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Words Matter

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Message from Head of Center for Book Affairs

Dear Children,

For your love of reading, we present interesting and fun storybooks, each with fascinating illustrations. The book in your hand is one of them!

Feel free to choose whichever you like. For a more fun experience, get your friends and parents to read with you.

Keep on reading as reading softens your heart, helps you gain more knowledge, and boosts your creativity.

Happy reading!

Jakarta, September 2024
Head of Center for Book Affairs

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Foreword

Hello, wonderful readers!

We hope this letter finds you well!

We often see verbal bullying as unimportant. But the truth is, it can leave a scar. This book will help you understand the topic better through an engaging story and pictures.

Hopefully, you can become a better human being by being kind to your friends and making positive changes. May each page of this book inspire you to use good words.

Cheers,

Nazlah & Dhidit



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Is it a Joke or a Mockery?

Imagine you're happily playing at a park, laughing and joking with your friends. Suddenly, someone who enjoys mocking you shows up, starts saying rude words, and ruins your good time.

His words sting your heart. You are hurt, and all of a sudden, your happiness is gone.

Have you ever felt that way?



That is verbal bullying. The action was meant to hurt the victim. It happens repeatedly because the perpetrator envies what the victim has. How sad! The incident can occur anywhere and at any time. Whether at school, home, or online, such as on social media.





Verbal bullying is more than just words. It can make you sad and discourage you.

This book will help you understand verbal bullying, including its definition, effects, strategies for handling it, and how to create a safe and supportive environment.

Let's get to know verbal bullying better and fight against it. You are not alone. We can work together to create a world where words are used to build connection, not destroy it.

1

Important things to remember

According to experts, bullying is an unpleasant verbal or physical action that is continually repeated, causing a person to feel uncomfortable, hurt, and depressed.

① Ugly

② Failure





Chapter 1

Words That Make You Sad

You might have heard a rumbling sound, followed by a blinding light and a loud boom. Yes, that's thunder. It usually occurs during the rain without warning, frightening anyone experiencing it.



Verbal bullying feels like that. Someone uses words repeatedly and continually to annoy others. Rude words are like striking thunder. It can hurt you and cause damage or destruction.



For example, when someone calls you “stupid,” “your skin is so dark”, or “you don’t have friends!”

Those words sting. They make you flinch, sad, and insecure. Sometimes, the mocking happens again and again, making you hurt, like a drop of water hollowing out a stone.




Stupid. No one wants to be your friend
Stupid!
Fatso

A verbal bully wants to appear stronger than other people. They use words as a weapon to hurt others.

But remember. Those rude words are not valid!



Verbal bullying only reflects the doer's malice.

Those words do not define you. You are a good child. No cruel words can dampen your spirit.

2

Important things to remember

Bullying has become a worldwide issue. The 4th of May is commemorated as International Anti-Bullying Day to raise awareness about the negative impact of bullying.



Chapter 2 Invisible Wound



One afternoon, you were playing with your friend when suddenly you fell and hurt your knee. Your knee stung and bled. You were crying and asking for help. Physical wounds are visible and can be treated easily. People around you would notice when you are hurt and need help.

Do you know that there is another kind of wound? One that is invisible?

It isn't a wound in your body, but your heart and mind. It is called a psychological wound. Verbal bullying can leave an inner wound on its victim.



Hana and her drawings



Hana is a fifth grader at elementary school who enjoys drawing and writing stories.

During recess, she would sit under a large tree in the school park, creating beautiful pictures and writing exciting adventures.

However, something made Hana sad. Some of her classmates said mean things to her.



“What are you drawing?” Tomi asked as he observed Hana’s drawing book.

“A rose,” Hana answered briefly.

“It looks like a baby’s doodle,” Tomi laughed.

“What about this story? What is it about?” asked Dita while pointing at one of Hana’s papers.

“It’s a poem, not a story.”

“Oh. I thought it was a horror story,” mocked Dita.



Tomi and Dita repeatedly teased Hana. Hana felt as if invisible thorns pierced her heart. She was unable to show the wound to anyone else. Her wound was not on her skin. There was no visible blood or bruises.

Hana started to feel unnerved about doing the things that she loves – drawing and writing. Every time she tried, her friends' mocking voices echoed in her head. Hana's fingers were shaking. Her confidence was slowly fading away. She only came to school because her mom persuaded her.



Important things to remember

3

Schools, safe places to learn, can also be locations where bullying occurs. The laws in our country guarantee that every child is protected from violence and sexual abuse at school.



Magic words

Verbal bullying is often seen as less important than physical bullying. Verbal bullying doesn't leave visible scars, but the psychological scar it causes can stay with its victim throughout adulthood. It might affect the victim's mental health and cause fatal consequences.

However, you need to be optimistic and believe that an inner wound can heal like a physical one.







Chapter 3

Speak Up!

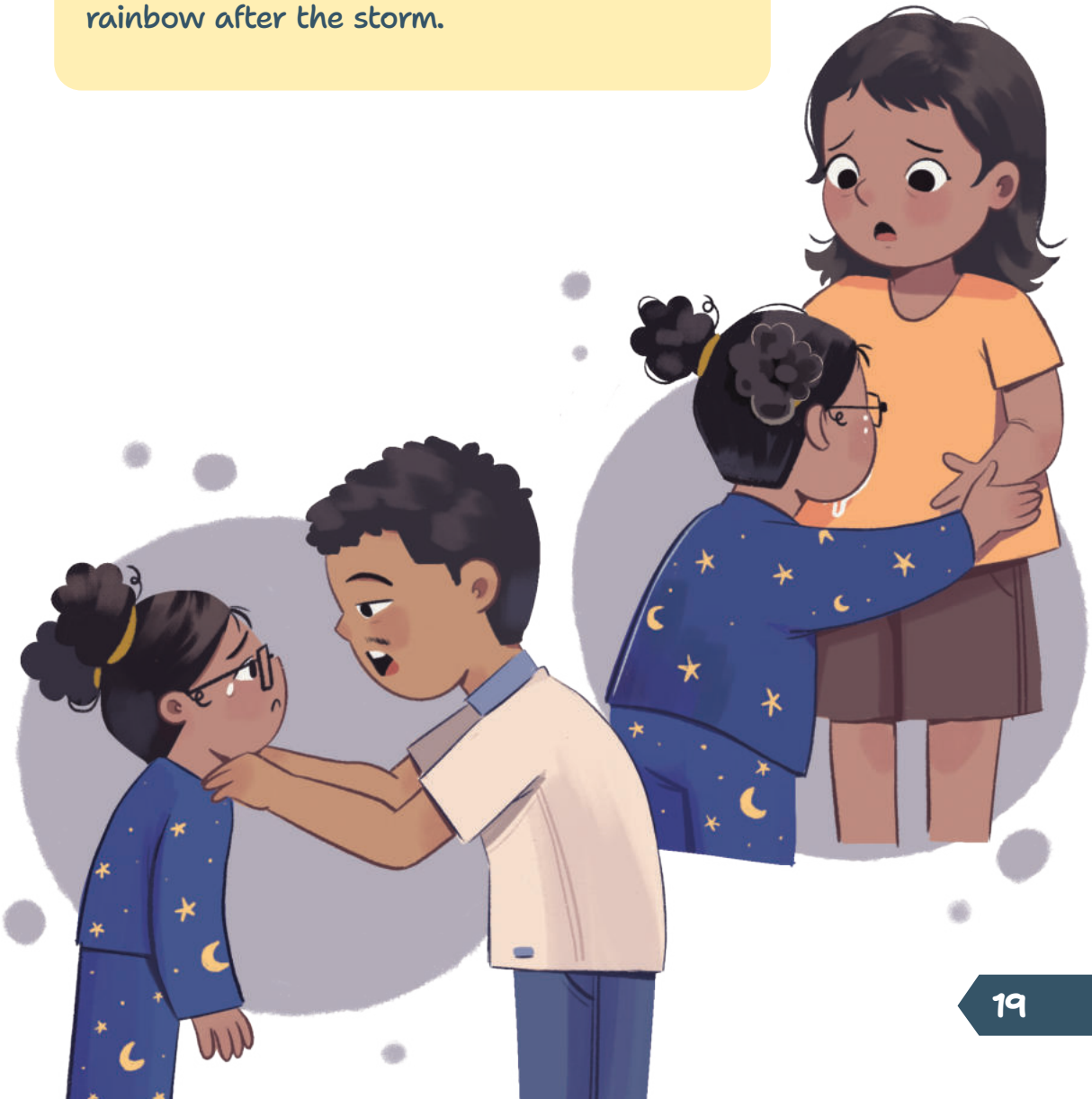
What should you do if you or your friend becomes a victim of verbal bullying?

Let's continue reading Hana's story.



Magic words

If you experience verbal bullying, try talking to adults you trust. You can speak with your teachers, parents, older siblings, or aunties and uncles. They can help you find a solution or give you support. Kind words and support from caring people are like a rainbow after the storm.



Hana and Tomi

"Hana, have you talked to our teacher about Tomi?" asked Bagas in the classroom.

Bagas was Hana's classmate. Tomi often teased him, too. Bagas biked to school, and Tomi often made fun of Bagas's bike.



He said hurtful things like, "Your bike is as old as my grandpa," or "Your bike is rusty."

"I haven't. What for?" asked Hana.

"I saw Tomi and Dita making fun of you multiple times!"

"Let them be."

"They are out of line! We should report them," said Bagas.

"But I'm scared," Hana answered sadly.

"Me too. If I have to do it alone."

"Do you mean, they mock you too?"

Bagas nodded. “That’s why we have to face them together.”

“How?”

“Perhaps you can talk about Tomi to your mom.”

“That’s impossible. I’m afraid my mom will be angry and sad.”

Bagas sighed. He understood Hana’s feelings. “But we have to do something for our own good.”

“You are right. But I don’t want to deal with them,” Hana said while doodling idly.





One day, Hana met a new teacher named Miss Sari. She has a gentle personality, so Hana started to talk to her. Hana told her everything — how her friends' words made her sad and unworthy.

Miss Sari listened attentively.

"Hana, words are powerful. They can make us happy or sad. Though the wound is invisible, words can hurt us, too." Miss Sari gently caressed Hana's cheek. "But you have the power to heal that wound!"

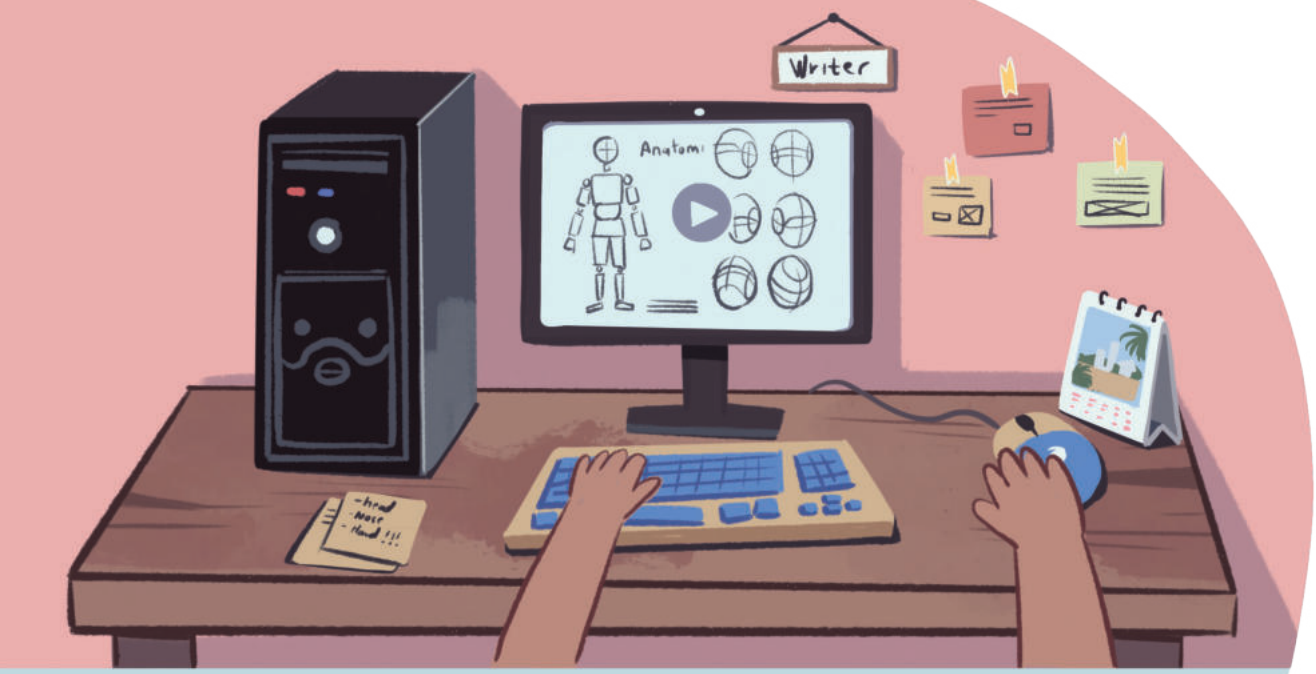
Hana's eyes widened with curiosity.



"How?" she asked.

"You need to believe that whatever your friends say isn't true. Tell yourself that you are cool! You can draw and write poems. Then, talk about your feelings with adults you trust, like your dad, mom, or teacher. And don't stop doing what you love. Drawing and writing are parts of who you are, and that's so special."





Hana felt better after talking to Miss Sari. Though it wasn't easy, she tried to ignore her friend's mockery.



She tried to draw and write again despite her pain. Following Bagas's suggestion, Hana decided to talk to her parents. In addition, Hana watched more online drawing tutorials, wanting to improve her drawing skills.

Sometimes, Hana secretly sketched her classmates. If she was happy with the result, she gave the sketch as a gift.

"Wow! Thanks, Hana! I like it," Erina cried as Hana showed her a sketch of herself writing.

"I'll put it up on my bedroom wall," Bagas said as Hana gave him the sketch of his bike.

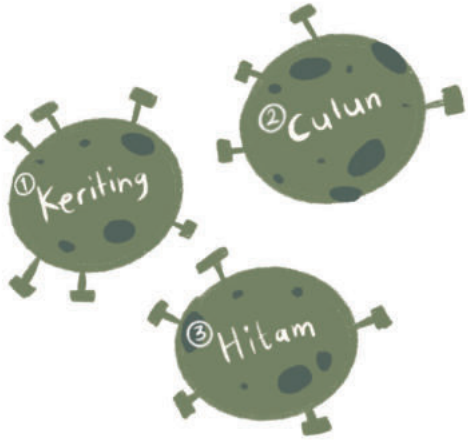




Gradually, Hana felt better about herself. New friends came and appreciated Hana's talent. They even asked Hana to teach them how to draw or write stories.

"Thank you for teaching us how to write a poem, Hana!" Hana's friends exclaimed.





"You're welcome," Hana said. She was glad she could share her knowledge and felt happy for helping others.

Hana now understood that invisible wounds caused by words could heal. Bravery, love, and attention might help fasten the healing process.

Hana would not let negative words stop her from dreaming.

Hana found her self-confidence again.

She was excited to paint with beautiful colors. To write fun stories

Magic words

We must treat others with kindness and speak kindly. We don't have to reply to bad words with other bad words because words are powerful.

① Curly ② Nerdy ③ Dark Skinned



1. Calm down

When you face verbal bullying, the first thing you have to do is calm yourself down. Take a breath for four seconds, hold it for four seconds, and then let it out for four seconds. Repeat it several times. Don't panic or get too emotional.



2. Avoid the bully

If possible, stay away from the bully. Find a safe place where you feel comfortable and protected, like a prayer room, a teacher's lounge, or a library.

3. Talk firmly

If you're brave enough, tell the bully confidently that you don't like what they said about you.

For example: "I don't like to be called ugly!" Said it in a firm but polite way.





4. Find help

Don't hesitate to seek help from a trusted adult, such as a parent or teacher.



4 Important things to remember

From Hana's story, we learn some ways to face verbal bullying.

5. Stand up to bullying with kindness

You can fight the bully with grace

For example, showing your confidence instead of replying to their unkind words.



Chapter 4

The Kindness Project

Do you know what the kindness project is? Let's continue reading Hana's story, who successfully initiated this project.



Hana's kindness project

Hana was feeling better now. She realized that some of her schoolmates might be experiencing what she was facing before. She wanted to help and show her friends the importance of treating each other with kindness.

Excitedly, Hana approached Bagas and shared her idea. Bagas agreed right away.

"We have to tell Miss Sari. This is such a great idea," Bagas said.

"Let's see Miss Sari now," Hana said eagerly.

Luckily, they found Miss Sari in front of the teacher's lounge, and she was not busy.



"Miss Sari, we have an idea," Hana and Bagas said once they were seated.

Miss Sari could feel their excitement. "What is it?"

"What if we make a kindness project at school?" Hana asked, "So the students can get along and be kind to each other."

Miss Sari smiled. "That is such a cool idea, Hana and Bagas. Let's invite everyone to get involved so we can all learn together."



Hana and Bagas started the project with Miss Sari's help. They gathered the students to explain the goal of this project.

Hana and Bagas took turns sharing their experiences in front of the class. They explained how words can cause a painful wound.

"Oh, dear! I just realized that our thoughtless words can hurt other people!" Many students were surprised to hear Hana and Bagas' story.





As part of the project, Hana, Bagas, and Miss Sari held several activities, one of which was making a "Kindness Tree."

They put up a paper tree in the school hall. Then, every student was given a paper leaf.

On that paper leaf, the students were asked to write

down kind words they had said or heard and the good deeds they had done or accepted. Then they placed the leaves on the tree, making it colorful with kindness.

The students also played games that taught empathy and understanding. One of their favorite games was 'Love Knots.' The students sat in a circle, tying their wrists to a friend's wrist with a ribbon. Then, they had to say something about the person sitting beside them.

This activity made everyone feel appreciated and accepted.



Miss Sari held a special session with the bullies.

She asked them to think about the impact of their rude words on other people.

"Seriously? They are upset just because they were called ugly?" Tomi asked, astonished, "It was just a joke!"







"I know, right? They're too emotional. Such a Tattletale!" Dita replied.

"Besides, Hana's drawing is awful. That's a fact," Tomi added. "My mom used to say the same thing about my drawing. We should say things as they are, right?"

"Same here! My dad gets angry when he sees my handwriting is untidy," said Dita.

Miss Sari patiently listened to Tomi and Dita. She understood that children learn from their parents. If the parents like to curse, the children will do the same. If the parents are appreciative, their children will learn to appreciate others. Perhaps Tomi and Dita were used to listening to bad words, so they considered them normal.

"I wonder what the two of you will do if someone mocks or insults you," Miss Sari asked Tomi and Dita.

"I won't take it, of course. I'll be angry and get even with them," Dita answered without hesitation.

"I'll be mad and make sure to get revenge. Who does he think he is? How dare he mock me!" Tomi said with a murky look.



"There you go! You hate being mocked, right? You feel angry. Hana and your other friends feel the same, too," Miss Sari concluded.

Miss Sari's words left Tomi and Dita silent and pensive.





Miss Sari's words echoed in Tomi's mind for days. Was it true that his words had hurt Hana? Was it true that he would get mad if someone mocked him?

Dita was having the same experience.

Over time, Tomi and Dita realized their mistake. They regretted it and decided to see Miss Sari. They want to apologize to those they hurt.

"Miss Sari. You are right. We're sorry. We want to apologize to Hana and Bagas.

Miss Sari accepted Tomi and Dita's good intentions and arranged for the four of them to meet at the schoolyard.

"Please forgive me," Tomi said sincerely.

"I promise I will be a good friend," Dita's quiet voice was full of remorse.

Hana smiled.

"Thanks, Tomi. Thanks, Dita. I accept your apology," Hana said.

"From now on, let's just make our school a comfortable place for everyone," added Bagas.



So, have you learned what the Kindness Project is?

Now, imagine you are a kindness agent. You are the hero who pioneered the kindness project, so there will be no more bullies.



Magic words

Words hold great power. Kind words could heal a wounded heart and create a loving world.



Chapter
5

A New Hope

Hana & Her Enjoyable School



The Kindness Project has created a genuine impact. The atmosphere became more cheerful and filled with unity. The children played together harmoniously.

"Let's play 'Guess the words'!" one of the students asked.

"I'm in!" the others replied.

Name a fruit that ends with the letter E!

"Apple!"

"Orange!"

"Grape!"

Next, name a fruit that starts with the letter R!

"Raisin"

"Raspberry"



"Rotten pomegranate, rotten pineapples, rotten mangoes."

"Don't be silly! That's not acceptable!" the other answered.

The children became more accustomed to respecting each other, and school became a fun place to learn and play.

Important things to remember 5

Saying kind words could make this world a better place

The atmosphere in the classroom began to change. Children engaged actively and weren't afraid to ask or answer questions.

"Miss, can you tell me again the title of Chairil Anwar's poem about heroes?" Erina asked.



She missed the explanation about the famous Indonesian poet, Chairil Anwar.

"Karawang Bekasi," Bagas contributed.

"Yes, that's correct. The poem described the independence heroes' sacrifice," said Miss Sari.

"You should have listened carefully!" Tomi blurted out.

"Stop daydreaming, Erina!" added Dita.

"That's enough, kids," Miss Sari interjected.

★ ★ ★

One day, Miss Sari started discussing the importance of living in peace and harmony.

"Who wants to have a lot of friends?" Miss Sari asked.

"Me!" Everyone answered.

"What should we do if we want to have a lot of friends?" Miss Sari asked again.

"Being friendly instead of being harsh."

"Stop bullying others," Bagas replied.

"Being helpful!"



Likes to share!

"Play and have fun with others!"

The students were shouting out answers on top of each other.

"Good answers, everyone!" Miss Sari gave a thumbs-up.

Then, Miss Sari asked everyone to share their experiences.

"Who wants to share how the Kindness Project changed you?"

Tommy, who used to bully Hana, said, "I was unaware that my words could hurt others. But now I know that we need each other."



"I learn to be a better friend," said Dita.

"Way to go!" Miss Sari exclaimed.



Hana was happy that she could use her experience to make a change.

Humans are social creatures. Do you know what that means?"

Erina raised her hand.

"It means we can't live alone. We need each other. We need the canteen lady, and the canteen lady needs us, too."

"The canteen lady saves us from hunger!" someone cried. The class burst with laughter.





"That's right, Erina. As social creatures, we need to work together with kindness. Every good deed we do will return to us in the end," said Miss Sari.

6

Important things to remember

Social creatures are living beings who need the existence of others to survive and grow. Humans are an example of a social creature. Naturally, humans need to communicate and build relationships with one another.

The bond between Hana and her friends grew stronger. They learned and played together. Everyone felt respected and loved. Hana and her friends were determined to do good and not mock each other.



Now Hana could see the future with new hope. She knew there were still some things to be done to make the world a better place, but she believed they could face anything with kindness and support.

Under the clear blue sky, Hana and her friends walked toward that new hope.





Important things to remember 7

Apart from verbal bullying, you need to know other kinds of bullying.

1. Physical bullying

This bullying involves repeated physical violence. It is easy to recognize because it leaves a visible mark on the victim's body.

For example: hitting, kicking, pushing, pinching, or shoving one's head.

2. Cyberbullying

This bullying occurs online via social media (Instagram, Facebook, TikTok) or through text messages. It can be negative comments on others' accounts or spreading humiliating content.

For example, posting someone's picture and adding a harsh comment that makes the person sad or embarrassed.

In short,
try not to get involved in bullying, whether as the doer or the victim.



Glossary

Agent	:	one that acts or exerts power
Appreciative	:	showing appreciation
Appreciation	:	a feeling or expression of admiration, approval, or gratitude
Bruises	:	an injury that causes discoloration without a break in the overlying skin
Chairil Anwar	:	an Indonesian poet and member of the "1945 Generation" of writers
Cool	:	very good, excellent
Curse	:	to use harsh or offensive language
Dampen	:	deaden
Daydreaming	:	a pleasant visionary, usually wishful creation of the imagination
Echo	:	the repetition of a sound
Empathy	:	the action of understanding, being sensitive to
Engaged	:	involved in activity
Fact	:	something that has actual existence
Fatal	:	causing death, bringing ruin
Flinch	:	to withdraw or shrink from or as if from pain
Genuine	:	sincerely and honestly felt or experienced
Harsh	:	excessively critical or negative
Hope?	:	want something to happen or be true
Intention	:	what one intends to do or bring about
Internet	:	an electronic communications network that connects computers around the world
Knot	:	interlacement of some parts to tie together
Negative	:	unfavourable, lack of positive qualities
Old?	:	ancient
Poem	:	a composition in verse
Positive	:	favourable, good
Psychological	:	mental, occurring in the mind
Regret	:	to be very sorry for
Silly	:	showing a lack of common sense
Social media	:	a form of electronic communication through which users can share information, ideas, personal messages, and photos and videos
Sketch	:	a rough drawing
Special	:	unique, having some unusual quality
Victim	:	one that is injured, destroyed, or sacrificed under any of various conditions

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Profil Pelaku Perbukuan

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Kiata was born with a cloak of stone around her shoulders, grew up with sharp pebbles under her feet, and iron chains around her hands. Her mind is the only thing that was free. Her mind transformed into stories and songs, carrying her soul away to dreams of goodness for those around her. Say hello to Kiata on Instagram @kiatayaki.

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