

Things that
make me special

Why are we all so different?





Have you ever wondered why people are so different from one another?

There are tall people and short people, fat people and thin people...



Talking Point: Discuss other ways in which we are all different. Examples: Eye-colour, hair-colour, skin-colour

There are lots of things that can make people different sizes...

The food we eat, whether we play sports...



Talking Point: Discuss why eating different sorts of food or taking exercise might make us different: for example if we exercise more it might make us really good at sports.



There are other things that can help make us tall or short. They are called genes.

Everybody has different genes. Just like you can make different cakes by following different recipes, each person is different because their genes are different.

Recipes are a list of instructions that tell you how to make things like cakes. Genes act like instructions that tell how the body how to grow.

Genes are grouped together into chromosomes just like recipes in a book are grouped into chapters.

Each chromosome is like a chapter that contains thousands of words.

Some people might have extra letters, words, lines or pages in their chapters. Some people might have parts missing from their chapters.

Most people have 46 chromosomes, but some people might have more and some people have fewer.

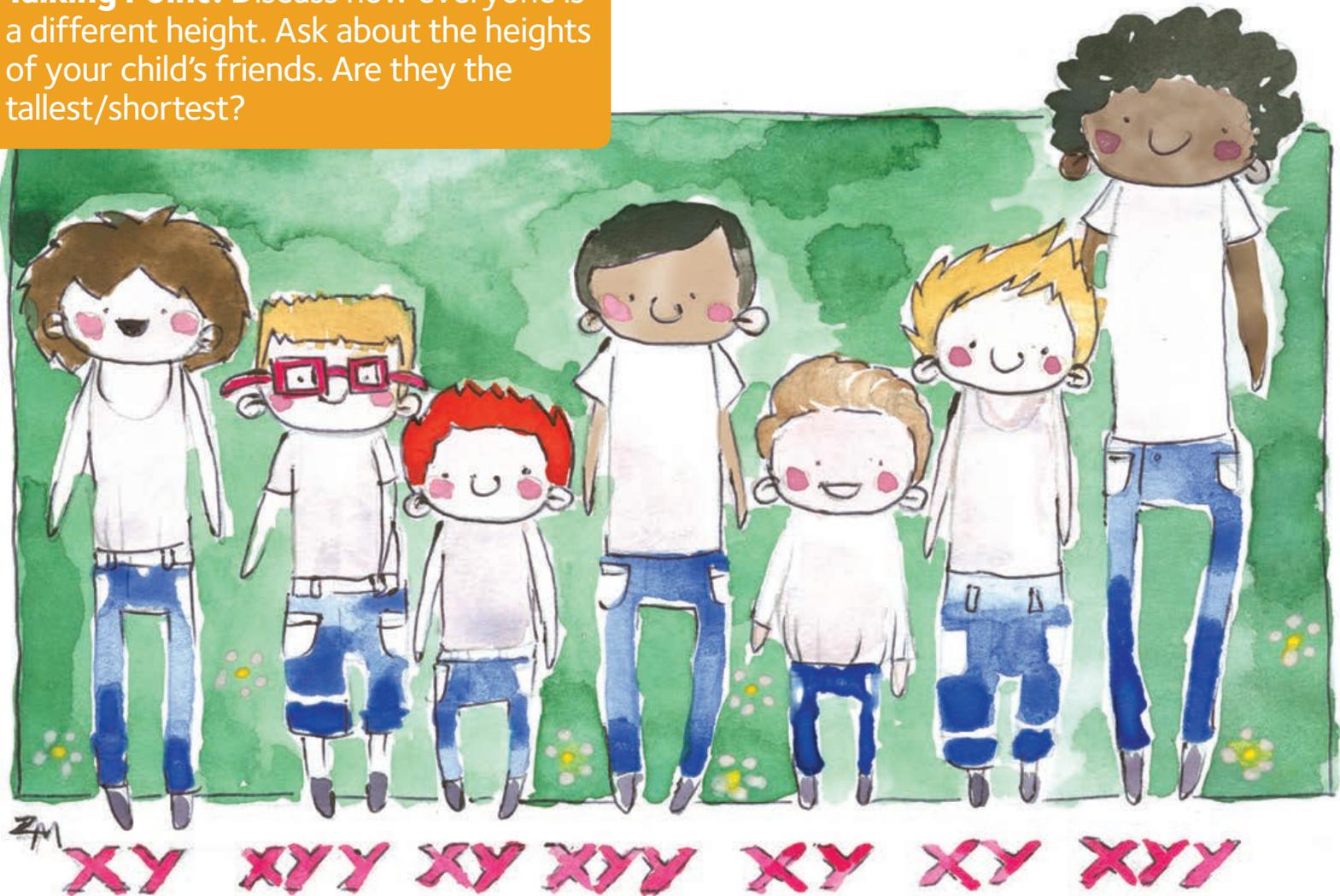


There are two special chromosomes called X and Y. Usually girls have two Xs and boys have one X and one Y.

Although most boys have one X and one Y, some boys have an extra Y. This is called XYY.



Talking Point: Discuss how everyone is a different height. Ask about the heights of your child's friends. Are they the tallest/shortest?



Boys who have XYY tend to be taller than other boys who just have one X and one Y chromosome.

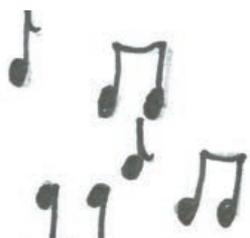
But not everyone who has XYY is tall, and there are lots of people who don't have XYY who are tall.



Talking Point: Discuss what things your child is good at. Ask them what things they enjoy doing or what their friends enjoy doing. Point out that you enjoy different things to them.

Some people like sports, while others hate running around. Some people enjoy maths, while others really like music. Some people love being around lots of friends, while others prefer more time on their own.

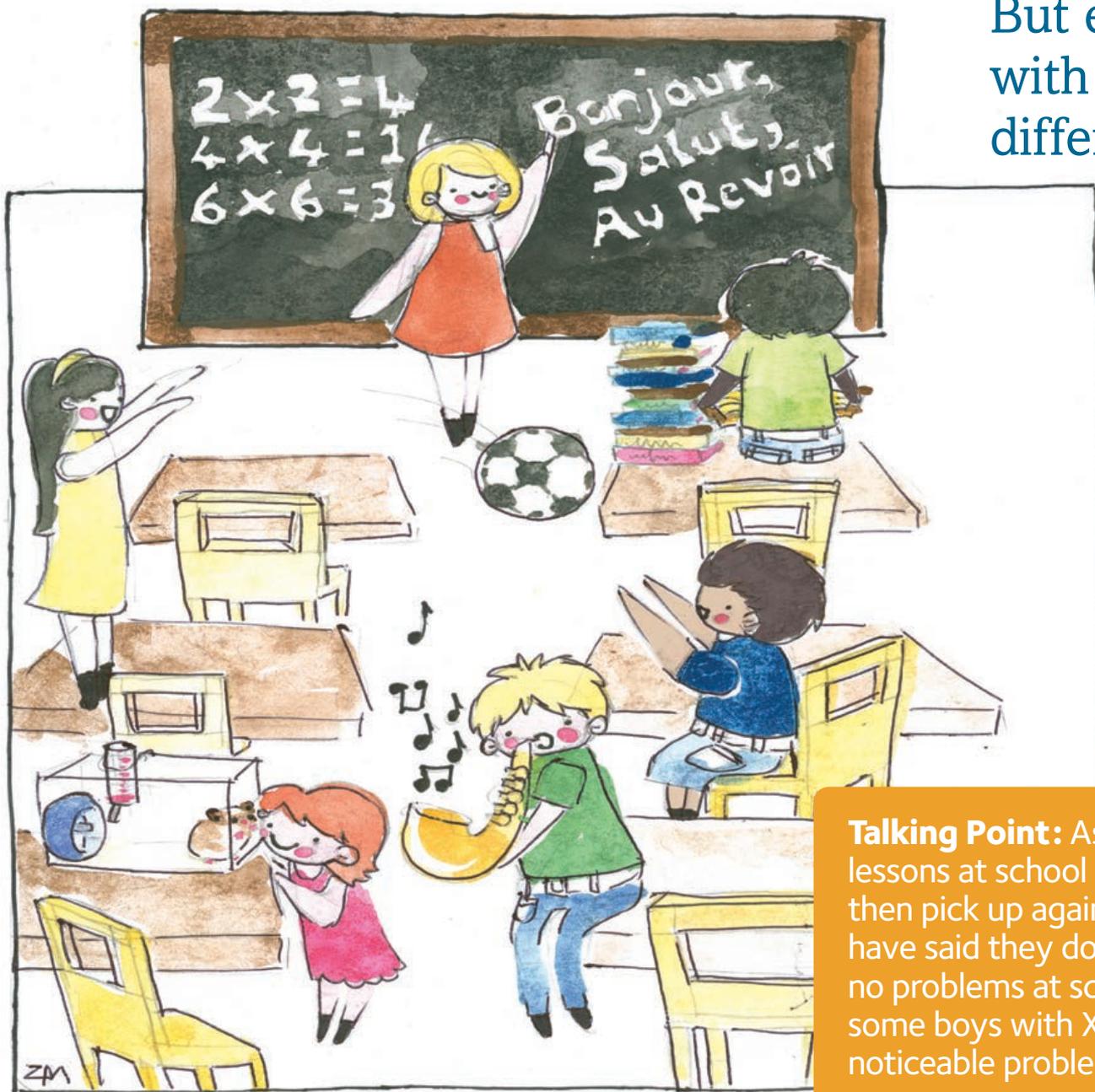
People aren't just different heights. They also all like doing different things and are good at different things.



Our genes help make us all different.

Some boys who have XYY might not like English lessons but really like doing art or music.

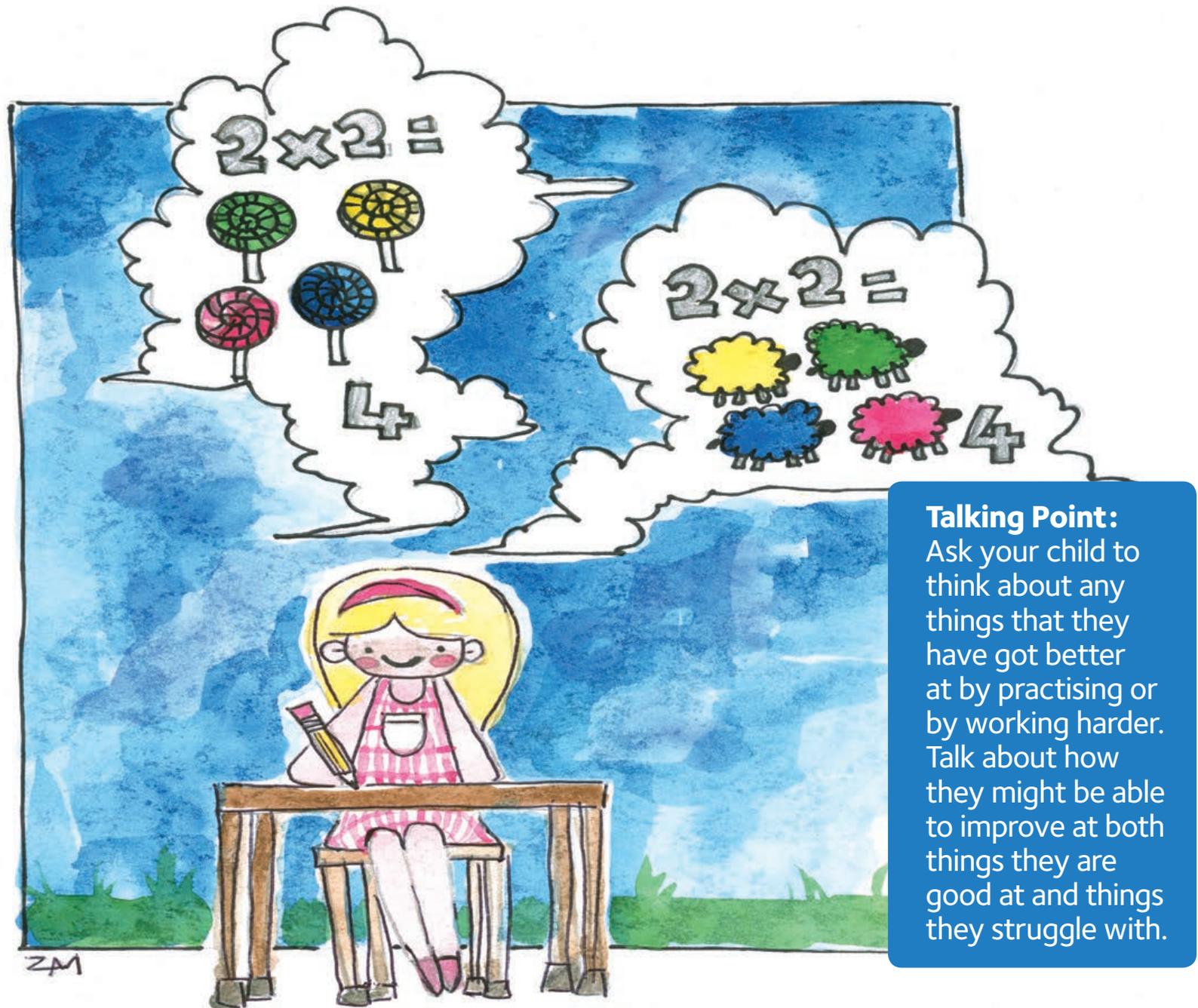
But everyone with XYY is different!

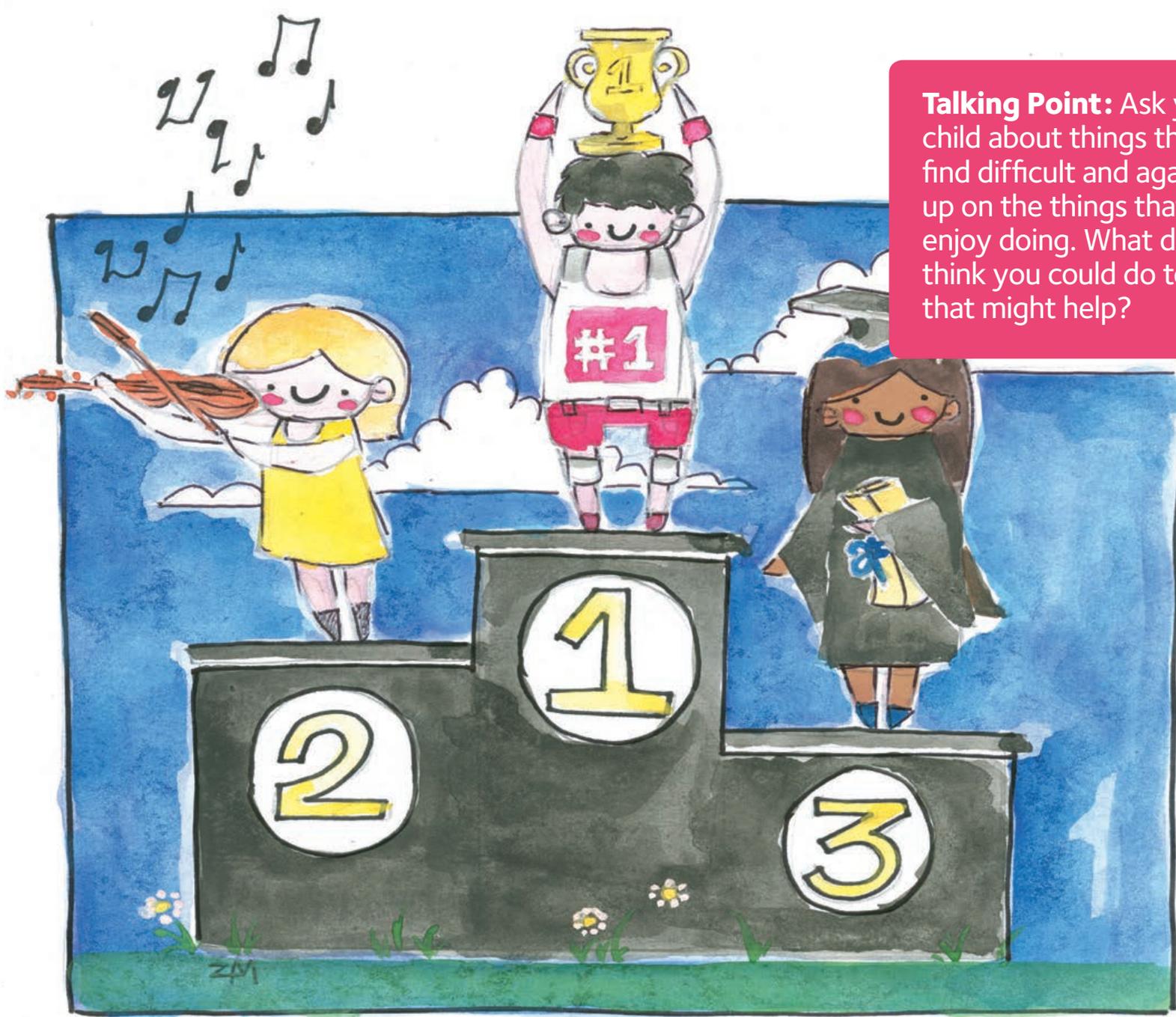


Talking Point: Ask about any lessons at school that they don't enjoy, then pick up again on the things they have said they do enjoy. If your son has no problems at school, talk about how some boys with XYY have no noticeable problems.

It's not just genes that matter...

If you practise playing football, you will be better than if you don't. If you like your maths teacher, you might work harder to do well in maths.





Talking Point: Ask your child about things that they find difficult and again pick up on the things that they enjoy doing. What do you think you could do together that might help?

It's really important to find out what things you like doing, but you should also work out what things you find more difficult.

Spending time working hard at things you find challenging is really important, but you should also take time to do things you enjoy!



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