

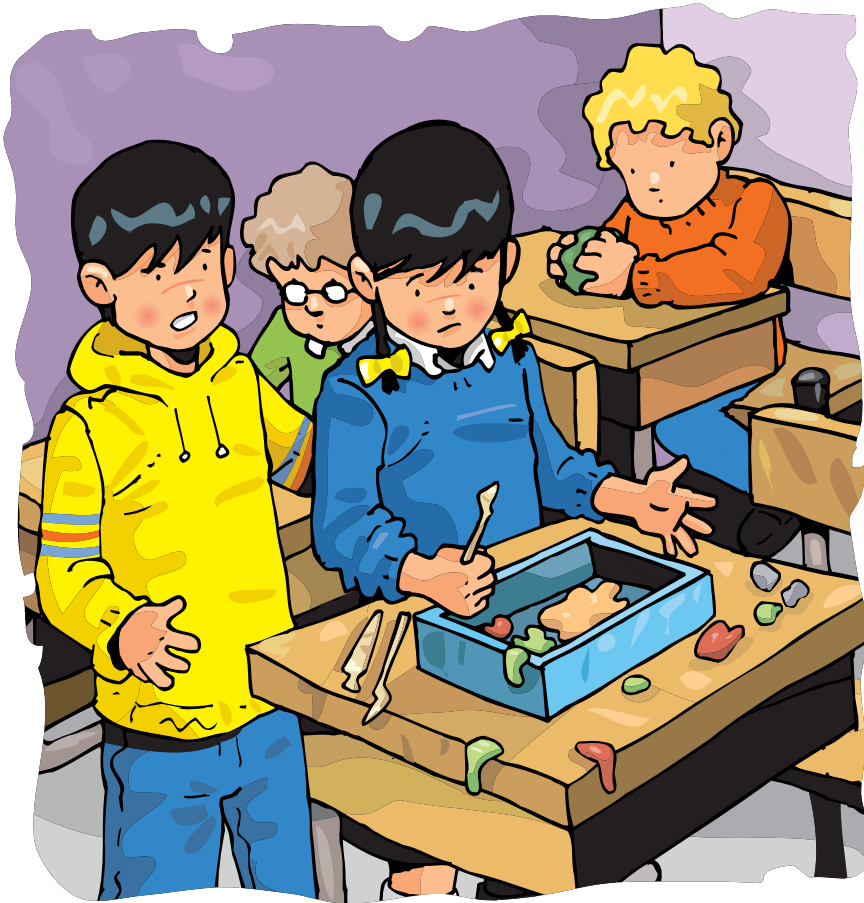
## Chapter 3

## "Hey! That's mine!"

On their way home, Charlie continued to tell Alice that she would never be happy if she didn't give a little more instead of moping. Alice didn't want him to go on about it, but she knew he was right. Charlie had been managing to make friends all day.

Alice was thinking about what she might do. "Maybe I could share something with the class?" she suggested to the teacher. She had in mind her most prized possession.

"That would be nice," said Mrs. Patterson.



## Unit 1

Alice loved sculpting clay. Her clays were colourful. They were expensive, but you only needed a little bit. And it could be baked and hardened into a toy you could keep.

Alice's clay box was precious to her—she had special cutting tools and moulds, as well as the clay itself. She thought the class would enjoy it.

Everyone was very excited. Alice could make such clever shapes! She made wonderful animals and flowers. She made mini footballs out of white and black clay and mini netballs from brown and black. Soon they were all wanting to try!

At first Alice was happy. But then she saw her classmates mixing the clays carelessly, creating big greyish, purplish lumps. They smeared clay on the desks, wasting it, and someone snapped one of the cutting tools by pressing it too hard. Tears stung her eyes.

"Now, stop!" Mrs. Patterson rebuked them. "Alice was kind enough to bring in her beautiful hobby, and you are all being very careless with it!"

"She said she wanted to share," pouted one girl.

"Sharing it doesn't mean you can *ruin* it!" said Mrs. Patterson. "What's the rule? Respect other people's property! This clay is Alice's property. That means you must care for it as you would expect her to care for something of yours!"

Alice held her breath. She was afraid they wouldn't like her now.

"Sorry, Alice," they said, one after another. Alice breathed a sigh of relief. They all helped clean up the clay. Some made planets and whales out of the greyish lumps, some flowers and footballs. Alice told them they could bake them at home and keep them. Then they straightened up her clay box.

"Thank you for sharing, Alice!" they all said.

"You're welcome," Alice said, wondering if she really meant it. But the ice had been broken. She went home feeling much more part of the class. Her damaged clay kit seemed more valuable than ever as it had brought her closer to her new friends.

