

*Should competition get in the way of keeping or making friends – Vihaan Ved, 9*

*It was a bright sunny morning. I was on my way to school with my best friend Rohit. Rohit is a scrawny boy yet he is so strong he can win in wrestling with most of the third graders. Rohit is fast on his legs like a cheetah and quick in his thinking like a fox. Rohit and me do everything together, we play together, we study together, we are in the same classroom, same outdoor activity. I know Rohit the most and he knows me the most, he is my only best friend.*

*The only thing he does not know about me is that he is my role model but I am envious of him. I am envious of him because he is the best at everything, he is ahead of me in every subject, he comes first place in every competition, he gets A+ in every exam and sometimes I can't match up. To tease me he makes me jealous with the prizes he gets awarded. I get frustrated and tell him "Stop troubling me" he says "Ok" and does the same thing the next day.*

*My anxiety got the better of me and I confided to my mother. In the night I told my mom how I felt and she said "Are you going to let competition get in the way with your friendship?" That stayed with me. I pondered about this statement and I thought I knew the answer. It was hard not to feel green because Rohit kept telling me how cool he was in hockey but I tried to take that out of my mind.*

*A few days later, Akshat, a school friend came to me when I was with Rohit and said "Hey Vihaan want to come for a play date tomorrow it is Saturday isn't it?" I was surprised he was asking me not Rohit. Hesitatingly I responded "Yes"*

*The next day when I went to Akshat's house I had fun, we had played Monopoly, Basketball, Football, Scrabble. I went home thinking Akshat's company was nice.*

*These days negative thoughts about Rohit have stopped coming to me. Expanding my horizon has made me realize that friends can compete and have fun at the same time.*