

## Gotcha!

By Colleen Messina

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Wes and his brother, Ben, were opposites. Wes was the older brother, and he was studious, serious, and careful. However, Wes was a bit clumsy. On the other hand, Ben was a natural athlete with a penchant for playing practical jokes. He liked to play practical jokes on members of his family. His mother never quite understood the idea that jokes were practical since most of Ben's pranks were annoying and often untidy. Ben also liked to perform experiments that ended in a huge mess.

Take, for example, the dry cereal experiment that Ben conducted. Six-year-old Ben wanted to figure out how much cereal could fit inside his shirt. He tucked the bottom edge of his shirt into the elastic band of his gym shorts and proceeded to pour dry cereal down his neck and into the space around his tummy. He thought this was a valid experiment, but when his shirt exploded from its tucked-in position and sent cereal in all directions around the kitchen, it didn't seem quite as scientifically worthwhile.

Of course, Wes came home shortly after this culinary disaster and laughed out loud. He thought with glee that Ben would be in trouble again, and he found this entertaining. Wes, of course, had been polishing his straight-A average and had brought home more evidence of this in his latest perfect math test.

Ben wailed and ran to his room. Shortly after that, his mother came home from work and wailed at the mess in the kitchen. She stomped up the stairs like a weary elephant. She went into the boys' room and began to wave her arms and yell. Wes went upstairs to see the spectacle of Ben getting in trouble...again. As Ben watched his mother's tirade, Wes, who stood behind his mother in the boys' room, decided to make things worse. He began imitating his mom by waving his arms and making faces. His mom wouldn't have a clue, and Wes thought this was funny. Then his mom turned around and said, "Wes, you are in trouble, too."

Mom had seen Wes's reflection in the mirror along the side of the room. She saw how he had imitated her, and she was not amused. Both boys had to go clean up the mess in the kitchen. Moms usually know more than their kids give them credit for. Gotcha!



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## Questions

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- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Ben liked doing practical jokes.
- A. true
  - B. false
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. What did Ben put in his shirt?
- A. dry cereal
  - B. peanuts
  - C. chips
  - D. rice

