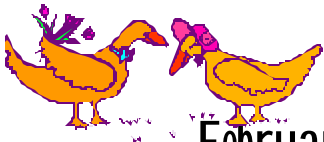


*Trustworthy /
Honesty*

To be worthy of
confidence

Honesty is telling the
truth. Integrity is doing
what we say we will do.

Stephen Covey



February Character Connection Theme: Trustworthy/Honesty

Definition

Someone who is trustworthy warrants trust and is dependable, reliable, and faithful.¹ An honest person does not lie, cheat, steal, or take unfair advantage, but is honorable, truthful, and trustworthy.² This person is characterized not by deception or fraud, but by truthfulness, sincerity, and genuineness.

Dr. Arthur Simms wrote, "To all China, the Great Wall seemed a superb way to gain security. So at great expense, and loss of life, it was finally built. But within a few years it was breached three times by the enemy. Not only this: it was breached, not by failure of the wall itself, but through bribery of the gatekeepers. It was the human element that failed. What collapsed was character.

"Remember, the test of a wall or an oak tree, or a man is: How sound is he at the heart?"³

The remarkable story of the trust between Pythias and Damon is told in "Two Friends of Syracuse," located at <http://digital.library.upenn.edu/women/yonge/deeds/friends.html>.

Quotes

"A few honest men are better than numbers." -Oliver Cromwell

"Truth has no special time of its own. Its hour is now – always."--Albert Schweitzer, "Out of My Life and Thought"

"Plato is dear to me, but dearer still is truth". -Aristotle⁴

"Trust is basic, at the very core of life. If you don't trust people, it's my opinion that you are not trustworthy and assume others aren't." -- Hyrum Smith, chairman and chief executive officer of Franklin Covey.

"To be trusted is better than to be loved."

I have seen flowers come in stony places
And kind things done by men with ugly faces,
And the gold cup won by the worst horse at the races,
So I trust, too.

--John Masefield (1878-1967), in *An Epilogue*

Activities

** In Don Quixote, Miguel de Cervantes comments, "Truth indeed rather alleviates than hurts, and will always bear up against falsehood, as oil does above water."⁵ Talk about Cervantes quote and experiment with pouring vegetable oil into a glass of water.

** Fill a cup $\frac{3}{4}$ full of water. Bend a paperclip so that it forms a right angle. Lay a second paper clip across the first one. Make sure the water in the cup is still. Gently lower the bent paper clip onto the water. The paper clip that lies across the bent paper clip should float. *Talk about surface tension: the*



¹ "trustworthy," The American Heritage Dictionary, page 1378

² "honesty," The American Heritage Dictionary, page 632

³ The Scouters Minute, page 62

⁴ "Honesty" Peter Mansfield <http://www.healthyskepticism.org/quotations/honesty.htm>, Accessed January 4, 2002

⁵ "Quotes Related to Honor, Integrity, and Truth" (Vanderbilt University Honor Council) <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/HonorCouncil/quotes.htm>, Accessed January 6, 2002

water molecules cling together in such a way that the surface is strong enough to support a paper clip. Likewise, actions that are trustworthy bind together to form the basis of trust in more difficult situations.

After the paper clip is floating, touch one end of a toothpick in liquid detergent. Then, gently touch the detergent end of the toothpick to the water. The paper clip will sink. *The detergent weakens the surface tension, allowing the paper clip to sink. Untrustworthy actions diminish others' trust in us.* ** Select an object to be hidden. Have one student leave the room. Hide the object. Select two other students, one to direct the first student to the object, one to direct him away from the object. Blindfold the first student and bring him back into the room. Time how long it takes for the student to find the object, listening to the directions from the second and third students. (This activity can also be used with a maze of desks and chairs.) Later discuss how the blindfolded student knew which voice to trust.

Stories

The Unexpected Guest

Adapted from a folklore tale retold by Kristi Bell⁶

A soldier had been out scouting the area for enemies. On his way home he stopped at a humble cottage and asked for shelter. An older couple answered the door, took pity on him and allowed him to stay the night. The stranger was exhausted and retired as soon as he was shown his room. The mistress of the home then locked up all of her valuables in case this man was a thief. However, before she fell asleep, she heard speaking in the next room. She listened closer and “heard a prayer offered in gentle yet solemn tones. It was the stranger praying for his country, for the soldiers who were fighting for the noble cause.

“The woman was ashamed of her suspicious fears. She got up and put the key back in the cupboard door” and slept peacefully and soundly through the night.

The next morning, the stranger could not stay. He offered to pay for his night’s lodging, but the old couple refused.

“ ‘Then,’ said the guest, ‘you deserve to know who I am, who you have entertained and treated so nobly. I am General Washington.’ . . .”

What made the old woman distrust the stranger? What changed the old woman’s perception?

The Purse of Gold—A Jewish Fable⁷

A poor beggar found a purse containing 100 pieces of gold. At the same time a merchant, discovering his loss, called out, “My purse! My purse is missing! A reward to someone who will return my purse!”

Being an honest man, the beggar presented the merchant with the purse and politely asked for the promised reward.

The merchant looked in the purse and cried, “Why, when I lost the purse, it had 200 pieces of gold. You have stolen more than your reward! Leave or I will call the police.”

Unwilling to be labeled a thief, the beggar asked that the matter be taken to court.

In court, the judge patiently listened to both sides of the story, then declared, “I believe you both! Justice is possible. Merchant, since you state that the purse you lost contained 200 pieces of gold, this could not possibly be your purse. No other person has come forward to claim this lost purse.” With that, the judge gave the purse and the gold to the beggar.

Read about the rewards of honesty in a difficult situation for seven-year-old first baseman, Tanner Munsey, at http://www.clemmer.net/excerpts/honesty_integrity.shtml.⁸

Writing or Discussion Topics

** Relate stories of trustworthiness. These may include Washington and the cherry tree, Abraham Lincoln working off the debt of a damaged borrowed book, or Lincoln walking 3 miles to return 6

⁶ Bell, Kristi. “George Washington’s bravery highlighted in folk tale.” *The Daily Herald*, Provo Utah (February 16, 1997) page G6

⁷ “Story Library The Purse of Gold,” Story Arts, <http://www.storyarts.org/library/nutshell/stories/purse.html>, accessed Jan. 7, 2006

⁸ “Honesty and Integrity Build a foundation of Trust,” Clemmer, Jim, http://www.clemmer.net/excerpts/honesty_integrity.shtml, accessed Jan. 7, 2006



pennies of change. Look for stories of honesty in the newspaper. *Discuss the role of trustworthiness in society and great leaders.*

** A TV station broadcast a story about a young man who found a wallet with \$530. Although his father was recently disabled and could have used the money, he returned it to a mother of four. It was her needed rent money. With gratitude, she rewarded him with \$40. The boy declared the reward money would be used for improvements to his old bike. However, a TV viewer who wished to remain anonymous helped the boy get a new bike “to reward him for being an honest guy.”⁹ *How can students and adults promote trustworthiness in others and in society?*

** Ask students to talk to their parents about the importance of trustworthiness in the workplace and at home. *Why is the trust between business and customers important?*

**In A Bargain for Frances, written by Russell Hoban and illustrated by Lillian Hoban, the following interchange occurs:

“That is not a very nice trick to play on a friend,” said Thelma.

“No,” said Frances, “it is not. And that was not a nice trick you played on me when you sold me your tea set.”

“Well,” said Thelma, “from now on I will have to be careful when I play with you.”

“Being careful is not as much fun as being friends,” said Frances. “Do you want to be careful, or do you want to be friends?”

Discuss the qualities that students value in a friendship. Why is trust an important part of friendship? Is it easier to trust someone you have known a short time or a long time? Can you tell by looking at someone or something, whether it can be trusted?

** After a few big whoppers in Stan and Jan Berenstain’s The Berenstain Bears and the Truth, Brother and Sister Bear tell Mama the truth and that they are sorry about the broken lamp.

“Oh,” said Mama, “I’m not worried about the lamp. We can always get another lamp, or we can glue this one back together. What I’m sad about is the thought that maybe, just maybe, my cubs, whom I’ve always trusted, aren’t telling me the truth. And trust is not something you can put back together again.”

Why is it easier to replace a broken object than a broken trust? Once trust is lost, how can it be restored? Have students pretend to be Brother and Sister Bear and write a Dear Abby type letter and response about how trust can be restored once it is broken.

**“In Horton Hears a Who, Dr Seuss writes, “And Horton called back to the Mayor of the town, ‘You’re safe now. Don’t worry. I won’t let you down.’ ” *A promise has been made. To what lengths should one go to keep that promise? Is there a situation where not keeping one’s word would be acceptable?*

Role Plays

** Alfred has just come home from the store. He discovers that he has been given \$.06 too much change. *What should he do? What if he had been given \$.60, \$ 6.00 or \$60.00 too much change? Is there such a thing as “mostly honest?”*

** On Monday, Jane invited Susan to Jane’s house after school on Tuesday. Susan has accepted the invitation. Tuesday morning Lucy invites Susan to come with her to the circus that very afternoon after school. *What does Susan do?*

** During a class test, Henry is working on the math problems. While concentrating on his work, he moves the paper that covers his answers. Just at that instant William looks over and sees Henry’s answer to problem number 7. The test finishes. *What should William do? Does it make a difference if William did not have the problem done before he looked at Henry’s paper? What are guides for helping ourselves and others be honest during a test?*

Book List

The Children’s Book of Virtues, “George Washington and the Cherry Tree” (page 84)

Horton Hears a Who! by Dr Seuss

A Bargain for Frances by Russell Hoban and illustrated by Lillian Hoban

The Berenstain Bears and the Truth by Stan and Jan Berenstain

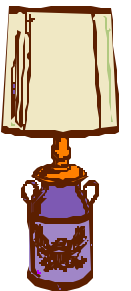
True Stories about Abraham Lincoln (page 18, 22) by Ruth Belov Gross.

March: Accountability

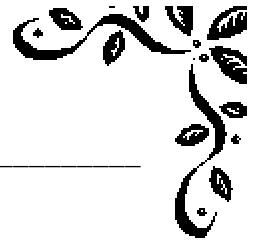
April: Self-Control

May: Worth and Potential

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⁹ “We Believe in You,” <http://www.homeandholidays.com/files2/viewarticle.php?articleid=10260>, <http://www.homeholidaysfamilyandfun.com>, accessed January 7, 2006

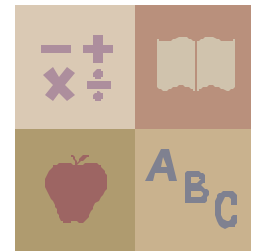


Name : _____

Trustworthy/Honesty Word Search

"Today I am going to give you two examinations, one in trigonometry and one in honesty. I hope you will pass them both, but if you must fail one, let it be trigonometry, for there are many good [people] in this world today who cannot pass an examination in trigonometry, but there are no good [people] in the world who cannot pass an examination in honesty." - *Madison Sarratt (1891-1978), dean, Vanderbilt University.* ("Quotes Related to Honor, Integrity, and Truth," Vanderbilt University Honor Council, <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/HonorCouncil/quotes.htm>, Accessed January 6, 2002)

G L T A C Z C O R E L I A N C E O V T P
 P M R U Y B N S B W H O N E S T Z R T R
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honest
 veracity
 honor
 integrity
 probity
 trust
 reliance
 trustworthy
 truth
 verisimilitude

candor
 truthful
 verity
 fidelity
 sincere
 honorable
 frank
 candid
 straightforward
 responsible

What do the words listed above mean? How do they relate to being trustworthy?

Trustworthy/Honesty Word Search Answers

. R E L I A N C E
. . . . Y H O N E S T
. . . . H . R E S P O N S I B L E
. . . . T P
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. H O N O R A B L E