Truthfulness
This week we are going to look at a poem that was written by Hilaire Belloc who lived a hundred years ago. He wrote stories and poems for children and in particular, he wrote some “Cautionary Tales”: dramatic and imaginary stories to teach children, “how to behave.”

I think the writing of Roald Dahl was influenced by Belloc. What do you think?

Interestingly the poem I’ve chosen is called, “Matilda (who told lies)”, although she is nothing like Roald Dahl’s Matilda and she come to a sticky end because of her lying.

Can you think of another, cautionary tale about a little boy who made things up and got caught out in the end?

https://youtu.be/hW1Gg7jf _c

Click on the link above to hear a reading of the poem.

Matilda Who told Lies, and was Burned to Death

Matilda told such Dreadful Lies,
It made one Gasp and Stretch one’s Eyes;
Her Aunt, who, from her Earliest Youth,
Had kept a Strict Regard for Truth,
Attempted to Believe Matilda:
The effort very nearly killed her,
And would have done so, had not She
Discovered this Infirmitiy.
For once, towards the Close of Day,
Matilda, growing tired of play,
And finding she was left alone,
Went tiptoe to the Telephone
And summoned the Immediate Aid
Of London's Noble Fire-Brigade.
Within an hour the Gallant Band
Were pouring in on every hand,
From Putney, Hackney Downs, and Bow.
With Courage high and Hearts a-glow,
They galloped, roaring through the Town,
'Matilda's House is Burning Down!'
Inspired by British Cheers and Loud
Proceeding from the Frenzied Crowd,
They ran their ladders through a score
Of windows on the Ball Room Floor;
And took Peculiar Pains to Souse
The Pictures up and down the House,
Until Matilda's Aunt succeeded
In showing them they were not needed;
And even then she had to pay
To get the Men to go away,
It happened that a few Weeks later
Her Aunt was off to the Theatre
To see that Interesting Play
The Second Mrs. Tanqueray.
She had refused to take her Niece
To hear this Entertaining Piece:
A Deprivation Just and Wise
To Punish her for Telling Lies.
That Night a Fire did break out--
You should have heard Matilda Shout!
You should have heard her Scream and Bawl,
And throw the window up and call
To People passing in the Street--
(The rapidly increasing Heat
Encouraging her to obtain
Their confidence) -- but all in vain!
For every time she shouted 'Fire!'
They only answered 'Little Liar!'
And therefore when her Aunt returned,
Matilda, and the House, were Burned.

Comprehension questions for older juniors:

https://www.teachitprimary.co.uk/attachments/thumbnails/big/x74494.php.pagespeed.ic.fO8hIU18NM.webp

TRUTH IS....

Trustworthy words and actions
Respect for doing the right thing
Uncovering the full picture
Telling it as it is
Having all the facts

Which line do you think is the best way of describing the truth and why?