*A Bike Like Sergio’s* by Maribeth Boelts

**Discussion Questions**:

1. Ruben tells his story and says, “Every kid has a bike but me.” He does not say why this is so. Using the clues in the story and illustrations, why do you think Ruben does not have a bike? [Ruben’s family may not be able to afford to get him a bike. His loving and supportive parents work hard, but there are four children in the family that need to be taken care of.]
2. Do you think Sergio understands that Ruben’s parents can’t afford to get him a new bike for his birthday? Why? [Sergio appears to be from a wealthy family and seems to assume that Ruben can get whatever he wants for his birthday. When Sergio and Ruben go into Sonny’s Grocery after school, Sergio spends his money on football cards. Ruben uses the money he has to buy a loaf of bread his mom has asked him to get.]
3. Why do you think Ruben kept the money the lady in the blue coat dropped on the floor?

[Ruben thought it was just a one dollar bill.]

1. Even if it was just a one dollar bill, do you think he should have kept it or run after the lady and return it? [Answers will vary. Be prepared for some lively discussion! Of course, the honest thing is to return the money regardless of the amount because it belongs to someone else.]
2. How do you think Ruben feels when he discovers that he has a hundred dollar bill? How would you feel? [Answers will vary.]
3. What are some choices Ruben can make about what to do with the money he found? [Possible answers: Buy a bike. Return it to the lady in the blue coat. Give it to his parents and let them decide what to do. Donate it to a charity. Put it in a safe place and save it for an emergency.]
4. Sergio’s teacher, Mr. Grady, is teaching the students about money in math class. He sets up a class store and gives the students play bills and coins to spend. Why do you think Mr. Grady is allowing students to pretend to shop during class time? [Mr. Grady may think this would be a fun way to teach the students about being consumers, how to save money, how to count money, and how to make change.]
5. Mr. Grady asks Sergio’s class some money questions, can you answer them? “How many nickels in a dollar?” “How many quarters in a five dollar bill?” [The answer is the same for both questions: 20.]
6. Why do you think Ruben did not buy a bike the day after he found the money? [He may have been confused and feeling guilty. Also, he was not sure what to tell his parents when he came home with a new bike.]
7. How did Ruben feel when he could not find the money in his backpack? [He was upset and sad. But he was smart enough to realize that this is how the lady in the blue coat likely felt when she discovered her money was missing.]
8. When Ruben returns the money to the lady in the blue coat she thanks him and says, “You have blessed me.” Ruben says he feels “happy and mixed up, full and empty, with what’s right and what’s gone.’’ What do you think he means by this statement? [Answers will vary.]