Dear Diary!

Meet 11-year-old Kaia, who is sharing a page from her diary each issue!

Your Grades Do Not Define You

I sat down at lunch last week with one of my super-smart friends — the one who’s never gotten anything less than an A in her life. “Kaia,” she said, “What did you get on the math test?” I could tell from her face that she aced the test, as always. “I got a C,” I said, feeling my face turn red. Math has never been easy for me, but I work hard at it. I felt upset and the look on her face told me what I already knew: it was embarrassing.

If I had to describe the feeling I get when I get a bad grade, it wouldn’t just be sadness or shame. It’s thinking that everyone is smarter than me ... like there’s something seriously wrong with me. It’s a terrible feeling, and I have to remember that it’s all a lie.

Our grades don’t define us. Sure, they can tell us how well we know this one math lesson or if we do a good job memorizing vocabulary words, but when we spend so much time focusing on our bad grades, we forget all about the times we got As, or we killed it on the tennis court or got a good part in the school play.

To the girls who always get As on math tests: You rock! I’m seriously proud of you and love watching you shine. But I am also cheering on the girls who blow me away with their gymnastics routines, who play the piano like professionals, sing like angels or draw beautiful pictures. The world would be a boring place if we all were great at the same things. So instead of feeling bad about that one C in math, I am going to work harder at writing. I will get better and better at tennis and yes, while I will do the best I can at math, if I still don’t get an A, I am done being ashamed because I am so much more than an A, B or C can ever describe — and so are you!

’til next time!

Kaia xoxo