

# Integrity

This is the second week of our Integrity unit. Students will expand their understanding of integrity and explore how it can fluctuate depending on the setting if we are not careful.

Begin the unit with the whole class lesson and then aim to complete at least two of the mini lessons with your students throughout the week. Each mini lesson is designed to present elements of the main lesson in new and engaging ways.

## Main Lesson

**Whole Class Lesson**  
30 minutes



### Resisting Temptation

Students will examine the temptations present when alone and brainstorm solutions to combat these temptations. (See page 2 for lesson details.)

## Mini Lessons

**For Small Groups**  
15 minutes



### Integrity Inventory for Teens

Divide into groups of 4-6. Have the groups create an integrity inventory for personal use. Each inventory must include at least 5 ways to self-assess your level of integrity. Before the groups begin, explain that an inventory includes traits that match up to the concept of Integrity. What actions are you doing that demonstrate integrity?

**For Partners**  
15 minutes



### The Consequences of Lying

With your partner, discuss whether lying ruins relationships? Why or why not? What about the lies that are never discovered? Provide examples to support your point of view.

**For Individuals**  
15 minutes



### The Face of Integrity

Using the template provided (or freehand if you enjoy art!), identify traits of a person that shows integrity/honesty. You can use both pictures and words.

**Technology-Focused**  
15 minutes



### The Lens of Integrity

How do popular websites “bend” the truth to get you to click on articles, ads, etc.? Using yahoo.com (or another news website), identify 3 misleading headlines. As a group, rewrite the headlines to reflect an honest summary of the contents. Can be done in small groups if time permits.

# Resisting Temptation

Students will examine the temptations present when alone and brainstorm solutions to combat these temptations.

## Lesson Timeframe

30 minutes

## Required Materials

- Index Cards
- Pencils

## Standards Map

This lesson aligns with CASEL Competencies, National Health Education Standards, International Society for Technology in Education Standards, when applicable, and Common Core State Standards. Please refer to the [Standards Map](#) for more information.

## Lesson Objective

Students will:

- Evaluate how they currently demonstrate integrity across settings
- Identify areas of struggle as it relates to integrity and create a plan for increasing integrity on a personal level

## Teacher Connection/Self-Care

Being a teacher requires a higher-than-normal degree of integrity. In fact, it can sometimes feel like we are under the microscope; our students are watching us, their families are watching us, and our community is watching us. We often can't go to the grocery store or out for dinner without being recognized (or cornered!) Our middle school students are especially perceptive and look to their teachers for how to act, think, and relate. If you are feeling like there is too much pressure on you, remember that you are also an individual. You get to live your life as you choose to and you do have a life outside of school. Honor your free-time, your family, your hobbies, and your "me-time". Teachers are often held to a very high standard without necessarily receiving the respect, pay, and prestige the position and the individual deserves. Reclaim your personal integrity by feeding your mind, body, and soul with good things that are separate from the job. If you are at your best, then your students will be at their best, too.



## Share

3-4 minutes

Think back to our definition of integrity: Doing what you know to be right and kind in all situations.

What are some examples within your day to day activities that this might be challenging? Invite Student responses.



## Inspire

4-6 minutes

Last week we explored the connection between honesty and integrity and the possible external negative consequences when we compromise ourselves with choices that do not line up with these concepts. This week our focus expands to include the internal struggle caused by dishonesty and compromised integrity.

This definition does not leave room for the “gray area” of bending the truth. When we are true to ourselves and really take a hard look at the choices we make when we are alone or when no one is directly there to hold us accountable, we know immediately if we are acting with integrity. Every person is tempted to cut corners for a variety of reasons; maybe they are tired, maybe they don't enjoy the assignment, maybe they are late. However, when we choose a life of integrity, we must aim to make consistently honest choices on a daily basis. All of us will slip up on occasion, so take the time to examine your decisions, own up to your choices if necessary, and correct yourself moving forward.

Take some time to think about your daily chores and/or responsibilities. Now pick out one task that was specifically taught or explained to you by an adult; for example, washing dishes or completing your math homework. Do you continue to complete this task exactly as it was taught/assigned? Think about a time when you might have rushed through the task or skipped a component that wasn't that important or necessary. Share your experience with your neighbor.

Now, imagine if the person that taught you that task showed up just as you were rushing or cutting corners. How would you feel if you got caught in the act? (Invite student responses.)

Use this feeling to guide your choices when alone. Those feelings of anxiety and embarrassment are a clear indicator that you are not making honest choices that show integrity. When you are tempted to veer off your path of truth, think back to this activity in this moment. You are in control of your personal level of integrity, even when no one is looking.



## Empower

15 minutes

Explain that the class will now play a game to examine common areas that tempt teens to compromise their personal integrity.

Divide the class into groups of 6-8. Provide each group with a broad topic that lends itself to temptation such as:

- Chores that are to be done before your parent/guardian gets home
- Nightly math homework assignment
- A research paper on a famous person in history
- A take home test where you cannot use your notes or the computer for help
- Taking care of your pet

Each group will be responsible for:

- Examining and discussing the topic provided
- Identifying possible ways to be dishonest and the likelihood of getting caught in each example
- Selecting their top 3 most common or tempting decisions within their area

Example: Homework (copying answers from a friend, looking up the answers in the back of the book, googling answers, ec.)

Each group will present their topic. As a whole group, discuss possible solutions to combat these temptations of dishonesty.

- How can we resist when we ourselves are the only one aware of our decision?
- What are some negative consequences to your decision, even if you officially “get away with it”?



## Reflect

5-7 minutes

Provide each student with an index card. Have them write out one way they are going to increase their personal integrity with tasks they do alone this week. Instruct them to leave their note cards anonymous. Read the cards aloud throughout the week to encourage students with ideas from their peers, thus extending the concept of integrity beyond this lesson!

# The Face of Integrity?

Using the template provided (or freehand if you enjoy art!), identify traits of a person that shows integrity/honesty. You can use both pictures and words.

