



## Activity # 1 – An Honest Kid (idea from kidsofintegrity)

- Target grade level: elementary
- Character quality emphasized: honesty,
- 1. Share with students this true story about a seven-year-old boy named Tanner Munsey. Tanner's reputation for being honest earned him a mention in the "Scorecard" column in the July 10, 1989, issue of *Sports Illustrated*

During a T-ball game in Wellington, Florida, Tanner Munsey attempted to tag a player leaving first base. When the umpire called the player out, Tanner immediately informed the umpire that he hadn't managed to tag the runner. Two weeks later, Tanner encountered the same umpire in another T-ball game. This time, Tanner was playing short-stop and tagged a runner as he approached third base. When the umpire called the player safe, Tanner didn't say a word, but the umpire noticed his surprise at the call. "Did you tag the runner?" she asked Tanner. When Tanner affirmed that he had, the umpire changed her decision and called the player out. When the coaches and other parents protested, the umpire stood by her decision, informing them that she had learned to trust Tanner, because of his honesty.

2. Ask students about how exercising honesty (or dishonesty) can have long-term effects.

## Activity #2 – The Lie Trap (idea from kidsofintegrity)

- Target grade level: elementary
- Character quality emphasize: honesty
- 1. Head outdoors with the kids and hunt for a spider's web, and watch how a bug becomes entangled in the web, or catch a fly and put it in the web to see what happens, or find a video online of that occurrence instead.) The more the insect struggles, the more entangled it becomes. If you are fortunate, you might even see the spider come and wind the bug up in more sticky thread.
- 2. Ask students what happened every time the insect struggled, and what happened because of that struggle. Explain that the same thing happens when we do not tell the truth and become entangled in lies. Ask students if they think the insect regrets ever getting trapped in the web (and a lie) and what should have been done instead (tell the truth).

## Activity # 3 – Truth in Advertising

- Target grade level: secondary/college
- Character quality emphasize: honesty
- 1. Select an advertisement from a magazine or newspaper, or from radio or TV, or find a political speech or a political campaign advertisement. Analyze it for honesty:
  1. 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?

2. What is a phony? 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?
2. What is the relationship between honesty and trustworthiness? Write an essay exploring this relationship.
3. 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?
4. Write a letter to someone in the news whose honesty has impressed you.

## **Activity # 4 – Can the ladder be trusted? (idea from CharacterCounts!)**

- Target grade level: elementary/secondary
  - Character quality emphasized: honesty
1. Have students make a ladder out of pieces of board.
  2. Have each rung of the ladder represent one of the pillars of character.
  3. After the ladder is made, break one of the rungs. Talk about how the ladder is unreliable when a rung is broken.
  4. Remove all but one nail on each side of one rung. Brainstorm about the effects of this action on the ladder.
  5. Remove one of the rungs. Then ask the students if the ladder is trustworthy. Talk about the importance of hanging strong rungs on our ladder of character. Stress that others relying upon us and our character.

## **Activity #5 – Interview with a leader**

- Target grade level: elementary/secondary/college
  - Character quality emphasized: honesty, empathy, humility, perseverance, courage, vision, responsibility, leadership
1. Have students interview a local leader (could be a community leader, business leader, political leader, school leader, etc). Students should question the person on what it takes to lead, and what character qualities are necessary for successful leadership. The interview can be recorded
  2. Have students share their interview or the findings of the interview with the class.