



**Art & Craft
Academy**



Different Heroes Series

Karim

and the Stubborn Pencil



Written by

Sara Ali Ahmed

Mohamed Thabet Ahmed



To every child whose ideas
are bigger than their lines,
and to every patient grown-up
who showed them
how to make friends with the pencil.

Karim and the Stubborn Pencil



Written and created by

Sara Ali Ahmed

Mohamed Thabet Ahmed

Illustrations and design: **Art & Craft Academy**

Published by



Different Heroes Series, Book 5

© 2026 All rights reserved



1

This is Karim. His head is full of ideas, like a box full of surprises.

He dreams of amazing inventions: a bridge made of straws, a car that runs on air, and a little robot that waters the plants. He loves building his ideas out of cardboard and empty boxes, and explaining them to anyone who will listen.



2

But Karim has a stubborn pencil.

When he holds it to write, it doesn't listen! The letters go up and down and grow big and small, and Karim presses so hard on the paper that his hand hurts.

He erases... and erases... until the paper tears.



3

In class, Miss Mona said, **“Write about an invention you dream of.”**

Karim was happy, because he had a thousand ideas! But he wrote only two lines... and then the bell rang.

He looked at his paper, then at his classmates' full pages, and thought, “My ideas are big... but the pencil doesn't listen to me.”



4

At home, Dad sat next to him and said, **“A pencil doesn’t need strength, Karim. It needs a hand that’s ready.”**

He taught him to “warm up” his hand before writing: squeezing a ball of clay, playing the spider game with his fingers, and picking up small things with clothespins.



5

Then Dad brought a thick triangle pencil and paper with colored lines: a blue line like the sky, a green line like the grass, and a brown line like the dirt.

“Letters stand on the grass. Tall letters reach up to the sky, and some letters go down a little into the dirt, like g, j, p, and y.”

Karim wrote slowly... and the letters sat in their places.



6

At school, Miss Mona told him, **“Your ideas can come out in more than one way, Karim. Draw your idea first, tell it to me out loud, then write just the most important words.”**

She gave him more time than the others. The pencil was still stubborn on some days... but Karim was learning how to make friends with it.



7

Then Miss Mona announced, **“Next week is Little Inventors Day! Everyone will present an invention and a poster that explains it.”**

Karim decided to make a robot that waters the class plants. He built it from cardboard boxes and a water bottle, drew a big colorful poster, and wrote a few words under it... on the colored lines.



8

On Inventors Day, Karim stood in front of the class. He pointed to his poster and explained his idea out loud, step by step.

Then he pressed the red button on the robot... and water poured from the bottle into the flowerpot!

Maryam cried, **“Amazing!”** and Omar said, **“Even Susu will love this robot!”**



9

Miss Mona said, “**Karim, your ideas deserve to be seen, heard, and written.**”

That night, Karim used his triangle pencil to write a little note on the colored lines. He drew a heart on it and gave it to his dad: “Thank you, Dad.”

Then he said to himself, “**The pencil is still stubborn sometimes... but now I know how to make friends with it.**”

The End

Let's Talk About the Story

1. Why was Karim sad after the writing lesson?
2. What helped Karim make friends with the pencil?
3. If you made an invention, what would it be? Draw it, then tell us about it!

For Parents and Teachers

Some children have lots of ideas and beautiful words, but writing by hand is very tiring for them. Their handwriting is uneven, letters go off the line, and their hand gets tired quickly. This is a real difficulty with writing, and it has nothing to do with intelligence or carelessness.

Signs we may notice

- Gripping the pencil very tightly, and complaining that their hand hurts.
- Letters of different sizes, and difficulty staying on the line and spacing words.
- Copying very slowly, and writing much less than they can say.
- Avoiding writing homework.

Good to know: Messy handwriting is normal for young children who are still learning to write. On its own, it does not mean a writing difficulty (sometimes called dysgraphia). It is worth a closer look when writing stays very slow, tiring, or painful despite practice.

What helps?

- Exercises that strengthen the hand and fingers: clay, clothespins, tearing paper.
- A triangle-shaped or thick pencil, or a soft pencil grip.
- Paper with clear colored lines, so the child knows where each letter goes.
- Other ways to share ideas: drawing, telling, voice recording, or writing only the key words.
- Extra time, and judging the ideas, not only how the handwriting looks.

If the difficulty continues, talk to an occupational therapist or a specialist in learning difficulties. They can assess what is making writing hard and how best to support your child.

Let's Warm Up and Write

You will need

Clay, clothespins, small dried beans or lentils, a triangle pencil, and paper with three lines drawn on it: blue, green, and brown.

Steps

1. Squeeze a ball of clay ten times with each hand.
2. Use a clothespin to pick up beans and move them from one bowl to another.
3. Spider game: “walk” your fingers up the child’s arm like a spider, and ask the child to copy you.
4. Write a short letter, like a, c, or o: it stands on the green grass and doesn’t touch the blue sky.
5. Write tall letters, like b, d, and h, that reach up to the blue sky.
6. Write letters that go below the line, like g, j, p, and y, and take them down a little into the brown dirt.

Start with just five minutes, and praise calm, slow work, not speed. Beans are small pieces, so adult supervision is needed.



Karim's head is full of amazing inventions,
but his pencil is stubborn and won't listen!
Can Karim learn how to make friends with it?

A warm story about big ideas, patience,
and the many ways to share them.

Different Heroes Series

Ages 5 to 8

Written and created by
Sara Ali Ahmed

Mohamed Thabet Ahmed



Scan for more activities
artandcraftacademy.com