

Charlie behaves badly

As he leaves home, Charlie stuffs a balloon into his pocket. He wants to take it out and blow it up later. But he doesn't know if he is allowed to take a balloon to school.

When he goes to the toilet, he has an idea. How about filling it up with water?

"What are you doing?" George asks him at the basin.

"Mind your own business, George!" replies Charlie, annoyed at being disturbed.

"Oh, it's a water bomb!" exclaims George. "My cousin threw one once, and it was fun. But if you punch it hard"

Charlie goes out. In the playground, he spots Alice.

You can guess what happens. Alice gasps as the cold water hits her. The teacher comes out to find the culprit. Charlie does not dare to own up. He is frightened of getting into trouble.

"Who threw the balloon?" asks the teacher sternly.

Feeling nervous, Charlie still hesitates. Then he remembers that when he could not find his rubber, Alice owned up in front of the whole class. He was pleased to have his rubber back. He realises that Alice would hate getting all wet, and be cross if the culprit didn't own up.

"It was me, Miss. I was with George, and he told me to."

"That's not true, Charlie!" protests George. "I was there, that's true, and I told you what my cousin had done, but I never told you to do it!"

"Charlie, come here. Is it true that George told you to do it?"

"No, not exactly," replies Charlie miserably.

"And even if George did tell you to, who threw the balloon?"

"I did," says Charlie again.

"Not only have you done something stupid, you were prepared to lie to avoid being caught and to lie to yourself about your responsibilities. Whatever your friends may tell you to do, you are always responsible for your own actions. Now go and help Alice, and then you can find a mop to clear up the mess. We will speak again in the classroom."

