

## Character Education: Honesty

**Pre-teach:** Greet the students and tell them that today you will be discussing the trait *honesty*. Ask the following questions and call on different students for answers. Below each question are examples of the type of responses you are looking for. You may need to rephrase the student's answers or guide them along.

**(Ask) What does *honesty* mean?**

1. To be truthful
2. To not lie, cheat, or steal.

**(Ask) Why is *honesty* important?**

1. Honest people are trustworthy, dependable, and respected by others.
2. It is the right thing to do. It feels good.
3. Telling the truth lets every one know what happened and keeps the wrong person from being blamed for □something they didn't do.

**(Ask) What are the consequences of dishonesty?**

1. Losing the trust and respect of others.□
2. The need to tell more lies in order to cover up.□
3. You may face punishment and embarrassment.

**Ask) What are the qualities of an honest person?**

1. Tells the truth, regardless of the consequence.
2. Admits when he or she is wrong.□
3. Does not cheat or steal.
4. Does not exaggerate to make things seem different than they are.
5. Keeps promises and encourages others to be truthful.

### Book Suggestions for Honesty:

Read and discuss a book that teaches a lesson about honesty. These books and others are located in our Character Education library and available for check out. This library is located inside the school library against the back wall under the windows. You will see a "Character Education" sign and the books are divided by character trait. We have roughly 30 books about honesty in the character ed library. Please check these books out with the librarian and return promptly since we all share these resources. Also, please feel free to bring an appropriate book

from home or the public library. These are just suggestions.

### **Grades K-2**

Franklin Finders Keepers, *Paulette Bourgeois*

Arthur's Computer Disaster, *Marc Brown*

To Tell Truth, *Patti Farmer*

Sly Fox and the Chicks, *Carl Sommer*

The Big Fat Enormous Lie, *Margorie Weinman Sharmat*

Tyrone, The Double, Dirty Rotten Cheater, *Hans Wilhelm*

Too Many Tamales, *Gary Soto*

Liar, Liar Pants on Fire, *Diane DeGroat*

The Honest to Goodness Truth, *Patricia C. McKissack*

If You Had To Choose, What Would You Do? *Sandra McLeod*

The Talking Eggs, *Robert D. San Souci* □

*The Big Brag by Dr. Seuss (Yertle the Turtle Book)*

### **Grades 3-5**

The Empty Pot, *Demi*

Honest Abe, *Edith Kunhardt*

Summer Wheels, *Eve Bunting*

Liar, Liar Pants on Fire, *Gordon Korman* □

The Summer When I was Ten, *Pat Brisson*

*Ricky Sticky Fingers by Julia Cook*

*But It's True by Heather Gemmen*

*Edwurd Fudwupper Fibbed Big by Berkeley Breathed*

*Sam Tells Stories by Thierry Robberecht*

## Honesty Activities:

Complete an activity to go along with your lesson. You may choose to incorporate an activity into your lesson at any time. Oftentimes visuals and experiments are very effective at the beginning and will get your students excited about the lesson.

### Role Play (Suggested for grades 3-5)

Divide the students into small groups. Ask each group to write a short skit to present to the rest of the class in which a person has a choice to be either honest or dishonest. Be sure the students include consequences of the choice in their skit. \*If you can locate an Abraham Lincoln's hat you can put skit ideas on strips of paper and have each group select one and act it out. Here are some suggestions for skit ideas.

1. The cashier only charges you for two candy bars when you really bought three.
2. You find a \$10 bill in the hallway at school.
3. A friend asks if he can copy your answers during a test.
4. You promised your mom or dad you would clean your room, but you watched TV instead.
5. You borrowed your friend's skateboard and lost it.
6. At the store, you see one of your friends put something in her pocket without paying for it.
7. You think no one will notice if you take two cookies from the tray when the sign says "One cookie per person."
8. The rule states that you must be 8 years old to play. Who will know that you're only 7 years old?

### Honesty Comic Strip (suggested for grades 3-5)

Materials: paper and colored pencils and star stickers

Divide the children into groups of 2-3 kids. Ask them to draw a comic strip about a person being honest. You can give them a specific topic or use the suggestions under the "role play" section above. Ask them to show how the person made an honest choice. Have them draw 3-5 sections for the comic. Display the comic strips around the room and give each student a star sticker. Have them go around and vote for their favorite comic strip by placing a star

on it.

### **Honest math (suggested for grades 3-5)**

Divide the class into small groups of about 4-5 students per group. Give each group a different question. Have one member of the group ask the question to the entire class. Each student will write their answer on a piece of paper and submit it. Repeat this so each group gets to ask their question and gathers the answers for their question. Then have the students return to their group. Then have that group take all the answers and analyze them. Have them answer these questions and present it to the class.

1. How many people answered yes and how many answered no?
2. How many more answered yes than no?
3. Graph your answers using a bar graph
4. What did you learn about the class?

Here are some sample questions:

1. If you found a wallet on the street would you keep it?
2. Would you give a friend an answer to a test question if they asked?
3. Would you take something from a store that you wanted for a long time if no one sees you?
4. Do you play video games that are rated higher than your age?

### **Honest Advertising (suggested for grades 3-5)**

Divide students into small groups. Have students select a commercial that they recently viewed on television. Think about commercials for cereal, sport clothing, toys, video games. etc. Ask students to write about their perception of the commercial and tell whether or not they feel that the commercials are honest in their advertisements. Have them present their findings for the class. You may be able to access these commercials on YouTube.

Have them think about how the ad may be misleading or dishonest.

- Does it make the toy look better than it is? Does it really do all the things the ad says it does?
- If its and ad for food is the food really healthy? Will it make you better at sports or smarter?
- Will wearing sports clothing or shoes promoted by an athlete make them better in sports?

- If they play certain video games or wear certain clothes will they have more friends?
- Who is the ad targeting? Is it targeting small children, parents, etc.
- Does the commercial give all the important information or does it leave some out? Does it exaggerate the truth?

### **The Honesty Pledge** (Suggested for all grades)□

Materials: paper and crayons

Ask the students to write their own honesty pledge. This is the student's promise to always be truthful in their words and actions. After they have finished writing, students can decorate and sign their pledge. Start by having them write on a paper "Starting today, I am someone who tells the truth". If they are older, have them list a few characteristics they promise to work on such as:

- Not exaggerating
- Not twisting the truth or leaving out part of it
- Not getting caught up in "cover ups"
- Be proud of yourself when you tell the truth

### **Fact or Fantasy (suggested for grades k-2)**

Materials: red and green circles

When young children tell stories they often exaggerate to make the story more fun and interesting. Young children have difficulty understanding the difference between fact and fantasy. When listening to a story some questions to ask are "did this really happen or is this something you wish would happen". This activity will help reinforce the difference between fact and fantasy.

Give children a red paper circle and a green paper circle. The red circle signals "stop." Start telling a made-up story. Have the children hold up the green circle until you say something that couldn't really happen. Then hold up the red circle to stop you. Continue the story using the signals for facts and fantasies. Discuss the difference in a fantasy and reality.

## **Pinocchio (suggested for grades k-2)**

Materials: Pinocchio book, print out of Pinocchio for each student

Read the story Pinocchio so all the students are familiar with the story. Then give each student a picture of Pinocchio. Read a list of “facts” and have the children add to his nose each time they think you are lying. These facts can be anything you can think of or things about yourself. Make some things obvious and others things they may have to guess at. Such as:

- I have blond hair
- I drive an ice cream truck
- I have a pet dog
- I am wearing shoes
- I love to go to the beach
- I have a pet alligator
- I am wearing red pants
- I live in a castle

## **The Butcher Story (suggested for all grades)**

**Read this brief story to the class and discuss**

A butcher who had had a particularly good day, proudly flipped his last chicken on a scale and weighed it. “That will be \$5.35,” he told the customer. “That’s a good price, but it really is a little too small,” said the woman. “Don’t you have anything larger?” Hesitating, but thinking fast, the clerk re- turned the chicken to the refrigerator, paused a moment, then took it out again, “This one, “he said faintly,” will be \$5.65.” The woman paused for a moment, then made her decision  
. . .

“I know what,” she said, I’ll take both of them!”

## **I am on the Right Foot (suggested for graded k-2)**

Materials: paper and crayons

Talk about the saying “I am on the right foot”. That this means doing the right thing or starting out doing something you know will be good. Give each student a piece of paper and have them trace their right foot. Have them write on the paper “Being Honest puts me on the right foot”. Have them decorate their drawing.

## Honesty Videos

YouTube is a great resource for videos about honesty. Here are a few suggestions but feel free to find your own age appropriate videos.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GRuaX7X6u\\_s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GRuaX7X6u_s)

This is a cute song about honesty, set to the tune of “Party in the U.S.A.” by Miley Cyrus.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ojqCFt5uwrc>

This clip shows a social experiment where a man “accidentally” drops a wallet, and then films strangers’ reactions when they see him drop the wallet. After the clip, the class should discuss why some people gave the wallet back, while others kept the wallet, and talk about how it is important to show honesty, even when no one is watching.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LJ-ZqDYuXwU>

In this moving clip, a boy wins a raffle that enters him into a competition at half-time at a hockey game. He has the chance to win \$50,000—if he makes an impossible shot with a hockey stick. To everyone’s surprise, he does! However, it turned out that the boy’s twin brother took his place and was the one who actually made the shot. The father and children appear on television and discuss their decision to admit that the son did not win honestly, and how they sacrificed \$50,000 because it was more important to be honest.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WELkRnpfBhw>

This is a brief song about the importance of telling the truth (for younger students).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tcmf3h6YoMI>

Short video about how telling one lie leads to others and only makes the situation worse. (for younger students)

### Closing Comment

Read and discuss the meaning of the quote below.

***“Honesty is always the best policy” ~George Washington***

***or***

***“If you tell the truth, you don’t have to remember anything.”—Mark Twain***

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