

Demonstrating Integrity through Promise-Keeping

Objective: Students will gain a better understanding of how keeping promises is part of behaving with integrity and will demonstrate this understanding by writing in response to prompts and answering questions during class discussions.

Materials: Writing journals for each student. If students do not have journals, they can make them by stapling pages of writing paper together and decorating the covers. Sample writing prompts are provided below. Also included on the following page is a short quiz that may be given after journal entries are completed in order to check for understanding.

Length of time: This lesson may be stretched over several class periods throughout the two months assigned to cover integrity. Writing prompts may be assigned at the beginning of the day, and the teacher may lead a circle discussion on the carpet after students finish writing (30-45 minutes per session).

Activity/Discussion: The teacher will introduce the idea of promise-keeping and have students come up with definition of the concept. The class can discuss why promise-keeping is important and how keeping promises affects our relationships with others. Students may then be assigned writing prompts to complete for discussion. Some prompts to use include the following: 1. What is the last promise you made to someone? Did you keep it or are you still working on it? 2. How do you feel when someone makes a promise to you and then he or she breaks it? Is it easier to handle a broken promise when you understand the reasons why it was broken? How does it make you feel if you think the person who made the promise really didn't care that much? 3. What promises do parents or adults make to small children? Why do you think they make those promises? 4. Make a list for one day of the promises you make to others. Then go back and check yourself. How did you do? If you broke some promises, why did that happen? 5. Have you ever made a promise to someone else and then realized immediately afterwards that you couldn't keep it? What was the promise? How did you feel? What did you do? 6. Is it ever OK to break a promise to someone else? Under what circumstances?

Evaluation/Extension: The teacher may evaluate student understanding through their contributions in writing and during discussions. The teacher may also use the quiz after lessons to determine understanding.

What Promise-Keeping Is and Isn't

- 1. Y or N Johnny went to the dentist and found he had several cavities. He told the dentist he would brush his teeth every day. He made a chart and marked it off every day after he brushed his teeth. So far he hasn't missed a day.**

- 2. Y or N Latoya's mother asked if she would lock the door before she left for school each morning. Latoya knew it was important and agreed to do that. The school bus came early one morning and Latoya rushed out the door without locking it.**

- 3. Y or N Sandi told her best friend Aimee that she would let Aimee borrow her bike for the weekend. When the weekend came, Sandi told Aimee that she had changed her mind.**

- 4. Y or N Rob's mother made him promise that he would let his little brother borrow his camera to take pictures of his baseball team. Rob didn't want to let his brother borrow his camera, but he found another camera that didn't always work right and gave that one to his little brother.**

- 5. Y or N Alison's teacher, Mrs. Frye, asked Alison if she would spend her recess time going around to other classrooms and delivering the school newspaper. Alison told Mrs. Frye that she would do it, but at recess time, she forgot and went outside instead.**

- 6. Y or N Jamie and Kyle were going to meet at the movie theater. Jamie told Kyle that he would probably get there first, so he would save Kyle a seat. Sure enough, Jamie got there early, got his ticket, went into the theater, and saved Kyle a seat so that when the movies started, Kyle came right in and sat down.**