

My name is Sanjiv

During the first week of kindergarten, Trisha RECE assumes that Sanjiv, a South Asian boy, is an English language learner and speaks slowly when she addresses him, using short sentences. Her teaching partner does the same thing. During circle time, Trisha asks each of the children to share something about themselves or a special summer activity. Trisha pauses when it comes to Sanjiv's turn and, very slowly, asks, "Do you understand your new friends? What language do you speak at home Sanu or is it Sani?"

Sanjiv looked around at his peers. He hesitates, "Um, my name is Sanjiv, S-A-N-J-I-V and I speak English at home." Trisha was surprised and unsure how to respond. "Oh, I-I'm sorry, I just assumed you didn't speak English because ..." trailing off. She looks up and Sanjiv's mom is at the door to pick him up early for an appointment. Watching and listening, she fills the gap by saying to Trisha, "Our family speaks English fluently. We were both born in Canada."

You can add your thoughts and reflections in the space below.