

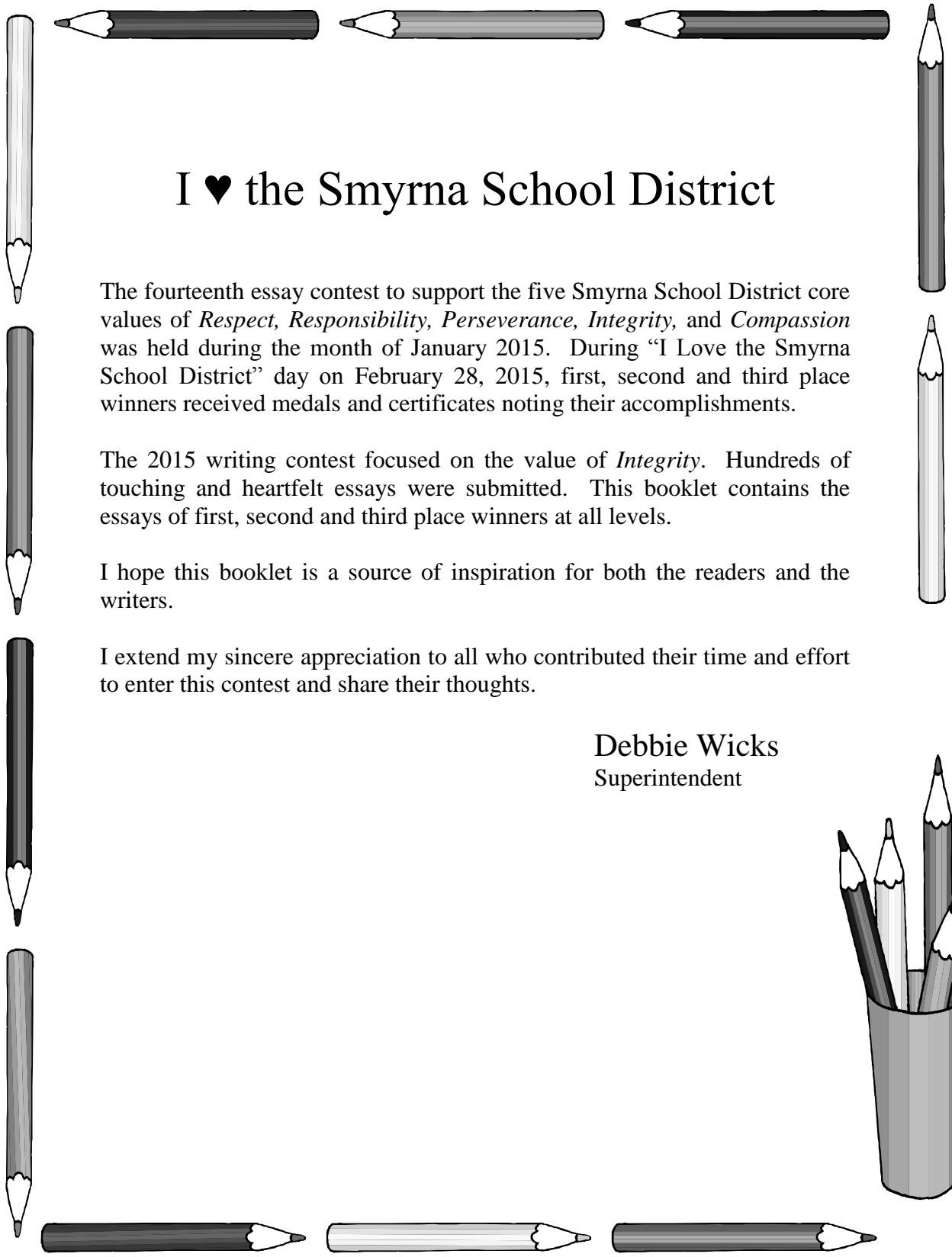


Smyrna School District

Essay Contest

2015

Student Winners



I ♥ the Smyrna School District

The fourteenth essay contest to support the five Smyrna School District core values of *Respect, Responsibility, Perseverance, Integrity, and Compassion* was held during the month of January 2015. During “I Love the Smyrna School District” day on February 28, 2015, first, second and third place winners received medals and certificates noting their accomplishments.

The 2015 writing contest focused on the value of *Integrity*. Hundreds of touching and heartfelt essays were submitted. This booklet contains the essays of first, second and third place winners at all levels.

I hope this booklet is a source of inspiration for both the readers and the writers.

I extend my sincere appreciation to all who contributed their time and effort to enter this contest and share their thoughts.

Debbie Wicks
Superintendent

For the annual “I Love the Smyrna School District” essay contest, students were asked to write about *Integrity*, a core district value. Contest rules and writing prompt were disseminated to students (via their teachers) in December 2014. June Wicks, district reading coordinator, prepared the prompt and assisted with coordinating the essay contest. Jamie Cox, Smyrna School District Curriculum Office secretary, completed the typing and formatting of the publication and assisted with the layout and editing of the publication. Alexander “Sandy” Shalk, Ed.D. conducted the contest and edited the final publication. District teachers encouraged their students to write and helped select essays. Appreciation is extended to all for their time and effort in making this publication possible.

Essay Contest

Contestants are asked to write a maximum 500-word essay on the following topic:

Integrity is the quality of being honest, fair and good. People that have integrity are trustworthy.

Write about a person you admire who has the qualities of integrity. Tell in detail why you chose this particular person, what specific qualities this person possesses, and give specific examples of how he/she demonstrates integrity.

STUDENT WINNERS: First (gold), second (silver), and third (bronze) place winners are selected at each grade level (K-12) in each building. Winners receive medals and certificates noting their accomplishments. All winners were recognized during the “I Love the Smyrna School District” day (February 28, 2015).

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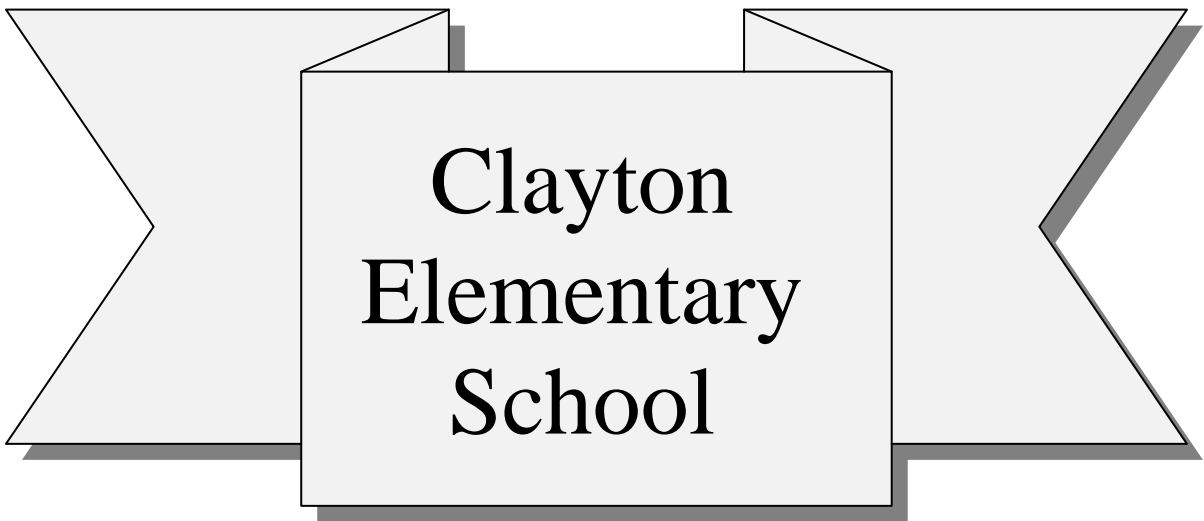
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Grades kindergarten, 1, 2, 3, and 4

My Mom mom has integrity. She takes good care of me when I spend the night. Mom mom is fair when we play games. I love Mom mom.

Riley Hufford
First Place, Kindergarten

Mrs. Chadwick has integrity. She is fair to me and my friends. Mrs. Chadwick is honest to everybody in the school. She is the best!

Ivy Crouch
Second Place, Kindergarten

My sister has integrity. She helps me when I'm sick. She is helpful when people are down and out.

Anahlee Conklin
Third Place, Kindergarten

My friend Kaia shows integrity because she tells the truth. She found someone's pencil. She took it to the lost and found. The person who got it back was happy. Kaia got a Cool Cat ticket for being honest!

Aleisa Clarke
First Place, First Grade

My mom shows integrity because she helps me when I'm hurt. She tells the truth. She does not cheat in games. She is honest because she never lies. That is why my mom shows integrity.

Adelina Kline
Second Place, First Grade

My friend Mason shows integrity by being fair. He takes turns. He plays fair. He plays with me. Mason is in my heart.

Sean Green
Third Place, First Grade

Do you or somebody you know show integrity? Integrity is the quality of being fair and honest. Always tell the truth, don't lie. If you see someone who is struggling to do something help them. If you are getting bullied, walk away and tell an adult. Integrity is always important because nobody would be nice or respectful. If there were no integrity in this world, there would be lots of cheating and lying. For example, in The Honest to Goodness Truth Libby learned to tell the truth when it was necessary. I think Kylee Lehnert is such a good integrity role model. She could be a star as a best integrity actor. My story about Kylee is that always cheers me up when I'm sad and she sticks up for me and she never fights so we're never not friends. I wish everybody showed as much integrity as Kylee.

Aubrey Downward
First Place, Second Grade

Do you want to know about my sister Skyar? She's always fair at playing games with me. She's kind, and she lets me play with her and her friends. She's kind and let me play with her toys. She's kind to friends and family. Skylar is also trustworthy because she always keeps her promises. She's trustworthy when she helps me with my homework. Skylar is trustworthy because she is always on time for safety patrol. Skylar is honest with me, my mom, my dad and all of her friends. That is how my sister, Skylar, shows integrity. I will always love her.

Brooke Berge
Second Place, Second Grade

Integrity is the quality of being honest, fair, good, and trustworthy. I'm writing about my sister because she shows all the qualities of integrity.

Mary is always fair. She shares with me. Mary also lets me do things with her. She does not cheat on other peoples work and on games.

Mary does well with her classroom jobs. She is on time for anti ash brigade and safety patrol. I trust her when she uses my tablet. I know she will take good care of it. Mary is honest. She tells the truth to our parents. She doesn't lie. That's why I like my sister. She has the most integrity of anyone I know.

Patrick Watts
Third Place, Second Grade

Integrity, integrity, integrity! Do you know what integrity means? Integrity means being honest, fair, and good. People that have integrity are trustworthy. Integrity is important because it shows who you are as a person. Integrity to me is returning money or stuff that someone has lost or dropped. An example of integrity in schools is when someone drops a cool cat ticket, and then you return it instead of keeping it for yourself. Another example of integrity in school is to

not cheat on work. Showing integrity can be hard. J.C. Watts once said, "Character is doing the right thing when nobody's looking." I feel this is a powerful quote that everyone should live by.

In class, we read an article that was in the newspaper called "An Honest Kid." This was a very true and powerful story. It was about a boy named Tanner Munsey who was 7 years old. Tanner was an honest kid. Tanner was playing baseball when a runner ran and Tanner attempted to tag the player leaving first base. When the umpire called the player out, Tanner immediately informed the umpire that he hadn't tagged the runner. The umpire appreciated Tanner's honesty. Then two weeks later during another game, the umpire called a runner safe when Tanner really tagged him. The umpire believed Tanner because he was honest. Now isn't that a great example of integrity? What Tanner did is being honest and trustworthy.

In class we watched a short video about integrity. The young man in the video was named Joey. Joey is in his teens. In this short news video there was a visually impaired man who dropped \$20 at Dairy Queen. A woman behind him picked it up and she claimed it was hers. Joey asked the woman to give it back, but she refused. Joey asked her to leave Dairy Queen. Then Joey gave the man \$20 of his own money. That is two hours of his pay. Another customer saw Joey's act of kindness and wrote a letter to the store manager. Wouldn't you say that is an excellent example of integrity?

In the end, I hope you learned that integrity is a strong quality that everyone should have. I hoped you learned that integrity means being honest, fair, and good. I learned from Tanner and Joey it's always good to show integrity. It is good to show integrity because it gets you rewards and sometimes nothing but it's still important to show integrity. Tanner and Joey helped change the way I think by always doing the right thing even when no one is looking. That's what true integrity means.

Allyson Holmes
First Place, Third Grade

Do you know what integrity is? Integrity is the quality of being honest and kind. People will know you show integrity because you are trustworthy. According to Confucius, "To know what is right and not do it is the worst cowardice." I totally believe this quote because always doing the right thing will get you far in life. I am going to tell you about the two awesome people, a young boy named Tanner, who played shortstop in a t-ball game, and a Dairy Queen Manager named Joey.

First, I would like to tell you all about the amazing Tanner. Tanner showed lots of integrity at a t-ball game. One day at the baseball fields, Tanner was playing short stop and he attempted to tag a player running from first base. The umpire called the player out. Tanner knew he did not do such a thing and immediately informed the umpire that he didn't tag the player at all. The same thing happened the next week, but this time Tanner did tag the player and the umpire thought he did not. The umpire asked him if he tagged the player and Tanner said yes. The umpire thanked him for his honesty again. Since he was honest the first time, the umpire believed him the second time. Tanner is a great example of how even a child can show integrity.

Next, let's talk about the awesome Joey, the manager of a Dairy Queen. Joey showed integrity this one day when a blind man ordered a sundae. The blind man dropped a \$20 bill on the floor and a lady picked it up and put it in her purse. Joey said he saw what she did, and said to give it back or I will not serve you. She left mad. The next day, Joey saw the blind man again and he paid the blind man \$20 out of his own pocket. A person saw what happened and wrote an email to Dairy Queen and it went viral. Queen Latifa asked Joey to be on her TV show. Joey was a hero to everyone. Joey showed integrity by telling the truth and doing the right thing.

Both of these boys showed 100% integrity. Tanner and Joey showed lots of honesty and are amazing heroes. Lastly, they both showed fairness. I learned that being honest and telling the truth is a great way to be a better person. I hope you like Tanner and Joey's stories of integrity. I think everyone should be like them. They are great examples of how integrity is shown. Have you ever met someone that shows integrity?

Alina Bartlett
Second Place, Third Grade

What does integrity mean? Integrity means making good choices and doing the right thing when no one is looking. Take me for example, one day I found trash on the ground. I picked it up without anyone telling me to.

After reading the article, "An Honest Kid," I learned that Tanner, a baseball player from Florida, showed lots of integrity. During a t-ball game, the umpire called a player out because he really wasn't out. Tanner went up to the umpire and said that he really didn't tag the runner. Then at Tanner's other t-ball game he recognized the same umpire. Tanner tagged a runner and the umpire called the runner safe, but Tanner really did tag the runner this time. He just kept to himself. The umpire noticed his surprise at the call. Then she asked, "Did you really tag the runner?" Tanner said yes, and then the umpire changed her mind. She called the runner out. She trusted Tanner because he showed integrity the last time.

Another person that showed integrity is a teenage boy named Joey Prusak from Minnesota. He is a manager at Dairy Queen. A visually impaired guy walked into Dairy Queen and gave Joey a twenty dollar bill and Joey gave him money back but the guy dropped it. Well, you know he was not going to know he dropped it. Then a lady came in and saw the twenty dollars on the floor. Joey thought she would be a nice kind lady and give it back, but she put it in her purse. Joey said he couldn't serve unless she gave the money back. She claimed it was hers. "Then I can't serve you," said Joey. The lady walked out of Dairy Queen. Then Joey gave the visually impaired guy his own twenty dollars. Someone saw Joey give the man the money and sent a letter to the owners. They put it on Facebook and it went viral. Joey Prusak is a good role model who showed integrity.

The lesson I learned about integrity from Tanner and Joey was you should do what is right and you will feel great about yourself. Joey is an honest person and would give money right out of his pocket to a visually impaired person. Tanner told the truth at his baseball game. I learned that being honest and kind is really special. Just like Martin Luther King, Jr. said, "The time is

always right to do what is right.” So we should be honest and kind because good things will happen to you. Don’t forget be honest and true, that is the best part of you!

Hailey McCutchan
Third Place, Third Grade

Lots of people display integrity. Do you show integrity? I hope you do because showing integrity is the way people trust you. I have a friend that I’ve known since kindergarten. His name is Joey McLean. He expresses lots of integrity. Joey is always honest and always fun to play with. I can trust him because he never cheats in video games. I want to tell you how to show integrity just like Joey.

One way to display integrity is to be honest and not lie. Lying is saying something that is not true. Lying is when you say, “I have 1,000 gold coins.” But you really don’t. If you are honest, and don’t lie, people can trust you and trust what you speak. Joey never lies and when he never lies, I can trust him and I can trust what he does and says. That’s why Joey is my best friend.

Another way to show integrity is to behave well even if someone has his or her back turned. This is the #1 way to show integrity. This is because when someone has their back turned, you don’t walk away or do something bad. So, always behave when someone’s back is turned. Joey always behaves when someone’s back is turned.

Well, do you have any friends who show integrity? I bet you, the reader, have lots of friends who show integrity. I hope you also show integrity. You may use this helpful information because you can become an even better person when you show...integrity!

Logan Babenko
First Place, Fourth Grade

The world is full of integrity. If you can keep a secret or you are honest, fair and good, you have integrity. Today I am going to write about how my sister, Alison, showed integrity.

“Oh No!” I watched in amazement as a small, green piece of paper fell to the ground. I looked ahead of me and I saw that the green piece of paper was a five dollar bill.

My sister pointed out that maybe the money belonged to someone who needed the money to buy dinner. I thought about it long and hard.

I knew what I had to do. So my sister and I began to look for the owner of the money until we came to a man with a worried look on his face. I handed the man his money. He smiled and suddenly I began to feel a lot better.

If my sister and I did not return the money, the man may not have had a meal on his table. If the world did not have integrity, everything in life would be unfair and people's feelings would be hurt. Life would not be such a happy and peaceful place.

My sister helped me realize that showing integrity is important and being kind can make you feel great.

Amber Sayers
Second Place, Fourth Grade

According to "Merriam-Webster.com," integrity is the state of being honest and fair. I think integrity is when people can trust you to do the right thing. Integrity is a big part of my life!

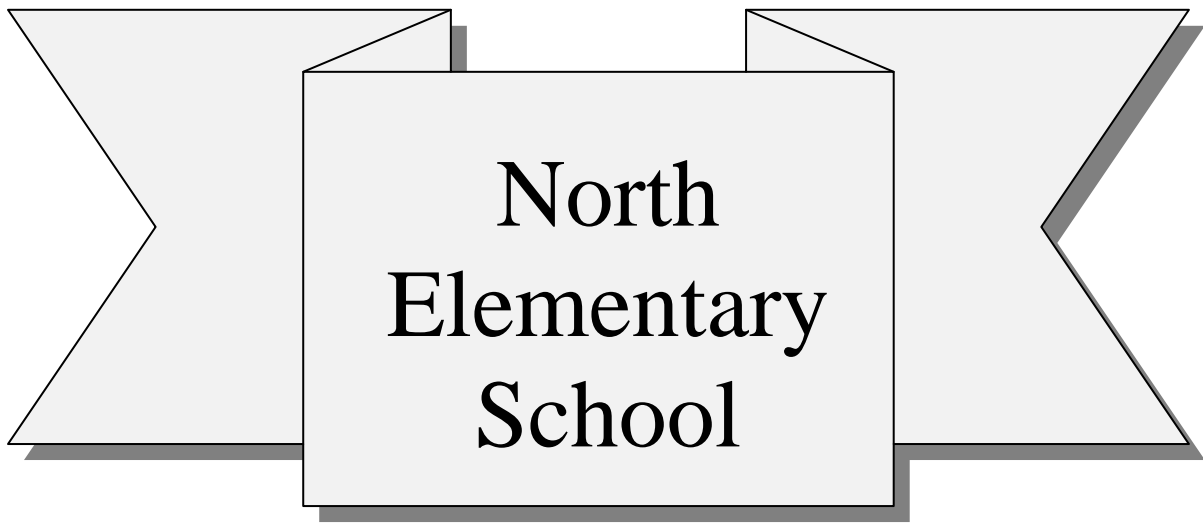
Someone who showed me a lot of integrity is Martin Luther King Jr. He was a person who fought for equal rights. Martin Luther King Jr. gave a speech and he wished people would not be judged by the color of their skin. Martin Luther King was born in Atlanta, Georgia. He inspires me.

In an article I read from biography.com, I learned that Martin Luther King Jr. has many qualities of integrity. One of the qualities was that he is a very positive man. When people were mean to him he did not say anything back. He did not say any negative words to anybody. Another great quality is he fought for what he believed in. There were probably a lot of people who did not agree with him. The last quality is that he never gave up even times got rough. Those are the many qualities of Martin Luther King's integrity!

Martin Luther King also shows a lot of examples of integrity. One example of integrity was when he marched. People marching with him trusted him. They trusted him to do the right thing. Another example is when he did his famous "I Have a Dream" speech. He believed that everyone should have equal rights. This information came from myhero.com. These are just a few examples of how he showed integrity.

So, Martin Luther King Jr. was an amazing man with a lot of integrity. He is my hero!

Jordan Myrick
Third Place, Fourth Grade



Grades kindergarten, 1, 2, 3, and 4

My cousin has integrity. He always tells me the truth.

Kaden Puetz
First Place, Kindergarten

Savannah shows integrity by being a nice student.

Cheyenne Cook
Second Place, Kindergarten

My Mom has integrity. She is honest.

Dimitrius Herard
Third Place, Kindergarten

Do you know a person who shows integrity? My dad shows integrity every minute of the day. One time he was truthful when we were playing checkers and I said, "did you win?" Then he said "no." He showed integrity because other people will just lie and say I won when they really didn't win. That is why I think my dad is being a role model. But he showed integrity twice! When I was hungry and when my dad was cooking, I was whining and then I said, "when are you going to be done?" He said, "I will be done in a second," and it was! He tells the truth all the time. I can always count on him!

Gabriella Charles
First Place, First Grade

Do you know a person who shows integrity? Me! I know all about integrity. I showed integrity when I broke my shelf. I told the truth and was honest. I feel happy when I show integrity. People are proud of me in my family!

Michael Davis
Second Place, First Grade

Scott shows integrity in many ways. He is responsible because he does his chores. When it was his bed time he was in bed. When it is school time he gets ready to go to school by himself. That is how Scott shows integrity.

Erica Shogan
Third Place, First Grade

The person who shows integrity in my life is Mrs. Courtney. She is devoted to making us happy. She is not my babysitter. She is my step-mom. I love her and she loves me, too. She is also devoted to our dog Brooklynn. She also keeps us safe any way she can! She will spend a fortune on us. She is a really caring person! I want this super, fun, smart, funny person around all the time.

Ella Carter
First Place, Second Grade

Integrity means good, fair, and honest. Do you know anyone that shows integrity? I do. My person is..... my daddy! Here are three ways my daddy shows integrity. He is honest because he never lies. He tells the truth. He is fair because he cuts the cake in equal groups so everyone can get a piece. I don't know how he's trustworthy, so I'm just going to skip that one for now. He is good because he works very hard to earn money to keep us healthy.

Kali Butcher
Second Place, Second Grade

Dear Readers,

Integrity means being fair, good, and honest. Do you know anybody who shows integrity? I do. My person is my mom. My mom is honest because she tells me everything. When I am not being safe, she tells me right from wrong.

She is fair because she shares the TV. She shares her light and she shares the food that she cooks.

She is good because she helps people. She takes care of me and she loves everyone. Integrity is import because..... you will be good people if you have it.

Love,

Nevaeh Perry
Third Place, Second Grade

Integrity means a person is good, fair and honest. People that have integrity are trustworthy. Having integrity helps people do the right thing. If we didn't have integrity, we wouldn't follow the rules. We wouldn't be the people we are.

I can't wait to tell you about the person in my life that shows integrity. Kiki does. Kiki is my cousin. She is honest, fair and good. Kiki always follows the rules. She never gets in trouble. She is a person that has shown integrity and is trustworthy. She is fair because she makes everything equal. My mom was looking for her new earrings. She lost them and no one wanted to help her find them. Kiki was the only one to help her. She found the earrings and my mom was happy. My mom gave her a snack. Kiki said, "No thanks you." She used her manners. Instead of taking the snack, she gave it to my mom. Also, one time we went to the store. We saw a homeless person on the sidewalk. She gave him her sandwich. That is just a little bit about Kiki and how she shows integrity.

Integrity is being a good, honest and fair person. You are not rude or selfish. It means to not be disrespectful. Integrity is important because it helps people and kids. Integrity is not a game. It should be practiced all of the time. You should always show integrity.

Amarianna Dixon
First Place, Third Grade

Integrity is when someone is being honest, fair, or good. Sometimes you can see integrity when you are at school. Integrity looks like you are being helpful to someone else. Integrity is when you are making the right choice when no one is looking. Also, integrity looks like something that you do for a family member or a friend.

The person who shows integrity in my life is Alanis. Alanis is a very honest person because she stands up for the right choices. Alanis also found a bracelet that didn't belong to her so she gave it back to the person it belonged to. One time, when I was hurt, she helped me up to go to the nurse. Alanis shows a lot of integrity.

Integrity means that you should always be honest to others. It also means to follow the teachers' rules. Integrity is important, because without it, we would not have a nice place to live. Also, our city, state, country, or town would have trash all over the place. We also want to live with good people.

Tierra Hill
Second Place, Third Grade

Have you heard about integrity? Integrity is being kind, honest and brave. For example, if someone drops something pick it up and give it back to them. Doing that is being honest and

kind. Standing up for what you know is right shows bravery. If everybody tried to show integrity, the world would be a better place.

Do you have a person who shows integrity in your life? I do! My dad shows me how to be a good person and use integrity. My dad helped me learn how to cook and fold laundry. That was helpful and kind. He always helps strangers and people in need. He was a volunteer firefighter. That showed bravery. He teaches me that you should always tell the truth, never steal or take anything that is not yours and always do the right thing. He is a great role model and the person that I chose to write about.

Why is integrity important? Try to imagine what the world would look like without integrity. It would be unkind, dishonest and a scary place to be. The world needs kind people to give a helping hand. We need honest people to keep us on the right track. Our world also needs brave people like my father to keep us safe. Show integrity where you live and help others do the same.

Emma Clukey
Third Place, Third Grade

Do you know what integrity is? Integrity is being honest, fair, and polite. It is important to have integrity because if no one had integrity, you would not know who to trust.

A person I think has integrity is my dad. He has integrity because he is honest, fair, and good. He also follows moral codes. Moral codes are rules that are not written down. Holding the door for others is one example of a moral code. Now I will tell you a time he had integrity.

My dad had integrity when he said he would take me to the movies and did. But integrity is not only being honest, it is being reliable and polite. He is reliable and polite. He is reliable when he picks me up from the bus stop. My dad is polite when he says please and thank you.

Now that you know what integrity is, maybe you will be able to point out someone who has integrity, and maybe you'll show it too. If you see someone who is not showing integrity, you should tell them to have integrity and why.

Milan Williams
First Place, Fourth Grade

Do you know what integrity means? Having the qualities of integrity means you are honest, fair, and good. Examples of integrity are paying taxes, obeying the law and not committing crimes. Integrity is not just obeying laws. It could be picking up garbage, helping others or voting.

Out of everybody I know, my dad, Michael Davis, shows a lot of integrity. My father is very honest. He always tells the truth and never lies. For example, one time I asked him a serious

question and he told me an honest answer. Whenever my dad sees somebody drop something, he helps them look for it and will be honest and not keep it.

My dad is a fair person in our house. He would make sure every kid gets the same amount of something. An example was, one time my brother and I were fighting over the TV remote and dad told us to take turns. My brother and I both got the same amount of TV time. Another example is that my brother, my sister, and I were fighting over the last cookie, so my dad split it in thirds for us.

My dad also shows integrity by being a good person. For example, he pays his taxes like he is supposed to. He will never steal money from people. One time somebody in the Acme dropped their groceries and he went to go help pick them up. My dad votes for presidents for our country like a citizen.

My father can be very reliable. I can rely on him every day. I can rely on him if I get hurt. For example, once I bruised my knee and dad helped me out by cleaning it and putting a bandaid on it. Those are the attributes of my dad that show he has the qualities of integrity.

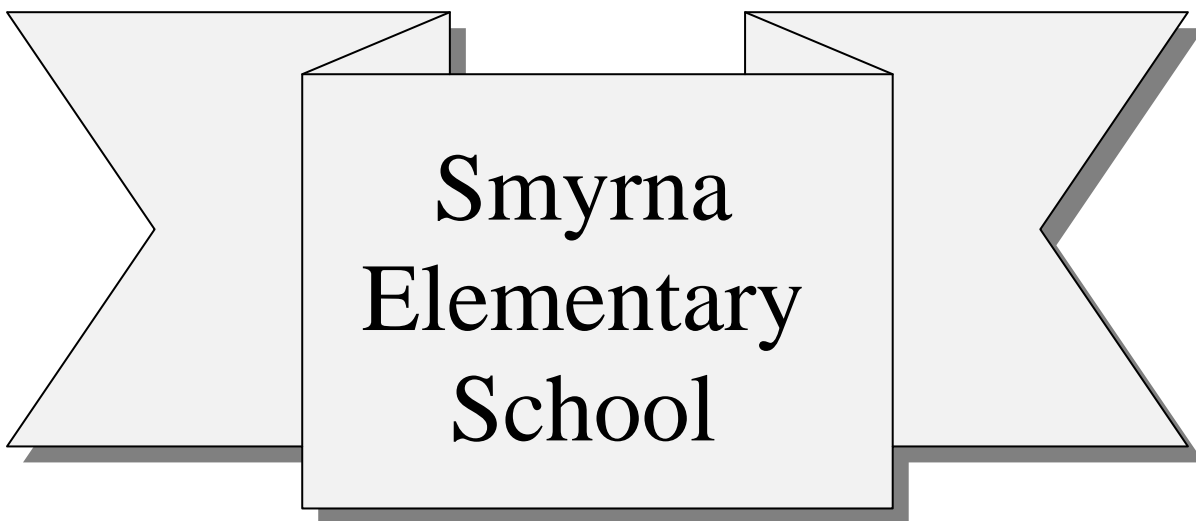
Machai Stinnett
Second Place, Fourth Grade

Integrity is one of the best qualities a person could have. Integrity reveals how good a person is. Also, integrity shows how kind and respectful somebody is. There are a lot of people I know that show the qualities of integrity. You know what? I'll tell you about somebody right now.

That somebody is Maurice Ruff-Lane. He's in my class and also a close friend. Maurice is very sterling. He always tries to make the best out of situations. Also, Maurice helps people even when they don't do anything nice in return. He shows a lot of generosity towards everyone he meets. Maurice also does not like it when people get hurt. If somebody gets hurt he's the first person to help. This may seem like a lot, but not really for Maurice.

Maurice does that and a whole lot more. If I were to put everything he shows integrity on this paper, it would be 5 pages long. Everybody would be able to do this if they put their mind to it. This is what I call a good person showing integrity in excellent ways.

Bahsil Laster
Third Place, Fourth Grade



Smyrna
Elementary
School

Grades kindergarten, 1, 2, 3, and 4

Integrity is being honest. Integrity is being fair. Integrity is being kind. Integrity is telling the truth. I show integrity if I don't sneak in my sister's closet.

Riley Merritt
First Place, Kindergarten

I showed integrity by telling Mommy that I ate chocolate while she was in the shower.

Lucas Blair
Second Place, Kindergarten

I have integrity because I am honest. I browse Mom's Kindle and I told the truth. I can be trusted.

Anna Korpela
Third Place, Kindergarten

Martin Luther King Jr. was a great man! He showed integrity by talking to the president to change laws. He gave speeches so all children could go to good schools. He went on marches so all Americans could sit anywhere on the bus and eat at any restaurant. Martin Luther King Jr. was an awesome man!

Kathryn Hornberger
First Place, First Grade

In my opinion, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. always showed integrity. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was very honest. He was very honest because he never told lies. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was a very fair man. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. wanted them to treat them the same. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was very good. He said not to fight. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. shows Integrity.

Ethan Grandel
Second Place, First Grade

Martin Luther King Jr. showed integrity, want to know why? What did Martin Luther King Jr. do for us? He was making good choices! He fought for everyone to be fair to others, like me and you. He wanted blacks and whites to go to the same school. He loved his family, and us, today, tomorrow, and always. Martin Luther King Jr. fought for the people around him and the way they were acting! He was a good man.

Madison Lomax
Third Place, First Grade

Our school is having a school contest about Integrity. I know someone who has Integrity. Let me tell you about them.

What is Integrity you might ask? Well, Integrity is when you tell the truth and are honest. Just like if you do something wrong, you always tell the truth.

The person that I know who has Integrity is my teacher, Mrs. Scullion. Mrs. Scullion is very serious. She wants us to be very smart. She has learned a lot, and she knows what she is doing. She tells the truth to people. Sometimes she makes learning fun. Mrs. Scullion does the right thing when we are doing our work. She stays quiet so we can concentrate. She is honest to people. She tells us what something means when we don't know what it means.

If nobody had Integrity, then the world would be a disaster. People will be so mean and they would fight and hurt one another. They wouldn't be honest to anyone. Good thing people have Integrity!

Thank you for reading this organizer about Mrs. Scullion. Integrity is an important thing. You and all of those people who have Integrity, you should be proud of yourself!

Katelynn Christine
First Place, Second Grade

I chose Caden Hood because he displays integrity. Caden is good he can keep a secret. I can trust him. He's fair and nice. He does not lie. He's good not bad or mean. He is fair he takes turns at recess games. I chose Caden Hood because he's good, fair, and honest.

Gabriel Ramirez
Second Place, Second Grade

Integrity is something good that people do, like being honest. I know Mr. Obama because he is our president. Mr. Obama is honest and tells the truth. He does not lie and is a nice person. He also makes good choices. He is honest because he cares about the people in the United State of America, like me. I have not met Mr. Obama, but he seems nice to me!

Kharyzma Goldsborough
Third Place, Second Grade

Hi, I'm Corey and I am going to tell you how Deontae shows a lot of integrity and telling the truth. Integrity means to be honest.

The first reason he shows good integrity is by making games fair. Like trying to sort the teams to make the teams equal for soccer. He also lets people play the soccer game whenever they want to play the soccer game even if it's in the middle of the game. He lets everybody have a chance to play the goalie if they want to play as the goalie.

Deontae is very trustworthy. He's always nice to the people around him. He's also always trying to help the people around him. He's also my friend and I'll put all my faith into him to do what he's supposed to do.

Deontae is very honest and I think that's one thing he does best. Deontae gets in trouble he doesn't try to blame somebody else or try to get out of trouble. He just admits that he did it. He takes the blame for what he did wrong. Another thing he does that makes him honest is that he tells true stories about himself or something or someone else. He doesn't just tell fake stories so people like him. He also never ever tells lies about someone or something, and he doesn't lie to me or anybody.

I hope you like my story about my friend Deontae who never lies, and always tells the truth. You should also show integrity like my dear friend, Deontae.

Corey Adams
First Place, Third Grade

You may be surprised to learn that someone with integrity might be right in front of your eyes. Can you tell me someone you know with integrity? I know someone with integrity. Her name is Carmella. But how do you know they have integrity? You might ask. Well that is a wonderful question! Here are some ways: (1.) Returns lost things to their rightful owners. (2.) They always tell the truth. (3.) You can trust them to not take your things. My friend Carmella is a very truthful friend and soon you will find out just how much integrity she has. She returns lost things. Once I left my headband at her house and when we came back to school on Monday she gave it back to me. Plus she once found a really pretty coat and gave it back to the student who owned it. She found a cute glove and put it in the lost and found. She also tells the truth. Once I asked her if she knew where my flower was and she told on her friend. Also, she tells the truth to her parents and the teacher. Besides if you can't trust her why would I be telling you about

her? The reason I am telling you about her is because she is trustworthy. Once I was really busy and she asked if I needed help and I said "Yes can you count my tickets?" She said "Yes." And she did not take any tickets from me. And the teacher said go pick up something from the office and you can take a friend and they didn't mess around. So now you see what an honest person is like and try to be one yourself. It can't hurt you.

Kate McGowan
Second Place, Third Grade

Do you know what integrity is? If you don't I will tell you what integrity is, why integrity is important, also someone who shows integrity. I hope you will agree with me about integrity. I hope you enjoy reading!

I am going to first tell you facts about what integrity is. Integrity is the quality of being honest, fair, and good. People that have integrity are trustworthy. In other words integrity is being so trustworthy everybody will trust you. Now you know what integrity is.

Now that you know what integrity is I will tell you why integrity is important. Do you know why integrity is important? Integrity is important because if no one showed integrity the world would be full of lies, rumors, and nobody would trust anybody. Now I hope you think integrity is important!

At this time now I will tell you somebody who shows integrity named Brandon. Brandon shows integrity by when tickets fall on the floor he gives it to the person. When Brandon saw his best friend doing something bad even when he knew if he told they wouldn't want to be his friend he still told. Now you know a person who shows integrity.

I hope you like my writing piece about integrity, and I hope you think Brandon shows integrity. Now you should show integrity. Bye.

Jacob Wagner
Third Place, Third Grade

Hello, my name is Abigail. I am going to tell you about a person who gains integrity. This passage is going to tell you the reasons I chose this person. I am also going to tell you the specific qualities this person possesses and how the person demonstrates integrity. The person I am writing about is Andrew Foster.

First, I am going to tell you the reasons I chose Andrew. I chose Andrew because he is very reliable. I have never heard him lie and he is very trustworthy. Once, in third grade a fight happened on the playground. When the teachers asked Andrew to explain the whole problem, he didn't tell a single lie. He told the whole truth. He always does his work and when someone gets hurt, Andrew helps them right away.

Next, I am going to tell the specific qualities that Andrew possesses. Andrew is reliable because if he has something important he has to do, people can trust him to do it correctly without hesitation. When something really terrible happens, Andrew tells the whole truth even if it gets him in trouble. If there is something that everyone wants, he steps right in and divides it equally.

Finally, I am going to tell you how Andrew demonstrates integrity. Andrew demonstrates integrity by doing the things he has to do without complaining. He also demonstrates integrity by being a good friend to everyone. Andrew never upsets anyone, and he always does his work. The final way how Andrew demonstrates integrity is that he is very admirable and also very fair.

Now you know how Andrew demonstrates integrity and the specific qualities he possesses. Also, you now know the reasons why I chose him. By reading all these things about integrity, let's hope that you show integrity too! See you next time I write another writing prompt.

Abigail Pierre-Louis
First Place, Fourth Grade

Hi! If you would like to know the definition of integrity, here's a story to read. This story is about a girl who shows integrity. Her name is Dalayna. She is one of my many classmates, and my friend. In this writing piece I will summarize how kind, helping, and trustworthy she is.

Kindness: Since the first day of fourth grade, she has been so nice. For example, on the first day of school I wanted to make new friends and right away we became friends. Another reason she is so kind is when we were at recess Dalayna and I said "why don't we make up our own game?" then she said "I love that idea, Madi!"

Helping: One of the reason I picked he was she is so helpful. For example, Dalayna helped me with my homework because I was having trouble. Another reason is she is a problem solver. When I have a problem she always has great advice to give. Not just for me but for anyone.

Trustworthy: She is also very reliable. For example, I can tell her secrets that I do not tell anyone. Dalayna is not one of those people who tells everyone your personal business. What I say to her stays with her.

Dalayna is kind, helping, and trustworthy as I said before. She shows 100% integrity every day. That's why I chose her. I hope you want to be Dalayna's friend too. Also I hope you enjoyed my writing piece. Bye!!

Madison Sullivan
Second Place, Fourth Grade

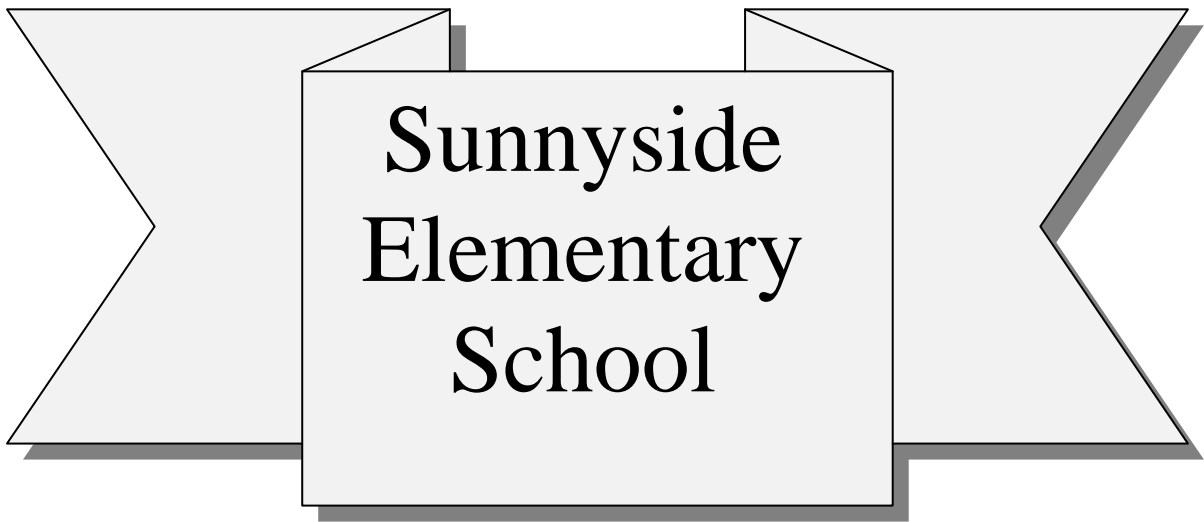
What is integrity? Integrity means your being honest and telling the truth. My Mom shows integrity. Her name is Oribel Ray. I picked my mom for a good reason this is why.

First, she is one of the most honest people I know. My mom tells me the truth and also does the right thing when no one is looking. She is my best friend and is very nice to people. My mom is hilarious and she tells me bad things but at least she's being honest. One time we were going to a restaurant. I wore something, and she told me I looked hideous. I didn't get upset because my mom was being honest. She helped me pick out my clothes, and I looked good again.

Next, she is dependable. My mom is always there for me when I'm sad she makes me happy. My mom takes care of me, helps me out, and she can also keep a secret and promises when I need help she's going to be right there by my side helping me. You can definitely count on her to be there for you.

Now you know why I picked my mom, and how she is the most honest and dependable mom in the world. I love her so much. I hope you liked this essay.

Eric Ray
Third Place, Fourth Grade



Sunnyside
Elementary
School

Grades kindergarten, 1, 2, 3, and 4

One time I found a little toy. I told my friend about the toy. She said we should give it back. We gave the toy to the bus driver. She said thank you for telling the truth.

Rorianna Boulden
First Place, Kindergarten

My sister named Morgan is honest. I asked her, "Do you have my hand sanitizer?" "Yes I do," she said. That was honest.

Makenna Wisk
Second Place, Kindergarten

It is integrity when Mrs. Thompson takes my money for lunch. Mrs. Thompson keeps it safe for me.

Madison Medina
Third Place, Kindergarten

What does integrity mean to you? Integrity is honest words and actions. An act of integrity is when others are laughing at a classmate, I do not. Showing integrity and knowing right from wrong helps you to feel awesome. I hope you learned something about integrity.

Jaime McMillan
First Place, First Grade

Integrity means being honest, fair, and good. That sounds just like my dad. He helped me learn how to read. Then I told him secrets that he never told. Also he always gets me ready for school. Integrity is important because everyone is treated fairly.

Hannah St. Bernard
Second Place, First Grade

My sister Alexis shows integrity. One time she found money and returned it. Another time we were playing and she bumped me and it hurt. She told the truth. Alexis always does the right thing.

Dominick Moore
Third Place, First Grade

Have you ever shown integrity? Have you ever seen somebody show integrity? Integrity is telling the truth, having faith, trust, and doing the right thing. I know a great person she is also an excellent classmate that shows integrity every day. Her name is Kelsey Lowman. Kelsey shows integrity by telling the truth when we ask her a question. She uses her manners and is quiet when we are supposed to be quiet. That's probably why the teachers trust her. If no one showed integrity they would be lying and losing their trust. They wouldn't have manners. Everything would be loud and noisy. Would you like to live like that? I think it would be terrible. If the class was leaving to go to art a person could come in and take my stuff and lie that they didn't. They wouldn't even tell the truth. Being around Kelsey makes me feel happy and to use my manners. She inspires me to be a better classmate like her. "I want to tell the truth like her. I don't want to lose my trust." She shows me that doing the right thing makes people happy.

Ava Emrich
First Place, Second Grade

Did you know if you have integrity you will grow up to be a great person? Integrity is something you have to do! Integrity means to tell the truth, do the right thing, and be faithful. I know a person and her name is Mrs. Patricia, and she is my neighbor. She loves kids. I know she shows integrity because she always keeps her promise. She knows what's right and not, like if I should help her or not. She is also faithful as a pack of cats. She helps collect newspapers and box tops. She is faithful by collecting newspapers and box tops to earn money for kids schools. She doesn't do it for one day but she does it all the time. Can you imagine if she would never keep her promise? That probably would be terrible. If she did not keep promise, the whole neighborhood would be sad, mad, and grumpy. Nobody will ever have fun. If she would not collect box tops my school would not have much money to make the school a better place. And if she would not help me collect newspapers for my teacher's guinea pig she would pee, poop, and would not have anything to eat. Knowing Mrs. Patricia helps me become a better person by watching everything she does. She gives me an idea of how I should be when I grow up. We are best buddies. Every time I see her it makes me happy and very excited to talk to her. I want to be the great person that Mrs. Patricia is like.

Anna Hines
Second Place, Second Grade

Do you know what integrity is? Integrity means that you have to be honest, fair, good, and trustworthy. If you did not show integrity people would not let you do things such as borrow stuff. If my friends did not show integrity I would not want to be their friend because they are not trustworthy. If teachers did not show integrity I would not want to be in that class because that teacher would not be nice or fair even if we are trying. If the school did not show integrity then I would not want to be in that school because I do not feel safe there. Integrity is important

because if people did not show integrity it would not be a fun place to live. Without integrity the world would not be good. I like integrity because it is good for everyone.

Leah Correll
Third Place, Second Grade

Being honest, making good choices, and acting in a fair way are the three qualities of integrity. I know someone that shows all three of those qualities every second of the year. My grandmother is a role model of integrity for the wonderful world. She is making the Earth a wonderful place to live each day.

To start with she is one of the most trustworthy persons I know. When my mom and dad work late, she can pick me up from school. She can also keep an eye on me when I'm sick or even if there's an inservice day that my mom and dad have plans. When there's a half day at school, she can watch me the second half of the day. I can even tell her how I feel like when I think my sister's getting all the attention. Grandmom keeps my secrets, even the most embarrassing ones. She's never a lump on a log when she can help out. Grandmom is a role model of integrity to not just me but other too.

My grandmom isn't just my grandmother she's also a very fair friend of mine. She pays the same amount of attention to me and my sister. When my sister's sick grandmom takes care of her and plays with me. But she's not just fair to me and my sister; she's also fair to the rest of the family. She spent about the same amount on our Christmas presents. But when we make special trips, she makes sure me and my sister both get a souvenir before we hit the road. There's a lot of words I can use to describe grandmom but fair is number one.

In addition to being fair grandmom knows right from wrong. She never breaks the law. She pays her taxes, pays for what she buys at the store, and is an eager beaver on election days. She always drives safely and carefully, like when there's no slush noise she knows that there is ice on the road so she drives slowly. When I was not at Sunnyside grandmom used to watch me in the afternoon because I had preschool in the morning. She helped raise me when I was a month old to when I was 4 years old. Grandmom steers herself in the right direction not the wrong.

In conclusion, grandmom seems to show integrity every time I turn around. She inspires me to do the right thing, not the wrong. Her heart seems to lead the way to a place that she can show integrity. Over all, grandmom is a wonderful person.

Bryce Daniels
First Place, Third Grade

Being fair and making good decisions can lead to many things. Integrity is always good to do. Integrity is when you do the right thing even when no one is looking. There is many people I could be writing about but I believe there's one person that shows it a lot...my mom.

To begin with, my mom is trustworthy doing her job as a parent. I can rely on my mom to get us to school each morning. When we're running behind she can always hurry us up and get us going. I can also depend on her to do my laundry every week on Friday. She makes me fold them and put them away. I can always trust her to be there for me when I'm feeling down. She sits me down and talks to me about it if I am feeling sad. I bet my mom could win the most trustworthy parent award.

My mom isn't just a trustworthy parent, when it comes to chores she is fair about it she is on us about getting something out when the house is messy. She always says I have to clean something up before get something out. Oh, and don't get me started with electronics, I have to earn that too. She says I have to clean my room before I play something or sweep, well you get it. My mom also says that if I get my homework done I can play outside for a little while. Sometimes I don't get it done and I don't get to go and play. My mom shows lots of integrity but with chores she's fair the most.

Yeah she can be so fair but her being good whenever she can, now that's hard to beat! One time my mom bumped someone's car with a door. She didn't just say whoops! or uh-oh! She left a note saying to call her and she'll pay for the damage. My mom also has this nutritious factory going on. She wants us to eat healthy so we can be like superman when we grow up. My mom sets a good example in public too. She always uses her manners and doesn't act like there's a party going on. I'm sure my mom will be good for the rest of her life.

At last, my mom is a wonderful person that is full of integrity. I chose my mom because she brightens people's day and I look up to her. She shows integrity and I know that the right thing to do. She shows integrity parenting, while handling chores, and she keeps on showing it whenever she can be.

Jesse Dixon
Second Place, Third Grade

Do you know anybody who shows integrity in your family? I know my mom does. Integrity is fairness, honesty, and trustworthiness all combined and my mom does that all! First before I tell you how she shows that you need to know some stuff about her. My mom's name is Saw Oo and she is 41 years old. She displays integrity at the store, school, and home. My mom is a person full of integrity in all ways.

When my mom was little she would eat her lunch in class before lunch so she could play jump rope at lunchtime. One day her teacher caught her. Instead of lying, she told the truth. Most kids her age would come up with excuses. My mom also used to look at people's test to copy. When her teacher caught her she always told the truth. That shows she presents honesty. Now honesty is one of the things to make integrity.

At home, my mother shows trustworthiness because when I get home I express my feelings and secrets. I trust her because she gives me advice on solving my problems. I now she gives me good advice because when I tell it to someone it solves the problem. I trust her very much. Now that is trustworthiness. Trustworthiness is one of the best ingredients to make integrity.

One time at the store my mom grabbed the last two gallons of milk. She heard a woman telling her husband that she needed the same kind of milk that ran out. My mom was kind to give that woman one gallon of milk she had. Also if people asked her to cut the cake bigger for them at the birthday parties she cuts it equally. That shows she is fair. Fairness is the last ingredient to make integrity.

In conclusion, my loving mother shows integrity at the store, school, home and even at parties. At the store she presents fairness. At home she displayed trustworthiness. In her old school she showed honesty. Those three things are the perfect ingredients to make integrity.

Heather Thwin
Third Place, Third Grade

Have you ever stopped to think about what integrity means? If not then let me tell you. Integrity is when a person has good qualities that lead up to good values and honesty. I have a special person in my life that shows a lot of integrity. His name is Jason but I call him uncle. He is the one who has shown me the meaning of integrity.

My Uncle Jason works for fishing wildlife in the State of Delaware. He loves his job and what he does to help animals. Uncle Jason builds habitats for animals to keep them safe. He protects and watches over eagles and owls. He makes sure dishonest hunters can not kill animals when they are not supposed to. He makes sure sickness does not spread. Sometimes he watches different species for illness. My uncle has received awards for his help and hard work. He spreads his good values into something he loves to do.

One day my uncle was on his way to work and there was a house on fire. He stopped immediately to help. He first called 911 and then he showed the most integrity and courage of anyone I have ever known. He told this young girl to trust him. He told her and promised her that he would catch her. He made that young girl jump from a second story window. My uncle did catch her. He did not think he did anything that another person would not have done.

My Uncle Jason has become my role model. When we are playing a game, he will not allow me to cheat. He tells me that cheating gets you nowhere. I spend a lot of time with my uncle. He helps me with my homework. He tells me to do it honestly. When I try to talk about people that are mean; he tells me that as long as I am a good person it does not matter what other people say.

My Uncle Jason has so many qualities of integrity. He is someone I hope to grow up to be like. I think everyone should act like him and show the same values as him.

Lindsey Sweeney
First Place, Fourth Grade

Do you know a person who is trustworthy? Guess what! They have integrity! Have you ever wondered what integrity is? To me, integrity is when you can really trust someone with a secret or something really important. They also help you when you're having a rough time or when you "fall down." My step-mom, for example, is someone who I can really trust. She is extremely special to me.

My relationship with my step-mom is very important to me. She is the kindest, greatest, and most loving step-mom a girl to have. I love her and want to be as brave as her someday. She even helps me get through hard times. I trust her with all my heart. Becky helps me with my homework and with things that are troubling me. She always tickles me and makes me smile. She gets me to try new foods and activities all the time. The qualities Becky has that reflect integrity are...she makes things fair and she always compromises with me. She is always honest with me and she shares her opinion and ideas. My step-mom shows integrity in every way possible.

One of the times when she helped me, for example, was when something that has gone at school and that was really dragging me down and upsetting me. It was hard to get it out but I did it with Becky's help. First, she sent my brother up to take his shower so we could talk without little ears eavesdropping. Then I just blurted out *everything*. When I was done, Becky suggested that we go to the school early in the morning and tell the teacher. Everyone went my real mom, my dad, and Becky, to give me support. She helped me tell them. After that was finished, I felt like a free bird because I got it out of me. I felt wonderful all because Becky helped me and showed integrity to me.

Becky makes me feel a whole lot of different things. The biggest one is that when you show integrity and kindness, it helps everyone. Every time I'm near her I feel like I can do anything! Even go to a concert, right then and there, and sing in front of one million people! When I'm sad she asks me if I want to bake, which always gets me in a happy condition. She is always there for me. She shows integrity no matter what. I love my step-mom.

If you are still wondering what integrity actually is, it is a quality of kindness, fairness, and honesty. Becky shows all of these things. Becky is the best step-mom anyone could have and I love her for it. Integrity is important because anyone who has it is honest, fair, and trustworthy. The more people who have it, the more honest the world will be.

Alexia Inhof
Second Place, Fourth Grade

You may think integrity is all about kindness. That's not true. To me, integrity shows the colors inside you. It also shows whether you would tell the truth or the opposite. Integrity does not show kindness, but it does show if you would tell the truth. There is one person I know that shows the most integrity in my life and probably everyone else who has met her. She is none other than my mom mom.

One quality of integrity and is also shown by my mom mom is honesty. Honest is all about telling the truth. The ways she shows it is by never blaming anybody else when she has done an

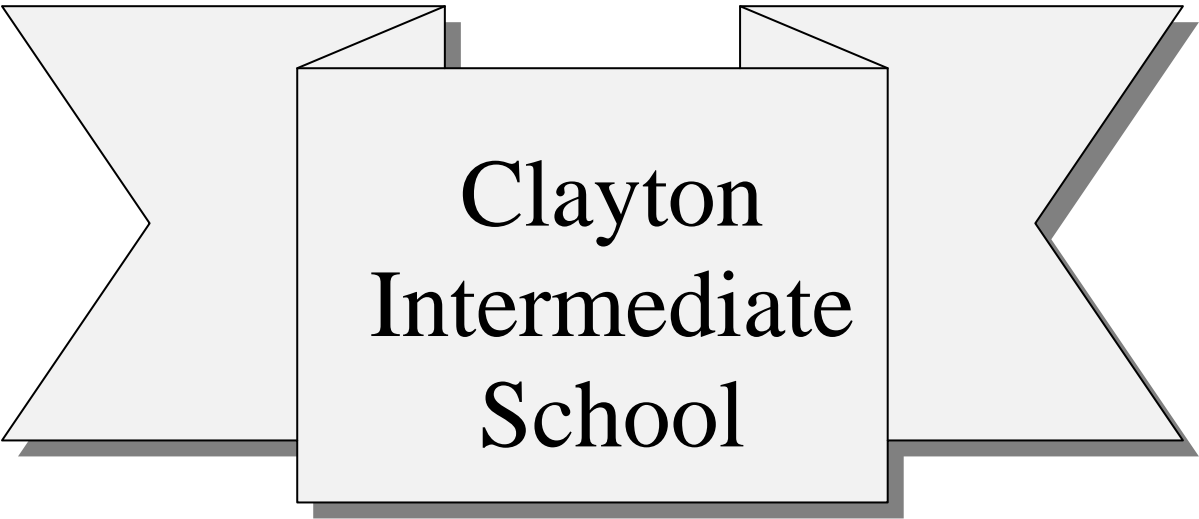
accident. This means when something is done wrong and it's her accident, she does not say it was anyone else's fault.

Another quality that is included in integrity is being trustworthy. If things like tragic events have happened and my mom told my family, we'll believe her. Being trustworthy is all about if people will believe you. This is based off of you telling the truth or you telling lies in the past. Being trustworthy assures she can be trusted to do anything.

The third version of integrity that my mom shows is that she always does the right thing. My mom always chooses to do the right thing instead of the wrong thing, even if nobody is looking. That shows a lot of integrity. Doing the right thing when nobody is looking is basically what integrity is all about.

To end my statement, I want to tell you that my mom shows the most integrity than anybody else in my life. Integrity is important to me because it shows that you are trustworthy and honest. You want to do the right thing even when nobody is watching or will notice.

Riley Pritchett
Third Place, Fourth Grade



Clayton
Intermediate
School

Grades 5 and 6

“The time is always right to do what is right.” This is a quote by Martin Luther King Jr, who is one of the many examples of people who show integrity. Integrity is the act of telling the truth and keeping your word. One person that stands out the most to me when I think of the word integrity is my stepsister Ashleigh.

Ashleigh shows integrity by doing many things on a daily basis. One thing she does is always keeps her word. One time I let her borrow my skateboard. She promised to return it just the way she found it, which is exactly what she did. Also, one time she wanted something, but she didn't have money. She promised if I lent her money, she would pay me back. Later that week she did exactly what she said. Lastly, my room was a mess. Ashleigh promised me she would help me clean my room, which she didn't have to. Would you believe she actually kept that promise and helped me clean my room?

Another example Ashleigh does that is an act of integrity is her chores. Ashleigh will do her chores along with chores that aren't even hers to complete. She will do chores without being told to do so. Whenever someone needs help with anything like carrying out the trash, she will help. Ashleigh helps me with my chores also by cleaning the game room with me, or doing small things like helping with my homework.

Last but not least, Ashleigh always does things for other people. This year she is doing the Polar Bear Plunge to raise money for the Special Olympics Foundation. She helps with a lot of other things as well, even if they are simple like helping me find something if I lose it. You can also find her helping me organize things. At the beginning of this school year, my school supplies weren't organized, and she put everything together and labeled it for me.

There are many people who show integrity. However, Ashleigh is the one who stands out the most to me. She helps with many things, as you can see by all of the examples. There are many more, but you get the idea. Hopefully you know someone like my stepsister Ashleigh, who is a great example of someone who shows integrity, in your life.

Ryan Malone
First Place, Grade 5

Integrity represents the kind and selflessness from the mean and untrustworthy. I am writing about my recently passed grandfather. I chose him because of his honesty, fairness, and kindness. I also do my best to follow his path and show integrity to my best ability.

Before my grandfather passed, he would treat my sister and me in a fair manner. For example; if we went to a carnival he would give us both equal amount of money to spend. If one person was bad, he would give fair punishments. Also, if we played a game he would balance the teams and make adjustments so that it was fair.

When I was younger, I thought of my grandfather as a noble role model. A leading factor in that decision was his honesty. He would never tell a lie, even if it made him look bad, but the truth made him seem better. He was always trustworthy and he could always be someone who could keep a promise, and who you could rely on.

With kindness, you can make others happy. This would always work for my grandfather. When my grandfather expected visitors, he would try to get them gifts. Also, when my sister or I got upset, he would be funny and cheer us up. If my grandfather and I were hungry at night, we'd say we were getting a "midnight snack" of ice cream.

"Be true to your work, your word, and your friend" – Henry David Thoreau. I follow this every day and do my best to follow my grandfather's fascinating trail. I hope I can manage to develop these traits as a young adult.

Phillip Hughes
Second Place, Grade 5

"Anyone who doesn't take truth seriously in small matters cannot be trusted in large ones either." That was a quote that Albert Einstein said to show integrity. Integrity is the quality of being honest, fair, and good. People who have integrity possess all of those traits. People who are trustworthy also have integrity. George Washington was a man who had integrity. With integrity many people respected him.

Many people know that Washington was the first president of the United States of America, and that he was a general of the colonial army. He fought against the British to earn the colony's freedom and became a hero. George Washington was born on February 22, 1732 in Virginia and died in Mount Vernon, Virginia in 1799. He became president in 1789 and retired in 1797. George Washington made America a great place for people. He was a hero who many people respected.

Because of Washington's integrity, many people respected him. He was fair to the people when he declined to be king after the war. Instead, he became president and gave people rights and freedom. He became president because he was also trustworthy. People trusted him to lead them. Even today he is still considered a hero because of his integrity.

Integrity is important to everyone because they want other people to be good, fair, honest and trustworthy to them. If you have integrity like George Washington, then a lot of people might respect you in return. Integrity can help people become great people. With integrity you can be a famous person too. That is why integrity is important.

So now you know what integrity is. It is the qualities of being good, honest, fair, and trustworthy. Because of integrity, Washington was a great and respected leader. This shows that integrity can make others happy and others can show you integrity too. Maybe integrity can make you a great leader too.

Leandro Villanueva
Third Place, Grade 5

Can you imagine a world without integrity? Without people doing the right thing just for the sake of it? If the only time someone tried to do a good thing they would expect a reward? Fortunately, there are people that demonstrate integrity, the people who are honest with themselves, and others. Integrity helps our society stay intact; it makes life better for everyone, and all around can make someone happier and more successful.

Without integrity, our world as we know it would be a disaster! Without people who are honest, no one would reach their goals or become a trusted member of our society. Integrity is being honest with yourself and others; it makes our world a better place. "If you have integrity, nothing else matters," Alan Simpson had once said. That means if you have integrity, people will start to notice and respect you. If you don't have integrity, people will notice and do the opposite. Integrity is doing the right thing for the sake of doing the right thing.

Two people in my life that I know show integrity are my parents. On a regular basis, my parents will do the right, honest thing! For example, if someone dropped money walking or running around our house, they would return it. My parents choose the honest decision even if that decision doesn't benefit them. My mom has earned respect at her work by showing integrity. She doesn't lie to her patients to get them to spend more money. Some people request to have their appointment with her because she does the right thing and she isn't lazy doing her work. Over time, my mom has come home with gifts from patients because they love being with her. I believe that my parents display perfect integrity.

Say someone was to litter in a public playground. You have two choices: (a.) you can pick up the trash or ask the man or woman to pick it up themselves; or (b.) you can walk away without doing anything to help the environment and do the right thing. My parents have taught me to pick choice a, doing the right thing even if it isn't for a reward. They also tell me to make sure I am not being that person who is littering in the first place. My parents have taught me to speak up for what I believe is right, but most importantly stand up for the things that I think are wrong. I was taught that someone who is constantly showing integrity will become more trusted, happier, and generally more successful in life.

When you show integrity, you help society. You help local citizens, and you help yourself! Integrity is a main factor in person success along with happiness in life. So maybe you should think about showing more integrity or at least trying to do the right thing....

Mason Semenick
First Place, Grade 6

As human beings, we all know that we only live once. We face choices every day that only we can decide how to answer. We choose what we want for ourselves in our lives, and the only way we can achieve in our lives is by doing the positive things versus the negative things. If you can define a person with honesty, who acts tolerable, and is trustworthy, that person has integrity.

As a young woman, I always try my best to figure out what to do with myself, how I should react, and how I should appear. Sometimes, I might not have an answer for myself. I might need some encouragement, and that's when I talk to my grandmother. My grandmother is filled with

sweetness, but she can also express herself with deep honesty. I'm blessed to have my grandmother around to help me grow into a woman like her.

My grandmother was raised by very strict parents, and my great-grandparents thought that it was important for their kids to worship God. As a Christian, you never want to disobey the Lord and make a sin, and for my grandmother, she always tries her best to be honest. Proverbs 12:22 states, "Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord, but those who act faithfully are his delight." After reading this verse, it reminds me what my grandmother does for a living and why she's always honest.

In Philadelphia, my family has a family church. My grandmother participates as the church treasurer. Being a treasurer, you would want people to trust you about handling the church's money, and most importantly, people want you to be honest about your job. Folks have the choice to be dishonest and take things that aren't theirs, but not my grandmother. I bet every member in my grandmother's church thinks she demonstrates integrity. By doing her job, my grandmother has accomplished many awards, but she wouldn't have received them if she didn't have integrity.

I learned from my grandmother that by living honestly, you are following God's commandments. I think it's awesome to live your life and make your own decision, but it's even better when you're a role model for showing integrity.

Mya Stinson
Second Place, Grade 6

Martin Luther King, Jr. once said many years ago, "The time is always right to do right." We have a good community for many reasons and one of them is a trait called integrity. Today many people show integrity and are truthful to others. My grandma is one of them and she taught me the importance of integrity.

What is integrity? This is one of those questions with many answers. One way to define integrity is that it's a character trait that means you are fair, kind, and honest. Integrity is showed by a trustworthy person. If you do the right thing even without hope or reward, you've shown integrity at least once. Showing it can be as simple as helping someone or more advanced like stopping a bully. Integrity is doing the right thing, even if no one is watching.

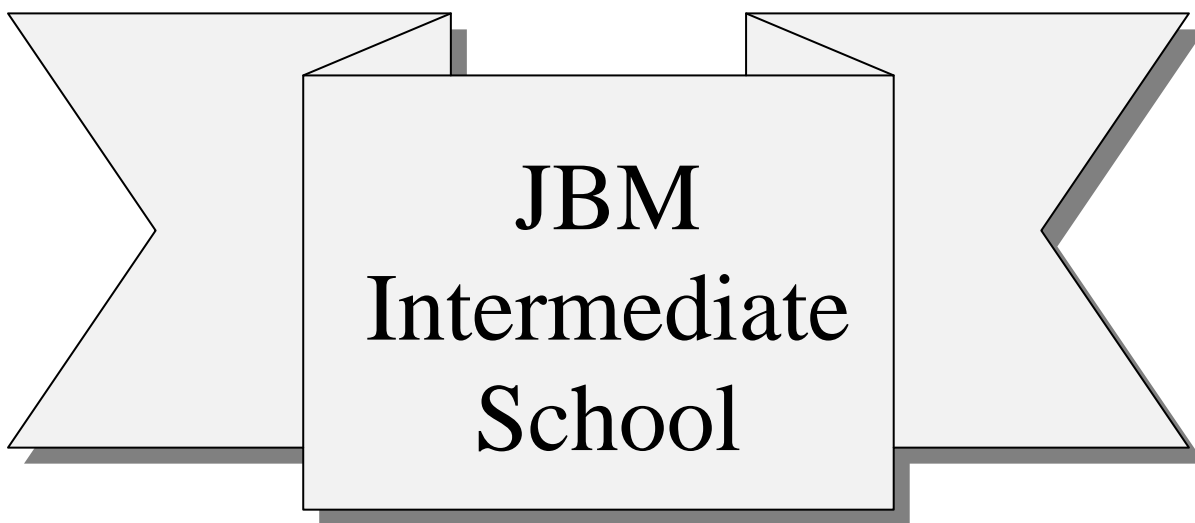
Sure, many people around the world are honest and fair, but how many people volunteer for everything? That describes the motive of my grandma, who shows a lot of honesty, kindness, and fairness to anyone. She never lies and is fair to a lot of people. The best part is that she always volunteers for anything between my school activities and helping at scouts. Recently, she spent her free time walking in her neighborhood to collect forms. My grandma is a person who cares about others and she will stay that way.

To me, she is like my very own private teacher. My grandma helped me learn since I was young and she didn't just teach me math and reading. She taught me the core values like perseverance

and even integrity. Another way I learn was from her examples like always help others and be fir. My grandma was and still is one of my role-models.

I said it before and I'll say it again, our community is good because of integrity. In the earlier days and in the present, people like my grandma show it and teach it to the younger generations. I learned from her to be the best I could be.

Colton Bowie
Third Place, Grade 6



Grades 5 and 6

I'm going to tell you about someone who is special to me and is a role model to many people. It is my grandmother, Deborah Wicks. She has showed me in life to always be kind to anyone you meet. She has also showed me that no matter what happens you have to tell the truth in a nice way and always be strong. One time she was under a lot of stress and people were mean and disrespectful to her. On a December night my grandfather, George Wicks, was having an intense surgery for his head because he has Hydrocephalus. My grandmother was scared of what was going to happen at the same time she had to decide if there was going to be a snow day because we were going to get hit with a blizzard. She did not know what to do because there is always someone that is not happy with her decisions in the district. They either are mad that there is a snow day or that there isn't. So that day she was so stressed people were upset with her on the phone calling asking why she was not in Smyrna making the decision of what was going to happen. Added on to that the fact that my grandfather was about to go into a serious surgery in Baltimore. While that was all happening my grandmother stayed calm and made sure that everything would go right. So when she was on the phone with those people they were yelling at her and making complaints she stayed completely calm and kind. She just said everything will be ok. My grandmother still stays calm during meeting or arguments and states what she thinks and gets the job done and is always calm, kind, caring thoughtful, composed, and unflappable. My grandmother is a strong independent woman that has lots of integrity. Deborah Wicks has done lots for the school district and for our town by having integrity and always staying kind to anyone she meets.

Integrity is very important to have in life because it gives you strength and respect and many other things that you need to succeed in life. Integrity means being trustworthy and reliable and always standing by your word. If you say you are going to do something, you do it. It's important to have integrity because it gets you through tough things in life and makes people be able to trust you. This will give you better opportunities in life.

My grandmother shows integrity every day. She is always honest and stands by her word. She works hard and tries to help other people no matter how they treat her. One of her favorite sayings is to be kind, be kind, be kind. She tells us this every time she sees us to remind us how important kindness and integrity is. I look up to her because she is a strong independent woman with lots of integrity that gets her through life.

Integrity is an important trait to have in life. My Grandmother shows integrity in her job and also in her home life. She is an inspiration to me because she takes care of my Grandpop when his is in pain and she still works hard as the Superintendent. It is hard to keep as calm as she is because of her stressful job and her sick husband but she does it with integrity every day.

Ryla Wilber
First Place, Grade 5

Integrity. What is it? It's when you do the right thing even though no one is watching you and when you are true to yourself. I'll be the first to admit that it's easy to show it. In fact, lots of people show integrity. But sometimes it is hard to pick a specific person that shows it. I finally decided to do my mom. Before you groan with frustration saying, "I read about one million

papers that talked about their mom!” consider this. Moms are awesome. So, my mom’s name is Jessica Rudderforth. I will just call her mom (cause she is one!).

When we finally left the grocery store, my mom, my two brothers, and I were so excited. Done! Can you believe it? My brother sitting in the cart started getting out, and my mom saw a piece of fabric that my brother was sitting on that we didn’t pay for! I realized that we would have to go back into the store to pay for it. So my mom got all of us back into the store to pay for it even showing her receipt for proof. And while doing it, she looked like she did this all the time! Now that was a pretty good example for integrity, but there’s more. We were at the store looking for a drink. While pulling a bottle out of the shelf, my mom’s hand brushed against another bottle on the shelf. In slow motion, I saw the bottle fall to the ground. CRACK! Part of the lid broke off. “We’re just going to have to pay for it,” my mom said. Integrity is a great thing to have as a character trait.

You should always have integrity, even if it means you can’t get the biggest prize. For example, when our whole family was at an amusement park, one of the rides broke and started spitting tickets at us. Once we called a person that worked there to fix it, and the machine stopped, my mom started handing the guy the big pile of tickets back. “Oh, you can keep that,” he said.

“Really?” one of my brothers asked excited.

“Sure,” he said as he shrugged his shoulders. So my mom didn’t just do that to get a lot of tickets. She showed integrity because she was nice. A person can be nice, even if they don’t get a reward.

So, now you have seen some examples of integrity. Without it, people would be mean and selfish. We need integrity to be nice to people in the world. Integrity has its rewards too. People can trust you when you show it. Now you know the definition of integrity and have seen a few examples. So just keep calm and show integrity.

Sydney Christensen
Second Place, Grade 5

Good afternoon people of Smyrna. Today we’re going to be talking about integrity, and who I think has integrity in my life. Do you know what integrity is, well if you don’t I’m going to tell what it is. Integrity is being honest, fair and trustworthy. It’s also doing the right thing when nobody’s watching. The person in my life that I think has integrity is my mom. I think that because she always listens to what I have to say and she cleans up around the house when nobody asks her to. For example, when I asked her to keep \$50 for me she kept it in the envelope the whole time and didn’t just go spend it.

The qualities of integrity that my mom has are honest and trustworthy. Being trustworthy means that people can lend or give you something knowing that you will give it back. For example, I told my mom not to tell my secret and she hasn’t told anyone yet. Now to the honest part. Being honest means telling the truth which means when someone asked you if you did something you

won't lie about it. For example we had a family meeting and my mom told the truth about everything even if it was depressing or would make you angry or mad.

If something happened to my mom I wouldn't know what to do with myself. My mom is one of the most important people in my life. That's because when I'm sad she's always the first one there to cheer me up. Also, when I fall down she's always the first one to get me back up to my feet. Last of all, my mom's usually always the first one to tell me what I'm doing wrong.

Have you ever thought that without integrity the world would be a mean, dishonest, selfish world? Integrity is important because if you have integrity people just won't look at you and think you are a bad person. If you have integrity people will think you're a good person and a great role model, like my mom.

I hope you learned a lot about integrity and I hope the people listening have integrity, and if you don't I hope you learn to have it. Most of all I hope you think my mom is a good role model.

Jacob Wilber
Third Place, Grade 5

Integrity, total honesty and sincerity. One of the most powerful core values the Smyrna School District holds. 'Honesty is the best policy, if I lose my honor, I lose myself' – William Shakespeare. This quote has true feeling in it because if you lie about something, you aren't yourself, so you lose yourself. Integrity is a key to success in life. Failure to show integrity may result in what your future holds for you.

Ever since I started school, integrity wasn't encouraged, it was expected. Honesty was a key in life that I have to show daily, no matter if I am in school, at my house, or in a store. As I grow older I must paint a clearer picture on what integrity truly is and take that in full action. I've learned that integrity is something you should be able to show every day. You should also be able to show integrity even when nobody is watching. That is when your real character trait comes out. People actually recognize who you are. I do understand that in some points in my life integrity may not be an option, or integrity may be the only choice I have. There will become situations where integrity will become my best friend, or my worst enemy. My family plays a big role in me showing integrity. They always tell me to hold the door for one another, use manners, and more importantly never lie. I now understand why integrity is such a big role in life.

In my family, I have an older sister and her name is Kassandra, but we call her Kassie for short. To me, I believe that she shows integrity the most. She is 21 years old, is in her 3rd year of college, has a job, has one son, and is studying to be a nurse. Her son's name is Nathan, and he just recently turned one on January 16th. Kassie has gone to a mentally disabled hospital for one of her clinical rotations for college to help out the ones in need. She makes them their meals, talks to them when they need someone, but more importantly she is at the hospital to be their friend. She teaches them their manners, too. When it is time for her to go, it breaks her heart to tell them goodbye. I look up to her. This year she invited me, my younger sister, my mom, and

my two friends to do the Polar Bear Plunge. You swim in the ocean down in Rehoboth to raise money for Special Olympics. Whenever she comes over to visit, I wish she still lived with us. She makes bangin' hot chocolate, she always makes dinner, and makes super good dessert. When she has to leave and I say goodbye, she says "Never say goodbye. Goodbye means forever and forever means never again. So say see you soon." She always corrects me on that one.

Kassie has taught me to put other people's lives before mine. To never give up, even when there is no chance. She taught me to be brave, kind, caring, but more importantly she has taught me how to show integrity. I have learned that life can throw you challenges left and right, but if you believe in yourself and show integrity, you can conquer the world. Kassie taught me to love and care for another, especially when they need it. You don't have forever with someone. Before you know it they are gone. I've learned from Kassie that you can pretty much do anything. She has so many things in her life right now, it is probably like a roller coaster. At some point in my life I know that it will be me with all of the challenges. I have learned from her that integrity can depend on your life ahead of you. I can tell she has shown integrity ever since she was little because look where she is now! She is on top of the world.

As you can tell, integrity is a life skill you need. You can show integrity anywhere. Integrity is more about giving than getting. "No legacy is as rich as honesty." – William Shakespeare. That quote can play a huge role in your life. It means that you don't need to be the richest or the most famous person on the world. If you have honesty, that could be worth a lot more than the glitz and glam. As long as you are yourself, nothing else matters.

Audrey Price
First Place, Grade 6

Integrity is about being totally honest and sincere no matter what the cost is. That you would do the right thing so other people can be happy. Integrity is the core value at our school and should be part of every person's everyday life. You make choices every day; the good ones have a positive impact. Sometimes, people lie, or keep something you find. Or they can choose to come forth and do the right thing. Integrity is not just about turning down a valuable; it is also determined by your way of doing it as well. If you have to think about whether you keep what you find, or turn it in to responsible adult, then you probably have done things like this in the past and chose wrong by keeping it.

No one should have to be forced to do the right thing. You should do it without being told to. But if you don't, then you have to live with the guilt. I once saw my friend Harvey, show integrity. He once found \$200 in a little money clip just sitting on the floor of the airport with no owner in sight, just some people entering the terminal in the west wing. Harvey turned it in to the airport security. He could have kept the money but instead, he did the right thing and turned it in. That is honesty at its best! So you should take Harvey's example and do the right thing.

Harvey's actions taught me the true meaning of honesty and integrity. Even though your temptations try to best you, somehow you still must do the right thing. I've learned that you

should turn down your wants and desires to do the right thing. It may be hard demonstrating integrity, but knowing that you did something right warms your heart.

Even though sometimes things appear like there is no one watching, you have to look yourself in the mirror, whether right or wrong. When you find an item that you really want, like an iPod just sitting around with no owner, what would you decide to do? Do you want to keep it as a personal gift and not let anyone know, or turn it in? If you decide to keep it, then the police will track the iPod down and you will get in trouble, no matter what the excuse is. Finding it on the ground doesn't mean you can keep it. But if you turn it in, you may not get anything in return, but you did the right thing. This will make you a better person no matter what your friends tell you. So just always remember that you have the choice to do the right thing.

Going with the right choice and showing integrity is always the right thing to do, even though it may be hard. Just think of the good feelings you will have and the smiles on people's faces when you decide to do the right thing. But if you keep something that is not yours, then think of the devastated person that lost their valuable when it went missing. They would be so upset. And it's for the greater good. It may be very difficult, but you get to live on knowing that you did the right thing. So just put it to thought that you can make choices every day and every time you have the chance to do the right thing!

Brandon Pastuch
Second Place, Grade 6

“A half-truth is a whole lie” – Yiddish Proverb. This quote means if you tell one truth in a web of lies, the one truth is still a lie. Honesty is always the best policy. Sometimes, you are rewarded for telling the truth. Other times, not so much, but no matter how much trouble you get into, it is always best to tell the truth. When you do this, you are showing integrity. According to Grace Farley, “Respect and honor from others helps build lasting relationships, which leads to long-term success.”

Integrity means telling the truth and doing what is right, even if it is hard at times. Integrity is a good quality to have; it is also a very important one to have. It is important to have because this is the quality people look for during a job interview. It proves that you are trustworthy enough to handle the larger projects. Without integrity, what do you have? People show integrity every day and most of the time, they don't even realize how often they do it. In kindergarten, when the teacher found a pencil on the floor and asked whose it was, anyone who didn't raise their hand was showing integrity. When you are on the bus and you find a pair of gloves, a hat, or maybe even money in the seat, when you gave it to the bus driver, you were showing integrity. Everybody everywhere shows integrity every day. It doesn't matter how old you are, you are never too old or too young to show integrity.

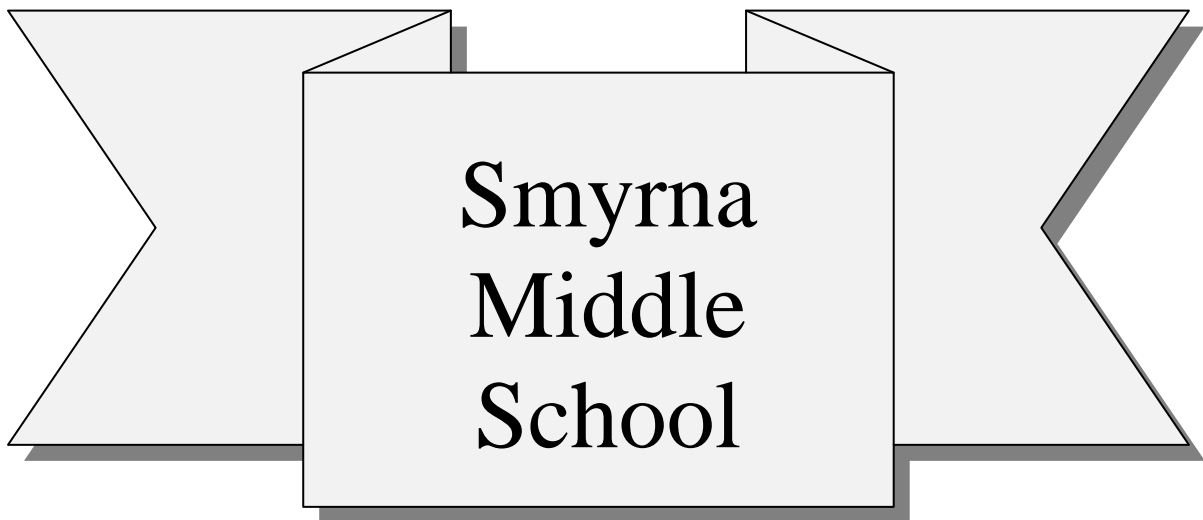
An example of someone who shows integrity is Morgan Belford. Morgan has been my friend since second grade when she moved to Smyrna, Delaware. She is always there to help me, when I need her. She always tells the truth and does what is right, especially when her friends need her. She is a very bad liar so, when she does lie, it doesn't really count. Morgan is such a good example of a person that shows integrity. When someone needs advice, the first person they go

to is her. This is because she is honest in her opinions, but isn't mean about it, or picks sides in an argument. She listens to both sides of the story and does her best to help. She is one smart cookie. She is always one of the first people to raise her hand to help others that may need it.

I have learned a lot from Morgan in the few years we have been in school together. We have been best friends since then. We learn a lot from each other. One thing I learned is how to show integrity to everyone I come in contact with. For example, she is the one who always helps me with what to say when I can't decide how to say the truth without hurting someone's feelings. She helps me in school, is compassionate to all, and most of all, she is my best friend. My point is, she is a wonderful person. No matter how she shows it, or how little the act, I know there is always one person I can go to, Morgan Belford. She is the only person, besides my family, I can trust with my problems. So, when you need someone to talk to, need advice, or just a friend, go straight to Morgan. She will always give you her honest opinion on a situation, or decision.

Honesty is always the best policy. "Anyone who doesn't take truth seriously in small matters cannot be trusted in large ones either." – Albert Einstein. Integrity is such an easy thing to do; even two-year-olds can do it. There is never a wrong time to tell the truth. Think about the ways you show integrity every day. Now, make it your goal to always tell the truth.

Jenna Carroll
Third Place, Grade 6



Grades 7 and 8

Lillian Hellman once said, "I cannot and will not cut my conscience to fit this year's fashions." While integrity is an innate quality, many choose to ignore it. They will hurl away what is morally right to fit in with what the world derives is in the best interest of all of us. It is important to distinguish the differences between what is right and what is wrong and to always stick to what you believe in. Never give up your morals and values. Integrity is a very important core value in both our school district and in our lives and Frederick Douglas is a prime example of someone who showed integrity throughout his entire life.

Integrity can be shown in many ways. It was shown by Frederick Douglas because of his ever existing need to learn to read when it was forbidden of him. Frederick Douglas himself stated, "This bread I used to bestow upon the hungry little urchins, who, in return, would give me that more valuable bread of knowledge." He knew that it is right for everyone, no matter what your race or nationality is, to learn and to be taught. He knew in his heart that knowledge triumphs all. Frederick Douglas, also, showed integrity by his strong hunger of freedom. Frederick Douglas exclaimed, "The reading of these documents enabled me to utter my thoughts, and to meet the arguments brought forward to sustain slavery." He recognized the need for change in the world of slavery. That the enslaved people should be emancipated and that slavery should never transpire again. Frederick Douglas, after being released from slavery, refused to give out the names of the boys who had helped him learn to read. He related, "I am strongly tempted to give the names of two or three of those little boys, as a testimonial of the gratitude and affection I bear them; but prudence forbids;- not that it would injure me, but it might embarrass them; for it is almost an unpardonable offense to teach slaves to read in this Christian country." By doing so, Frederick Douglas displayed that he knew those little boys would not want their names to be known. He did not belittle their wish, for he knew that it would be wrong in every sense of the word. All of these examples just reveal that Frederick Douglas is a man who showed great integrity.

Integrity is important in every aspect of our lives. While not only does it make us a better person, integrity helps you to build a strong character and sound relationships. Those who show integrity are trustworthy and truthful, responsible and caring, and so much more. In school and work, these are the ones who do as they're told and do it well. The one you depend on and turn to for advice between friends. To never turn their back on you in any sort of relationship. Though people who possess this quality are not perfect, they try their best to do what is right and to stand by their morals and values. They are the sort of people that you should want to be around and to have as a friend. They are the sort of people that you should want to strive to become.

Frederick Douglas is someone who displayed the core value of integrity very well. He wanted the chance to learn and be taught that we typically write off as garbage. He demanded an end to slavery when no one else would. Frederick Douglas stood for what is right, even if it meant suffering the consequences of it. It is important that we build that strong character that comes with having integrity and that we become a trustworthy and responsible person. So strive to be that person that people turn to. Strive to be that person with great integrity.

Emma Zeitler
First Place, Grade 7

Integrity is knowing whether what you are doing is the right thing. Martin Luther King Jr. was a leader in the civil rights movement. King protested against racial inequality and because of this he was shot. What Martin Luther King Jr. did during the civil rights movement was the right thing to do even though many did not agree with him. He is admired by so many people because of his integrity. King is a person of strong beliefs and the courage to fight for them, even when others would not. His integrity was something we should all aspire to.

Martin Luther King Jr. demonstrates integrity by leading the civil rights movement and peacefully protesting injustice. In the text it says, “The Southern Christian Leadership Conference, a leading civil rights organization, elected him president in 1957. That year, Congress passed the Civil Rights Act of 1957, the first civil rights law passed since 1875” (White 1). As president, King was able to lead this organization with integrity and purpose, by helping to ensure new civil rights laws passed through Congress.

Martin Luther King is a person of integrity because he does the right thing during a time when his ideas were unpopular. Throughout his life King made speeches that influenced many and changed so much in America, especially during a protest in Washington D.C. where his most famous words were spoken. This moving speech, now known to all Americans as “I have a Dream” affected us the most. In White’s text it says, “One of his famous moments was a speech that he gave in Washington D.C. On August 28, 1963, he delivered as a part of the 250,000 people strong March on Washington, a famous speech that has come to be called the ‘I Have a Dream’ speech” (White 1). This speech is what inspired people to stand up for what they wanted.

Martin Luther King Jr. is a man of integrity because of what he did. Integrity is doing what you believe is the right thing. King did the right thing and led the civil rights movement and gave inspiring speeches which helped to change the ideas of a nation. He was shot because of his integrity and willingness to be an outspoken leader of the civil rights movement. Martin Luther King Jr. is now celebrated for his integrity on his birthday.

Juliette Bartoline
Second Place, Grade 7

Oprah Winfrey once said, “Real integrity is doing the right thing, knowing that nobody’s going to know whether you did it or not.” The word integrity means “the strict coherence to a moral code of ethics.” To me, the word means doing the right thing no matter if someone is watching, it means sticking to your morals. Sometimes integrity can be the difference between life and death, injustice and justice, or the deciding factor on whether someone has a good day or not. Medgar Evers was a person who showed integrity in his lifetime, and integrity is an extremely important core value in the Smyrna School District and our lives.

Medgar Evers showed integrity a lot in his life. He is a great role model to show integrity. In the article, Medgar Evers by NAACP history, it says “Evers became the focus of and NAACP campaign to desegregate the school.” This shows Medgar has integrity because desegregating a school is the right thing to do. Then more students have the opportunity to learn. In the text, the

author states, “His vocal support of Clyde Kennard left him vulnerable to attack.” He supports someone who he thinks has integrity. Have you ever heard the expression “it takes one to know one?” Medgar does the right thing by supporting someone who is also doing the right thing. In the article, you can find “He helped organized the RCNL’s boycott of service stations that denied blacks use of their restrooms.” Medgar did the right thing because he felt that everybody should be allowed to use public restrooms. Medgar Evers has inspired me to show integrity, and to be an inspiration to others.

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible with liberty and justice for all. I know what you’re thinking “What does the Pledge of Allegiance have to do with integrity?” If you are an American citizen, you have probably said the pledge a lot. As an American, I feel that it is our responsibility to demonstrate integrity, and do the right thing. My mom and dad always taught me to do the right thing, and that it might not always be easy. They have shown me through their actions what integrity really is. For example, we were at Disney World and a girl tripped and fell, and my dad helped her up. Integrity alone does not make you a good person, but add compassion, perseverance, respect, and responsibility – you have a great person. People, who show integrity, normally are also helpful, kind, and smart. Integrity is an essential part of being a model citizen.

Medgar Evers showed integrity in his life, and integrity is important in the Smyrna School District. Medgar stood up for what he believed in, and for what he thought was right. This shows he has integrity because sometimes standing up for what you believe is the right thing. Medgar fought for integrity because segregation is not the right thing. I feel integrity is an essential piece in the puzzle of being a great citizen.

Adara Turek
Third Place, Grade 7

“Have the courage to say no. Have the courage to face the truth. Do the right thing because it’s right. These are the magic keys to living your life with integrity.” - W. Clement Stone. Integrity is a personal characteristic that is vital to possess in life. Integrity encompasses honesty, principle, sincerity, and virtue. It is something that should be ever present in an individual’s personal and academic life. Unfortunately in today’s society, academic dishonesty is a growing problem, but there is a solution to promote academic integrity in our schools.

Academic dishonesty occurs any time a person is not truthful in obtaining information for academic purposes. Academic dishonesty is another term for cheating. Any time an individual is not honest in their academic practices, they are guilty of academic dishonesty, which can take many forms. For example, with the continuing use of technology, people have answers and resources at the touch of a button. The Educational Testing Service reports, “While about 20% of college students admitted to cheating in high school during the 1940’s, today between 75 and 98 percent of college students surveyed each year report having cheated in high school (“Cheating is a Personal Foul”). “The ease of such technology in finding answers has increased the likelihood that an individual lacks academic integrity in their work. While some people claim that cheating is not a new problem, they are failing to recognize the increased use of technology to write

papers, answer test questions, and other dishonest practices that did not exist many years ago. However, academic dishonesty can be prevented in most situations.

Obviously, academic dishonesty is a scandalous topic. If individuals are educated on how to prevent academic dishonesty, then it may encourage more integrity in academic endeavors. In NEA Today's interview with Dr. Denise Pope, she stated, "Everybody has to be part of the solution. Parents can do a lot of what we ask of teachers – emphasize high standards for honesty, make it clear that cheating is unacceptable ("What Can Be Done About Student Cheating"). So, if a student is plagiarizing from a website, and using that information as their own, they need to be taught how to cite their sources. Teachers can make sure that students cannot cheat by having them put away their phones, or ensure the desks are far enough apart to prevent wandering eyes. Lastly, if classes were smaller, and students had more room to themselves, the likelihood of cheating would decrease. These are only some of the solutions to solve academic dishonesty. It is extremely necessary that students are made aware of the importance of integrity in academics, as well as in every other aspect of life.

Cheating is a problem that displays an individual's dishonesty and lack of integrity. However, there are solutions that address this problem. It is extremely important that students realize the consequences of academic dishonesty, as well as being educated on ways to avoid it. Academic integrity, as well as integrity in every other aspect of life, is all about being honest in your actions.

Lauren Iglio
First Place, Grade 8

Academic dishonesty is a dark, black hole sucking others into it. It was much better in the past when people had a greater sense of right and wrong, and could see more easily that academic dishonesty was no better than failing. Participating in academic dishonesty could possibly mean that your future career may be in jeopardy. Today, students think that academic dishonesty is fine if you don't get caught, but even if you don't get caught it will bite you someday. Academic dishonesty is a severe epidemic but it can however, be solved if children learn about a word called integrity at younger ages.

A major conflict today is academic dishonesty, where students manipulate the school system to get good grades. People do this either because they do not do well in school or they want to advance in academics. Some evidence I have to back this up from the article "Challenges Success 2012." The article points out that "some studies have found that cheating is more common among students with lower academic performance, other studies find that cheating is also very prevalent among high achieving students". This evidence shows as originally stated by declaration that students manipulate the school system because of not performing well in school or out of desire for advancement, but it also mentions an interesting statement about how it is not just a specific group of kids that cheat, it could be any group. Academic dishonesty is an ongoing issue that needs to be solved.

A magnificent way to solve the academic dishonesty epidemic would be for students to learn about academic integrity at younger ages. Academic integrity is a great thing to show as it means being honest and fair with your work and other activities and if it is explained more thoroughly

when kids are at younger ages, it may sink in better. I retrieved some evidence to back up my answer from the articles “Challenge Success 2012” and “Honesty and Integrity in the classroom.” According to the article “rates of self-reported cheating are fairly low in elementary school, then increase in middle school and peak in high school before showing a slight decline in college.” The article also points out that “in the real world, employers are more likely to hire someone who has a reputation for being honest.” This evidence helped to support my point because it shows that not a lot of academic dishonesty happens in elementary schools, this supports my idea that kids should learn integrity at younger ages so they can be prepared for middle school and high school where manipulating school systems happen the most. Also, the evidence provided an example of a good benefit from learning and performing academic integrity. This is a solution to the problem that I’m fairly sure will work.

One way to solve the academic dishonesty issue is to explain integrity more thoroughly to kids at younger ages. In conclusion, this activity is performed for many reasons. In summary, the reasons usually involve academic pressure or desire. There is hope though, by children learning about integrity earlier in their life. Academic dishonesty is an issue that will not go away, but we need to find ways to get it under control.

Quinn Boyd
Second Place, Grade 8

Have you ever copied off someone else? Well I have, I copied off one of my friends because I didn’t do mine the night before. I was once guilty of cheating and I knew it was wrong. Cheating is also known as lack of integrity. Academic integrity is honesty and responsibility in scholarship, that all work should be your efforts not anyone else's. Recently, there has been a lack of academic integrity due to school rewards and students believing that getting good grades is most important, not their knowledge. However there are ways to fix this problem.

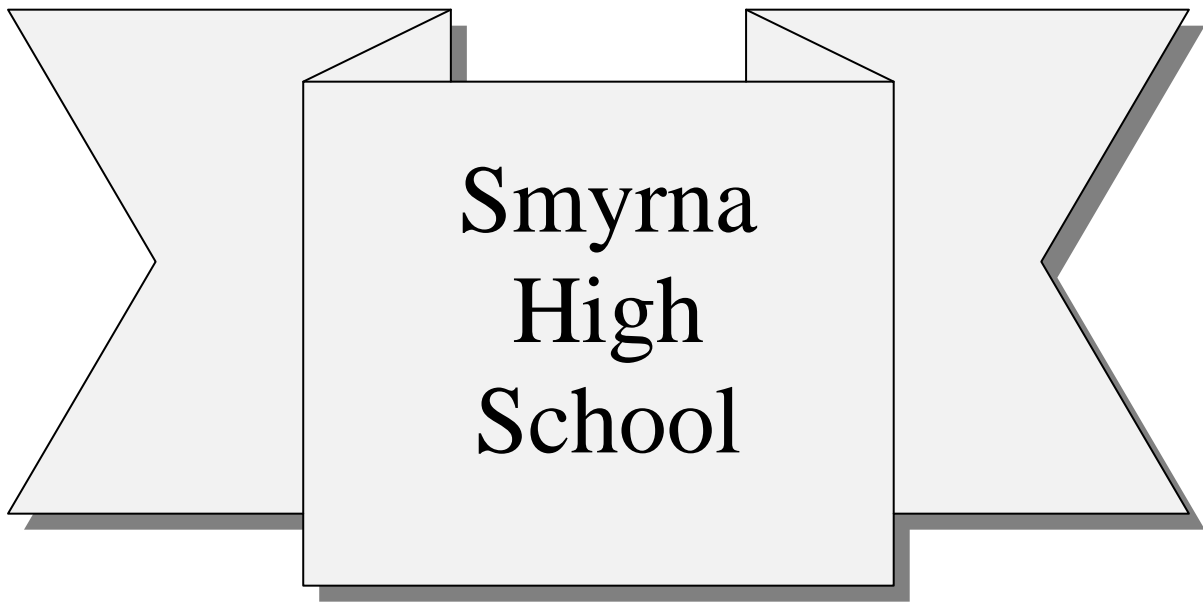
The problem with academic integrity is that students are deciding to cheat. Teachers need to try their best to prevent cheating. It was reported that, “several studies indicate that between 80 and 95% of high school students admit to engaging in some form of cheating (Challenge Success pg.1).” This means that if you have 20 people 19 of them are guilty of cheating and only one person is innocent. That is a large percentage of people! Another reason this is a problem is that students know cheating is wrong but still proceed to do it. According to *Challenge Success* “3,600 students from six diverse schools . . . found that more than half of the students who admitted to cheating also knew that cheating is wrong (Challenge Success, p. 3).” Although some may not think cheating is wrong, evidence shows it’s a problem in every school.

Giving rewards in result of passing and assignment is one reason for this problem. Students will do anything to get that reward, even go as far as cheating. In a 1998 study it was “found that when students perceive an external reward for doing well (for example, they could earn a privilege for doing their work well), they saw cheating more justifiable and cheated more often (Challenge Success, p.4).” This means that students felt as if it was okay to cheat in order to get the reward. A solution to this problem could be not to give as many rewards or don’t give valuable rewards. This problem could be fixed, if teachers to the right thing and stop giving as many rewards.

Another reason cheating is a problem is that some students believe that getting good grades is most important, not their knowledge. *Challenge Success* says that “students cheat more when they believe that grades and performance are valued in their classrooms, and they cheat less when they believe that learning and mastery are valued (p. 4).” A solution to this problem could be making sure the student understands the material well. In conclusion, students should focus more on the gaining knowledge in the class, rather than the grade in the class.

Cheating is a very serious problem that needs to be addressed. There are many reasons why students cheat, such as school rewards and not knowing the material. Teachers should stop giving as many rewards in result of passing an assignment and help students understand material. Cheating may never stop completely, but we can increase academic integrity in our schools.

Regan Ruff
Third Place, Grade 8



Grades 9, 10, 11, and 12

Integrity is it necessary for American business or not? Integrity has been a major word in business for centuries. When a business displays integrity, they show themselves as being trustworthy, reliable, and honest. Not everybody believes integrity is a necessary part of business, though as of recent years, the topic has become a subject of argument. Practicing integrity often causes an increase in customers and respect for the rights of others, yet some see deception and chicanery more profitable.

Thus, some businesses practice integrity because it increases customers and employees. When customers hear about acts of altruism, they'll become more inclined to do business with the parties responsible. Customers are typically attracted to a brand by the image associated with the brand (Marquis and Park 31). More people will seek job offers from a company with integrity. It attracts "incredible talent to a firm" (Marquis and Park 31). The media will also be drawn to write about a business with integrity. In their research for "Inside the Buy-One, Give-One Model" Christopher Marquis and Andrew Park interviewed more than 30 leaders at "buy one, give one" companies (Marquis and Park 28). From this, it is evident integrity has a positive impact on sales.

Furthermore, practicing integrity also shows respect for the rights of others, including employees and customers. By respecting the rights of others a business will gain a positive reputation. Marquis and Park have found that the social mission of many "buy one, give one" brands, made them unique to consumers and employees (Marquis and Park 31). This means employees that are drawn to work at the enterprise will feel more at ease, and will see less reason to change occupations. "The "buy one, give one" model is a viable way to create commercial and social value, and is likely to increase in the coming years, as an industry" (Marquis and Park 28). Customers will also develop a stronger trust with a company that displays integrity, because they feel the company isn't attempting to take advantage of their naivety, but is trying to help them meet their needs instead of make a few extra bucks. Integrity welcomes and appeals to the customers, a business owner want to bring in the door (Marquis and Park 31). It's clear, customer relations improve with integrity.

Nevertheless, some businesses believe it's not necessary to display integrity because of their popularity, or because of the siren's call of the possibility of dishonestly making money. After all why should they spend hard earned money paying union workers minimum wage, if they can use sweatshop labor for almost no cost at all? For example, in New York, during the 1990s Thai nationals were sewing in a sweatshop for \$0.69 an hour, while U.S. minimum wage at the time was \$4.25 (Falk 2). The labor department raided the sweatshop, and linked the Thai nationals back to the company, which then began legal trouble (Falk 4). At the same time, if a company's popular enough, people won't care, and will keep buying from them, no matter what. What consumers care about when they walk into a store is getting the greatest selection at the most competitive price (Falk 4). However, it has become evident that nobody is untouchable, especially considering the public has turned on even the most popular companies before. "Battered by a steady stream of bad publicity, the apparel industry's on the offensive" (Falk 3). It is obvious from these facts that operating without integrity leads oftentimes to a business's downfall.

Thus, some believe integrity's no longer necessary, while others believe in its continued use. Practicing integrity draws more customers and employees and creates a possibility that they'll return. It also respects the rights of others. However, if one can save money and retain his or her

popularity, is it worth it to compromise values? I think some businesses will continue to practice integrity while others cut corners. Yet, in the end, it's the customers who decide a business's fate.

Gabrielle DiRusso
First Place, Grade 9

In the clothing industry, it's a battle between pride and profit. But, what if there's a way to have both? Most businesses have previously abused the laws of third world countries in order to increase profit. Recently, some companies have begun to try a more wholesome route, and have started using more respectable business models. The most popular one is the "buy-one, give-one" model, in which companies will give away an item to somebody who needs it whenever a customer buys one of their products. Although some businesses value profit over integrity, integrity is proving to be a very effective business practice.

Businesses should exhibit integrity by showing respect to their employees. As demonstrated in the article entitled *Dirty Little Secrets*, by William B. Falk, many of the working conditions for employees of companies that don't show integrity are detrimental to a worker's health. Many of the sweatshops or buildings used for making these products are "nasty places" (Falk 1). Alongside these working conditions, many of these same companies don't give workers nearly enough money to pay for food and drinks. It is so little that some unemployed Americans are better off than the people who work in these areas. These workers are so underpaid that their paychecks give them a life that doesn't even support poverty (Falk 1). The final reason for why businesses should show integrity to respect employees is that many companies that practice integrity will be able to draw in better employees who are willing to work for them (Marquis and Park 31). Businesses who exhibit integrity to respect their employees can, overall, become even better businesses.

Furthermore, businesses should also show integrity because it will help them keep customers. As was discussed in the article, *Inside the Buy-One, Give-One Model*, by Christopher Marquis and Andrew Park, people who notice a company with integrity have a higher chance of becoming a loyal customer. Loyal customers serve as free advertisement and buy a company's products simply because the company made it (Marquis and Park 30). Another thing that would help a company if they showed integrity is that they'll get more public attention from the news advertising about how good the company may be. One thing that the press seems to be attracted to, is companies doing good (Marquis and Park 30). The final reason why showing integrity increases customers is that some customers will buy a company's products strictly to support that company's cause. For example, the KNO Company has told that their customers will purchase products strictly to help their goal of ending homelessness (Marquis and Park 31). In summary, it would be a good idea for businesses to show integrity in order to increase customers, as there are many things that customers can do for a business.

Nevertheless, some people believe that business integrity isn't as important as profit. However, there are many ways to blend them both to make a profitable business that also shows integrity. For example, some businesses think that using integrity will reduce profit. However, with integrity and a level head, any business can earn the same (or more) profit. Some companies also

think that money is better spent on advertisements, but there are plenty of ways to advertise for free, such as social media and customer reviews. The free advertisements will give companies a bit more spending money that they could use to pay their employees more. There are many ways that a business could increase profits while also showing integrity.

Integrity can help to increase profit even more than the original profit if a business plays their cards right. Businesses with integrity can recruit better employees who produce more of the same product at the same price, thus earning a greater profit. Alongside that, any business that shows integrity will be have a positive image in the public's eye, and will attract more customers. While there's also the argument that a lack of integrity can keep money rolling in, many companies have showed that that isn't entirely true. Why? Because no integrity will ultimately lead to less business. So, will you drop your brand new Nike's and pick up a pair of TOM's to support business integrity?

Edson Strong
Second Place, Grade 9

In the past, present, and future integrity has been, is, and will be valued as an honorable quality through which many have succeeded in life. Integrity is an essential quality amongst society for with it many have and many can achieve greatness through the respect and trust gained by community members, peers, or coworkers. The quality of being honest and fair is valued in many areas but it is of great importance in businesses and its succession. Over the past year media has proven a lack of integrity in businesses through different situations that show companies not being ethical to their workers, businesses lying to cover their tracks in front of the public, and groups not getting the recognition that they deserve for their right and just actions. Without integrity businesses are not able to achieve their full potential for their relationships are built on the qualities of this value which seems to have become unknown in the world of business. Integrity is a value of great importance for businesses to have for it helps build a foundation of trust between workers which will make their businesses successful through a high a reputation.

In a business integrity is important for it helps in building a foundation and relationships of trust between its workers. Businesses rely on the effort of all workers working together in order for them to be successful for not only one person would be able to carry on the responsibility of leading a well-adjusted business alone. For this reason, trust between everyone in a work place must be implemented for even "At the most basic level, all business relationships are built on trust" (Nimbo). In order for a foundation of trust to be built all workers in a company must have the value of integrity for where trust is in place, business employees and employers are open with each other which is necessary for the succession of a business. A foundation of trust is necessary for employees must be able to rely on one another which is gained through honesty and making just and fair decisions or actions. As the members of a business begin to trust one another not only will their personal relationship grow but their business will also begin to achieve its goals.

In business the value and importance of integrity is also shown through the success of a business with a high reputation among society. Over the past year media has made integrity into a hot topic in business as situations of companies not being ethical and lying continue to occur. Many

businesses have lowered their reputation as their dirty secrets are presented to the public such as the case “In Honduras, teenage girls work up to 78 hours a week, making Levi Strauss Dockers and other clothes to be sold in American department stores, amid conditions that human-right workers say include frequent threats and sexual harassment” (Falk). In order for a business to achieve its goals of success it must display integrity as failing to do so can lead to gaining unpopularity and a low reputation. Businesses that display integrity have become and are more likely to become successful such as the TOM’S company who became so popular through showing beyond the quality of being honest and fair in their business. Their integrity and generosity has been proven by them donating 10 million pairs of shoes to children in need and transforming what first started off as a company to a movement which has earned them a high reputation through which their business has succeeded. Through their many actions the kind of people who are involved in their business are also revealed to be ones who display the quality of integrity such as Blake Mycoskie who stated, “I was so overwhelmed by the spirit of the South American people, especially those who had so little, and I was instantly struck with the desire to do more- the responsibility to do more” (Tom’s). Integrity in a business can help them grow to become successful as a high and decent reputation can cause them to be a popular business among the people.

While some may believe that integrity in a business is not important for it can allow them to get away with many things that benefit them in ways such as economically, integrity must always be implanted in a business in order for it to succeed in a decent and honest manner. Many businesses have been able to get away with not being ethical to their workers which can ruin the trust foundation needed to be built between them. Many have also lied to cover their tracks of an immoral act and some may not have been given the recognition they rightfully deserved for their honest actions. These actions however may have been discovered at one point which led to the ruin of the reputation of the business and it also hurt the relationship of workers in companies which is essential to the succession of a business for workers must earn to rely and trust one another. Integrity is worth more than a paycheck or any extra money going to your business which is proven by the statement that expresses this by stating “If your company asks you to do something against your personal code of conduct, refuse. If it means a good paying job, so be it” (Forbes). The quality of honesty and fairness is very important for businesses to have for with it a business can achieve much more than what money can. Trust and high reputation that was earned truthfully can help businesses succeed and achieve its various goals which can all be reached through valuing the importance of integrity.

In a business, integrity is an important quality for it helps build a foundation of trust between workers which will make their business successful through a high reputation. Integrity can help businesses succeed by helping build a relationship of trust between workers which is essential for a business to successfully function. In order to be successful, a high reputation must also be gained in order for a business to be popular among people which is earned through the quality of being honest and fair. Businesses must at all times act with honesty and be truthful for it help them achieve the many goals they wish to reach as acting with integrity will always be a valued quality amongst society. Integrity is an important quality for a business to have and it must always be implanted in order for it to reach success.

Anilu Paneda
Third Place, Grade 9

“Both wit and understanding are trifles without integrity. The ignorant peasant without fault is greater than the philosopher with many. What is genius or courage without a heart?” To what Oliver Goldsmith was referring we do not know. We can only speculate as to how it can be applied. To consider this honesty and integrity causes an impetuous movement of cases to the forefront of the mind. Among these cases are economics, relationships, and careers, but one situation reaches just slightly farther than the rest; academics.

Due to technology and the work ethic of the modern student, a sense of integrity has become increasingly difficult to find in the educational sphere. More and more often teachers and professors are having students turn in excellent work— only to discover that it was not the student’s own. In a 2007 poll conducted by the site CollegeHumor just over 60% of college students admitted to cheating in their academic career, and the numbers only continue to rise. One such reason for this increase are the infamous paper mills. These are a collection of websites and companies that are willing to provide written papers, of any length or topic, to any student who can pay the cost. Aside from these ultra-modern million dollar industries, there are more conventional methods. Things like plagiarism, outside resources, and the classic mid-test hand signals are still very much alive. Of course the philosophy of “build it and they will come” doesn’t always apply. Just because these resources are available doesn't mean student will use them. There are repercussions for cheating, right? Well, sort of.

To begin with, students don’t believe they’ll get caught. With a reported 95% of students never being caught cheating by the Ad Council, why would they? Now look at that meager 5%. What happens to those students who do get caught in the act? Surprisingly, not much. Out of 607 reported cases at the University of Florida between 2007 and February of 2010 only 18 resulted in suspension and only *two* resulted in expulsion. This means that only about 0.03% percent of students received a stiff punishment. These numbers don’t seem particularly discouraging if you ask me. If the institutions themselves do not prevent the act, who or what does?

The truth is that only one thing can ever stop you from doing something, yourself. This sense of self pride is the only thing that can ever stop you. As exemplified in the words of J.C. Watts Jr. “Character is doing the right thing when nobody’s looking. There are too many people who think that the only thing that’s right is to get by and the only thing that’s wrong is to get caught.” Integrity is a promise to one’s truest self, a promise to do what you know is right, not what is easy; regardless of who’s watching. It was said by Dorothy Sayers that “to make a deliberate falsification for personal gain is the last, worst depth to which either scholar or artist can descend in life.” So I leave you with a single question: How low are *you* willing to go?

Justin Nash
First Place, Grade 10

As Dwight D. Eisenhower said, “The supreme quality for leadership is unquestionably integrity. Without it, no real success is possible, no matter whether it is on a section gang, a football field, in an army, or in an office.” Personally, I witness dishonesty and poor integrity throughout my school on a daily basis. I have commonly heard the phrase, “Did you do the homework?”

shamefully uttered from many students in hopes of acquiring someone else's work to copy. It seems as though students are more worried about the task of getting the homework done rather than the personal integrity that comes along with it. I can say that I value integrity more than ever now that it is so enforced through the academic dishonesty policies at both high schools and colleges everywhere.

To start off, integrity is one of the key principles on which a person should base his or her character. A typical elementary school child would define integrity as, "Doing the right thing when no one is watching." A prevalent issue today is the widespread plague of academic dishonesty. People are willing to destroy their character in order to get better grades. A specific example of this is presented in an article about students submitting information about an essay to have someone else write it for them, "Clients from all over the nation post their requests on the sites like Proficient Writers, listing the assignment specifics and time limit. Cook and other writers then look through the postings via the website's back end and apply for projects." The grade a student gets in a course is so valuable to him or her that they will submit an assignment that they did not even write. This is easily considered the epitome of academic dishonesty and encompasses the act of doing the *wrong* thing when no one is watching.

I would like to put some focus on the motivation behind students when choosing to be academically dishonest. Especially in recent years, there is so much pressure to do well put on students. It is suggested that students take the most challenging classes in order to get into college easily. Because the workload is not necessarily an easy task to conquer, people resort to the easy way out: academic dishonesty. There is so much information online that specifically aligns with what a student is doing that it would be almost idiotic to not use it. This supports the notion that integrity is essential to have today because it is not a commonly found quality.

The University of Delaware has specific policies that prohibit academic dishonesty and encourage integrity. If a student decides to act upon his or her desire to cheat, punishments such as, "receiving a failing grade in the class" in which the offense occurred, and having an X placed next to the F on the student's University transcript, with an explanation are severe consequences. Such a simple act of dishonesty can destroy the reputation of a person at a university.

Why is integrity so important today? I would say that your willingness to act without integrity will be matched by a college's or a high school's willingness to fail you. The access to doing the right thing is just as accessible as doing the wrong thing. I would like to close with such an impactful quote by our first lady, Michelle Obama, "We learned about honesty and integrity - that the truth matters... that you don't take shortcuts or play by your own set of rules... and success doesn't count unless you earn it fair and square."

James Latavitz
Second Place, Grade 10

Four people, one crime; four different punishments. At the University of Florida this exact situation was seen in regards to four people committing acts of academic dishonesty. Not only did each of the students lie about where they had gotten the information regarding their assignment, there was an inconsistency in their punishments resulting in some of the students

being punished and others being let free for the crime that they had committed. Despite the fact that academic dishonesty is an infraction that can have severe consequences the true problem is the lack of integrity that has spread throughout today's modern world. Lack of integrity is seen to become more and more common throughout our world and the culprits are emerging from all sides of the academic realm. There must be changes made to make schools and the people within them more inclined to show integrity in their everyday lives starting with being honest in a scholastic setting.

The first initiative must be taken by the students. In most cases it is their decision and laziness that is resulting in the dishonesty in schools, and it must be their decision to change the way they are acting. According to the University of Delaware office of student conduct, there are a number of actions that must be taken by the students in order to stop the problem of academic dishonesty. If students familiarized themselves with the material of the class and thoroughly prepared themselves for assignments and exams, then they would have no need to act upon anything but integrity. They will also learn the skills and responsibilities that come are needed for future success. Each student must take the step to stop themselves from being dishonest, but they must also work to stop others from doing it as well. As students make the decision to share their assignments with others, they are only encouraging the chain of dishonesty to grow. They must keep their work to themselves and refrain from encouraging others to commit the crime that they should work to stop themselves.

The second contributing factor to the world's dishonesty comes from the professors, staff, and administrations of schools that are seen to be overflowing with cases of academic dishonesty. In any case the teacher is not at fault for the student making the decision to be dishonest, but in most cases they are at fault for allowing the situation to continue and allowing the students to feel that academic dishonesty is not a problem. At the University of North Carolina there was a case of academic dishonesty involving student-athletes. In another example, the administration and staff of University of Florida wished for their athletes to succeed academically in order to have the ability to continue playing, so they created classes known as "paper classes" which allowed the athletes to turn in a single term paper in order to pass the class. In those classes they were given slack in grading and school policies which also allowed them to continue as an athlete for the school. Not only was the staff displaying strong acts of dishonesty they were also showing students that dishonesty is an appropriate course of action.

Not only must there be actions taken from within the school, but the influences from the outside world must also become less relevant in the lives of students. On many occasions essays and assignments that were not originally written by the student were bought by the student from the outside company. People are running organizations called "paper mills" and taking advantage of the bad choices made by others to make money. This displays and encourages dishonesty and a lack of integrity throughout our world. The world is giving the younger generation role models who do not even know the true definition of integrity.

Action must be taken to stop the spread of dishonesty and lack of integrity. With nearly 68% of all academic dishonesty starting in a high school setting, beginning with local districts could be the key to ending academic dishonesty. If that one step is taken then there may be more and more actions leading towards advocating integrity rather than its neglect.

Samantha Sawyer
Third Place, Grade 10

“She saw a dust-bearing bee sink into the sanctum of a bloom; the thousand sister-calyxes arch to meet the love embrace and the ecstatic shiver of the tree from root to tiniest branch creaming in every blossom and frothing with delight. So this was marriage!” (Hurstons 11) The love Janie saw between the bees and the tree was her dream; to find a husband to love her like that. Janie is the main character in *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, so far she has gone through a roller coaster of losing and gaining her independence and trying to fulfill her lasting dream of finding a man that loves her like the bees love the trees and they will marry. Throughout this roller coaster, Janie always seems to keep her integrity by keeping her moral principles and her moral uprightness. Janie shows the traits of integrity while reaching for her dream when she leaves Logan to follow her dream, when Joe dies she burns all of her head rags, and she sticks to her beliefs and doesn't care what people think.

When Janie was sixteen her grandmother, Nanny, made her marry a man named Logan Killicks. He was much older than Janie and throughout their marriage things weren't what Janie imagined marriage would be. At one point, she believed the love for Logan would come after they actually married. She was wrong. Then one day a man by the name of Joe Starks came walking down the road. To Janie he was a breath of fresh air. He joked with her and made her laugh. With every conversation she seemed to fall in love with him. He made her feel like a tree and he was the bees. Before he left her he gave her a choice, “Ah'll be down dis road uh little after sunup tomorrow mornin' to wait for you. You come wid me. Den all de rest of yo' natural life you kin live lak you oughta.” (Hurstons 29-30) Then he left. The next day, Janie and Logan got into an argument. He insulted her and her family by saying, “Ah'm too honest and hard-workin' for anybody in yo' family, dat's de reason you don't want me!” (Hurstons 32) After that Janie's decision was made. She left the next morning whether Joe was down the road or not. She was ready to leave Logan for a new life. She was ready to follow her dream. It turned out that Joe was down the road, she got in the cab with him and by sundown they were married.

Twenty years later and Janie is still in the same spot. Over these years her independence was being stifled by Joe. He made her work in his store even though it was apparent that she hated it. While she worked, Joe had made her tie up her long, beautiful hair in a head rag. She never liked having to wear her hair tied up. But, she did it because Joe had asked and insisted and she figured disagreeing aloud to him would be a useless confrontation. These twenty years later, Joe had gotten sick and had eventually died. Janie ended up not feeling sorrow, but rather pity for Joe when he died. It turned out that Joe was too much of a “man” to admit that he stifled Janie's independence throughout their marriage and she felt bad for him. At the funeral, “Janie starched and ironed her face and came set in the funeral behind her veil.” (Hurstons 88) It was as though her body was mourning while her thoughts were running wild at the new found freedom. “Before she slept that night she burnt up every one of her head rags.” (Hurstons 89) This was her way of

putting the past behind her. She may not be that beautiful young girl that she was before, but she was now a “handsome woman” (Hurston 87) and realized that her new life had just begun and was ready to follow her dreams.

After Joe's death Janie continued to work in the store, but didn't work too much. She loved the freedom that she now had at her fingertips. She could talk when and to whoever she wanted to. Men came from all around trying to get their hands on the fortune she now had. She never let them past her front porch. “These men didn't represent a thing she wanted to know about.” (Hurston 90) Janie also had time to visit her friend Pheoby Watson. They would sit and talk and sometimes fish. Janie was loving her independence and one day told Pheoby. “T'ain't dat Ah worries over Joe's death, Pheoby. Ah jus' loves dis freedom.' Pheoby then said, 'Sh-sh-sh! Don't let nobody hear you say dat, Janie. Folks will say you ain't sorry he's gone.' 'Let 'em say whut dey wants tuh, Pheoby. To my thinkin' mourning oughtn't tuh last no longer'n grief.’” (Hurston 93) This conversation shows that Janie is happy with herself and her own dreams and doesn't care what anyone has to say about it.

Janie shows traits of integrity while reaching for her dreams when she leaves Logan to follow her dream, when Joe dies she burns all of her head rags, and she stick to her beliefs and doesn't care what people think. In her life so far, Janie has realized that she doesn't need to put her happiness and her dreams aside for someone else. She now knows that her bee will not stop her branches from growing, but will rather help them bloom. And I believe that the strongest form of integrity is sticking by your moral principles and knowing the difference of what is right for your life and your dreams rather than settling for less just to make someone else happy and Janie shows this strong sense of integrity.

Jordan Keller
First Place, Grade 11

Ordinarily, words should have only one meaning. The word ‘integrity’, however, is overflowing with various definitions. In Ron Ashkenas’ article *Why Integrity Is Never Easy*, he states, “Everyone defines integrity differently.” Dictionaries, people, schools, and even businesses have their own version of what integrity is. Integrity is usually known as doing what is right whether someone is watching or not. In most cases, integrity is revealed through the select few that view it. A famous act of integrity included Theodore Roosevelt, the twenty-sixth president of the United States. Roosevelt was widely respected as a man of authority; yet after his known act of integrity, it had added to his legacy and fame of being a great president.

Roosevelt was always known for his charismatic ways and his good deeds towards the United States. During his term, he went on a bear hunt with his party members. Nearing the end of the trip, everyone had shot a bear except for Roosevelt. The members of the bear hunting party found an old bear and tied it to a tree for the president to shoot it. However, he refused to kill the bear. Roosevelt kept his morals of sportsmanship and spared the bear’s life. As Amy Rees Anderson said in her article *Success Will Come and Go, But Integrity Lasts Forever*, “It takes having the courage to do the right thing, no matter what the consequences will be.” Thus meaning, when doing the right thing, one should be prepared to take the consequences. Roosevelt knew that doing the right thing would leave him to be the only person who didn’t

shoot a bear and he accepted the result. By doing so, he would rather have no kill and be honest than to kill a bear and be dishonest. In *Walking Your Walk: The Path of Personal Integrity* by Cat Thompson, Thompson stated, “When you lie, reality splits – it ‘dis-integrates.’ You now have one reality that *you* know and live in, knowing the ‘truth’ about a particular issue, and the reality that the people to whom you’ve *lied* live in, which is designed around somewhat or totally different information.” From that quote, it tells of how lying creates two realities where in one that liar knows that truth and in the other, the people lied to sees the lie as the truth. If the tied up bear was shot, Roosevelt would have created the two realities and this act would have not been about integrity at all. Yet at that moment in time, Roosevelt kept his ground and decided to be truthful in his integrity.

By the end of the trip, Roosevelt lived up to integrity’s true meaning: keeping with one’s morals and doing right regardless of the situation at hand. With the bear freed, his legacy as a great president was amplified by the integrity shown. Even when knowing he was supposed to kill on the trip, he decided not to out of honesty and compassion for the old sick bear. As a result, the integrity worked in his favor and created the most famed toy in history: the teddy bear. This simple yet extraordinary act shows what integrity truly is and the importance it has others.

Harinette Kpokai
Second Place, Grade 11

What is integrity? Integrity is the quality of being honest and having strong moral principles, meaning having a personal rule of conduct that shows the distinction between right and wrong. One person who illustrates good examples of integrity is Janie from the novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. Janie presents integrity by leaving her husband to achieve her dreams, gaining independence, and sticking to her beliefs, not caring about what people say. You may ask how these actions show integrity, and the answer is simple.

Janie first illustrates integrity by leaving her husband, Logan, to achieve her dream. While you may think of it as wrong to leave someone just for their dream, you must remember that having integrity means being honest. Janie displayed this honesty to herself. Instead of lying to herself and to Logan by saying that her relationship with him was okay, she went with her better judgment and broke things off with him. After all, what part of lying and pretending that you still have a good relationship shows “moral uprightness”? I would think that achieving your dream is more important than cementing yourself to a situation you resent. Janie had just done what she trusted was right, which was to leave Logan and go to Joe, who was a man who seemed that he would treat her better. It’s obvious that she trusts this as a sound decision when the text in *Their Eyes Were Watching God* stated “Even if Joe was not there waiting for her, the change was bound to do her good” (Hurston 32).

Another way Janie shows integrity is by gaining her independence. In the novel, her freedom is stolen from her because of Joe always told her what to do and wouldn’t even let her think for herself, which is what Janie announces by saying to him “Mah own mind had tuh be squeezed and crowded out tuh make room for yours in me” (Hurston 86). When Joe dies, she burns the head rags that he made her wear as a symbol for independence. This shows that she no longer lets someone else make all of the decisions for her. It isn’t very moral to let someone take your

autonomy away; every human being deserves to have their own freedoms. When Janie illustrates that she is now an autonomous woman, it shows that she has strong moral principles. She obviously desired that independence, and burning those head rags showed that she wasn't planning on giving it up again any time soon. Her intent on keeping her freedom could be seen when the author stated that she was in no rush to change everything after Joe's death as "she would have the rest of her life to do as she pleased" (Hurst 89).

Janie also displays integrity by sticking to her beliefs and doesn't care about what other people say about them. She doesn't lie about what she thinks at all; instead, she outright says that it wasn't Joe's death that was stopping her from moving on, but it was because of her love for her newfound freedom. She didn't want to give it up, and she had no difficulty expressing that, even if it meant people thinking that she wasn't remorseful about Joe's death. This shows integrity because staying true to your beliefs despite others is the right thing to do, and it shows honesty. She doesn't let people influence her thoughts on the subject. Janie also stays with her own principles, which would be that she shouldn't act a certain way just because everyone else views it as "wrong" or "right". As long as she thinks her beliefs are right, she'll hold on to them. You can tell this is true when she says "Let 'em say whut dey wants tuh, Phoeby. To my thinkin' mourning oughtn't tuh last no longer'n grief" (Hurst 93).

In summary, Janie presents integrity by leaving Logan to achieve her dream, attaining her own independence, and adhering to her beliefs despite other peoples' thoughts. She does what she trusts is right and doesn't let people sway her beliefs. She has strong moral principles and doesn't care about anyone's thoughts on them. Janie is a prime example of someone who expresses integrity, and I believe that we should all follow her. Integrity is a valuable quality, and maybe it's about time all of us show more integrity like her.

Emaline Innerarity
Third Place, Grade 11

It's 1517. Pope Leo X just announced that the Roman Catholic Church is now selling indulgences. The people within the church stir. *What about the poor people who can't afford pardons? Will they be doomed to hell?* In response, an angry Martin Luther posted a note onto the Church's door: The Ninety-Five Theses, a catalyst for the start of the Protestant Reformation. This dominoed into effect until Martin Luther was asked to recant the Theses he wrote; to which he refused. His determination to uncover the flaw within the church and speak his mind about what is right, led to him being excommunicated from the Church. Although his obedience toward his ideals made him become stranded within the Church, Luther still devoted his energy to doing what he believed was moral- therefore making Martin Luther a man of integrity.

Even as a young man, Luther stood by his principles. Growing up, his father saw promise in him and pushed Luther to go to school and become a lawyer. This plan was going well until Luther had an unexpected life changer. He was trapped in a thunderstorm and cried out to Saint Anne to save him, promising that if he made it out alive he would become a monk and devote his life to the Lord. As it happened, he survived that night and stuck to his promise, although it was greatly to his father's dismay. Even though his father disapproved of his son's newfound devotion, Luther continued on his pathway, fully believing that his choice was his moral obligation to God.

Because of his allegiance to religion, he studied the bible furiously and was requested to attend church conferences and lectures. At first, he struggled to find the religious enlightenment he was searching for and grew frustrated. Then one day as he was pouring over scriptures in the Bible, he read, "The just live by faith". He pondered this quote for some time before he illuminated that it meant one should not fear God for salvation, but that salvation would come with faith alone. This speculation was an important one for Luther, and sparked the reformation that would come soon after. If Luther had given up on his religious journey after the first difficult periods, he would have never brought about the reformation and religion today would be completely different.

After finding the religious stimulation he was striving for, Luther became very vocal and impenetrable in his views. When Pope Leo X announced that the Church was selling pardons for sins, Martin Luther realized that these indulgences were corrupting people's faith, and openly criticized the Church. His Ninety-Five Theses were spread around all of Germany and word quickly spread. A few months later, the Church acted defensively towards Luther and asked him to retract his statements towards them. Again, Luther stood up for what he knew was right and would not give up in proving them wrong; this forced the Roman Catholic Church to send him a letter warning him that he would be excommunicated from the Church. For his last act of defiance towards the Church, he took the letter he received from them and publicly burned it, officially ousting himself. Although he was a wanted man, with the help of his friends, he hid himself and translated the New Testament in German for the common people to read. Luther had so much dedication to what he knew was right that he began a religious reformation and grew so many followers that he created a whole new sect of the church. Even with the Church vehemently objecting to every word and action Luther said and took, Martin Luther was ruthless in his strive to enlighten the people of the corruption within the church.

His brutal honesty and devotion to his religious convictions resulted in the disapproval of his father, disappointment in himself after not initially reaching the spiritual need that he desired, open critique from priests within the Church, excommunication from the Church, and a warrant for his arrest if found in the area in which he was repudiated from. However, his moral obligation to do the right thing and uncover the unscrupulousness of the Roman Catholic Church led to a drastic change of the religious interpretation of the era; thus crowning Martin Luther as an outstanding example of integrity.

Shanyn Austin
First Place, Grade 12

The concept of integrity is very loosely defined for most people, but that doesn't keep anyone from boasting about integrity at every opportunity they get. This behavior is seen everywhere, from a business boasting about the guaranteed quality of a product to a lawyer tossing around the word to earn the trust of a potential client. Even engineers have adopted the term, using it to describe the reliability of their buildings by boasting about structural integrity as one of their biggest selling points. That seems to be what integrity has become: a selling point, or an advertisement. In the eyes of many, integrity has stopped becoming a merit to strive for and has simply become another buzzword for gaining trust and money. Ron Ashkenas argues this same

point in his article, “Why Integrity is Never Easy,” in which he writes that many companies have included integrity into their stock phrases and have made a habit of gloating about things like honesty, transparency, and sincerity. Although the definition of integrity in a time like this is not quite as transparent as these firms claim to be, there is plenty of evidence that Albert Einstein certainly exhibited the merit.

The path of integrity is a winding and confusing one. Gray areas need to be negotiated in order to decide which path truly is the right one to follow. Ashkenas gives the example of high school students, who tend to believe that cheating is wrong, but who also believe that they are justified in being academically dishonest on the occasions that they choose to falsify their work. The way he puts it, “they rationalize their situational behavior, and this way they can still consider themselves to be honest.” Because of this confusion that often surrounds the choice to be option, the most important character a person of integrity can have is honesty with oneself, and Albert Einstein embodies that. Einstein has many breakthroughs in physics attributed to him, and he appears to be infallible in that respect, but he even once said that “Anyone who has not made a mistake has never tried anything new.” He embraced the fact that even he made mistakes, and this honesty with himself gave him the freedom to be a true person of integrity. This is because the honesty he had with himself allowed him to accept his mistakes rather than justify and excuse them, and thus he could end up being more honest with the world as a whole as a result. Ashkenas argues that the power of rationalization is part of what makes true integrity a difficult thing to achieve, because people will always try to justify their actions and convince themselves that they already have integrity instead of actually working toward obtaining the virtue. The only way to get around this is to accept the fact that even people of integrity might do things that don’t display integrity from time to time, but the ability to recognize and work at these flaws is the thing that sets a genuinely honest person apart, and this is something Albert Einstein displayed quite effectively.

In order for true integrity to shine through, one must be dedicated to moral self-improvement. As Ashkenas puts it, “In some ways, the value statements about integrity are meant to remind us that integrity is not just a corporate responsibility, but a personal one as well.” In saying this, Ashkenas states that integrity needs to be more than a buzzword or a slogan. Individual people need to strive for integrity in order for society to function optimally. Albert Einstein held very similar beliefs in that he felt that the moral fiber of a person is just as important, if not more important, than the business prospects of that person. Einstein made this belief know when he said “Try not to become a man of success, but rather try to become a man of value.” Of course, words alone are not enough to plead someone’s integrity, but Einstein also showed good character in standing up for friends. When Marie Curie, a scientist and two time Nobel Prize winner, was harassed by flocks of reporters from the media, Einstein was outraged by the type of treatment she was receiving. He wrote her a letter in which he expressed his feelings and supported her. This willingness to stand up for what he believes is right is what really made Einstein a person of integrity.

In order to display integrity, a person has to be willing to be honest with themselves. This involves accepting their mistakes, which is something Albert Einstein did willingly. Integrity also requires acting upon one’s beliefs, which is something that Einstein did when he stood up for Marie Curie.

Laura Smith
Second Place, Grade 12

Almost one hundred years had passed and African Americans had still not been granted the full promise that the United States had promised them. The Reconstruction Amendments had been passed in 1865, giving all African Americans their freedom, equal protection under the law, and also the right to vote. However, the governing people in many parts of the country had denied them this right despite the unconstitutionality. Jim Crow laws had harmed the well being of many African Americans. The South especially had stopped people from voting through the grandfather clause, white primaries, poll taxes, and literacy tests that would specifically prevent Blacks from voting. All of this occurred up to one hundred years after the federal government gave African Americans these rights. Up until his death, one man stood for something more than himself and carried a whole race on his back in the fight for equality. This man was Thurgood Marshall and he exemplified the Smyrna School District core value of integrity because of his resilience and dedication to what was fair.

Through the lens of history, we tend to think of Martin Luther King Jr. as the champion of the civil rights movement, however without Thurgood Marshall, the movement may not have gained any ground towards equality under the law. Marshall dreamed of being a lawyer ever since he was a child. However, since he was African American, he faced many challenges. Marshall was often denied his wishes because of his race. In college, he became a great arguer through debate club, and then started getting involved in sit-ins and National Association for the Advancement of Colored People meetings. After these first interactions with the civil rights movement, Marshall began seeing the injustice that faced African Americans. He wanted to stand up for those he couldn't, and he knew he had the power, talent, and will to do that.

In 1934, Thurgood Marshall took on his first case for the NAACP, *Murray v. Pearson*. Donald Murray was an African American law student with great talent and credentials that was denied acceptance to the University of Maryland Law School because of their segregation policy. Marshall won this decision, and began a trend of class action suits defending the rights of blacks across the country. He dedicated almost every waking hour of his days focused on arguing cases and preparing these class action suits. Death threats were regular; white supremacists would throw bricks through Marshall's windows, crowd around his house chanting, and the KKK even burned a cross in his yard. However, Marshall's resilience carried him through, and he refused to give up. Thurgood Marshall won 29 of the 32 cases he argued before the Supreme Court. His most famous and resounding case was *Brown v. Board of Education*, which catalyzed the desegregation of the public school system. In 1967, in reward for his hard work with the law, President Johnson nominated Marshall as a Supreme Court justice. Through this tireless work and dedication, Marshall was able to fight for what he believed in; what he knew was right.

Very few people have the honor of representing an entire race before the judiciary system of a country that had fallen short on their promises to those people. But Thurgood Marshall rose to the occasion, fought the power, and made people realize how unfair discrimination was. It takes bravery to stand up to the law and millions of people, and Marshall was able to do this. He fought for equality using ethics, logic, and reason which is the best way one can accomplish change. Along with Dr. King, Marshall truly led the African American people to equality under the law in the United States. Integrity by and by led Marshall to success, and he is most remembered for his achievements while sticking by his morals.

Andrew Morrison
Third Place, Grade 12

HONORABLE MENTION

CLAYTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Whitney Russell	Kindergarten
Rory Whitehouse	Kindergarten
Emma Garrison	Kindergarten
Ethan Russum	Kindergarten
Tyler Selhorst	Kindergarten

Travis Dixon	Grade 1
Alara Kollar	Grade 1
Derek Gomez	Grade 1
Mason Crouch	Grade 1
Jackson Pleasanton	Grade 1

Colin McBride	Grade 2
Cecilia DelDuco	Grade 2
Marcus Perez	Grade 2
Kailey Grasso	Grade 2
Clayton Lloyd	Grade 2

Kadin Zook	Grade 3
McKenna Vest	Grade 3
Sarah Esbenshade	Grade 3
Brandon West	Grade 3
Ivan Stanley	Grade 3

Laniah Hill	Grade 4
Julia Haldas	Grade 4
Delaney Porter	Grade 4
Jade Hendricks	Grade 4
Karalyn Osborne	Grade 4

NORTH SMYRNA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Gracelynn Scotton	Kindergarten
Christopher Robinson	Kindergarten
Aurelia Thomas	Kindergarten
Danica Colbert	Kindergarten
Janiyah Ridgeway	Kindergarten

Cara Shogan	Grade 1
A'nya Isabell	Grade 1
	Grade 1
	Grade 1
	Grade 1

Yaniyah Jones	Grade 2
Christopher Grantland	Grade 2
Oscar Vanyanbah	Grade 2
Zoe Thomas	Grade 2
Emily Harding	Grade 2

Robert Moore, Jr.	Grade 3
Marissa Coulbourne	Grade 3
Lauren Barbour	Grade 3
	Grade 3
	Grade 3

Farrah Charles	Grade 4
Kaelin Donovan	Grade 4
Ryan Conway	Grade 4
Dylan Pham	Grade 4
Faith Starchia	Grade 4

SMYRNA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Avery Rice	Kindergarten
Caroline Maher	Kindergarten
Myah Samonte	Kindergarten
Matthew Passero	Kindergarten
	Kindergarten

Christian Parson	Grade 1
Gabrielle Royal	Grade 1
Jordan Reph	Grade 1
Harrison White	Grade 1
Reagan Faulkner	Grade 1

Mason Schulenburg	Grade 2
Ella Carroll	Grade 2
Mikhaila Washburn	Grade 2
Chase Dove	Grade 2
Brian Matheus	Grade 2

Oriana Gibson	Grade 3
Isabelle Bernard	Grade 3
Isabela Richichi-Leon	Grade 3
Obinna Coleman	Grade 3
Joey Blankenship	Grade 3

Sanaa Dudley	Grade 4
Autumn Steele	Grade 4
Shelby Willey	Grade 4
Dennis Russell	Grade 4
Landon Andrus	Grade 4

Grade 4	Grade 4
Grade 4	Grade 4
Grade 4	Grade 4
Grade 4	Grade 4
Grade 4	Grade 4

SUNNYSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Taylor Rybicki	Kindergarten	Ashlyn Baker	Grade 2
Kristen Beardsley	Kindergarten	Raleigh Shimp	Grade 2
Alana Deedon	Kindergarten	Ryan Pointer	Grade 2
John Munsterteiger	Kindergarten	Omotola Iyanda	Grade 2
Aaryn Gary	Kindergarten	Isabella Graham	Grade 2
Mia Gilliam	Grade 1	Caroline Davis	Grade 3
Marquis Alexander-Simpson	Grade 1	Christopher Colas	Grade 3
Erinn Rodriguez	Grade 1	Michael Womer	Grade 3
Ava Pritchett	Grade 1	Katelyn Curtis	Grade 3
Jaidyn Stewart	Grade 1	Reaghan King	Grade 3
	Blessing Nyameke	Grade 4	
	Jared Williams	Grade 4	
	Nicole Ransome	Grade 4	
	Vianna Muiruri	Grade 4	
	Jacob Collins	Grade 4	

JBM INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

CLAYTON INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

Robert Mace	Grade 5	Alexa Lehnert	Grade 5
Savana Kopach	Grade 5	Liam Meginniss	Grade 5
	Grade 5	Savanna Evans	Grade 5
	Grade 5	Rebecca King	Grade 5
	Grade 5	Sarah Cain	Grade 5
Gianna Hannum	Grade 6	Lily McIntosh	Grade 6
Lydia Klecan	Grade 6	Jenna Donovan	Grade 6
	Grade 6	Sophia DeMarco	Grade 6
	Grade 6	Jacob McCleary	Grade 6
	Grade 6	Hannah Osborne	Grade 6

SMYRNA MIDDLE SCHOOL

Isabella Dunning	Grade 7
Faith Young	Grade 7
Alexis Hudson	Grade 7
Cassidy Markel	Grade 7
McKenzie Gearhart	Grade 7
Marcus Figueroa	Grade 8
Jaidah Lottie	Grade 8
Ashley Stamper	Grade 8
Courtney Spader	Grade 8
Chloe Griffiths	Grade 8

SMYRNA HIGH SCHOOL

Steven O'Neill	Grade 9	Amanda Hennen	Grade 11
Hunter Moyer	Grade 9	Mary Lemma	Grade 11
Emily Youngcourt	Grade 9	Jake Mitchell	Grade 11
Alec Shalk	Grade 9	Markee Davis	Grade 11
Justina Bottomley	Grade 9	Joshua Smith	Grade 11
Elana Montejo	Grade 10	Cole Newport	Grade 12
Max Berman	Grade 10	Cayla Carter	Grade 12
Neel Patel	Grade 10	Nicole Simpson	Grade 12
Lindsey Asbury	Grade 10	Dominique Demoe	Grade 12
Davyn Roberts	Grade 10	Elizabeth Birney	Grade 12