Choosing Teams



Read the story. Then answer the questions in full sentences.

Name _____ Date _____

Theo had waited all year to be a team captain in gym class, and on Friday Coach Rivera finally called his name. The other captain was Ruby, the fastest runner in the whole fourth grade. Theo knew exactly whom he would pick first. His best friend, Felix, was standing right in front, grinning and giving him a thumbs-up.

But Theo also noticed Hamid, a new boy who had joined the class that week. Hamid stood alone at the back with his hands in his pockets, staring at the floor. Theo remembered his own first day at this school, when nobody had known his name and he had been picked last for kickball. He could still remember how hot his face had felt.

"Theo, it's your pick," said Coach Rivera. Theo took a deep breath and said, "Hamid." Felix's smile disappeared for a second, but then Ruby picked him, and the soccer game began. Hamid turned out to be a terrific goalie. He blocked three shots in a row, and Theo's team won by one goal.

After class, Felix walked over and said quietly, "You didn't pick me." Theo explained that he had known Felix would get picked anyway, but Hamid didn't know anybody yet. Felix thought about it for a moment and then nodded. At lunch, he waved Hamid over to their table, and by the end of the week, the three boys were practicing goal kicks together at every recess.

1. **What choice did Theo have to make when he became captain?**

2. **Theo remembered "how hot his face had felt" on his first day. What does this phrase tell you about how he felt, and which words help you tell?**

3. **Why did Theo pick Hamid first?**

4. **Do you think Theo was still a good friend to Felix? Why or why not?**

Answer key

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1. What choice did Theo have to make when he became captain?
   Whether to pick his best friend, Felix, or Hamid, the new boy, first.

2. Theo remembered "how hot his face had felt" on his first day. What does this phrase tell you about how he felt, and which words help you tell?
   He felt embarrassed. The clues are that nobody had known his name and he had been picked last for kickball.

3. Why did Theo pick Hamid first?
   He remembered being new and picked last himself, and Hamid did not know anybody. He also knew Felix would get picked anyway.

4. Do you think Theo was still a good friend to Felix? Why or why not?
   Sample answer: yes, because he knew Felix would be picked anyway, and he explained his reason honestly. Felix understood and even invited Hamid to their lunch table.