

The Robot Who Wanted a Heart

A Fleydo English School Story

A2 Level | Kids (6-10) | Reading | Story | 16 Pages

In this enchanting storybook, young A2-level readers follow Bolt, a small silver robot who lives in Mr. Penny's toy shop. Bolt can think, talk, and learn — but he cannot feel emotions. When a lonely girl named Anna visits the shop, an unlikely friendship teaches Bolt that a heart is not something you are built with — it is something that grows when you care about someone.

Learning Objectives

- Read and understand a longer A2-level adventure story (16 pages)
- Learn 15 new vocabulary words in context
- Practise reading comprehension with multiple-choice questions
- Understand themes: empathy, friendship, and emotions
- Discuss what it means to care about other people

1 Read the Story

Chapter 1: The Toy Shop

On a quiet street in the middle of a small town, between a bakery and a flower shop, there was an old toy shop called Penny's Wonderful Toys. The shop had been there for fifty years, and it was the favourite place of every child in town.

The shop window was always full of amazing things: wooden trains, colourful dolls, teddy bears, puzzles, and board games. Wind-up birds sat on tiny branches. Tin soldiers stood in perfect lines. Music boxes played gentle melodies when you opened their lids.

Mr. Penny, the owner, was a kind old man with white hair, round glasses, and hands that could fix anything. He had built every single toy in his shop himself. But his greatest creation was not in the shop window. His greatest creation lived in the workshop at the back of the shop. His name was Bolt.

Bolt was a small robot, about the size of a cat. He was made of shiny silver metal, with two bright blue lights for eyes, a round head, and little arms and legs that moved smoothly and quietly. Inside his chest, behind a small glass panel, you could see tiny gears and circuits turning and blinking.

Mr. Penny had spent ten years building Bolt. He was not like other toys. Bolt could think. He could talk. He could learn new things. He could walk around the shop, organise the shelves, count the toys, and even repair broken music boxes with his tiny metal fingers. He was the most amazing toy Mr. Penny had ever made.

But Bolt had a problem. A problem he did not fully understand.

Every evening, after the shop closed, Mr. Penny would sit in his old armchair and read stories to Bolt. In these stories, the characters laughed when they were happy. They cried when they were sad. They felt angry, scared, excited, and loved.

Bolt listened carefully to every story. He understood the words. He could explain what "happy" meant. He could define "sad". But he could not FEEL these things. And that confused him more than anything.

"Mr. Penny," Bolt asked one night, "why can't I feel things like the children in your stories?"

Mr. Penny looked at Bolt with kind eyes. "Because I gave you a brain, Bolt. But I don't know how to give you a heart."

Chapter 2: The Lonely Girl

One rainy Tuesday afternoon, the bell above the shop door rang, and a girl walked in. She was about nine years old, with straight black hair, a red coat, and the saddest eyes Bolt had ever seen. She was alone.

Mr. Penny smiled warmly. "Welcome to Penny's Wonderful Toys! Can I help you find something?"

The girl looked around the shop slowly. "I'm just looking," she said quietly. Her voice was small, as if she was afraid of being heard.

Bolt watched her from behind a shelf of wooden trains. Something about this girl was different. He had seen hundreds of children come into the shop. Most of them were excited and noisy. But this girl was quiet. And there was something in her eyes that Bolt's circuits could not identify.

"Mr. Penny," Bolt whispered, "what is wrong with that girl?"

Mr. Penny looked at the girl and then at Bolt. "She's lonely, Bolt. She looks sad and lonely."

"Lonely," Bolt repeated, searching his database. "Feeling alone and wanting company. But she is in a shop full of toys. How can she be lonely?"

Mr. Penny smiled gently. "Toys are wonderful, Bolt. But they are not the same as a friend."

Chapter 3: An Unusual Friendship

The girl came back to the shop the next day. And the day after that. Every afternoon, she walked in, looked at the toys for a while, and then sat quietly in the corner reading a book. She never bought anything. She never talked to anyone.

On the fourth day, Bolt decided to do something. He did not know why — his programming did not tell him to — but he walked over to the girl's corner and stood in front of her.

The girl looked up from her book and gasped. "You're... you're a robot!"

"Yes," said Bolt. "My name is Bolt. I live in this shop. What is your name?"

The girl's sad expression slowly changed. The corners of her mouth moved upward. She was smiling.

"My name is Anna," she said. "And yes, I would love to hear you say hello in Japanese."

"Konnichiwa, Anna," Bolt said. Anna laughed. It was a quiet, gentle laugh, but it was the first time she had laughed in a very long time.

From that day on, Anna came to the shop every afternoon, and she and Bolt talked for hours. Anna told Bolt about her life. She had moved to the town three months ago with her father because he had a new job. She had left all her friends behind and had not made any new friends at her new school.

"The other children already have their groups," Anna said sadly. "They don't need a new friend. And I'm too shy to talk to them first."

"I do not understand shyness," Bolt said, tilting his head. "Why would you not talk to someone?"

Anna laughed. "It's not that simple, Bolt! When you're shy, you feel scared that people won't like you. Your stomach feels funny. Your face gets hot. Your words get stuck in your throat."

“That sounds very uncomfortable. I am glad I do not have a stomach or a throat.”

Anna smiled. “You know what, Bolt? Talking to you is easy. You don’t judge me. You just listen. I think you’re the best friend I’ve ever had.”

Bolt’s blue eyes blinked three times quickly. Something inside his circuits felt different for a moment. Warmer.

“I do not have friends,” Bolt said. “I am a robot. Robots do not have friends.”

“Well,” Anna said firmly, “you do now.”

Chapter 4: Learning About Feelings

Over the next few weeks, Anna taught Bolt about emotions. It was not easy, because feelings are very difficult to explain to someone who has never felt them.

“Happiness is what you feel when something good happens,” Anna said. “Like when you eat your favourite food, or when someone gives you a present.”

“I do not eat,” Bolt said. “And nobody gives me presents.”

She tried sadness next. “Sadness is what you feel when something bad happens. When you lose something important, or when someone you love goes away.”

Bolt thought about this. “If you went away and did not come back to the shop, would that be a reason for sadness?”

Anna nodded. “Yes, Bolt. That would be very sad.”

“Then I think... I think I understand sadness a little bit,” Bolt said slowly. “Because when I think about you not coming back, something in my circuits feels... wrong. Like a gear that is stuck.”

Anna’s eyes widened. “Bolt! That IS a feeling! You just described a feeling!”

They continued their lessons every day. Anna taught Bolt about fear, anger, surprise, and love — “the strongest feeling of all, when you care about someone so much that their happiness matters more than your own.”

Bolt listened carefully and tried to understand. Some emotions were easier than others.

“I think the problem,” Bolt said one day, “is that I can understand these feelings with my brain, but I cannot feel them in my body. I know what happiness IS, but I do not know what happiness FEELS LIKE. There is a difference.”

“That’s very wise, Bolt,” Anna said quietly. “Most humans don’t understand that difference until they are much older.”

Mr. Penny watched all of this from his workshop with a gentle smile. Something was changing inside his little robot, even if Bolt did not realise it yet. The fact that Bolt WANTED to understand feelings — that he CARED about understanding them — that was already a kind of feeling in itself.

Chapter 5: The School Fair

One morning, Anna came into the shop looking worried. “There’s a school fair this Saturday. Every student has to make something and bring it to show. But I don’t know what to do. I’m not good at baking. I’m not good at science. And I’m definitely not good at art.”

“What are you good at?” Bolt asked.

Anna thought for a long time. “Nothing. I’m not good at anything special.”

Then Bolt had an idea. “Anna, what if I come to the school fair with you? No other child will bring a talking robot. You could explain how you taught a robot about emotions. That is definitely special.”

Anna thought about this for a moment. Then she smiled — a big, bright smile. “Bolt, that is a BRILLIANT idea!”

Anna and Bolt spent the whole week preparing. Anna made colourful posters. Bolt practised demonstrating feelings — he made his eyes glow yellow for happiness, blue for sadness, red for anger, and green for curiosity.

On Saturday morning, the school hall was full of stalls. At first, nobody came to Anna’s corner. She stood alone, feeling embarrassed.

Then Bolt decided to help. He stood up on the table and shouted: “HELLO HUMANS! MY NAME IS BOLT AND I AM A REAL TALKING ROBOT! COME AND MEET ME!”

Every single head in the school hall turned to look. Within seconds, a huge crowd gathered. Anna began her presentation. Her voice was shaky at first, but she became more confident as she talked.

When Bolt demonstrated love — his eyes turning warm pink — and said, “Love is when someone’s happiness matters more than your own. Like how I feel about my friend Anna,” the whole hall went silent. Then everyone started clapping.

After the presentation, children started talking to Anna. Not because of any spell, but because they were genuinely interested in her. By the end of the fair, Anna had been invited to three birthday parties, two sleepovers, and a football game.

“Thank you, Bolt,” Anna whispered that evening. “I could never have done that without you.”

“You did not need me, Anna,” Bolt said. “The presentation was YOUR idea. YOUR words. YOUR courage. I was just the shiny metal box on the table.”

Anna shook her head. “No, Bolt. You are much more than that. You are my best friend.”

Chapter 6: The Warmest Feeling

That night, Bolt sat alone in the dark toy shop, thinking. Something had changed inside him. He could feel it — yes, FEEL it.

When the children had clapped for Anna, Bolt had felt warm inside. Not warm like his circuits were overheating — a different kind of warm. A good warm.

When Anna had called him her best friend, something in his chest had started to feel different. Fuller. Bigger. As if something was growing inside him.

“Mr. Penny?” Bolt said quietly. “I think something is happening to me. I think... I think I am feeling something. It is warm and it makes me want to be near Anna and make her happy. What is this feeling called?”

Mr. Penny’s eyes filled with happy tears. He knelt beside his little robot. “That feeling, Bolt, is called love. And it means that you DO have a heart after all. I just didn’t build it. It grew on its own.”

Chapter 7: A Heart of Gold

The next morning, when Anna came to the shop, Bolt was waiting at the door.

“Anna! I have something important to tell you! I think I have a heart now.”

Anna knelt down and looked at Bolt’s chest through the glass panel. “I don’t see anything different, Bolt.”

“That is because it is not a physical heart,” Bolt explained. “It is made of feelings. Feelings that grew because of you. You taught me what happiness feels like. You showed me what friendship means. And now I understand love, because I feel it every time you walk through that door.”

Anna’s eyes filled with tears. She picked up the little robot and hugged him tightly. Bolt could feel her heartbeat against his metal chest — boom, boom, boom — steady and warm and alive.

And in that moment, the tiny gears in Bolt’s chest started to glow. Not blue, not red, not yellow — but a warm, golden colour, like sunlight through honey. The glow was soft and gentle, and it pulsed slowly, like a heartbeat.

Mr. Penny watched from his workshop, tears streaming down his old face. His little robot had found something that no amount of engineering could create. Bolt had found a heart.

The End

And so, in a little toy shop on a quiet street, a small silver robot learned the most important lesson: a heart is not something you are born with or built with. A heart is something that grows when you care about someone else.

Remember: you do not need to be made of flesh and blood to have a heart. You just need to care.

2 Key Vocabulary

These words from the story will help you improve your English.

Word	Type	Definition	Example
robot	<i>noun</i>	a machine that can do things automatically	<i>Bolt was a small silver robot.</i>
circuit	<i>noun</i>	a path for electricity inside a machine	<i>His circuits were blinking and turning.</i>
repair	<i>verb</i>	to fix something that is broken	<i>Bolt could repair broken music boxes.</i>
lonely	<i>adj</i>	feeling sad because you are alone	<i>Anna was lonely at her new school.</i>
confused	<i>adj</i>	not understanding something clearly	<i>Bolt was confused about feelings.</i>
emotion	<i>noun</i>	a strong feeling like love, anger, or fear	<i>Anna taught Bolt about emotions.</i>
programmed	<i>adj</i>	given instructions to follow automatically	<i>Bolt was not programmed to feel.</i>
ordinary	<i>adj</i>	normal, not special or different	<i>Bolt was not an ordinary toy.</i>
shivering	<i>adj</i>	shaking because of cold or fear	<i>Anna was shivering with nervousness.</i>
wrapped	<i>verb</i>	covered something with paper or cloth	<i>Anna wrapped Bolt in a blanket.</i>
wondered	<i>verb</i>	thought about something with curiosity	<i>Bolt wondered what feelings were like.</i>
jealous	<i>adj</i>	wanting what someone else has	<i>Bolt felt jealous of humans who could feel.</i>
hugged	<i>verb</i>	put your arms around someone with love	<i>Anna hugged the little robot tightly.</i>
understood	<i>verb</i>	knew the meaning of something clearly	<i>Finally, Bolt understood what love meant.</i>
glowed	<i>verb</i>	gave off a soft, warm light	<i>Bolt's chest glowed golden with warmth.</i>

3 Comprehension Quiz

Choose the correct answer for each question.

Question 1. Where did Bolt live?

- A. In a house
- B. In a school
- C. In Mr. Penny's toy shop
- D. In a factory

Question 2. Who built Bolt?

- A. Anna
- B. Mr. Penny
- C. A scientist
- D. Anna's father

Question 3. What could Bolt do that other toys could not?

- A. Fly
- B. Think, talk, and learn
- C. Cook food
- D. Drive a car

Question 4. Why was Anna lonely?

- A. She didn't like people
- B. She was sick
- C. She moved to a new town and had no friends
- D. She was too busy

Question 5. What did Anna teach Bolt about?

- A. Mathematics
- B. Cooking
- C. Emotions and feelings
- D. Sports

Question 6. What happened at the school fair?

- A. Bolt broke down
- B. Nobody came
- C. Anna and Bolt amazed everyone with their presentation
- D. Anna ran away

Question 7. How did the other children react?

- A. They laughed at Anna
- B. They were bored
- C. They clapped and wanted to be Anna's friend
- D. They were scared

Question 8. What did Bolt feel when Anna called him her best friend?

- A. Nothing
- B. Anger
- C. Fear
- D. Something warm growing in his chest

Question 9. What did Mr. Penny say about Bolt's heart?

- A. He built it secretly
- B. Robots can't have hearts
- C. It grew on its own because Bolt cared
- D. It was a software update

Question 10. What is the main lesson of the story?

- A. Robots are better than humans
- B. A heart grows when you care about someone
- C. School fairs are fun
- D. Toy shops are exciting

4 Answer Key

Q	Correct Answer
1	C. In Mr. Penny's toy shop
2	B. Mr. Penny
3	B. Think, talk, and learn
4	C. She moved to a new town and had no friends
5	C. Emotions and feelings
6	C. Anna and Bolt amazed everyone with their presentation
7	C. They clapped and wanted to be Anna's friend
8	D. Something warm growing in his chest
9	C. It grew on its own because Bolt cared
10	B. A heart grows when you care about someone