

The Lie Snowball

This lesson focuses on the power of lies and the solution for them- practicing Integrity. This lesson will focus on identifying honesty and dishonesty and speaking up when we have told fibs so they do not become great big lies.

Integrity Sub-Concepts

Kindness

Lesson Timeframe

45 minutes

Required Materials

- ☐ White, Red, Blue, Green, and Yellow Clay/Playdough
- ☐ A plastic knife for each table
- ☐ “The Little White Lie” by Lisa Rose (attached)

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.

Lesson Objective

Students will be able to:

- Utilize caring and kindness to develop honest alternatives to deceptive actions
- Practice showing honesty in social situations.
- Understand how to speak up when we have told a white lie

Teacher Connection/Self-Care

As teachers, we are held to a level of integrity that is unprecedented in any other profession. Let’s be honest. You are here because of the students. How can you start and end each day with this simple statement in mind?

Tips for Diverse Learners

- If you have time, create picture cards to illustrate each lie.
- Cut up and roll flat each piece of clay used for the activity to help students with manual dexterity struggles.



Share

3-5 minutes

Play Race to the Finish Line

1-2 students stand at the finish line as “judges” and the rest of the class starts at the other side of the classroom. Everyone must try to cross the finish line without being seen by the judges. These are the rules:

- Judges will start the game with their backs to the students.
- Judges will turn around every so often to catch students.
- Students can move as long as the Judges don’t see them.
- Once a judge spots you, you are out of the game.
- First player to cross the finish line without being seen wins.

After playing the game, ask students what they had to do to win (sneak, trick, lie, etc.). Yes, you could only win by “going behind the judges back” as you ran to the finish line. But what if you told the truth? What would have happened? Is it better to lie and win or tell the truth and lose? These are tough choices, especially when the circumstances are bigger than a silly game!

RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS
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Inspire

3-5 minutes

We are going to watch a video that may surprise you. The teens in the video have a tough decision to make.

Integrity- Pass It On

https://youtu.be/CXHWP1Kt_c?si=pulDVTMZ5VCYfid7

Pause the video at 0:19 and ask the students:

- *What do you think the teens are going to do next?*
- *Why are they so interested in the truck?*

After the video, follow up with these questions:

- *Did their choices surprise you?*
- *How did they show integrity by their choices?*
- *What examples of integrity have you seen in others recently?*

Integrity can happen anytime, anywhere. The choice is yours.



Empower

20 minutes

Have you ever heard of the expression, “It’s just a little white lie”? If so, what does it mean to you?

Invite student responses.

Yes, It means that you are lying, but it’s about something small. Some people think that this type of lie is no big deal. However, little white lies often build on top of each other until you have a whole lie snowball! Today I will read a story about the little white lie that grew and grew until it became a HUGE lie.

Each student will get a small white ball of clay. Emphasize that this is the little white lie in the story they will hear. Give each table/group 4-5 different colors of clay in addition to the little white ball. Explain that every time they hear another little lie, they will cover up their ball with a different color of clay. As they do this, their lie snowball will grow and grow.

- Read the story below. After every white lie, pause and let the children have a chance to cover their little white lie clay ball with another color of clay. Make sure they are alternating colors.
- After the story is finished, have students use a plastic knife to cut their snowball in half. Emphasize just how much the lie grew from the tiny white lie that started.
- Count the number of layers and remind the students that this is the number of extra lies the girl had to tell because of her “little white lie”.



Reflect

5-10 minutes

Ask the students the following questions to evaluate their understanding about honesty.

- What was the original white lie Lisa told?
- How many lies did she have to tell to cover up her initial lie?
- What happened to the lie snowball as we added more clay?
- What happens to a “little white lie” when you start covering it up?
- Do you think a “little white lie” should count as a real lie? Why or why not?
- How could Lisa be more honest next time?
- What would have happened if Lisa had been honest from the beginning?

Remember, honesty means you are telling the whole truth, all the time. It also means you are willing to fess up to a little white lie instead of adding more lies on top of it to cover it up. The only way to undo your lies is by telling the truth. Otherwise it just takes more lies to keep the original one covered.



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AS A RECOMMENDED
PROGRAM FOR SOCIAL
AND EMOTIONAL
LEARNING.

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) has been reviewing evidence-based SEL programs since 2003. Kindness in the Classroom® meets CASEL's SElect Program and is included in the CASEL Guide to Effective Social and Emotional Learning Programs.

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/>

The Little White Lie

By Lisa Rose

Once there was a little girl named Lisa. She really enjoyed playing outside and climbing trees all day long. One day, she asked her mother if she could play outside. Her mother agreed, but she reminded her not to climb the smallest tree in the backyard. It was too small for climbers.

Lisa went out back and began playing a pretend game of fairies. She pretended to live under the largest tree, gathered food from the bottom of the medium sized tree, and then needed a place to call home. She tried and tried to climb the two bigger trees, but she was just too small. She looked longingly at the smallest tree.

"I'll just climb it very carefully. Mom won't mind as long as I don't hurt the tree," thought Lisa. She gingerly climbed the tree, being extra careful not to hurt any of its small branches. However, it wasn't long before she was caught back up in her pretend fairy game and forgot all about how fragile the young tree was. Just as she was jumping off the tree to escape a fairy-eating ogre, Lisa heard a SNAP. The branch on the small tree had broken.

Just then her mother came out and asked what Lisa was doing. "Oh, just playing fairies," Lisa

answered. "Oh no, what happened to the branch on the smallest tree, Lisa?" asked her mother.

"I have no idea Mom!" Lisa lied. Lisa knew this was not the truth, but she was worried about getting in trouble. Hadn't her mother told her to stay off the smallest tree?

- Make a small white ball to represent Lisa's little white lie

Lisa's mother looked a bit confused. "I wonder what happened to it?" she wondered. "Did you see any animals near it Lisa?" "Yes, actually I did," Lisa lied again. "Now that I think about it there was a rather large squirrel jumping on it." •

Cover your little white snowball with red clay.

"Oh really, wow that must have been very interesting my love! What did the squirrel look like?" asked her mom.

"He was grey, with white speckles all over him. He was the most beautiful squirrel I have ever seen!" Lisa lied again. She seemed to be lying for no reason now. Why was she making up this silly story? *Oh, well,* thought Lisa. *It's too late now. I guess I'll just hope my mommy doesn't ask me anymore questions.*

- Cover your red snowball with blue clay

Lisa's mother was very excited about her squirrel spotting. Apparently it was a rare type of squirrel that the local zoo had been trying to save. Her mother ran inside to call the zoo and report what Lisa had seen in their backyard. Lisa began to feel a little sick to her stomach.

Later on that evening, a zookeeper from the zoo came by to interview Lisa about the squirrel. "Do you think you could draw a picture of what exactly you saw?" the zookeeper asked.

"Um...sure" Lisa hesitated. Should she really be drawing something she didn't see? It was too late now. She drew a picture of a squirrel.

- Cover your blue snowball with green clay

"Holy Guacamole! That is the rare Speckled Grey Flying Squirrel of North Carolina! We thought this squirrel was extinct!" exclaimed the zookeeper. Lisa was getting a bit dizzy. Maybe she should tell the truth. Then again, she would be in HUGE trouble if she spoke up now. She decided not to say anything. "Do you know what extinct means little girl?"

Lisa nodded. “Yes, it means that all of that type of animal have died and there are no more left.” gulped Lisa. This little white lie was growing out of control!

Well, since you have seen it in your very own backyard, we can take it off of the extinct list!” shouted the zookeeper. He immediately placed a call to the local newspaper to report the exciting news. A reporter came out that very night and took Lisa’s picture for the article.

“Can you please describe what you were doing when you spotted the Speckled Grey Flying Squirrel of North Carolina?” asked the reporter.

“Um...er...well...I was playing fairies in my backyard and it just sort of came jumping out of nowhere, like it was flying.” Lisa lied yet again.

- Cover your green snowball with yellow clay

The reporter looked a bit disappointed with her story, but she assumed Lisa was just nervous because it was all happening so quickly. She promised to send them a copy of the article and she and the zookeeper left together.

Lisa felt a big knot growing in her stomach. She couldn’t handle the guilt any longer. She walked into the kitchen to talk with her mother. “Mom, I need to tell you the truth,” said Lisa. “I never saw that squirrel in the tree. I was the one who actually broke the branch on the smallest tree. I disobeyed you and now the tree will die!” Lisa fell into her mother’s lap and began crying loudly.

“Oh, Lisa. The tree will not die, we can help the branch heal by taping it back up. We can also help it heal by caring for it and using kind words to encourage it to grow. But Lisa, you have to do a lot more than just apologize to me. The newspaper is about to run a false article about the squirrel and the zookeeper is preparing a place for it.” Lisa looked up at her mom.

“Will you help me call them?” she asked. “I will tell them the truth right now so my little white lie can stop growing.” Lisa’s mother smiled and picked up the phone.

THE END