IDEA #100

Honesty Skit

OVERVIEW: Students perform a skit showing how honesty benefits both the truth-teller and the listener.

PREPARATION / MATERIALS:
- one photocopy of the skit for each student

PROCEDURE:

Select students to read the lines and act out parts in a play. Assign the following roles, bringing up a new cast with each scene to include as many youngsters as possible.

- Chris
- Sylvia
- Alberto
- Mr. Mayland

— SCENE I —

(Three students are playing ball. They have two balls and are throwing them to each other. One misses, and the ball goes flying through the window of Mr. Mayland’s house. A brief panic ensues.)

Alberto: Oh, no! Sylvia, you broke Mr. Mayland’s window.

Sylvia: I just threw the ball. You were supposed to catch it, and you missed. It’s your fault!

Chris: Maybe Mr. Mayland isn’t home. He’s such a grouch!

Sylvia: Look! Here he comes, and he’s mad! Let’s run! He can’t catch us.

Alberto: He knows us, and he’s seen us already. We’re in big trouble.
Chris: I've got an idea! We still have my ball. Let's tell him we saw another — a stranger — throw a ball at his window and then run. We'll say we were tossing this one back and forth when we saw him.

Alberto: I don't like this. I'm worried this may not work out.

Sylvia: Me too, but Mr. Mayland is really mean. He'll probably hit us if he knows we did it.

Mr. Mayland: All right, who did it? I want to know who broke my window! You kids are a public nuisance, and now look what you've done. You're going to be sorry!

Chris: Not us, Mr. Mayland. Look! We still have our ball. It was this other kid. He was wearing a blue shirt. We don't know who he was, but he threw the ball at your window and ran that way. He was tall and had brown hair.

Mr. Mayland: Maybe I can catch him.

(Mr. Mayland runs off in the designated direction, leaving Alberto, Chris and Sylvia relieved and staring after him.)

Sylvia: Wow! That was close.

— SCENE II —

(Several minutes later the youngsters are watching Mr. Mayland return from his fruitless search for the "other kid" who broke his window.)

Chris: I'm not feeling good about what we did to Mr. Mayland.

Alberto: I know. I'm sorry we broke his window, too. It was just an accident.

Sylvia: Me too. I'm the one who threw the ball and I went along with the story we told him. I don't like Mr. Mayland because he's always lecturing us and thinks we're no good. At first I was relieved that we weren't in trouble. Now I feel like nothing we did was right, especially the lying.

Chris: What do you think we should do?

Sylvia: I broke the window. I'm going to go tell him what I did and say it was my idea to lie to him. I'll tell him you guys aren't to blame — just me.

Chris: No way. I'm going with you.
**Scene III**

(They walk up to Mr. Mayland who is staring at his broken window. He looks disgusted and discouraged.)

**Sylvia:** Mr. Mayland?

**Mr. Mayland:** What do you want? I didn’t find that guy, and now I’m stuck with this mess. You youngsters are always around when there are problems.

**Sylvia:** (clearing her throat) Uh, we did it.

**Mr. Mayland:** What?

**Alberto:** (rushing his speech) We did it. We’re sorry. It was an accident. I missed the ball when it was thrown to me. We didn’t try to damage your house.

**Chris:** Please, Mr. Mayland, please don’t be mad. We lied about the other guy because we were afraid of you. We’re sorry.

**Mr. Mayland:** (looking sternly at the youngsters) You _should_ be afraid. I’m very mad about this, but I’m glad you were brave enough to tell the truth after all. Now, what are you three going to do about this?

**Sylvia:** Money’s tough in my family. I have about $2 saved that I could give you.

**Alberto:** We don’t have much money either, and my mom’s car just broke down. But I have $2 or $3, too.

**Chris:** I also have some money saved. But not much.

**Mr. Mayland:** Great! $6 or $7 won’t cover the cost of replacing my window.

**Sylvia:** I broke the window. I could do extra things around your house for you until I’ve made up the difference.

**Mr. Mayland:** If you’re going to break my window then lie about it, why should I trust you in my house.

**Alberto:** We could all help. We were all in this together. We could mow your lawn...
and do other chores outside your house. We could bring our own lawnmower. We’d be careful.

**Mr. Mayland:** I don’t know.

**Sylvia:** Please, Mr. Mayland. We feel badly about what we did. We’re not bad kids. We’ll even do some weeding too.

**Mr. Mayland:** All right. Let’s see how trustworthy you really are. Since you broke my large, double-paned plate glass window, you can each pay me $2 and do two hours of gardening each Saturday morning for the next three weeks.

**Sylvia:** Three weeks! Okay, we’ll do it. Are you going to tell our parents?

**Mr. Mayland:** No. I’m trusting you to do that. If you really mean it when you say you’re sorry, then you’ll also have the integrity to tell your families. I’ll be expecting you next Saturday.

(The kids leave.)

**Mr. Mayland:** (Shaking his head) That was dumb on my part. I’ll never see the money, and they’ll probably get their parents to get them out of the mowing.

--- SCENE IV ---

(The three are raking the yard and putting piles of weeds in a garbage bag.)

**Sylvia:** This is the last week. I didn’t realize Mr. Mayland’s yard was so big.

**Chris:** Me either. But at least we showed Mr. Mayland we can keep a promise. Remember that look of surprise when we showed up at his door the first weekend to do the yardwork? That was the first time I’d ever seen him smile.

**Alberto:** That was great! Between that and giving him his money, we had him so surprised he could hardly talk. I think we even surprised him by doing a nice job on the mowing, and pulling all his weeds.

**Chris:** It’s nice to think he is probably realizing we really are sorry about his window and that we’re not so immature and irresponsible — when we give our word, we mean it. My dad was angry when I told him about the window and our lying, but he said he was proud of us for having the courage to admit it and try to make up for it.
Alberto: It was hard to tell my mom, but I feel good to get it off my chest. I can see how in the long run it’s better to be honest all the way around.

Sylvia: I agree. And I’ll be more careful about where I play so I don’t damage anything else. You know, Mr. Mayland really isn’t such a bad guy. I liked talking to him last week when he came out to work with us. Did you know he collects all kinds of fossils and loans them to museums all over the country?

Chris: Really? Yeah, he does seem nicer now. I guess we just never took the time to get to know him. We should visit more with him. He’s all alone. Hey, I have another idea!

Alberto: Please! Not like the last one.

Chris: No, I’m never going to lie like that again. I was thinking... why don’t we go next Saturday and work in his yard just because we care?

Sylvia: That’s a good idea. Imagine what his expression will look like this time!

(They exit, class applauds, and all actors return to stage for bows.)

Contributed by Vicki Mirabal, Chelwood Elementary School teacher (Albuquerque, NM).