.

“The office!”

She had taken a note there for her teacher.

“Can we ask someone in the office?”

“Yes,” her teacher said.

Mia carried her Good Idea Book down the hallway.

At the school office, an adult greeted her.

“I lost my lunchbox,” Mia explained.
“Do you remember seeing me with it this morning?”

The adult thought carefully.

“I remember you bringing a note. I think you were carrying something else too.”

Mia smiled.

“That might have been my lunchbox!”

She wrote:

CLUE #3: I may have had my lunchbox at the office.

Three clues!

The lunchbox was still missing, but Mia felt less worried.



On the way back, Mia looked at her notes.

“First I came to school. Then I went to the office. Then I stopped near the library.”

“You’re retracing your steps,” her teacher said.

“Retracing my steps,” Mia repeated.

She drew a tiny map in her notebook:

Classroom → Office → Library → Classroom

Mia looked at the map.

The school did not seem so big anymore.

The clues were making the search smaller.

Back in the classroom, Mia asked better questions.

“Did you see me when I came back from the office?”

“Do you remember where I went?”

“Did you see me put anything down?”

Some students did not remember.

Mia did not get upset.

She simply kept asking.

One classmate remembered seeing her near the cubbies.

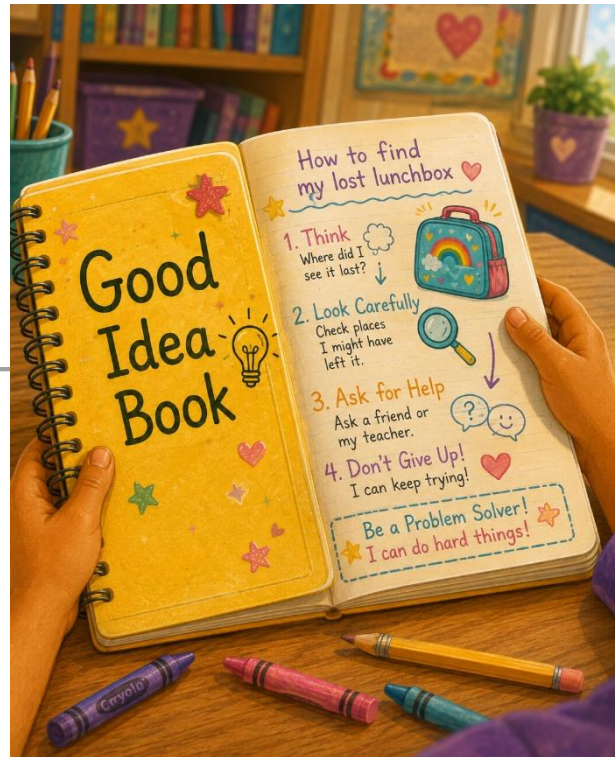
Mia wrote that down too.

Her notebook was filling with arrows, stars, and little notes.

Each answer felt like another puzzle piece.

Mia still did not have the whole picture.

But she was getting closer.



Mia looked at her teacher.

“I thought I had to solve this by myself.”

“You don’t,” her teacher said.

Mia looked around at her classmates.

Other people remembered things she had forgotten.

Her teacher helped her think.

The adults at school helped her search safely.

Mia opened her Good Idea Book and wrote:

ASKING FOR HELP IS PART OF THE PLAN.

She underlined it.

Her teacher smiled.

“How do you feel now?”

“I still want my lunchbox back,” Mia said. “But I’m not as worried.”

“Why?”

“Because I have clues. And people are helping me.”

Mia added one last line to her notebook:

NEXT STEP: Follow the clues.

She closed the Good Idea Book.

Her lunchbox was still missing.

But Mia had a feeling she was getting closer.

And this time, she was not searching alone.

What Mia Learned



You do not have to solve every problem by yourself.

Other people may remember something you missed or know something that can help.

Ask questions. Listen carefully. Accept help.

Sometimes one small clue—and one helpful person—can bring you closer to the answer.

Chapter 4: A Lunchbox Mix-Up



Chapter 4: A Lunchbox Mix-Up

Mia sat at her desk looking at the clues in her **Good Idea Book**.

She knew she had brought her lunchbox to school.

She had carried it near the office.

She had stopped by the library.

And someone had seen her near the cubbies.

Her lunchbox had to be somewhere.

Then Mia heard a voice behind her.

“Mia?”

She turned around.

A boy from another table was holding a bright lunchbox.

Mia’s eyes grew wide.

“My lunchbox!”

The boy looked embarrassed.

“I think I picked it up by mistake.”

Mia quickly took it.

She felt relieved.

Then she felt angry.

“You took my lunchbox?”

“I didn’t mean to,” the boy said. “I thought it was mine.”

He held up another lunchbox.

Mia stared at it.



It looked almost exactly like hers.

Same colors.

Same shape.

Even the handles looked alike.

“Oh,” Mia said.

“I grabbed yours without looking carefully,” the boy explained. “I’m sorry.”

Mia hugged her lunchbox.

She had spent so much time searching for it.

Part of her wanted to stay angry.

Then she looked at the two similar lunchboxes.

It really had been an accident.

Mia took a slow breath.

“It’s okay,” she said. “I was upset, but I know you didn’t mean to take it.”

The boy smiled.

“Thank you.”

Then Mia noticed something.

“If you had my lunchbox, where is yours?”

The boy looked at the lunchbox he was holding.

“I thought this was mine.”

He opened it.

His eyes widened.

“This isn’t mine either!”



Mia laughed.

“Now we have three lunchboxes to figure out!”

The boy laughed too.

Mia opened her Good Idea Book.

“Then we need another plan.”

They brought the extra lunchbox to their teacher.

Inside, they found a name label.

The teacher returned it to the correct student.

Now they only had to find the boy’s lunchbox.

“Where were you this morning?” Mia asked.

“I went to the library,” he said.

Mia smiled.

“So did I!”

With their teacher’s permission, they went back to look.

They checked near the book display.

They checked beside the chairs.

Then Mia spotted something under a small table.

“Look!”

The boy reached down and pulled out a lunchbox.

“My lunchbox!”



They had found it.

Back in the classroom, Mia and the boy put name labels on their lunchboxes.

Mia opened her Good Idea Book and wrote:

Mistakes happen.

Listen before getting angry.

Be kind when someone is sorry.

Fix the problem together.

Her teacher smiled.

“What did you learn?”

Mia thought for a moment.

“I learned that something can look like someone’s fault when it really was just a mistake.”

“That’s an important lesson,” her teacher said.

Mia looked at her lunchbox.

It was back where it belonged.

And now her name was clearly written on it.

She smiled.

One mystery solved.

And one more good idea added to her book.

What Mia Learned



Sometimes people make mistakes without meaning to cause a problem.

Before getting angry, it helps to **listen and find out what really happened.**

Mistakes happen. Kindness helps us make things right.

Chapter 5:

One Small Step at a Time



Chapter 5: One Small Step at a Time

Mia sat at the lunch table with her lunchbox in front of her.

At last, it was back.

Her name was now written clearly on the front:

MIA

The boy from the lunchbox mix-up sat nearby.

He held up his lunchbox.

“I put my name on mine too!”

Mia smiled.

“Good idea.”

They both laughed.

Then Mia opened her lunchbox and finally ate.



Back in the classroom, Mia opened her **Good Idea Book**.

The pages were filled with notes, clues, arrows, and little drawings.

She turned to a clean page and wrote:

WHAT I LEARNED

Then she made a list:

Stay calm.

Look carefully.

Ask questions.

Get help.

Be kind when mistakes happen.

Her teacher looked over her shoulder.

“That is quite a list.”

Mia nodded.

“I learned a lot from losing one lunchbox.”

Her teacher smiled.

“What could you do so it does not happen again?”

Mia looked at her lunchbox.

She thought about the morning.

Then she had an idea.



Mia wrote:

MY LUNCHBOX PLAN

- 1. Put my lunchbox in the same place every morning.**
- 2. Make sure my name is on it.**
- 3. Check that it is there before lunch.**

“That should help,” Mia said.

The next morning, Mia followed her new plan.

She hung up her backpack.

She placed her lunchbox in its special spot.

Then she checked the label.

MIA

Perfect.

At lunchtime, her lunchbox was exactly where she had left it.

“My plan worked!” Mia said.

Her teacher smiled.

“You solved yesterday’s problem and made a better plan for today.”

Mia liked the sound of that.

That afternoon, Mia opened her Good Idea Book one more time.

She wrote:

**BIG PROBLEMS CAN BE SOLVED ONE
SMALL STEP AT A TIME.**

Then she added:

Stay calm.

Think carefully.

Ask for help.

Be kind.

Try again.

Mia looked at the page and smiled.

She had lost a lunchbox.

But she had found something too.

She had learned how to become a better problem-solver.

Mia closed her notebook and said her favorite words:

“Let’s make a plan—and try one small step.”

What Mia Learned



Problems may feel big at first, but they can often be solved one small step at a time.

Being responsible does not mean never making a mistake.

It means **learning from what happened and making a better plan for next time.**

Epilogue

The next morning, Mia walked into school with a smile.

She hung up her backpack and carefully placed her lunchbox in its special spot.

Then she checked the label on the front.

MIA

“Perfect,” she said.

Before heading to her desk, Mia opened her **Good Idea Book**.

She looked at the pages filled with clues, plans, and lessons from the day before.

At the bottom of the last page, she wrote:

I can solve problems one small step at a time.

Mia smiled and closed the book.

Losing her lunchbox had not been fun, but it had taught her something important.

She had learned to stay calm.

She had learned to ask questions.

She had learned that asking for help was a smart choice.

And she had learned that mistakes could be solved with patience and kindness.

At lunchtime, Mia found her lunchbox exactly where she had left it.

She picked it up proudly.

Her new plan had worked.

As she walked toward the lunch table, Mia thought about her favorite words:

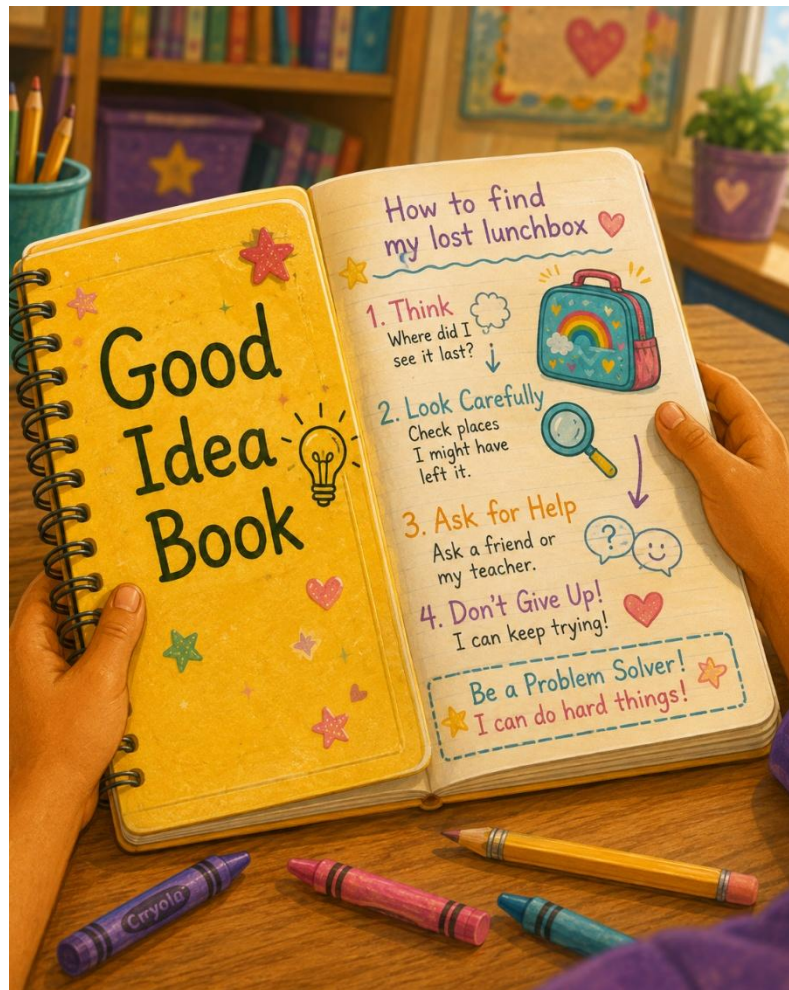
“Let’s make a plan—and try one small step.”

She knew there would be other problems someday.

But now Mia also knew something else.

She did not have to solve everything at once.

She just had to begin.



About the Author

www.scottMbooks.com

Scott Speicher brings a unique blend of life experiences to his writing. A U.S. military veteran, he carries the discipline, resilience, and perspective gained through service into every story he tells. After his military career, Scott built a successful path in marketing, where he developed a deep understanding of communication, storytelling, and audience engagement. For more than 15 years, he has also worked as a professional website designer, helping businesses and individuals create meaningful online presences.



Scott Speicher is a storyteller who enjoys creating gentle, heartfelt stories that help children notice the small moments that make life meaningful. Through warm characters and simple adventures, his books encourage young readers to slow down, care for others, and appreciate the quiet joys of everyday life. Scott believes that some of the most important lessons children learn come not from grand events, but from the ordinary moments shared with family, friends, and the animals they love.

Scott M. Speicher is the creator of ScottMBooks.com, a children's book and educational resource website focused on helping young readers grow through meaningful stories and printable learning activities. His books encourage children to build reading confidence while learning important life lessons such as kindness, courage, responsibility, patience, friendship, compassion, and caring for others. Through stories like Lily and the Kindness Club, Scott hopes to inspire children, teachers, parents, and homeschool families to use reading to build both literacy skills and strong character.

Suitable for readers aged 4-10 and for family read-aloud sessions. Ideal for SEL, guidance, and service-learning.



Mia and the Lost Lunchbox



When Mia can't find her lunchbox at school, her day turns upside down. She searches her classroom, revisits the library, asks for help, and follows clues through the school. Just when she thinks her lunchbox is gone for good, Mia discovers it's all part of an unexpected lunchbox mix-up!

With the help of her classmates and teacher, Mia learns that problems can be solved—one small step at a time.

Mia and the Lost Lunchbox is a heartwarming story that teaches young readers about problem-solving, patience, asking for help, and kindness. Perfect for 1st and 2nd graders!



Kids will discover:

- ★ How to stay calm when things go wrong
- ★ Why asking questions can lead to answers
- ★ The power of teamwork and helpful friends
- ★ Why kindness makes a big difference



**Mistakes happen.
Kindness helps.**
You can solve problems!

ISBN 978-1-963456-00-1



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