

Recipe for a Name

by Ron Anahaw



chocolate chip cookies
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It was Jem's first day at his new school, and he was nervous. He wasn't sure how he should **introduce** himself to his classmates.

"Jem" was easier for most people than "Janaldo Marcos." If he told everyone "Janaldo Marcos," they might have a tough time saying his name. And if they had a tough time saying his name, they wouldn't want to hang out with him. And if they didn't want to hang out with him, he would have no friends, and would end up starting a weird YouTube channel about bugs and growing a weird mustache like his Tito Anthony and...

Jem decided that he would **introduce** himself simply as "Jem." Then he noticed that his teacher, Ms. Weaver, had left a nametag on his desk that said "Janaldo Marcos."

Jem hurriedly erased "Janaldo Marcos" on the nametag and wrote in "Jem"-no mustache for him today! Realizing that the boy sitting next to him was staring at the new name, Jem squirmed in his seat, feeling tense, but the other boy said nothing.

Ms. Weaver smiled, said "Good morning, everyone," and began taking attendance, reading names off the class list.

"Rebecca Álvarez?"

"Here!"

As Ms. Weaver read each student's name, Jem realized that his name was still written "Janaldo Marcos" on the list, and not "Jem." Ms. Weaver would call him "Janaldo Marcos" first and he'd end up with no friends. He started imagining himself with the mustache again...oh no...

"And our new student... Janaldo Marcos Sayo?" Even worse, she said his first name wrong, and that made Jem feel so embarrassed. She **pronounced** it "Ha-NAL-doe" instead of "Juh-NAWL-doe."

"Ha-NAL-doe MAR-cose Sayo?" Ms. Weaver repeated.

Jem raised his hand but said nothing. "Welcome!" Ms. Weaver said cheerily, before moving on. Soon, she finished reading the names.

"All right, is everyone settled in?"

Jem responded "Yes!" with the other fourth-graders.

Ms. Weaver took a piece of chalk and wrote the word **ingredients** on the board. "For science today, we are going to examine the **ingredients** that make up my favorite food. And that food is..." She turned around and wrote something else on the board: Chocolate Chip Cookies. The class broke out in a loud buzz!

"Wow, I'm glad that you are all so excited," Ms. Weaver said. "All right, who can tell me what everyone's favorite part of a chocolate chip cookie is?"

"The chocolate chips!" everyone answered.

"Mine, too! But we can't forget the other **ingredients**," she said, writing a list of the different

elements that go into a chocolate chip cookie- sugar, butter, flour, baking soda, and eggs.

Ms. Weaver pointed to each **ingredient** and explained what its role was: "Sugar and butter make the texture and taste of a cookie, which can make it chewy or hard, very sweet or less sweet. Flour gives the cookie a body, and baking soda shapes that body by making it rise. And eggs bring all those components together!" Next, she taped an illustration of a chocolate chip cookie up on the board and said, "In the end, each **ingredient** is important, and the cookie wouldn't be the same without it." Ms. Weaver continued on, explaining more about the science of baking... but Jem was distracted, fretting about what he might say to Ms. Weaver about the way she **pronounced** his name.

At the end of the morning, the students headed out to lunch, but Jem waited for a minute, then haltingly stepped up to Ms. Weaver's desk.

"Hello, Ha-NAL-doe MAR-cos, how can I help you?" she asked.

"Hi," Jem said. "I wanted to let you know that my first name is said *Juh*-NAWL-doe, not Ha-NAL-doe."

"Oh my, I am so sorry to hear that I **pronounced** it incorrectly," she replied. "*Juh*-NAWL-doe, am I saying it **properly** now?"

"Yes, Ms. Weaver, thank you," Jem replied, paused, then added, "It's kind of like a chocolate chip cookie."

"How's that?" Ms. Weaver responded, looking puzzled.

"My name also has **ingredients**. The 'Jan' comes from January, when I was born, 'Aldo' is from my dad's name, 'Ronaldo,' and 'Marcos' is from my mom's name, 'Marcielle.'"

Ms. Weaver broke out in a wide grin and said, "It *is* like a chocolate chip cookie! Thank you for sharing your name's **recipe** with me, Janaldo Marcos."

Janaldo Marcos smiled back and left for lunch, ready to share his name's **recipe** with anyone who would ask.

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. How is Jem feeling on his first day of school?

- A. sad
- B. angry
- C. nervous
- D. excited

2. Why is Jem worried about introducing himself as Janaldo Marcos?

- A. because he's worried that people will have a tough time saying his name
- B. because he knows his name reminds people of a popular song
- C. because there's already another person with the same name in the class
- D. because he doesn't want to embarrass his teacher by correcting her

3. Read the following sentences from the text.

"'Jem' was easier for most people than 'Janaldo Marcos.' If he told everyone 'Janaldo Marcos,' they might have a tough time saying his name.

[...]

'And our new student... Janaldo Marcos Sayo?' Even worse, she said his first name wrong, and that made Jem feel so embarrassed. She pronounced it 'Ha-NAL-doe' instead of 'Juh-NAWL-doe.'

'Ha-NAL-doe MAR-cose Sayo?' Ms. Weaver repeated.

Jem raised his hand but said nothing."

What can you conclude about Jem based on this information?

- A. Jem's fears about people saying his name wrong come true.
- B. Jem's fears are proved wrong when Ms. Weaver says his name right.
- C. Jem decides to let everyone say his name wrong for the rest of the year.
- D. Jem corrects his teacher with the right way to say his name.

4. How does Jem use the lesson about chocolate chip cookies in his conversation with Ms. Weaver?

- A. He talks about how he loves sweet foods, especially chocolate chip cookies.
- B. He explains that his name has different ingredients, just like chocolate chip cookies.
- C. He explains that he was raised baking different kinds of cookies, not chocolate chip.
- D. He talks about how he wants to learn how to bake for his parents.

5. What is the main idea of this story?

- A. In chocolate chip cookies, each ingredient plays a special role in making the cookie taste good: the butter and sugar make the texture of the cookie either hard or soft, or sweet or less sweet.
- B. Janaldo Marcos loves learning about baking and ingredients because he hopes to open his own bakery one day where he bakes his favorite desserts, including chocolate chip cookies.
- C. Janaldo Marcos, or Jem, is nervous about people saying his name wrong on the first day of school, but a school lesson about ingredients helps him explain how to pronounce his name to his teacher.
- D. Janaldo Marcos, or Jem, is upset and embarrassed about having to correct Ms. Weaver because she is saying his name, Ha-NAL-doe, when really his name is pronounced *Juh*-NAWL-doe.

6. Read the following sentences.

"'Mine, too! But we can't forget the other ingredients,' she said, writing a list of the different **elements** that go into a chocolate chip cookie- sugar, butter, flour, baking soda, and eggs."

What does the word **elements** mean as it's used here?

- A. the most impressive example of something
- B. a type of cook book used for baking
- C. things that you might find in your bedroom
- D. things that are used to make something

7. Choose the word that best completes the following sentence.

Jem is worried about people having a tough time saying his name, Janaldo Marcos, _____ he thinks that then he won't have any friends.

- A. because
- B. however
- C. last
- D. first

8. How does Jem's teacher react when he corrects her about how to say his name?

9. What are the ingredients of Janaldo Marcos' name?

10. Why do you think that Janaldo Marcos is thinking of himself using his full name, not "Jem," by the end of the story?
