

Ages 11-14: Two Truths and a Lie

Materials Needed
copies of *Two Truths and a Lie Examples* to share, a copy of *Lying and Its Consequences* for each student, pens or pencils

Prepare in Advance
Print copies of *Two Truths and a Lie Examples* to share, and a copy of *Lying and Its Consequences* for each student.

Saul told Samuel a partial truth: he had killed the Amalekites. But since the Lord had told him to *completely destroy* them, his statement was in fact a lie. In saving the best animals and the king alive he showed that he believed they had value and did not want to part with them.

The Amalekites were a ruthless enemy who snuck up from behind Israel in battle. They correspond to falsity of a subtle and selfish kind that is deeply rooted in our will and sneakily attacks good affections. Half-way measures to get rid of this evil do nothing.



Students will play the game two truths and a lie and participate in a guided discussion about some of the subtle outcomes of lying.

1. Spiritually, Saul's action was like destroying "worthless" things, things that outwardly appear wrong, such as stealing and lying. However, Saul stopped short of getting rid of deeper spiritual evils of the heart, things that really seem valuable to us.
2. Invite students (and the teacher) to come up with two true statements and one lie about themselves to share with the group. If students have trouble thinking of things, offer the handout *Two Truths and a Lie* to stimulate thinking.
3. When everyone is ready, share two truths and a lie with the group. Students will try to identify the statements that are true, and the one that is a lie.
4. Give each student a copy of *Lying and Its Consequences* and ask them to circle all statements that they think are true. Be sure to mention that since motivations are key to actions, answers are not necessarily 'right' or 'wrong'. Even though two people may do the same thing, their actions may be motivated by very different loves. Discuss answers as a group.
5. Read the statement in the yellow box. Does thinking about times that you've told lies as 'mistakes', open up new options for you?

New Church Concept Teacher Background

"Those who deliberately or with intent to deceive speak falsehoods, and utter them in a tone which imitates spiritual affection—even more so if they intersperse them with truths from the Word, which are thus falsified—these people were called by the ancients spell-makers; and also soothsayers and serpents of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. These counterfeiters, liars and deceivers can be likened to people who chat in pleasant and friendly fashion with their enemies, and all the time they are talking, hold a dagger behind their backs with which to kill them."
True Christian Religion 324

New Church Concept Teacher Background

"A mouth symbolizes speech, preaching, and doctrine. And deceit symbolizes a persuasion to evil by means of falsity, especially with cunning and purpose. For someone who urges something with cunning or deceit also does so on purpose. Indeed, cunning or deceit proposes it to itself, conceals it, and acts on it when given the opportunity." *Apocalypse Revealed* 624

Likes/Dislikes

- My favorite animals are....
- I can't stand it when....
- I am a (vegetarian/picky eater/meat and potatoes lover).
- My favorite place in the world is....

Skills

- I can play the (harmonica/piano/tambourine).
- I can (juggle/wiggle my ears/do handstands).
- I never learned how to (ride a bicycle/braid my hair/draw).
- I'm a great (whistler/knitter/artist/cook).

Experiences

- I have visited (the Eiffel tower/Disney Land/Siberia).
- I've met (name of famous person).
- I've never seen (name of a famous movie).
- I've eaten (puffer fish/bug/a frog/no meat ever).

Wishes/Dreams

- When I was younger, my dream was to be a (firefighter/zookeeper/contortionist).
- I've always wanted to try (lassoing a cow/ riding in a balloon/hang gliding/horseback riding/slack lining).
- One of the places I want to visit most is (the Great Wall of China/the Pyramids/the bottom of the ocean).
- I hope to eventually (win a race/run a marathon/hike Mount Everest).

Family

- I am related to (Abraham Lincoln/William the Conqueror).
- I am the youngest (of five siblings/in my orchestra/to have won a spelling bee).
- My mother has worked (in a coal mine/as a chef/around the clock).
- I once owned a pet (hamster/frog/dog) named....

Random/Weird

- I am deathly afraid of (spontaneous combustion/knives/hot sauce/ghosts).
- I brush my teeth four times a day.
- I'm allergic to (strawberries/pumpkins/handshakes).
- I've never (had my nails painted/eaten a Pop-Tart/used someone else's toothbrush/broken a bone).

Circle all answers that you think are true and discuss them with your group. Answers are not necessarily “right” or “wrong”. Our motives are a key factor in whether or not something is right or wrong.

1. It’s not wrong to tell a lie if

- a. it saves someone’s life.
- b. gets me out of trouble.
- c. protects my country.
- d. prevents someone from being hurt.
- e. it won’t hurt anyone.

2. Bearing false witness (lying) about others can lead to

- a. losing the trust others have in us.
- b. protecting others from knowing what we really think.
- c. protecting friends from what others are saying.
- d. feelings of guilt and shame.
- e. the destruction of friendships.

3. Telling a half-truth is better than lying outright if

- a. we didn’t know we were doing something wrong.
- b. someone else ‘made’ us do something we didn’t want to.
- c. we are too embarrassed to admit what we have done.
- d. nobody will discover the truth.
- e. others would be hurt if they knew the truth.

4. If everybody stretched the truth (lied a little)

- a. society would become corrupt.
- b. it would be impossible to trust anyone.
- c. people would be more successful.
- d. there would be fewer conflicts.
- e. we would be confused about what’s true.

5. Having potential lies come into our minds means that

- a. we should be worried that we are on the path to hell.
- b. should recognize that evil spirits are suggesting we break the Ten Commandments.
- c. we have the freedom to choose a different path.
- d. we are experiencing a temptation.
- e. conscience can help us decide the right thing to do.

We all make mistakes. Your parents and grandparents made mistakes. Your teachers make mistakes and you have made and will make mistakes. These are inevitable as we make choices hourly. World leaders make important choices every day, but in terms of eternity, their choices are no more or no less important than those you must make. In God’s eyes we are all equally important. Life is about practicing to do what is right—and it does take a lifetime of practice. The most important part of all of us is what other people cannot see—that is, what goes on in our hearts and minds. Some mistakes that seem large in your mind may not appear that way to others, and may be too small to even seem significant in the grand scheme of life. But big or small, you can learn from your errors and start each new day knowing it holds new possibilities for change and progress.

(Adapted from *The Top of the Yardstick* by Donnette Alfelt)