MORAH BYTEN: Being that we have an even number in our class, no. [Look at each other in disappointment] Any other questions? [waits a moment] Good. [bell rings] The list of partners will be posted by the bulletin board. Have a wonderful afternoon!

[tapes a paper up by the wall. Class rises respectfully while MORAH BYTEN exists. Then everyone stampedes to the paper, calling and exclaiming when they find their name. Curtains.]

SCENE 2

[lunchroom. MIMI and CHANI sit at one end of the table, RIVKA sits near MIMI and CHAYA, surrounded by other girls]

DINI: [picking up her spoon in disgust] What is this? Glop? [shudders]

CHAYA: Otherwise known in the academic circles as tomato soup a la crème.

DINI: Well I don't care what language it speaks. It is *not* going near my mouth! [munches on a carrot stick. RIVKA takes a sip of the soup] Rivka! Are you okay? [jumps up and smacks her on the back.] Quick Sara, call Hatzala! Tell them it's food poisoning! [All the girls laugh at her antics]

RIVKA: [stops DINI's hand] Dini! I'm fine! It's just soup!

DINI: [repeats] Its just soup? She's really sick! Quickly! Let's lie her down.

CHAYA: Seriously Dini. Production tryouts aren't till high school. Leave Rivka alone. [tastes soup and makes face] Anyhow, the soup is not… its not so bad. [spits into napkin when no one is looking]

DINI: Fine. So Rivka, who is your partner for the project? [pops another carrot stick into her mouth]

RIVKA: Mimi Levin [DINI chokes on her carrot. LEAH smacks her on the back until she stops coughing]

[Scene shifts to other side of the stage where CHANI and MIMI are sitting.]

MIMI: [picking at her soup] You know, the difference between wisdom and knowledge is that knowledge is knowing that tomato is a fruit. Wisdom is knowing not to put it in a fruit salad.

CHANI: Or not making tomato soup.

MIMI: That's beyond wisdom. [both chuckle]

CHANI: So… who'd you get as a partner?

MIMI: [mumbles something unintelligible]

CHANI: What was that?

MIMI: [sighs] Rivka Cohen.

CHANI: Rivka Cohen?!?!?!?!?!?!?!?!

MIMI: Sshh! [nervously looks in RIVKA's direction]

CHANI: [laughing] Oh wow oh wow oh wow. I wonder what Morah Byten was thinking. [mimics Morah Byten] “So let’s see. Mmm hmm. Class genius with class queen. Sounds like a match to me!”

MIMI: Chani!

CHANI: [looks at her innocently] What? C’mon. That was probably your first reaction too.

MIMI: Of course not! [grins sheepishly] Okay fine. Maybe a little bit. Chani, what am I going to do? There’s no way we could work together!

CHANI: [folds arms] And why would that be?

MIMI: Well… Because…. There’s… Because there’s no room in my house! You know how there’s always kids running around everywhere and everything’s a mess.

CHANI: Hmmm. That is a problem. If only Rivka had a house also….

MIMI: [makes an exasperated noise] That’s not the point! Anyhow, its just not gonna work! We’re so different! Rivka is so… effortless. And talented. She’s not gonna need me for this. Its gonna be sooooo awkward!

CHANI: Its just for two weeks. How much could happen in two weeks already?

[curtains]

SCENE 3

[Each half of the stage is set up as a living room. Cohen living room is neat and classy looking, Levin is messy and worn. SHAINA is sitting on the couch, curled up with the phone. MRS COHEN is sitting on armchair on her iPad. MRS LEVIN is on floor, building a tower with her kids. BAILA is sitting by the table, listening to music and doing her homework. MIMI is reading a book.]

SHAINA: [into the phone] What? She got in? No way! I’m so excited! Did you read that email? They want us to dress “as befits a בת מלך” so we can’t wear junie skirts and sweaters. [pause] I know! My sister said that’s what she *lived* in! [pause] She said what?!

RIVKA: [bursts into the room and throws backpack on the floor] Hey! I’m home! Guess what?

MRS COHEN: Rivka. [points] Backpack. Hall. Now. And no screaming. [RIVKA removes backpack]

RIVKA: Guess what? Morah Byten finally assigned us that project!

MRS COHEN: [peering at iPad] That’s nice.

RIVKA: Can my partner come over tonight? We have *tons* of work to do.

MRS COHEN: Nice to see you take an interest in your schoolwork for a change. [RIVKA bows her head undramatically]

RIVKA: Well can she?