



Honesty and Integrity

Learning Objectives

After completing this chapter, students will be able to:

- explain honesty and integrity as the foundation of character
- analyse the long-term consequences of ethical and unethical conduct
- apply integrity to personal, academic and civic situations
- commit to a life guided by conscience and principle



Let us Begin

Think about these questions:

- ✧ Why is integrity often described as 'who you are in the dark'?
- ✧ Can dishonest success ever bring lasting peace of mind?
- ✧ Is it ever justifiable to abandon a principle for personal gain?

Talk about your answers with your friends.



Introduction

Honesty is truthfulness in our thoughts, words and actions, while integrity is the deeper quality of remaining honest and consistent even when honesty is inconvenient, unprofitable or unobserved. A person of integrity has a single, unwavering character rather than one face for the world and another for private life. Such a person may sometimes lose an opportunity or a reward, but never loses self-respect or the trust of others. Across every culture and age, integrity has been recognised as the cornerstone of character — the quality without which intelligence, wealth and talent lose their true worth.



Understanding the Lesson

- Honesty is truthfulness in thought, word and deed.
- Integrity is consistency between our values and our actions.
- A person of integrity behaves the same in public and in private.
- Integrity is tested most when honesty carries a cost.
- Unethical gains are temporary, but the loss of trust is lasting.
- One small compromise often makes the next one easier.
- Integrity is the foundation on which all other virtues stand.



Real-Life Example

A senior student found that her project had been marked far higher than it deserved because of an examiner's error. Returning the paper for correction meant losing a prize she had longed for. She reported the mistake anyway, explaining that a reward won by silence would have felt like a quiet theft. Her teachers later remarked that her integrity had taught the class more than any lesson could.



Story

The Apprentice and the Master's Test

In an old town there lived a master craftsman famous for the honesty of his workshop. When he grew old, he had to choose one of his three apprentices to inherit the business. Rather than test their skill, which he already knew, he chose to test their character.

He called each apprentice in turn and handed him a sum of money to buy materials from the market.

Secretly, he had added far more coins to each purse than the materials could

possibly cost. The first apprentice returned, kept the extra coins, and said nothing of them.

The second apprentice spent the surplus on small luxuries for himself, certain no one would know. The third apprentice counted the money carefully and noticed the large surplus at once.

He bought exactly what was needed and returned the remaining coins to his master. "Master, there was far more here than the materials required," he said, placing the purse on the table.

The old craftsman smiled, for this was precisely what he had hoped to discover. "Skill can be taught to any willing hand," he told the gathered apprentices. "But honesty, once lost, is rarely found again, and a workshop is built on





trust.” He handed the keys of the business to the third apprentice that very evening. The others protested that the test had been unfair and the money a trap. “It was no trap,” he replied gently, “only a mirror in which each of you saw himself.” Years later, the honest apprentice’s workshop was the most trusted in the entire region. He often told his own students that integrity had been his true inheritance, worth more than gold.



Moral

Integrity is choosing truth over advantage, even when no eye is watching and no reward awaits.



Key Values

- Integrity
- Honesty
- Conscience
- Trust



Exercise

A. Knowledge Check (Understanding Basic Concepts)

Fill in the blanks using the given words.

trust, compromise, conscience, integrity

1. _____ is consistency between our values and our actions.
2. Our _____ is the inner voice that judges right from wrong.
3. Unethical conduct destroys the _____ that others place in us.
4. One small _____ often makes the next one easier.

Tick (✓) the correct answer.

1. Integrity is tested most when honesty carries a _____. (reward / cost)

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2. A person of integrity behaves the same in public and in _____.
(private / crowds)
 3. Unethical gains are _____. (lasting / temporary)
 4. The master valued honesty above _____. (kindness / skill)

Write True or False.

1. Integrity means having one face for the world and another in private. (_____)
2. Integrity is tested most when honesty is costly. (_____)
3. The loss of trust is easily and quickly repaired. (_____)
4. Integrity is the foundation of all other virtues. (_____)

Match the columns.

Column A

1. Integrity
2. Conscience
3. Scruple
4. Rectitude

Column B

- a. a moral hesitation
- b. moral uprightness
- c. consistency of conduct
- d. inner sense of right and wrong

B. Understanding and Application

Answer the following questions:

1. Distinguish between honesty and integrity in your own words.
2. Why is integrity often tested only when honesty becomes costly?
3. What did the master craftsman truly wish to discover in his apprentices?
4. Explain why one small compromise can lead to larger ones.

C. Real-Life Situations (Competency-WBased Questions)

Read the situations and answer the questions.

Situation-1
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You see a classmate slip on the wet floor in the school corridor and get hurt.

1. What should you do to help your classmate?

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2. Why is it important to help someone who is hurt?
 3. How can you help prevent others from slipping on the wet floor?

Situation-2

A shopkeeper gives Sara far too much change by mistake, and she has already left the shop.

1. What should Sara do, and why?
2. What value is she practising if she returns the money?
3. How would keeping it quietly affect her conscience?

D. Critical Thinking

Think carefully and answer:

1. Can a person who is dishonest in small matters be trusted in great ones? Explain.
2. How does a society as a whole suffer when honesty becomes rare?
3. Why is a clear conscience described as 'the softest pillow'?

E. Value-Based Activity (Experiential Learning)

Keep an 'integrity diary' for one week. Each day, record one situation in which you had to choose between what was easy and what was right, and note what you decided.

F. Group Discussion

Discuss in groups:

"Integrity is doing the right thing even when it is difficult, unpopular or unseen." Discuss this statement with examples from daily life.

Write two examples from your discussion:

1. _____

2. _____



G. Project Work (Experiential Learning – NEP Requirement)

Research the life of any one respected figure known for honesty in public life. Prepare a short written profile explaining how their integrity shaped their reputation and influence.

H. Self-Assessment (Reflection – NEP Core Component)

Tick (✓) the statements that are true for you.

1. I hold to my principles even when it is inconvenient.
2. I am truthful in my words and my actions.
3. I admit my mistakes instead of hiding them.
4. I refuse gains that are dishonestly obtained.
5. I behave the same whether or not I am being watched.

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Life Skill

Ethical Decision-Making

Before acting, pause and ask whether the choice agrees with your conscience and principles. Decisions guided by integrity protect your self-respect and earn the lasting trust of others.