**The Truth About Lying**

*K-12 Philosophy Lesson Plan*

**Age group:** Grades K-2, 3-5, and Middle School

**Topic:** Language and Thought

**Introduction -**

This lesson aims to get us to think about why we lie, what lying is, and why we look down on lying. In recognizing the moments when we lie, we gain a greater understanding of why we do so and what the effects of our lies are. We tend to think of lying as generally bad, but why, then, do we do it so often? Do the white lies we tell to protect others’ feelings come at a cost, or are they justified?

**Activity #1 - Two truths and a lie**

Ask students to come up with two truths and one lie about their lives, giving them 2 or 3 minutes to brainstorm. When everyone is ready, have each person (depending on the size of the group) share their 3 statements and have the group guess which is the lie.

**Questions to ask once everyone has shared:**

* *What was your strategy for picking your own truths and a lie?*
* *How did you pick out other people’s lies?*
* *Would you ever lie about something like that while not playing a game?*

**Discuss - the four Ws**

* **What** does it mean to lie?
  + ***definition of a lie*** *- an intentionally false statement*
* **Why** do we lie?
* **Who** do we usually lie to? Do we lie to ourselves?
* **When** do we feel the need to lie?

**Activity #2 - The Effects of Lying, TEDxKids video** (3 minutes)

[**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wbftlDzIALA**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wbftlDzIALA)

**Discuss**

* *Do you agree with what was said in the video?*
* *Why isn’t lying good?*
* *Is lying always bad? What are some scenarios in which lying isn’t bad?*
  + *Bring up the idea of lying to protect a larger truth (ex. Telling someone you like their fashion sense so that they don’t think of you as mean -- also known as a white lie)*
* *Why do we care about the truth and being honest?*

**Written Reflection -** 5 minutes

Let students know that they will not be required to share with the group

* *When is the last time you lied? Why did you do it?*
* *How did it make you feel?*
* *What do you think the effect was?*
* *Would you do it again?*

Have students share their reflections, but only if they volunteer.

**Wrap-up:**

Ask students to share:

1. Has your opinion of lying changed? If so, how?
2. Is it important to be aware of when you lie?
3. Does it matter who we lie to?
4. What are some questions you might ask yourself when you’re considering telling a lie?
5. What are some things that you could do moving forward to keep track of when you lie?