

Melia and Jo

by Billy Aronson

Published in 2008

Why we love it: Melia loves science and engineering, and is constantly tinkering with a slew of inventions that are never quite finished. All that changes when Jo, who loves to dance and sing, moves in next door. Although the two don't see eye to eye at first, they soon discover that everything is much better when they create together.

Questions to ponder with your kids: At first, Melia is shocked and upset by the changes Jo makes to her inventions. She eventually realizes, however, that her creations are better because of Jo's input. Return to this part of the book with your kids, and have them identify some of the ways that Jo made Melia's inventions better. Jo isn't the only one to make important contributions, however. Ask your kids how Melia helps Jo get out of a predicament and with her creations. The book is all about the magic that happens when art and science come together, and we encourage you to explore this further by researching artist/inventors with your kids (if you need a place to start, try Leonardo da Vinci, Hedy Lamarr, and Beatrix Potter)! After being inspired, draw, plan, and design your own inventions that combine science and art. Make sure your kids can identify how science and art work together in their creations, and outline the problems their amazing innovations solve!