
IDENTIFYING INTEGRITY IN THE NOVEL *HOLES*

Main Objective: Students will be able to define and analyze the *integrity* of the characters in Louis Sachar’s novel *Holes* and apply that analysis to their own lives through a group project in which the students portray a scene with characters from the book.

Day 1

Opening (Do Now):

1. Write out the following question to prompt student response and discussion: “What does the word ‘integrity’ mean to you? Please think of an example of how someone can demonstrate integrity” (5 minutes).
2. Ask students for their responses to the question, and summarize the main points (5 minutes).
3. Compare student definitions with a formal definition. As defined by *Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary*, integrity is “the firm adherence to a code of especially moral or artistic values” along with “the quality or state of being complete or undivided.” “Honesty” and “incorruptibility” are synonyms for “integrity.” On the board, record responses from the class to create a working definition of integrity and actions that illustrate someone acting with integrity (5 minutes).

Suggested Teacher Script:

1. *Today, I’d like you to help define the word integrity. What does the word integrity mean to you? Using a clean sheet of paper, write out your definition of integrity and examples of where integrity applies in everyday life. Let me give you five minutes and then we will discuss this as a class.*
2. *Thank you for participating; let’s hear what you have written down. Who can give me one definition of integrity and an example of it?*
3. *Let’s compare your ideas to a formal definition. [Read Webster’s definition above.] How do your interpretation and description compare with this definition? How are they similar to Webster’s definition? How are they different? [Encourage student response.]*

Group Project:

Students will break into groups of four to identify how integrity (or lack of integrity) is demonstrated by characters in *Holes*. Either the teacher or students can choose the groups. During this time, the small groups will be required to analyze and create a scene from *Holes* that shows how characters demonstrate integrity in their actions. The students will be asked to use direct quotations and add original dialogue when planning their scenes. This activity will give students an opportunity to plan before presenting their scenes to the class the following day. They may use props, costumes, or any additional items that will enhance the scenes, and they have five minutes to act them out to the class the following day. This activity will enable students not only to engage with the text as it relates to the demonstration of integrity but also to practice higher-order thinking skills of analysis and evaluation (30+ minutes).

Suggested Teacher Script:

Now that you have defined integrity, you are going to focus on how it is or is not demonstrated by the characters in the novel Holes. You will work in groups of four to reenact a scene from Holes in which the characters do or do not illustrate integrity. Use the Integrity Scene Activity worksheet I am handing out to help organize your presentation. Please be creative during this time. You can use props and costumes to create a five-minute skit that will be presented tomorrow to the class. Remember that during your small-group planning period you must demonstrate respect by waiting until someone is done talking before you speak.

(continued)

Homework:

Students should continue planning their skits to present to the class the following day. Students can gather any props and costumes from home (5 minutes).

Suggested Teacher Script:

For tonight's homework, you will finish planning the skit you are going to present to the class tomorrow. While at home, gather any costumes or props you think are necessary to enhance your skit.

Day 2**Group Project:**

1. Students will return to their groups to finalize planning their scene and prepare for presenting their five-minute skits to the class. Students may use any paper, props, and costumes gathered from home to enhance their scene (5 minutes).
2. Groups will have five minutes to act out their scenes from the book *Holes* (25 minutes).
3. Class reflection on skits. Take time to discuss main points observed in each skit and record responses on a flip chart (5 minutes).

Suggested Teacher Script:

1. *Please gather any materials you brought from home to enhance your scene. You will have five minutes to meet with your group and finalize any details before presenting your skit to the class. I will tell you when the five minutes is over.*
2. *Now that you have met with your group members, each group will present its scene to the class. You will have five minutes to do this. During this time, please be respectful of others by remaining quiet throughout each group presentation.*
3. *Now that we are done with our skits, let's discuss the main ideas we observed with each one.*

Homework:

Students will consider why they chose the scene and characters that they acted out. Using this and the questions listed on the Integrity Scene Activity handout, they will create a 750-word written essay in which they identify whether or not one of the characters from their scene illustrates integrity, as well as an example of how such actions are seen in their own lives (5 minutes to explain the assignment and take questions).

Suggested Teacher Script:

For tonight's homework you will outline and draft a 750-word essay identifying a character from the scene that illustrates integrity (or lack of integrity) and how this is applicable to your own life. We will work together tomorrow to complete and peer-review this draft essay.

Connection to Final Essay:

Today's activity and homework assignment serve as a catalyst to outline and draft an integrity essay. The Integrity Essay Grading Rubric is a guide for students to participate in a peer-review seminar during the writing process as well as a guide for your own grading. We encourage that the writing exercise take place immediately following the Integrity Scene activity to help students attain a full understanding of integrity in *Holes* and how integrity may apply in their lives.