

SASO: MIDDLE SCHOOL CHARACTER EDUCATION TEACHING GUIDE

TOPIC: HONESTY (Wellington Smith SASO DVD)

Dr. Carolyn Peluso Atkins, Professor
Department of Speech Pathology & Audiology
College of Human Resources & Education
West Virginia University

Note to Teacher: This lesson encompasses one of the Six Pillars of Character (josephsoninstitute.org): Trustworthiness. Specifically, it focuses on being an honest individual. It offers the teacher guidelines to follow after students have viewed the DVD of Wellington Smith: Honesty.

Discussion questions, scenarios, and suggestions for writing and speaking assignments have been designed to develop student critical thinking, reflection, interaction, and creativity. Discussion questions and suggestions for writing and speaking assignments are interchangeable and should be determined by the teacher.

With regard to discussion questions and scenarios, teachers may pose questions to students individually or in small groups. With regard to the latter, a spokesperson for each group should be selected to summarize his or her group's discussion to the rest of the class.

Discussion Questions:

1. How do you define honesty?
2. What are examples of honesty?
3. Is it important to be an honest person? Why?
4. Who is an example of an honest person? Why do you consider this person to be honest?
5. Are you an honest person? Give examples to support your answer.
6. Could you be more honest? Give examples to support your answer.
7. Describe someone you know who is honest.
8. Describe a time when you observed honesty at home.
9. Describe a time when you observed honesty in school.
10. Describe a time when you were dishonest, and you learned a lesson from it.
11. Are there circumstances when it is appropriate to be dishonest? If you think there are, describe them.
12. Have you ever had a friend lie to you? How did you feel? Do you trust that person now?

13. Describe a time when you were honest in a difficult situation. Were you rewarded for your honesty?
14. Should people be rewarded for honesty? Why or why not?
15. What could you do to be a more honest and trustworthy person?

Scenarios: What would you do?

1. Your best friend wears an outfit that you don't like and asks your opinion. What would you tell him/her?
2. You saw your best friend cheat on a test. What would you do?
3. If you broke a friend's trust by telling one of his/her secrets, what would you do to regain it?
4. Your friend lied to you about having plans for the weekend and you found out. How would you react?

Writing/Speaking Assignments: Students either may write a paper or give an oral presentation about the topic (length and guidelines to be determined by the teacher).

1. Discuss someone you know (or know of) who is an honest person.
2. Define honesty in your own words and give examples to explain your definition.
3. Are you an honest person? Why? How does that influence how you interact with those around you?
4. Interview your family members and/or friends and ask them to define honesty and to tell you about one time when they were honest in a difficult situation.
5. Discuss a time in your life when you were honest even though it may have been difficult. What happened and how did you feel? What did you learn from the experience?
6. Discuss a time in your life when you were not honest. What happened and how did you feel? What did you learn from the experience?
7. Discuss a time in your life when someone else was dishonest with you. What happened? How did it make you feel? What did you learn from the experience?
8. Are honest people happier than those who are dishonest? Why or why not?

9. Discuss someone who is well-known because of his/her honesty.
10. Discuss someone who is well-known because of his/her lack of honesty.
11. Is respect related to honesty? Is self-respect related to honesty? Please explain.
12. What, if anything, keeps you from being more honest?
13. Is honesty important in today's society? Why or why not?
14. Select one of the quotes below and explain what it means. Or, find a quotation about honesty and explain what it means. Identify the author of the quote and describe who that individual is (e.g., Abraham Lincoln, 16th President of the United States).

Quotations about Honesty:

1. Honesty is the first chapter in the book of wisdom. (Thomas Jefferson)
2. I love you, and because I love you, I would sooner have you hate me for telling you the truth than adore me for telling you lies.(Pietro Aretino)
3. We lie loudest when we lie to ourselves.(Eric Hoffer)
4. There is no such thing as a minor lapse of integrity. (Tom Peters)
5. Integrity is what we do, what we say, and what we say we do. (Don Galer)
6. No legacy is so rich as honesty. (William Shakespeare)
7. The trite saying that honesty is the best policy has met with the just criticism that honesty is not policy. The real honest man is honest from conviction of what is right, not from policy. (Robert E. Lee)
8. A true friend will tell you the truth to your face—not behind your back. (Sasha Azevedo)
9. Honesty: The best of all the lost arts. (Mark Twain)
10. If you tell the truth, you don't have to remember anything. (Mark Twain)
11. Truth is the most valuable thing we have, so I try to conserve it. (Mark Twain)
12. Often the surest way to convey misinformation is to tell the strict truth. (Mark Twain)
13. A lie can travel half way around the world while the truth is putting on its shoes. (Mark Twain)
14. Those who think it is permissible to tell white lies soon grow color-blind. (Austin O'Malley)
15. With lies you may get ahead in the world - but you can never go back. (Russian proverb)

16. A half-truth is a whole lie. (Yiddish Proverb)
17. When you stretch the truth, watch out for the snapback. (Bill Copeland)
18. We tell lies when we are afraid... afraid of what we don't know, afraid of what others will think, afraid of what will be found out about us. But every time we tell a lie, the thing that we fear grows stronger. (Ted Williams)
19. Like all valuable commodities, truth is often counterfeited. (James Cardinal Gibbons)
20. When truth is divided, errors multiply. (Eli Siegel)
21. Truth is such a rare thing; it is delightful to tell it. (Emily Dickinson)
22. The cruelest lies are often told in silence. (Adlai Stevenson)
23. The truth is the only thing worth having, and, in a civilized life, like ours, where so many risks are removed; facing it is almost the only courageous thing left to do. (E.V. Lucas)
24. The truth needs so little rehearsal. (Barbara Kingsolver)
25. Men stumble over the truth from time to time, but most pick themselves up and hurry off as if nothing happened. (Winston Churchill)
26. To see what is in front of one's nose requires a constant struggle. (George Orwell)
27. All truths are easy to understand once they are discovered; the point is to discover them. (Galileo Galilei)
28. A lie may take care of the present, but it has no future. (Author Unknown)
29. If you want to ruin the truth, stretch it. (Author Unknown)
30. The truth is heavy; therefore few care to carry it. (Author Unknown)
31. Beware of the half truth. You may have gotten hold of the wrong half. (Author Unknown)