

The Lie Cover-up

This lesson about Integrity focuses on the importance of admitting to a lie before it gets out of hand. Students will also learn what happens when you try to cover up a lie with another one and how the only honest choice is to admit what you did.

Integrity Sub-Concepts

Kindness

Lesson Timeframe

45 minutes

Required Materials

- ☐ Large bowl filled with water
- ☐ 1 quarter (teacher only)
- ☐ 1 penny for each student
- ☐ *Hippo Owns Up* by Sue Graves

Standards Map

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



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See last page for details.

Lesson Objective

Students will be able to:

- Demonstrate integrity through a math exercise.
- Explain how being honest helps others trust you.

Teacher Connection/Self-Care

Integrity means teaching from 'bell to bell'. Examine how wisely you use your student contact hours. What can be done during planning instead of when they are present?

Tips for Diverse Learners

- Help students drop their penny in the bowl if they have dexterity issues.



Share

5-10 minutes

Play "Honesty Red Light, Green Light"

Directions: Have everyone line up on one side of the room. Turn your back to them. Explain that every time you turn around you will call out a truth or a lie. If you call out a truth, everyone can take one step forward. If you call out a lie, everyone must freeze. If you move during a lie, you must go back to the beginning. If you take more than one step during the truth, you must go back

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to the beginning. If you take steps when the teacher's back is turned, you must go back to the beginning. In this game it pays to be honest!

Try to tell more lies in a row to force them to persevere through the game. Here are some ideas for truth and lie statements:

- I have a hat on.
- I am the art teacher.
- We have both boys and girls in this classroom.
- We are in fifth grade.
- The sky is green.

After everyone makes it across, ask the students how it felt to be on the lookout for honesty. Was it difficult to be honest even when the teacher wasn't looking? Was it hard to wait to move forward until another truth finally came out? Remember, honesty is always the best policy.



Inspire

7-10 minutes

How lies grow

What is the opposite of the truth? Yes, a lie! Did you know that lies can grow quickly? Lies build on each other until they start to affect others and not just us. It can be tempting to try and cover up a lie with another lie- which just makes things worse.

Explain that we will now read a book about a Hippo that told one lie that quickly turned into a huge problem.

Read: "Hippo Owns Up - A Story About Telling the Truth," by Sue Graves

Read Aloud Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w5tBod5_ILw (5 min)

After reading, **ask:**

- Why did Hippo decide to lie?
- What happened after Hippo took a small taste of the cake?
- What did he decide to do after he ate the entire cake?
- Who did the teacher think ate the cake?
- What did Hippo do when he heard that the cat had been blamed?
- How did Hippo fix things after admitting his lie?

Hippo's first bad choice was actually getting up late and not eating breakfast. Once he missed breakfast, his choices continued to be bad. His solution after he licked the cake was to try and "cover up" his sneaky choice with another and another.



Empower

20 minutes

Covering up a lie is an impossible task. Let's take a look at this by using water and coins.

Instructions:

Step 1:

Gather a large bowl, 1 quarter and one penny for each child. Fill the bowl with water.

Step 2:

Explain that the water represents our class. The quarter represents a lie someone told. Drop the quarter in and let it sink to the bottom.

Step 3:

When we lie, it can be very tempting to “cover up” our first lie with another lie. Let’s try to cover up my quarter and see what happens. Allow every student the opportunity to drop their penny into the water to cover up the quarter. The quarter will never be fully covered.

Wrap Up

You cannot completely cover up a lie and the only way to even try is to lie again, over and over. The only answer is to come clean and be honest. Remember, honesty is the best policy.

**Reflect**

5-10 minutes

- What happened when Hippo tried to fix his first sneaky choice?
- What happened when we tried to cover up my quarter?

Lies are never the answer. You will make mistakes- all of us do. Your best choice is always to tell the truth the first time. However, if you do decide to lie, come clean as soon as possible. One lie will only turn into many, which as we saw with Hippo, just makes things worse. Honesty is always the best policy!

**Extension Ideas**

- Have students write a story about someone telling a lie and the consequences that happened afterwards. Remind the students to have the story end with the person telling the truth. It’s up to the student to decide just how far the person in the story goes before they finally speak up though!



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Kindness in the Classroom® met or exceeded all of CASEL’s criteria for high-quality SEL programming. Kindness in the Classroom® received CASEL’s highest designation for high-quality SEL programming.

<https://casel.org/guide/kindness-in-the-classroom/>

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