



Today the class was very quiet. I found it very unusual.

Suddenly Mihir puffed up his cheeks and pointed towards Rohan. Simran did the same thing while Shilpa puffed up her cheeks and pointed at Priya.

I called Priya and Rohan. I puffed my cheeks and gestured to ask what it meant.

Priya and Rohan removed some balloons from their pockets and kept them on the table....and the entire class burst out laughing sounding just like the balloons being burst!

There were five balloons of various colours.

I asked the class, "What shall we do with these balloons?"



“We will blow them... burst them... fly them... fill them with water... and perform some magic... let’s have some exciting experiment.”

“Excellent! Cool! We will have some fun with the balloons...we will make them push...dance...sway...or keep them still...Okay?”

“Yes, yes”, shouted the kids. “But how shall we do it?”

We quickly blew air into the balloons and filled them up.

We tied two balloons with threads and hung them on the blackboard.

“Now let these balloons play”, I said.

“How will they do it? How will this happen?” asked Mihir.

I called him near the blackboard and rubbed the hanging balloons on his head. And those two balloons began fighting with each other. They started pushing each other.

If one balloon went close to the other, the other would move further away. The class was watching this with bated breath and were wonderstruck.

Let us watch some more fun.

An ordinary balloon filled with air was kept between these two fighting balloons.



What a surprise...these two balloons held this ordinary balloon between them very tightly.

After seeing this the class made so much of a racket that it startled even the hanging balloons! The balloon between them slipped and fell down.

This balloon was then tied at the other corner of the blackboard.

“Mihir is always full of naughty ideas so the balloons were naughty”, I said.

Immediately Priya insisted that another balloon should be rubbed against her head. Let’s see what happens.

A new balloon was rubbed against Priya’s head.

It was taken near the balloon which hung at one end...but there was nothing!

The children started thinking. Why did this happen?

Priya took the balloon and observed it.

I decided to give the children a clue.

I asked them if they could observe any difference in the places on the head where the balloon was rubbed.



They remarked that Priya's hair was more shiny than Mihir's. Priya explained that she had oiled her hair.

"Hmm, there was no magic because of the oil!" shouted the children and just then Simran ran towards the blackboard.

She snatched the balloon from Priya and rubbed it vigorously against her sweater. Just as she was about to take it near the other balloon, Priya pulled her back. Simran held the wall for support and the balloon slipped from her hands...

then what a miracle...the balloon stuck to the wall.

All the scientists in the class shouted and clapped as this was a discovery for them.

"We will also now push against each other with balloons and stick them to the walls of our houses."

All this while Rohan was watching restlessly.

He got up quickly and picked up the fifth balloon from the table. He rubbed it against his head. He set out towards the balloon hung at the other corner of the blackboard. He reached the blackboard. Just as Rohan was about to touch the hanging balloon with the balloon in his hand, Priya and Simran ran towards Rohan. Rohan



extended his hand in the direction of the balloon which was hanging.

At that very moment Priya and Simran pulled him back and...

there was yet another miracle!

The balloon which had been lolling on the blackboard all this while was suddenly wide awake so to say!

That balloon suddenly leaped towards the balloon in Rohan's hand.

The distance between this balloon and the balloon in Rohan's hand was about 2 cm.

Rohan was startled by this sudden attack, he raised his hand and moved it here and there...and...the hanging string suddenly straightened up! The hanging balloon started dancing before Rohan's balloon with 'a stiff string and its nose in the air'.

The children were so taken aback by this scene that they even forgot to clap.

Now I thought the time had come to explain this mystery.

When a rubber balloon is rubbed against a cotton, nylon or woollen surface, the electrons on these surfaces come onto the balloon's surface and the balloon becomes negatively charged. When



two such negatively charged balloons are brought near each other they repel each other. This is known as 'repulsion'.

However, if a balloon that is not charged is brought near such a charged balloon, it gets attracted to that balloon. This is because two opposite charges attract each other and this is known as 'attraction'.

If we take a charged balloon near a wall it sticks to the wall because opposite charges attract. After a while the electrons disperse into the air and the balloon falls off the wall.

Now what do you think, who must have danced, the children in our school or the balloons?

And in your house are you the only one who dances or do some hanging balloons join you?

Will you let me know?

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