



# HONESTY

## Classroom Activities

### Grades K – 6



1. What does it mean to be a honest person? Have your class brainstorm a list of do's and don'ts for being honest. Ask for specific examples of each behavior they identify. Compare their list with the one at the top of this page. Hang the list up on the wall as a reminder.
2. Take some of the behavioral examples from activity #1, above, and turn them into role-play situations. The kids can act them out themselves or use puppets. First have them role-play the unfair behavior, and then the fair behavior. Have the group analyze each of the role-plays.
3. Bring in articles from newspapers and magazines reporting on events in which honesty and justice are at issue. Have a discussion about who is acting fairly, and who is acting unfairly in these situations.
4. Invite a judge (or a trial attorney) to come and talk to your class about how the justice system works and about how he/she tries to keep things fair in the courtroom.
5. If your students are old enough to write book reports, have them write about how the characters in the book behaved in either a fair or an unfair way. Do the same with movies or television programs they have seen. If your children are too young to write book reports, do this as a class discussion about the books they are reading or that you are reading to them.
6. Think of a time when you've taken unfair advantage of a person or a situation, or when someone has taken unfair advantage of you. Describe it. What was unfair about it? How did it make you feel? What did you learn from the experience?
7. How is fairness related to having respect for others? How is it related to honesty? To being reliable? To being a good citizen?
8. Think of something that you consider to be unfair. Describe it in detail, and write what you think should be done about it. Is there anything you can do to help change it? If so, what?
9. Did you know that almost every decision you make (even small ones) affects other people? Think of a few decisions you have made, and write about how those decisions affected other people.

# **HONESTY**

## Classroom Activities

Grade 7 - 12



1. Pick any question from the discussion questions (above) and write an essay on it.
2. Select an advertisement from a magazine or newspaper, or from radio or TV. Analyze it for honesty:
  - Does it explicitly say anything you think is untrue? Is it trying to make you believe something that might not be true? Is it lying by omission, i.e. leaving out important information that would make a difference to you? Is it misleading in any way? Does it present any half-truths?
  - Take any political speech (especially a campaign speech) and analyze it in the same way.
3. What is a phoney? How does dishonesty turn people into phonies? What does it mean when you say that a person is "real" or "authentic"? What does being "real" have to do with honesty?
4. What is the relationship between honesty and trustworthiness? Write an essay exploring this relationship.
5. Write an essay about a situation in which you were dishonest (lied, cheated, or stole). Why did it happen? How did you justify it? How did you feel about it at the time? Did it affect any of your relationships? Did it cause any problems for you? How do you feel about it now? What did you learn from it?
6. Write a letter to someone in the news whose honesty has impressed you.
7. Have the students keep an "Honesty-Dishonesty" journal for one week. In this journal, document examples of honesty and dishonesty in everyday life. Keep track of all the times you hear or tell "white lies." Pay particular attention to the media. See what role honesty plays in stories covered in the news. Note how often dishonesty is at the core of TV sitcoms and dramas. At the end of a week, write your conclusions and share them with the class. What did you learn about your own behavior from doing this project?
8. As a class, brainstorm all the excuses and rationalizations people give for lying, cheating, and stealing, and then have a discussion about them. How valid are they? What's wrong with each of them?
9. Conduct a survey in your school or community asking questions like the following: Do you think people are honest enough? What are some examples of dishonesty you really

dislike? What are some examples of honesty that you especially appreciate? Compile the results into a report.

10. Role-play various situations where one or more students are under pressure to be dishonest. Examples: helping a friend cheat on an assignment or exam, or lying to cover up for someone. Put it on videotape and share it with other classes.

11. Create an "honesty" website.



# **HONESTY**

## **Quotes for Character Education Skills**

These quotes related to our AISD Touchstone of character skills can be used in a variety of ways by the entire campus and in classrooms. The quotes are designed to be used as practical, applicable, and easily modified enhancements to your Character Education plan. They can be used to help you plan a variety of activities that reinforce the character skills in many ways. Remember, effective character education is not a program or an initiative, but rather the continuous and deliberate process and practice of teaching, modeling, and reinforcing these skills to enable each of our students to reach their full potential by putting forth their maximum effort to succeed.

Here are some specific suggestions for using these quotes:

- Read or have students read a quote each day as part of the announcements for the skill you are teaching.
- For our younger students, paraphrase the quotes so they can understand the meaning.
- Make bulletin boards featuring the character skill of the month.
- Use the quotes as banners, posters, coloring sheets, bumper stickers, and/or computer screensavers.
- Print quotes in the newsletters and in communications to parents.
- Post the quotes on the school web site and on the school marquee.
- Have students compose their own character quotes, songs, raps, bumper stickers, poems, etc.
- Use character quotes for student writing prompts and/or journal writings.
- Use the quotes for classroom discussion.
- Have students create their own classroom/campus character pledge.
- Create a Character Quote mural or collage by having students do drawings or bring pictures from magazines that illustrate the quotes.
- Have students create a character message or story using several of the quotes.
- Have students do a report on the people quoted in the character quotes and explain what character skills these people demonstrated in their lives.
- Ask students to bring in songs that are related to the specific character skills in the quotes and play the songs along with the quote.

**Remember, "People of character are the conscience of society." Ralph Waldo Emerson**

# **HONESTY**

**2007-2008**  
**February-March**

"Truth is man's staff in his voyage through life."

*Remy De Gourmont*

"Truth is the torch that gleams through the fog."

*Anonymous*

"When in doubt, tell the truth."

*Mark Twain*

"Truth is tough."

*Oscar Wendall Holmes*

"Honesty is the moral conscience of the great."

*William D'Avenant*

"Without courage, there can be no truth, and without truth, there can be no other virtues."

*Sir Walter Scott*

"Honesty is the highest thing that man may keep."

*Geoffrey Chaucer*

"Honesty is the one thing for which there is no known substitute."

*Anonymous*

"To be persuasive, we must be believable; to be believable, we must be credible; to be credible, we must be truthful."

*Ralph Waldo Emerson*

"Truth never changes a cause that is just."

*Mohatma Ghandi*

"The person who is honest does not have to worry about a faulty memory."

*Anonymous*

"Truth often hurts, but it is the lie that leaves a scar."

*Anonymous*

"When truth stands in your way, it is time to change direction."

*Anonymous*

"Honesty is the best policy."

*George Washington*

"Honesty is not always popular, but it is always right."

*Oscar Arias*

"If you add to the truth, you subtract from it."

*Anonymous*

"Honesty with oneself and others is the foundation of all virtues."

*Duane Hodgkin*

"If honesty is the best policy, it must also be the best practice."

*Duane Hodgkin*

"When we can be honest with ourselves, our personal journey begins."

*Duane Hodgkin*



# HONESTY

Inappropriate Behaviors Related to Specific Character Skills in the  
AISD Touchstone

- Cheating
- Stealing



# **HONESTY**

## **Classroom Management Strategies**

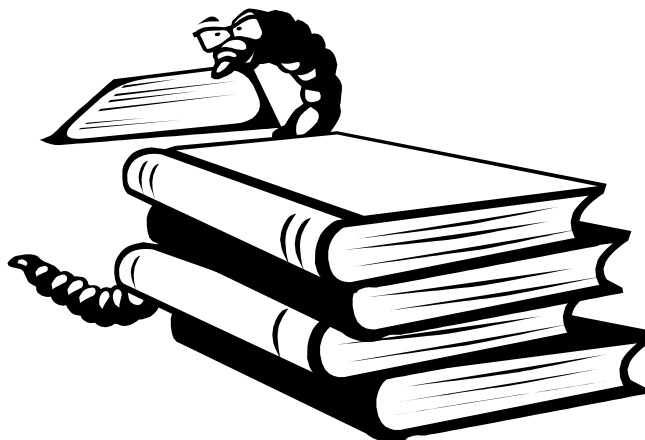
- Increase positive interactions (greet students as they enter the room, talk quietly with one or two students as they walk in the hallway, discuss work with students individually during independent work time, engage students in tasks like putting up bulletin boards before or after school or during lunch or recess).
- Teacher organizes the daily schedule to reflect consistency and variety with academic lessons that are clearly focused and relevant to students.
- Teacher establishes smooth, efficient classroom routines and procedures.
- Teachers interact with all students in a positive, caring manner.
- Teachers provide incentives/recognition/rewards to promote excellence.
- Teachers set clear expectations/standards for classroom behavior and apply them fairly and consistently.
- Teacher engages students in helping solve classroom problems.
- Teacher moves around room for increased proximity to students.
- Teacher visually scans the room for opportunities to acknowledge responsible behavior.
- Teacher makes eye contact with students and smiles.
- Teacher acknowledges responsible behavior verbally or with tangible rewards (like a written note from the teacher). Teacher sends a written note to parents about the responsible behavior.
- Teacher establishes a positive attitude about the potential for success for every student.
- Teacher models and reinforces the expected behaviors.
- Teacher provides opportunities for positive practice of expected behaviors.



# **HONESTY**

## **Classroom Level Interventions**

- Teacher places hand on student's shoulder to remind and show support.
- Teacher gives a verbal reminder to redirect behavior.
- Teacher corrects behavior errors in a manner that provides instruction.
- Teacher makes accommodations in areas such as daily schedule, class structure, physical arrangement of classroom to increase the student's chance of success.
- Teacher develops lessons to help students manage situations that cause difficulties. Some examples are: transitions between lessons and activities, how the rules relate to various activities in the classroom, conflict resolution strategies, and study strategies.
- Student is given quiet time to think about behavior.
- Student and teacher discuss better choices.
- Student is given time-out in the room.
- Teacher and student develop a signal to help the student realize when he/she is engaging in inappropriate behavior.
- Teacher uses a pre-correction to help a student avoid an inappropriate behavior when there seems to be a good chance of the inappropriate behavior occurring based on prior history.
- Teacher Ignores behavior to deprive student of desired attention.
- Teacher contacts parent.
- Teacher consistently praises expected behavior and/or gives consequences for inappropriate behavior (such as loss of recess time, loss of other privileges, etc.).
- Teacher follows through on problem behavior with predetermined consequences.
- Teacher changes student's seat in the room or physical arrangement of the room to enable teacher to respond consistently to minor misbehavior, to prevent misbehavior from escalating, and to engage more frequently in positive interactions with students.
- Have student fill out a Behavior Improvement Form.



# **HONESTY**

## **Service Learning Projects**

"To develop character, students need opportunities for moral action." Thomas Lickona

We want our students not only to learn about 10 character skills in our touchstone but also to have the opportunity to internalize them by practicing them through community service and/or service learning. In the purest design for service learning, students should be given the opportunity to reflect on their service, identify what they have learned from the service, and to celebrate their contributions to the community. It is best to allow students to identify a campus or community need or issue that focuses on a particular character skill and plan a project to address that need or issue. The more ownership we give our students in these projects, the stronger their leadership will become. Below are some suggestions for service learning opportunities for each of the character skills to help you in getting started:

- Have all students write their own "Truthfulness Contract". This contract is the student's promise to himself/herself to try to always tell the truth to themselves and others. Allow the students to decorate the contracts and provide an opportunity for each student to display his/her contract on a "Tower of Truth".
- Create a "Good Sportsmanship" campaign in which students identify the importance of playing honestly and fairly by the rules. Allow them to illustrate examples of fair play and honesty and display their work. Some students could write skits demonstrating honesty and fairness and present to other students.
- Develop an honor code or pledge that students could sign vowing not to cheat and to encourage others to be honest in all their work. Display the signed pledges on a "Hall of Honor".
- Have students make PSAs and/or announcements about the importance of being honest, famous people who demonstrated the skill of honesty (Abraham Lincoln, etc.) and how that helped them become successful.
- Start a community honesty campaign. Have community members sign a pledge to be honest to themselves and to others in all their interactions. Collect quotes from the community stakeholders about the importance of honesty. Have celebrities in the community make a statement about the importance of honesty in their lives and work. Display these statements and signed pledges in a public place like a library, a recreation center, a neighborhood meeting place, etc.