



Greater Good in Education  
SCIENCE-BASED PRACTICES FOR KINDER, HAPPIER SCHOOLS

# DISHONESTY/HONESTY SCENARIOS FOR "TUNING INTO TRUTHFULNESS"

## DISHONESTY/HONESTY SCENARIOS

### SCENARIO 1: A BROKEN PENCIL

*Imagine you accidentally broke your friend's favorite pencil. You feel nervous, so you decide to hide the broken pencil and not tell your friend. You pretend you don't know what happened. [Pause for students to imagine themselves in the scenario.] Notice how your body feels when you imagine keeping this secret. Pay attention to your chest, your stomach, your shoulders. What do you notice? If you don't feel anything, that's okay.*

Pause for 30-45 seconds to give students time to notice how they feel.

*Now imagine the same situation, but this time you decide to tell your friend right away what happened and offer to replace it. [Pause for students to imagine themselves in the scenario.] Notice what happens in your body when you imagine telling the truth. Do you feel tension or relaxation? Heaviness or lightness? Warm or cool? Or something else? If you don't feel anything, that's okay, too. Just notice how your body feels.*

Pause for 30-45 seconds to give students time to notice how they feel.

### SCENARIO 2: ACADEMIC HONESTY

*Imagine you're taking a test and you don't know an answer. You peek at your neighbor's paper and copy down their answer on your test. [Pause for students to imagine themselves in the scenario.] Notice how your body feels when you imagine cheating on a test. Pay attention to your chest, stomach, and shoulders. What do you notice? If you don't feel anything, that's okay.*

Pause for 30-45 seconds to give students time to notice how they feel.

*Now imagine the same situation. While you could easily peek at your neighbor's paper, instead you take a deep breath and do your best with what you know. Notice how your body feels when you choose to be honest about your own knowledge and skills. If you don't feel anything, that's okay. Just notice how your body feels.*

Pause for 30-45 seconds to give students time to notice how they feel.

### SCENARIO 3: HOMEWORK DILEMMA

*Imagine you forgot to do your homework last night because you were playing. When your teacher asks if you have your homework, you say "I forgot it at home" instead of saying you didn't do it. [Pause for students to imagine themselves in this scenario.] How does your body feel? Notice how your tummy and chest feel. If you don't feel anything, that's okay.*

Pause for 30-45 seconds to give students time to notice how they feel.

*Now imagine the same situation. You forgot to do your homework because you were playing. You tell your teacher, "I'm sorry, I forgot to do it last night." [Pause for students to imagine themselves in this scenario.] How do your tummy and chest feel now when you imagine telling your teacher the truth about your homework? If you don't feel anything, that's okay.*

Pause for 30-45 seconds to give students time to notice how they feel.

### SCENARIO 4: WATER SPILL

*Picture yourself accidentally knocking over a classmate's water bottle while walking to the pencil sharpener. Water spills on their papers. You quickly walk away and pretend you didn't see what happened. [Pause for students to imagine themselves in this scenario.] Pay attention to how your whole body feels when you imagine not telling anyone. Maybe you feel something in your stomach or your throat. If you don't feel anything, that's okay.*

Pause for 30-45 seconds to give students time to notice how they feel.

*Now imagine the same situation. You accidentally knock over a classmate's water bottle and water spills all over their papers. You go find your classmate and say, "I'm sorry, I accidentally knocked over your water bottle." [Pause for students to imagine themselves in this scenario.] What does it feel like in your body to imagine being honest about what happened? If you don't feel anything, that's okay.*

Pause for 30-45 seconds to give students time to notice how they feel.

### SCENARIO 5: SOCIAL MEDIA

*Imagine you're posting about your weekend on social media. You exaggerate and make it sound way more exciting than it really was to get more likes. [Pause for students to imagine themselves in this scenario.] What does it feel like in your body to have done this? If you don't feel anything, that's okay.*

Pause for 30-45 seconds to give students time to notice how they feel.

*Now imagine the same situation. You post on social media about your weekend, which wasn't very exciting at all, which means you won't get many likes. [Pause for students to imagine themselves in this scenario.] Notice the sensations in your body when you imagine posting the truth. If you don't feel anything, that's okay.*

Pause for 30-45 seconds to give students time to notice how they feel.

### DETECTING DISHONESTY

### SCENARIO 1: WHERE'S YOUR HOMEWORK?

*Picture a classmate telling you an elaborate story about why they didn't have their homework—something about their dog eating it, then their computer crashing, then their grandmother getting sick all in one night. As you listen, you have a feeling something doesn't add up. Notice what your body tells you as you hear this story. Do you feel tension in your forehead? A knot in your stomach? Sometimes our bodies can sense when something isn't quite truthful, even before our minds figure it out. Pay attention to these feelings without judging your classmate—just notice what your body is telling you.*

### SCENARIO 2: FRIEND LOYALTY VS. TRUTH:

*Imagine you saw your best friend cheating on a test. You could stay quiet to protect your best friend, or you could find a way to talk to your best friend privately about what you saw. Notice what happens in your body—maybe your heart and breathing—when you imagine choosing truth over protecting someone from consequences.*

*Sometimes choosing honesty isn't easy either—notice how your body feels when you think about confronting your friend.*

### SCENARIO 3: IS IT CHEATING?

*Imagine a classmate tells you they found the answers to next week's big math test online and they offer to share them with you. They say, "Everyone does this, the teacher will never know, and it's not really cheating since we're just studying together." But they also say, "Just don't tell anyone where you got the answers from." You start to feel like things aren't making sense. How does this feel in your body? What clues in your body hint to you that what your classmate is telling you might not be the honest thing to do?*