



Perel and the Friend Who Moved Away

Ages 6-9
A story and 9 activities



Perel and the Friend Who Moved Away

On Sunday morning, a big moving truck pulls up to the house next door.

Perel watches from her window as men carry boxes and a couch down the front steps. Her best friend, Atara, stands on the lawn holding a stuffed rabbit. Her eyes are red.

Perel puts on her shoes and runs outside.

"You're really going," she says.

"We're going to Cleveland," says Atara. "It's far. Totty got a new job."

The girls stand quietly. A robin hops across the grass. Perel kicks a clump of dirt.

"We always walked to school together," she says.

"And we shared the swing set."

"And we sat next to each other in Morah's class."

"I don't want to go," says Atara, and a tear runs down her cheek. Perel feels one on her own.

Atara's mother comes out and puts a hand on each girl's shoulder. "I know it's hard. Saying goodbye is very hard. But you can still be friends. Friends can write letters."

"Letters?" asks Perel.

"Real ones, with stamps. They take a few days to travel. But they're even more special because someone sat down and wrote just for you."

Atara wipes her face. "Will you write to me?"

"Every week," says Perel. "I promise."

That afternoon, the truck rumbles away. Perel stands on the sidewalk until it turns the corner and disappears. Then she walks home slowly. The house feels too quiet. Atara's window next door is empty and dark.

She sits on her bed. It is a gloomy, sinking kind of feeling. She misses Atara terribly. But she remembers the promise. She takes out a piece of paper and a purple pen.

Dear Atara, she writes. I miss you already. Today I watched a squirrel steal a bagel at the park. It made me think of you. Write back soon.

She folds the letter, puts it in an envelope, and writes the Cleveland address in her best letters. Mommy helps with the stamp.

Four days later, a letter arrives with her name on it. She tears it open. Inside is a drawing of Atara's new bedroom, with a yellow rug and a little window. Dear Perel, Cleveland has big hills! I saw a deer yesterday. I got a new rabbit blanket. I miss you too. Write soon.

Perel reads it three times. She hangs the drawing on her wall.

Every week, a letter goes to Cleveland, and one comes back. Perel tells Atara about school, about a spelling test, about a funny dream. Atara tells her about her new teacher, who has a parrot named Pickle. The letters make the distance feel smaller.

One evening, Perel is looking at the stack of letters. A new girl, Sima, has just moved into Atara's old house. She is standing on the porch, looking lost.

Perel takes a deep breath. She crosses the lawn. "Hi. I'm Perel. Want to see a squirrel that steals bagels?"

Sima smiles. "Yes."

That night, Perel writes to Atara: I made a new friend today. But you're still my best friend. Both can be true.



Activity 1 of 9

Remember the story

1. Where does Atara move?

2. What do the girls promise to do?

3. What is on the drawing Atara sends?

4. Who moves into Atara's old house?



Activity 2 of 9

Fact or guess? (circle one)

1. Atara's teacher has a parrot named Pickle. Fact / Guess
2. Perel stops writing after a month. Fact / Guess
3. Perel hangs Atara's drawing on her wall. Fact / Guess
4. A squirrel steals a bagel in the park. Fact / Guess



Activity 3 of 9

Think and write

1. How does Perel feel when the truck leaves?

2. How do the letters help?

3. Can you have an old friend and a new friend?

Activity 4 of 9

Word search (find all 6)

Words: LETTER, CLEVELAND, TRUCK, FRIEND, STAMP, SQUIRREL

E	F	K	H	D	K	W	D	S	C	B
I	T	T	R	U	C	K	N	Q	Y	T
C	E	H	J	R	U	K	E	U	S	Y
L	E	R	I	H	P	E	I	I	S	D
E	H	S	W	R	T	Y	R	R	E	M
V	U	L	T	O	E	Y	F	R	P	M
E	N	H	E	A	K	H	H	E	F	K
L	E	S	L	T	M	R	N	L	T	Y
A	C	P	D	L	T	P	M	P	I	E
N	H	D	H	J	R	E	J	F	W	E
D	S	O	M	T	J	M	R	J	A	E



Activity 5 of 9

Scrambled words (from the story)

1. TETLRE = _____

2. RTUKC = _____

3. DIEFRN = _____

4. STMAP = _____

5. TIARBB = _____



Activity 6 of 9

Say it out loud

Practice each line in a calm, steady voice:

"I miss you. I'll write soon."

"Both can be true."

"Want to see something fun?"



Activity 7 of 9

My chart

My Letters Chart

#	Who I wrote to	What I told them	Their answer
Letter 1			
Letter 2			
Letter 3			



Activity 8 of 9

Draw it

Draw Atara's new bedroom with a yellow rug and a little window.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for a drawing. It occupies the central portion of the page below the instructions.



Activity 9 of 9

Answers

Remember the story:

1. Cleveland
2. Write letters every week
3. Her new bedroom
4. Sima

Fact or guess: 1 Fact; 2 Guess; 3 Fact; 4 Fact

Scrambled words: LETTER, TRUCK, FRIEND, STAMP, RABBIT

Think and write: answers will vary; talk them over together.