

Eli's Lie-O-Meter: A Story About Telling the Truth

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HONESTY
United States
Reading Time: 5 minutes

CONCEPTS

Honesty
Courage
Love

SUMMARY

When it comes to playing with his friend, Eli understands the difference between real and make believe. At home with his family, it appears to be a more difficult task, that is, until the mailman delivers the Super-Deluxe Lie-O-Meter. This incredible machine somehow detects whether someone is telling the truth. It can even tell the difference between a whopper and a fib! Ebbeler's detailed and humorous paintings emphasize the exhilaration of pretending, the burden of telling a lie, and the relief in sharing the truth.

OBJECTIVE

The students will be able to:

- Identify and discuss honesty, courage and love as they apply to this story.
- Explore the differences among pretense, reality, and truthfulness.

Classroom Connections & Additional Activities

1. Keep a weekly log that documents play time. Include the time, place, activity, and play partners. **LA** **MATH**
2. Starting with a large box, work together in small groups to create your own special make-believe space or pirate ship. Search recyclables for additional materials. Decorate before taking pretend adventures. Use your imagination! **ART**
3. Draw and write or dictate stories about adventures on the ship. Include facts about the creation, as well as pretend travels. Challenge your classmates to identify truth from fantasy. **LA** **ART**
4. Create a map that shows the ship's location in the galaxy or on the high seas. **SS**
5. Note the welcome mats in the story's illustrations. Learn how to say *welcome* in several different languages. Share this knowledge with friends and family. **SS** **LA**

After the Story

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DISCUSSION

1. What elements of the story could actually happen? Which would be called make-believe?
2. Describe and list statements that would register for each portion of the *Lie-O-Meter*: truth, fib, lie, big lie, giant lie, and whopper.
3. Talk about the consequences that resulted from receiving a ticket from the *Lie-O-Meter*. Review the illustrations for clues.
4. Why do you think the *Lie-O-Meter* did not respond to Eli's lie about the lamp? How did Eli feel about this? What made him decide to tell the truth?
5. Do you think it would be easy to follow Eli's parents' request to "stick to the facts for the next hundred years or so..."? Why? What do you think would have happened if Eli had not blamed others for his actions and had told the truth right away? Would you keep the meter? Explain your reasoning.

ACTIVITIES

1. Role play scenes from the book. Consider extending the story. Make your own dialogue. These might include the following:
 - The dinner picnic scene, first with Eli blaming his brother; then with a truth-telling version
 - Eli's parents talking with him after he had admitted the truth
 - Colton and Eli providing the facts about the lamp's breakage to Eli's Mom
 - Eli apologizing to his dog, Duffy
2. Brainstorm a list of emotions portrayed by Eli, Mom, Dad, Colton, Madison and Duffy in the story. Draw faces to match these. Label and place together in a class book. Create a title and make the book jacket. Share with others.
3. Reread the story and identify statements from the story that were exaggerations or untruths. Try to create an honest, factual statement to replace each one.

EXTENSION

1. Share your journal entry with family members. Ask them to tell about a time when they were honest and earned the trust of others.
2. Ask family members to describe clues that indicate that someone is not telling the truth. What clues do they look for that seem to tell that someone is being honest? Describe the *Lie-O-Meter* and talk about behaviors that might fit each category of the meter.

WRAP-UP

In your *Heartwood Journal*, draw/write about a time when you were honest and earned the trust of another.

VOCABULARY

logs (pertaining to record keeping)
galaxy
customized
facts