

8 inches

3.5 inches

The Clever Cousins

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Illustrated by ???

Akash and Siddhi were visiting their cousin Palak in the United States. Siddhi was 9, Akash was 8, and Palak was 6. It was summer, so they were glad to get out of the heat in India. It was a long flight.

Palak's mother was waiting for them. She said, "We missed you so much."

"We missed you too," they replied. Then they drove to Palak's house. When they got there, Palak ran up to them and hugged them so tightly they couldn't breathe.

The next day they went on a picnic near a river. They took brown rice, tomato slices, mango, two boxes of sweets, and water. There they met Palak's friend, Akshat, who was 7 years old. Siddhi, Akash, and Palak were having lots of fun finding cool rocks by the river.

Suddenly there came a scream. "Who stole the sweets?!!!" Palak's mother was so angry. She blamed it on Palak, Akash, and Siddhi.

The cousins tried many tricks to catch the sweet thief, but none were successful. "Think, think, think," Siddhi said. Then "Why don't we put turmeric powder on the sweet box? Whoever opens the box to take the sweets will get turmeric on their hands. So we will examine their hands and catch the thief."

So they did. After about half an hour, they checked the hands of every family member and friend. Then they called Palak's mom and said, "We know the culprit."

"Who?" she asked.

"Akshat," the kids replied.

Now Akshat was enjoying the sweets, but his parents came right away and were very angry at him.

"I'm so sorry I blamed it on you," Palak's mother said.

"That's okay," the cousins replied.

That is how the clever cousins solved the mystery of the disappearing sweets.

4 inches

3 inches

4 inches

7 inches

4 inches

8 inches

2.5 inches

3 inches