

Magical Toolbox



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To My Readers,

I remember the day I was diagnosed with dyslexia—confused, unsure of what it meant, how it would shape my life, and whether it would stand in the way of my future. If you’ve ever felt the same, this book is for you. No matter how challenging the journey may seem, know that you are capable, resilient, and destined to thrive.

Thank you for picking up this book and choosing to read it.

Lilly’s story is similar to my own in many ways. Now, as a teacher, I strive every day to be a Mrs. Marks for my students.

This is Lilly. Lilly loves sports, drawing, and hanging out with her friends. She also loves school, though it has never been easy for her.



Lilly

Summer is over which means back to school for **Lilly Ford**.
She's excited to see all her friends and meet her new
teacher, **Mrs. Marks**.



You know being a 5th grader is kind
of a **BIG deal**.



The first day of 5th grade is finally here. Lilly and her friends catch up on all their summer adventures. “I read a whole chapter book all by myself,” says Lilly’s friend.

“Me too, I read so many!”

“I did too, what did you read?” said the others.

They look towards Lilly waiting for her to chime in.

“Oh, well I was super busy with sports and stuff.” They look at her and nod and continue talking about their books.



Lilly could feel her face turning bright red and warm. She wasn't just too busy with sports. Over the summer, she found out some **big news** about herself.



Lilly found out she has **Dyslexia**. This means she has a harder time reading and writing. Dyslexia effects people differently and can be hard to diagnose.

She is still learning what having
dyslexia means, and she is
DREADING finding out.

After the conversation with her friends, Lilly feels defeated. She walks to her classroom and a kind voice greets her, “Hi Lilly, I’m Mrs. Marks, your new teacher. I’m so excited for this year, are you?” Lilly nods, but quickly finds her seat and puts her head down.



“Lilly what’s going on? I know you had a busy summer, and I’m here to help.”

“It’s a lot of change, I just wish I was normal like all my friends.”



“I know this can be a lot, but we are going to do this together.”

Lilly smiles, “I have something for you.”
She tells her.



She reaches into her desk and pulls out a toolbox. Not just any old tool box... this one looked special. It glows bright, filled with tools galore of all different kinds and colors with names printed on them.

“Where did you get that? What is it?” Lilly asks.



“This is my **magic toolbox**. When I was your age, I found out I had dyslexia too, but I created this magical toolbox full of tools to help me. Together you and I will build you your own magical toolbox.”



Lilly's face lights up at the idea. "Maybe this whole dyslexia thing won't be so bad", she thought to herself.

Over the school year **Lilly** and **Mrs. Marks** work together on her reading. **She** rises to the challenge and begins unlocking her tools one by one.



“Mrs. Marks, could I take my test in a separate room? So I can read it out loud to myself?”

“Yes Lilly you can, I am glad you asked that. You are being a great advocate.”



Lilly grinned and eagerly went back to her seat to grab her test and pencil. That's when she saw it -- her tool box began to glow.

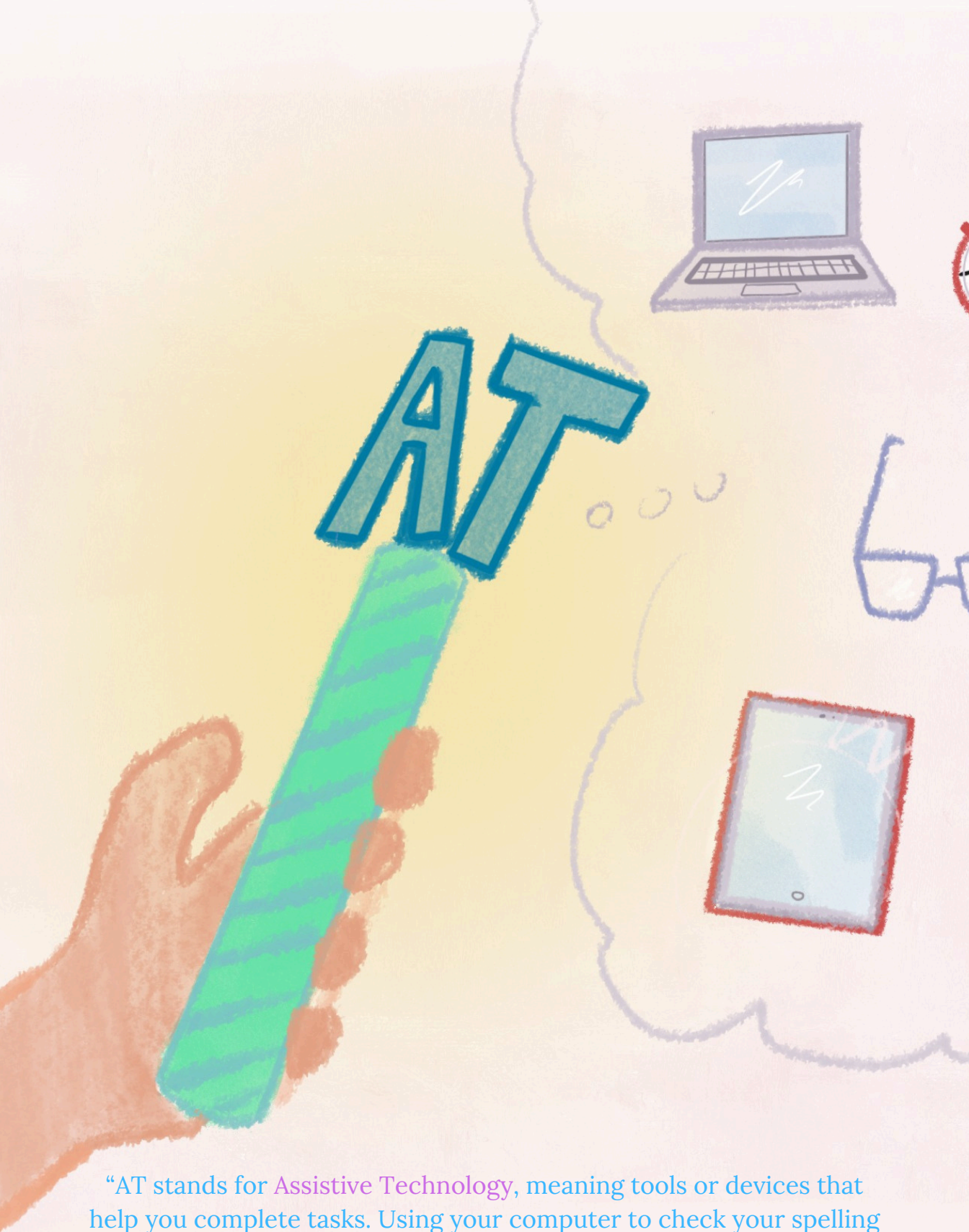
Her first tool is **Advocacy**. Advocacy means to speak up for yourself and for your needs.



During reading groups Mrs. Marks gave students the option to write on paper or use their computers to write their responses. “I like writing a lot better when I use my computer, I can even see when words are spelled wrong.”

Lilly glances at her toolbox, she sees a glimmer of light. Her new tool glows bright with the letters AT. “A-T, whats that?”





“AT stands for **Assistive Technology**, meaning tools or devices that help you complete tasks. Using your computer to check your spelling is a type of AT.”

Assistive technology comes in many different forms. Some examples include speech to text, computer programs, and online notes.

During the school year Mrs. Marks introduced Lilly to a new teacher, Mrs. Jones. She is a reading specialist.

Together Lilly and Mrs. Jones explored many books and reading strategies.



Her third tool is [Reading Strategies](#), together Lilly and her new reading specialist, Mrs. Jones, discovered many effective reading strategies.



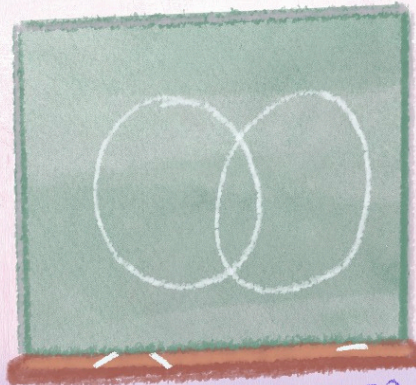
Lilly learned to use a bookmark to track her place from line to line, check her understanding at the end of each chapter, and use highlighters to break up the text for better clarity. These are all useful [reading strategies](#).

Over the school year Lilly's toolbox continues
to grow and glow. Each tool growing her
reading and her confidence.

AUDIO BOOKS



COLLABORATION



GRAPHIC ORGANIZER



Mrs. Marks assigned the class with their yearly research project. “You will present this project to the whole class, make it something meaningful to you.” Lilly paused for a second, then looked up, “I know exactly what I’m going to do,” she thought.



Lilly spent days preparing for her project. She wanted it to be perfect. Her magic toolbox stayed by her side, opened and ready. She picked out tool after tool, each one helping her make her speech even better.



She wrote and erased.



Then wrote some more.



She reread, refined,
rewrote, and reread again.



Until it was finally done.

On presentation day **Lilly** felt ready. She glances at her trusty toolbox full of tools she collected hoping for a tool to calm the nerves, but thats when she notices. There was a tool missing!

“Lilly Ford, its your turn” Mrs. Marks calls out.

Lilly stands up, pushes her shoulders back, and takes a deep breath. “You can do this.” She says to herself.



“Hi everyone, I am Lilly Ford and I today I will be presenting about Dyslexia.”

“Dyslexia makes it harder for you to read, write, spell, and some other things.”

“Everyone’s dyslexia looks different.”

“There are so many tools that help your brain read and write when you have dyslexia. I like to call that my magical toolbox!”

“I have dyslexia, and I am PROUD. My brain may work differently, but that doesn’t stop me. It is actually my superpower because it allows my brain to work harder and think outside the box.”





Mrs. Marks looked at Lilly with an extra wide grin and began to clap. The class followed, filling the room with cheers and applause.

Lilly sat down beaming with glee. She was not only proud of the speech she wrote, but she was proud of herself for doing it.



Lilly peeked into her desk, she hadn't forgotten about the missing key. She opened up her toolbox and there it was. The last tool!



In big letters was the word “CONFIDENCE.” She did it. Lilly gained her confidence and unlocked all of her tools!

When class was over, before Lilly left, Mrs. Marks stopped her. “Lilly, I want you to have this.”



It was her very own chapter book. Lilly read the title. “The Mysteries of the Magic Toolbox.” written by Mrs. Marks.

Throughout the year, **Lilly** navigated her dyslexia with the help of her teachers, her specialists, and her support system. But most importantly, she did it for herself. She built her magical toolbox, each tool with a story of its own.





Lilly Ford had now unlocked all of her magical tools to enhance her reading, but the most powerful tool of all was discovering her own confidence.