A Community of Integrity

This is the fourth lesson of the Integrity unit. At this age, the concept of integrity can be difficult to understand. As such, the focus will be on learning about honesty and perseverance. We lay the foundation for integrity by discussing how we build positive reputations through kind, caring, fair, inclusive, and honest behaviors and actions. This lesson focuses on how we can build a community of integrity, specifically at the school. Students will work together as a class to identify a common goal for the school and then execute their plan with a focus on maintaining integrity as they do the work of reaching their goal. Specifically, students will learn how completing a large-scale task requires follow-through and doing what you say you will do, even when no one is watching. This is a foundational element of integrity.

Integrity Sub-Concept(s)
Perseverance, Kindness

Lesson Timeframe
45 minutes

Required Materials
❏ Basic art supplies
❏ Other supplies
    (depending on your class goal)
❏ Action Step Template

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:

- Create a step-by-step plan for building a community of integrity.
- Examine areas needing improvement within the school as it relates to integrity.

Teacher Connection/Self-Care

The final promise within your classroom relates back to our first concept this year: Respect. Promise #4 is, "I promise to show respect to my students at all times." This may seem obvious. Of course we respect our students! If we are to be truly honest with ourselves, we can recognize that there will always be some students that are a struggle for us in one way or another. We may have opposite personalities, they may struggle to be in a group setting, there may be behavioral challenges, etc. Regardless of the reason behind it, you must work to ensure that same level of respect for them as for the rest of the class. Take some time with this week's promise. Examine exactly HOW you show respect to every student. Do your words and actions both inside and outside the classroom convey respect with regards to every student? When discussing difficult matters related to a student, are you able to do so in an honest, yet respectful and compassionate manner? Do you continue to advocate for your students even when the level of respect you are giving is not reciprocated by the student and/or family? Integrity starts with you. Say what you mean and mean what you say. Your kind words and actions make all the difference!

Tips for Diverse Learners

- Identify ways each child can help accomplish the class goal regardless of physical or verbal limitations.
- Draw pictures during the brainstorming session to aid in comprehension.

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Share

7-10 minutes

Ask students to share what they have learned about honesty and perseverance in this unit so far. Have they noticed they are getting better at finishing hard tasks rather than wanting to give up early?

Inspire

Overview of Building Integrity in our School

2-3 minutes

Explain that this lesson will target how we can help our school community demonstrate greater integrity through honesty and perseverance. Our class will help build a community of integrity by executing a common goal of honesty and perseverance. To do this, we must first decide what having a community of integrity looks like.

Brainstorming Session

7-10 minutes

Draw an empty school on the board (or on a large piece of paper). Ask the class to brainstorm ways they can build a greater sense of integrity, honesty, and perseverance within our school community. Aim for at least 10 solid ideas based on your school needs. If your class gets stuck, ask the following questions to spark conversation:

- What areas in our school could use some help or kindness?
- What is one way students can show honesty?
- What change in our school would make you feel like you can persevere through challenges?
- How can we encourage each other better to be honest and hard working?

Some ideas might be helping out more around the school to keep it clean and inviting, making sure we do our own work, setting school-wide goals and posting encouraging messages to help people reach their goals, designing posters about honesty and integrity, showing up for school on time every day, and following all the school rules.

Empower

20 minutes

Part 1 (if you decide to split up the lesson):

Narrow down your large list to the top three and vote as a class. The winning vote will become your Class "School Community of Integrity Goal". Using the template below identify three actions that can help the class obtain their School Community of Integrity Goal.
- Note: Make sure that you create actions that accommodate visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learners. For example, if your goal is

picking up trash, your actions might be: creating posters to inspire others to help, creating a catchy phrase or song to sing in other classrooms as you try to gain community support, or actually completing a clean sweep of the school each day after lunch.
- Write each action step in its own column. Include a simple picture to help with comprehension.
- Hang your Goal Sheet up in a prominent place if space allows.

(If needed, end the first lesson here as this is a natural break within this activity.)

Part 2:
- Once the three action steps are created, work through each step as a whole group.

How will we accomplish this action? Do we need supplies? Do we need adult supervision outside of the classroom? (If so, you may choose to have this action completed when you have a parent volunteer present.)

- Remind them that they are focusing on how to increase the level of integrity within the school community. Each person's talents are a valuable asset to this project! Work together as a team to complete each action step. Your goal is to unite as a class to accomplish your ultimate goal of demonstrating kindness and integrity to the school as a whole.
- After all the action steps have been prepared, get out there and start spreading kindness and inspiring a community of integrity!

Reflect

10 minutes

This lesson will require ongoing reflection as to how your action steps are working, if they need to be adjusted, etc. After you have created your goal, the action steps, and collected the tools needed to follow through, process your progress on a routine basis. The following questions can help guide the conversation:

- How has our School Community of Integrity goal changed our school in a positive way?
- How has our class been able to spread kindness through this goal?
- What changes should we make to go deeper, reach more people, and/or make a bigger change (depends on your goal)?

Increasing integrity, honesty, and perseverance will not happen overnight. It takes PERSEVERANCE! Encourage your class to continue this goal throughout the year by creating a habit of integrity moving forward. During reflection time your class may also begin to notice that an additional action step or an adjustment to a current action step is needed to ensure the overall goal is met. That's okay! Part of goal setting is continual review and adjustment.

Extension Ideas

This lesson is just the beginning stages of goal setting for a larger activity that requires ongoing action. This activity can easily be extended through the following:

- Ongoing monitoring of the original goal.
- A monthly addition of a new community of integrity goal to incorporate some of the other ideas identified during the brainstorming session.
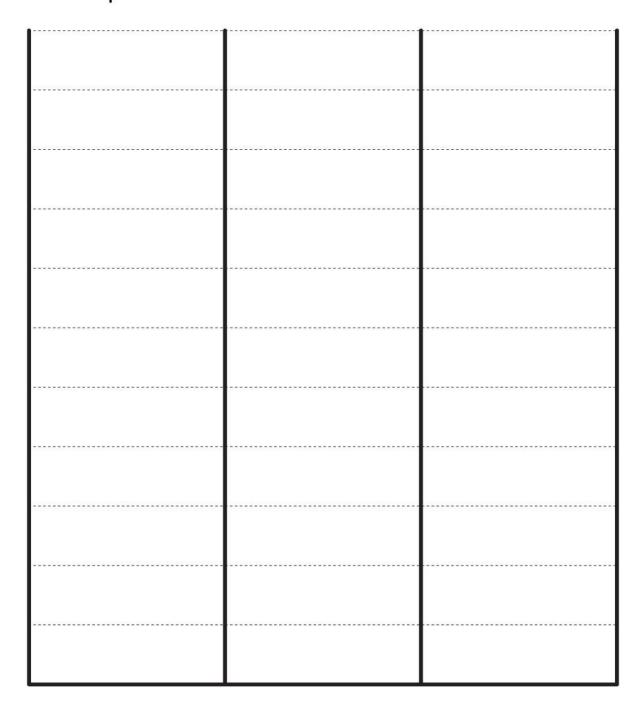

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The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) has been reviewing evidence-based SEL programs since 2003. Kindness in the Classroom® meets CASEL's SELect Program and is included in the CASEL Guide to Effective Social and Emotional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

School Community Respect Goal

Action Steps

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