



Bella Does It Differently

**A story about curiosity
instead of control**

**Rumana, Understanding what is
behind behaviour**



Bella was very good at noticing things.

She noticed the tiny buzzing sound of the lights.

She noticed when someone had moved her pencil.

She noticed when another child was sad, even when they said they were fine.

And Bella noticed something else too. Sometimes, things that looked very small to other people felt very big to her.



One morning, Bella sat at her table at school. The classroom was busy.

Chairs scraped. Children talked. Pencils tapped.

The teacher gave everyone their work. "Finish this first," she said. "Then you may draw."

Bella looked at the page. She knew how to do it. It wasn't difficult.

But suddenly her body felt strange. Her shoulders became tight. Her tummy squeezed. Her thoughts started bumping into each other.

Bella picked up her pencil. Then put it down again.



“I need to draw for a little bit,” Bella said.

Drawing helped Bella’s brain become quiet enough to think.

But the answer came quickly. “Work first. Drawing later.”

It was only a little bit of work. Everyone else seemed to be doing it. So why couldn’t she?

Bella didn’t know. She only knew that the tiny task in front of her suddenly felt as tall as a mountain.



“Bella,” said the teacher, “it’s only a small thing.”

But inside Bella, it wasn’t small anymore.

Bella wished she could open a little door in her chest and show everyone what was happening inside.

Then maybe they would see the buzzing. The squeezing. The hundred thoughts.

The enormous NO that appeared even when Bella herself wanted to say yes.

But nobody could see inside Bella. They could only see a girl who wasn’t doing her work.



Later, Bella sat quietly with another grown-up. This grown-up did something unusual.

She didn't say "Come on." She didn't say "You have to." She didn't say "Everyone else can do it."

Instead, she asked, "What made it hard?"

Bella looked up. Nobody had asked her that before.

Bella thought for a long time. "I don't know," she said.

"That's okay," said the grown-up.

Bella thought some more. "My brain was too full."

"And drawing helps?" Bella nodded. "It makes space."

The grown-up smiled. "Then maybe we need to help your brain make space."



The next day, Bella came to her table.
There was work waiting for her again.

But this time the teacher said:

“You can start with the first question, or
you can draw for two minutes and then
we’ll look at it together.”

Bella blinked. She had a choice. The
mountain became smaller.

Bella drew a tiny purple dragon.

Then she put down her drawing pencil.
“Okay,” she said. “I think I can do the first
question now.”

And she did.



Another child needed something different.

Sam needed the instructions twice.

Noor liked to stand while she worked.

Milo wore headphones when the room became too noisy.

Eva needed harder maths because easy work made her brain wander away.

And sometimes Bella needed to draw.

Nobody got exactly the same thing.

But everybody got help.



Bella looked around the classroom.

For the first time, different didn't look unfair.

Different looked normal.

The teacher still had rules. They still had to be kind. They still had to keep each other safe.

But now there was another rule too, maybe the most important rule of all:

when something isn't working, we get curious and find another way.



Bella smiled.

She was not a problem to solve.

She was a person to understand.

And sometimes, when Bella was
allowed to do things a little
differently...

she could do so much more.



The end.



For grown-ups

**Bella's story is not about a
child who won't.**

**It is about a child who can't
yet, and about the adults who
choose curiosity over control.**

**When something isn't working,
ask what is making it hard.**

Then find another way, together.

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