

Integrity

This is the first week of our Integrity unit. Students will focus on integrity and how it connects to the familiar concept of honesty.

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



Clean vs. Cloudy

Students will explore the concept of integrity by completing a simple science demonstration using water. (See page 2 for lesson details.)

Mini Lessons

For Small Groups
15 minutes



Broken Telephone

Divide into groups of 6-8. Give one person in each group an index card with the same sentence on it. For example, the sentence could read, "I'd love eating toasted cheese and tuna sandwiches." Have each ending person announce what they heard. Guide a large group discussion on the detriment of gossip and the rule of only repeating what you heard first hand.

For Partners
15 minutes



Personal Stories

With a partner, think about a time when you were able to show integrity and honesty, even though it might have been difficult. How did others involved react? How did you feel afterwards?

For Individuals
15 minutes



Honest Examination

Conduct a personal inventory of your level of honesty either at home or with friends. Journal about a time when you struggled with dishonesty. What happened after you chose to lie? If you were caught, what were the consequences? If you weren't caught, how many additional lies did you add to stay out of trouble? What other option besides lying did you have?

Technology-Focused
15 minutes



Digital Integrity Inventory

With a partner, go through the inventory. What are areas you feel are affecting you the most? Choose one area to work on; write out your goal connected to this area and commit to paying more attention this week! Check in with each other to see how you are progressing. (See below for the integrity inventory.)

Clean vs. Cloudy

Students will explore the concept of integrity by completing a simple science demonstration using water.

Lesson Timeframe

30 minutes

Required Materials

- 2 Clear containers (2 liter soda bottles work well)
- Water
- A Jar of dirt
- A Jar of salt
- 2 spoons

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:

- Explore how they currently demonstrate integrity in both isolated and public situations.
- Celebrate the courageous acts within their personal lives.

Teacher Connection/Self-Care

Welcome to the Integrity Unit! This can be a challenging unit because “integrity” feels like a big, complex concept to both kids and adults alike! However, in this unit, we define integrity as acting in a way you know to be right and kind in all situations. This actually makes the concept quite simple. As your students get older and have more responsibilities, they may find it hard to think about what is right and kind in every situation; neurologically, they aren’t always capable of making a good choice here. Their judgement is underdeveloped and often clouded by social pressures. You have a great opportunity to help them hone their integrity skills.

You can do this by honing your own integrity skills. When faced with a task, do you complete it fully or take a short-cut? If students push your buttons, do you respond with kindness or with curtness and sarcasm? Is there bureaucratic “red tape” in your job that frustrates you and makes you look for loopholes? If you feel your integrity slipping at certain points of the year, like end-of-term, state testing, holiday seasons, or mid-year, because you are busy or burnt-out, take some time for self-care and hit your integrity reset button. Talk with a colleague about your experiences or frustrations and brainstorm strategies to get back on track. You won’t be the only one with these feelings and working through them to maintain a high level of integrity in your work will be a great model for students.



Share

4-6 minutes

In this unit, we will explore the concept of integrity and how it expands on our understanding of honesty. Specifically, this unit dives deeper into the connection between personal integrity and kindness and how leading a life of integrity can not only help us make better choices, but inspire others to do the same!

Take some time to think about honesty and integrity. When you think of the word integrity, what images or phrases come to mind? (Invite student responses.)

Terrific! Honesty and Integrity go hand in hand and although many of us might be somewhat unfamiliar with this word, if we think about it as it relates to honesty it can help us better understand it.



Inspire

3-5 minutes

Integrity is acting in a way you know to be right and kind in all situations. This means you are honest and true even when no one is watching. As we mature and find ourselves in situations where our parents allow us more freedom to be alone or with only our friends, the temptation to act dishonest or ignore others' dishonest behaviors increases. What are some situations that might test your integrity? (Invite student responses.)



Empower

15 minutes

Explain that the class will now conduct a simple experiment to illustrate how integrity works in our lives using water.

Directions:

- Using two clear containers of equal size (2 liter soda containers work well), have a volunteer fill each up with water.
- Place both containers next to each other on a table. Make sure the entire class can observe both containers.
- Explain that each container represents a person's level of integrity. We all start off with pure intentions and a completely honest and kind conscious. However, we are faced with choices, sometimes very difficult ones, every day of our lives.
- Each choice we make can either help us to stay honest and full of integrity, OR it can cloud our focus by making a poor or dishonest choice. Using an index card, label each container; one with HONEST and the other with DISHONEST.
- To illustrate, you will read a series of questions aloud. A honest choice that demonstrates integrity will result in a spoonful of salt in the honest container. A dishonest choice that lacks integrity will result in a spoonful of dirt in the dishonest container.
- Read each question aloud. Ask the class to answer yes or no to illustrate showing integrity. Remind students that the meaning of integrity is acting in a way you know to be right and kind in all situations.
 - There are fresh baked cookies on the counter and no one is in the kitchen. One of the cookies broke and a piece fell onto the counter. Is it okay to eat that cookie?
 - Your parents tell you to finish all of your homework before going online to play games with your friends. You have a simple math assignment you need to complete, but you can probably finish it on the bus in the morning. Is it okay to play your game?
 - Your friend invites you over to their house. Your parents have told you you can only go if there is an adult supervising you. Your friend's brother just turned 18 last weekend, but no one else is home. Is it okay to go to their house?

- Continue until all of the questions have been answered and BOTH honest and dishonest choices for each question have been explored.
- After all of the questions have been answered, examine the water by stirring it well and holding it up for the entire class to see. As a class, discuss the obvious visual differences between the HONEST and DISHONEST containers. Why is the water cloudy/dirty in the dishonest container? What happened to the person's integrity when they decided to make dishonest choices?



Reflect

5-7 minutes

As a class, discuss why integrity can be so difficult at times. Discussions may include: You might not get in trouble or get caught so the temptation is higher, you “technically” are following the rules, you think the rule is ridiculous and don’t really see the point in following it, etc.

This week, make a commitment to examine your level of personal integrity. Are there areas that are more tempting for you to ignore the rules, bend the rules, or even intentionally break them? Try to make a change during one situation that reflects a higher level of integrity, even if it seems silly or unimportant to you. Discuss your choice with a trusted adult. How did you feel when you chose the honest choice, even when no one was watching you?

Digital Integrity Inventory

With a partner, go through the inventory. What areas do you feel are affecting you the most? Choose one area to work on and write out your goal connected to this area. Commit to paying more attention this week! Check in with each other to see how you are progressing.

	Yes	No	Sometimes
I act the same online as I do in person.			
I stop and think about how my words might sound to the person I'm texting.			
I only share pictures with permission.			
I discuss problems I have had online and in text with my parents when I am upset.			
I treat everyone with respect when using technology (including text, social media, FaceTime, etc.).			