Should Neo tell on his sister?

Today we have a story to share with you. We'll be doing lots of thinking in question time, and we'll be hearing from other children, too. Are you comfortable?

In last week's *Bite* we met Baka and Neo, the meerkats. Baka was upset because Neo was chosen to do guard duty and Baka thought that she should have been chosen. Let's see what they're up to now.

Baka and Neo have decided to play their wrestling game! The wrestling game doesn't have many rules. It starts with Baka and Neo standing up, looking at each other. Then they grab each other in a big meerkat hug. And then they fall down on the soft sand, and roll over and over, until one of them gives up and lets go. And when you let go, you lose.

All the young meerkats play the wrestling game. It's fun - and it makes their muscles strong - and they need strong muscles to run fast and to dig for their food.

The game does have one rule though: They are not allowed to use their claws. That's because the meercat claws are so long and so sharp. And a scratch from those claws really hurts. So, when they play the wrestling game, the meerkats have to be very careful not to use their claws.

Neo and Baka usually play three games in a row. Today, Neo wins the first game. 'I won! I won!' he cries out, jumping up and down in excitement.

And he wins the second game too. 'I always beat you!' Neo yells.

And now Baka feels really cross - and upset. She's cross that Neo was chosen to go on guard duty, and she wasn't - especially because she's so much better at standing on her toes. And she's cross that Neo's winning at wrestling, and that he's showing off about it too. Somehow it makes her feel bad.

So, in the third game, Baka does something she's never done before. When she feels she's about to let go, she moves her arm up and scratches Neo's head with her claw - not too hard - just hard

enough to make Neo let go. Neo puts his hand to his head. There's a cut, and it's bleeding.
Neo glared at Baka and said, 'You used your claw! Baka, you used your claw! Why? Why did you do that?'

Baka can't answer. She just stares at the scratch on Neo's head - and Neo stares back. He looks very angry.

And then they hear another meerkat calling, 'Baka! Neo!' It's their big sister – and they call her, Big Sister.

As soon as Neo sees Big Sister, he starts to cry - and his crying gets louder and louder, until he's almost screaming. Big Sister is a lot older than Neo and Baka - she's already grown up. And her special job is to look after the baby meerkats.

Big Sister has to shout to be heard over Neo's crying:

Big Sister: What's wrong?
Baka: Neo's got a cut - on his head!
Big Sister: Neo, let me see.

Neo bends his head down so that Big Sister can see the cut. By now it's stopped bleeding and Big Sister sees that's it's not too bad.

Big Sister: It's just a little scratch. Does it hurt?
Neo: Yes! It really hurts.

And he starts to scream and cry again.

Big Sister [gently]: How did this happen?
Neo [yelling]: Baka scratched me with her claw!

Big Sister looks shocked.

Big Sister: Did you, Baka? Did you really do that to Neo?

Baka [quietly]: Yes…but I didn't mean to scratch so hard - I didn't mean to make it bleed.
Big Sister: But why, Baka? Why did you do it?
Baka: Neo was showing off - he's always showing off. He wouldn't stop and he made me feel bad.

And now Baka is crying too.

Big Sister: Were you showing off Neo?

Neo: Well, maybe a little bit. But look what Baka's done - look at my cut! She's the one who should get in trouble.'

Big Sister realises it's getting late and says, 'We'd better get back to the burrow. Mum and Dad will be wondering where we are.'

And so together they set off for home.

Let's think about what happens in the story.

When does Neo start to cry? Is it straight after Baka scratches him?
Let's check what the story says. It says: When Neo realizes his head is bleeding, he looks very angry. And then as soon as he sees Big Sister he starts to cry - and his crying gets louder and louder, until he's almost screaming.
Why do you think that Neo only starts to cry when he sees Big Sister?

Let's listen to what other children have said.

Georgia: Maybe at first, Neo didn't know how badly he was hurt.

Arielle: Maybe he wanted Big Sister to know that he was really badly hurt.

When Neo sees Big Sister he starts to cry - and his crying gets louder and louder - until he's almost screaming. Why do you think he cries so loudly?

Ezra: He wants Big Sister to feel sorry for him.

Now try to imagine that you are Neo. You've been showing off and you've made your sister feel bad. And then she scratches you and makes a cut on your head. Are you going to tell on her? And if so, can you say why you would tell on her?

Arielle: I would tell on her, because she broke the rules... so she should be punished.

Is that a good reason to tell on her? What do you think?

Olive: I would tell on her because then Big Sister can remind Baka how dangerous it is to use her claws.

Okay, is that a good reason to tell on her? What do you think?
Would you tell on Baka? If you would tell on her, do you have a different reason? Is your reason a good reason to tell on her?
And if someone said they wouldn't tell on Baka, what reason might they have for not telling? What do you think?

Georgia: If others found out that you told on her, they wouldn't want to be friends with you.

Ezra: Yeh, that's what my big brother says, you shouldn't tell on people because that's dobbing.

Reef: It's not okay if it's just to get them into trouble – but you should tell if someone might get hurt or you're worried about it.

Do you remember that when Big Sister hears Neo screaming and crying, she says, 'Baka, what's wrong?' Can you remember what Baka says? She says, 'Neo's got a cut on his head'. But she didn't say how he got the cut. Why do you think Baka didn't tell Big Sister that she scratched Neo?
And then, Big Sister looks at Neo's cut, very carefully and she says, 'It's just a little scratch.' Then she asks, 'How did that happen?' And Neo said, 'Baka scratched me with her claw!' Why do you think Neo told Big Sister that it was Baka?

Georgia: Neo was telling the truth.

Ezra: Because Baka had a chance to say it was her fault...but she didn't.

Arielle: I think Neo wanted to get Baka into trouble.

If you were Neo, would you want Baka to get into trouble? Can you say why?
Would you tell on Baka just to get her into trouble? Can you say why?
Is it okay to tell on someone just to get them into trouble? What do you think?

We heard some really interesting ideas today. Thank you for joining us. You might like to keep thinking about what counts as a good reason to tell on someone and have a talk to your family and friends about what they think, too.

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Thank you to our wonderful actors Arielle, Ezra, Georgia, Olive and Reef who helped us to hear different points of view. While sometimes these points of view might have reflected their own opinions, at other times they were asked to express an opposing view in order to help us think more deeply about the topic.