

Use these prompts for short discussions at the beginning or end of a class period.

## Discussions

- **Trustworthiness Defined**  
Have students define "trustworthiness" [honesty, reliability, courage, loyalty].
- **Trustworthy People**  
Have students describe people they know who are trustworthy. Discuss the qualities that make a person trustworthy.
- **Trustworthy Qualities**  
Have students define each of these qualities that comprises trustworthiness:
  - a. honesty      d. courage
  - b. loyalty      e. reliability
  - c. good reputation
- **Reliability for Teens**  
List areas where teenagers are expected to be reliable.
- **Being Trustworthy**  
Discuss what is the most difficult part of being a trustworthy person.
- **Trustworthy Lessons**  
Have students tell about lessons they have learned in becoming a trustworthy person.
- **Trustworthy Actions**  
Make a list of actions that demonstrate trustworthiness.
- **Healthy/Unhealthy Friendships**  
List the qualities of healthy and unhealthy friendships.

Healthy Friendships	Unhealthy Friendships

## Questions

- **Okay to Lie?**  
"Are there times when it is okay to lie? When? Why?"
- **Trustworthy Friends**  
"What makes a trustworthy friend?"
- **When Someone Lies**  
"How do you feel when you find out that someone lied to you?"
- **Loyalty Issues**  
"Why is loyalty an important value? Are there ever situations where it is better not to be loyal?"
- **Getting a Good Reputation**  
"How do people gain a good reputation?"
- **Showing Courage**  
"What are some real situations in which you have had to show courage?"
- **Loyalty to Country**  
"Do you feel it is important to be loyal to your country? Why or why not?"
- **Is Reputation Important?**  
"Is it important to have a good reputation? Why or why not?"
- **Untrustworthy Peers**  
"How do you feel about peers who are not trustworthy? Why?"

### Quick Stats

A survey of over 15,000 people asked which of these traits is the key to effective leadership:

- a. Being fair-minded
- b. Being cooperative
- c. Being honest
- d. Being imaginative

Answer: 87% said being honest.  
Why?

A business survey found that these are the most common reasons why people are fired from their jobs:

- Dishonesty, lying
- Irresponsibility
- Chronic absenteeism
- A complaining attitude
- Absence of commitment

Why do you think these are the most common reasons? Which ones are issues for you?

### Trustworthiness in Media

- Make a list of television characters who are not trustworthy. Discuss whether or not students would like to have those characters as friends.
- Have students list names of celebrities they respect. Then discuss whether those people seem to be trustworthy.

### Trustworthiness in School

- "Why do students choose to cheat in school?" Discuss the values exchange involved in cheating--trading doing well in school for losing your trustworthiness. "Do you think it is worth it?"
- "How do you know whether or not a teacher is trustworthy?"

**1. Character Choices**

Our choices in different situations--especially stressful situations--reveal whether or not we are trustworthy. By looking at different situations in a story, we can see the kinds of decisions different characters had to make--and those decisions reveal their character. Have students create a chart like the one below and list at least five situations in which a character was faced with some difficult choices. Discuss as a class.

Situation	Possible Choices	Decision Made	Consequences of Decision	Trustworthiness Shown? How?

**2. Compare & Contrast**

The choices we make result in a life we build for ourselves. While our lives are filled with unexpected events, when we make healthy, positive choices based on good character, results are usually positive. In contrast, negative decisions based on poor character usually result in negative situations. Have students compare and contrast two characters--one who is trustworthy and one who is not--in a piece of literature. Have students look at not only the choices each character makes, but also the kind of life and lifestyle that results for each character.

**3. Poetic Images & Analogies**

Images and analogies are powerful tools of literature. They can communicate a depth of meaning that may be more difficult than simple descriptions. Have students write a poem that uses imagery or analogy to describe the quality of trustworthiness. For example, a poetic description of an oak tree can be a symbol for the quality of trustworthiness.

**4. Personal Writing**

Have students write about difficult decisions they have made where they chose to be trustworthy. Include such questions as. Why was the decision difficult? Why did you make the right decision What were the results?

**5. Personal Values Essay**

It is important not only to have a specific set of values that we strive to consciously live by, but also to articulate those values to others in a clear, concise, and thoughtful way. Have students write an essay arguing how important it is for teenagers to be trustworthy.

**6. Trustworthy Characters {Discovering Wisdom # 2}**

Being a trustworthy person earns respect from others, especially when difficult choices are made. Being trustworthy involves making decisions based on integrity that are consistent with one's values, even if it may result in negative consequences. Discuss with students about a character in literature who shows him/herself to be trustworthy. What does the character do that shows he/she is trustworthy? Have students make a list of specific ways this character is trustworthy.

**7. The Effects of Trustworthiness {Discovering Wisdom # 3}**

All of us want to be around people of integrity--we are attracted to people we can trust. When we are trustworthy in our relationships, we have a positive impact on others, which can lead to others becoming more trustworthy themselves. Discuss how trustworthy characters affect other characters in a story. Do any characters change throughout the course of events and become more honest? Why do they change? Does one character seem to be particularly influential over others? Why?

**Wisdom-in-Action Biographies**

Individual	Ethnicity	Writing Genres	Issues & Insights
Maya Angelou	African-American	Poetry, Novels, Autobiography	autobiographies; Southern racism
Sherman Alexie	Native-American	Novels, Short Stories, Poetry	Indian reservations; Indian authors
Maxine Hong-Kingston	Asian-American	Novels, Autobiography	stereotyping; immigrants to America

**1. VISUAL ARTS: Trustworthy Collage**

Collages are powerful ways to visually communicate ideas and principles. After students have discussed and understood the concept of *trustworthiness*, have them use images from newspapers and magazines to design a collage on the theme of trustworthiness. Have students discuss with the class or in small groups about their collage and describe to each other the feelings communicated in each collage. Have each student share how their collage illustrates trustworthiness.

**2. VISUAL ARTS: Classroom Posters**

Posters in classrooms can send positive messages to students. Have students design a poster for a teacher or a few teachers that highlight one particular aspect of trustworthiness. Have students ask teacher(s) what one trustworthiness issue they would like to highlight to students, such as:

- cheating/honesty
- working hard
- following through on commitments

Then have students design posters highlighting the issues teachers chose.

**3. PERFORMING ARTS: “Trustworthy Teens” Street Theatre**

Street theatre is a powerful and fun way to surprise people and make them think about things in a different way. Have students create short, 2 to 5 minute street theatre pieces that in a humorous and entertaining way highlight the importance of being trustworthy teens. Pieces should be funny, high-action, and engaging. Have students perform the pieces in high-traffic areas around the school at lunch and during breaks.

**4. PHOTOGRAPHY: Photography Exhibit**

Photographs can express strong emotions through the use of lighting, composition, facial expressions, body positions, etc. Have students take photographs that express the concept of “trustworthiness.” Have an art reception and display the photos at an exhibit in a classroom at lunch. Publicize the event.

**5. VISUAL ARTS: Images of Trustworthiness (Discovering Wisdom # 26)**

Have students describe what “trustworthiness” means. Have them brainstorm the images and pictures that come to mind with the word “trustworthiness”. Write their suggestions on the board. Have students discuss why “trustworthiness” makes them think of these images. Foollowing are some words that trustworthiness may imply:

- *solidity*
- *stability*
- *friendship*
- *strength*
- *wholesome*
- *love*
- *reliability*
- *commitment*
- *family*

Explain that images have a powerful ability to communicate deeper than the images themselves. Assign students to create a work of art that communicates the value of trustworthiness.

**6. MUSIC: Message in a Song (Discerning Wisdom # 17)**

Songs can communicate values--whether they are songs that say that falling in love is what makes you happy or songs that degrade a group of people. Music is a strong communicator. Have students bring in the lyrics of a contemporary song. Copy the lyrics for all students, play the song, and discuss the song’s meaning. What values is the song communicating? What do the lyrics encourage a person to think or do? Does the song encourage or inspire people to develop good character qualities such as trustworthiness? Does it encourage people to be better people? How?

**Wisdom-in-Action Biographies**

Individual	Ethnicity	Arts Profession	Issues & Insights
Wynton Marsalis	African- American	Musician, Composer	jazz musicians; influence of jazz
Della Reese	African- American	Singer, Actress	music & religion; artists who help
Buffy St. Marie	Native Canadian	Artist, Musician, Songwriter	indigineous people; social concerns

**School Service-Learning****1. Newspaper Series** (English)

Initiate a series in the school newspaper--"Exploring Trustworthiness." Write a paragraph each week for one month on the various qualities that trustworthiness comprises. Invite letters from students asking different questions related to being trustworthy.

**2. Trustworthiness Survey** (English, Math)

Design a survey asking students questions about trustworthiness. Questions can include "Are you trustworthy?", "Would your friends say you are trustworthy?" and "Do you look for trustworthiness in your friends?" Have students fill out the survey, analyze the results, and write about them in the school newspaper.

**3. How to Be Trustworthy--Any Ideas?** (English)

Start a school campaign to promote trustworthiness by having a box on campus for students to describe specific ways people can be trustworthy. Print a complete list of students' ideas in the school newspaper or on a separate sheet that is made available to all students. Ideas can also be read over the PA system.

**4. Peer Counseling** (Health)

Many students may need to learn how to develop healthy friendships and become a trustworthy person themselves. Volunteer to be a peer counselor and help students become people of character.

**Family Service-Learning****5. Family Discussions** (English, Social Studies, Health)

Many families have discussions over dinner about different issues and concerns. For one week, lead discussions with your family about the issue of being trustworthy. Have family members tell what trustworthiness means to them and people in their lives who are trustworthy. Keep a journal record of each of your family discussions.

**6. Being Trustworthy** (English, Health)

Under the heading "Being Trustworthy," make a list of the qualities that are part of trustworthiness (honesty, dependability, loyalty, etc.). Put the list on your refrigerator and have family members describe each day how they showed one or more of those traits during the day.

**Community Service-Learning****7. Trustworthiness Flier** (Art)

Design and create a flier explaining your thoughts about the importance of trustworthiness for all people, young and old. Make it catchy, interesting and easy-to-read. Make copies of the flier and ask local businesses if you could either post a copy in their store or leave a few copies fliers for people to take.

**8. Radio Spots** (English, Drama)

With a team of students, write a few radio spots that express the importance of being trustworthy. Contact a local commercial or non-commercial radio station and ask them if they will record some of your comments and play them on the air.

**9. Teaching Elementary School Students** (English, Careers)

Design an upbeat and fun 20 to 30 minute lesson for elementary school students on the importance of trustworthiness. Arrange to teach your lesson to a class of students.

# Nelson Mandela

## South African Leader

### Character Themes

1. Respect
2. Citizenship
3. Courage

Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela was born in 1918 in Umtata, an area in South Africa that later became the Black homeland of Transkei. After his father died when he was 12, he lived with the chief of the Tembu tribe. As a teenager, Mandela chose to give up his right to become the tribal chief and instead entered college to get a law degree. He wanted to go into politics to change the system of racial inequality and segregation which permeated life in South Africa.

Mandela attended University College at Fort Hare, but after he led a student strike in 1940, he was expelled. He obtained his law degree from the University of South Africa in 1942. In 1944, Mandela joined the African National Congress (ANC), a national organization that was working nonviolently to promote the rights of Black South Africans. He, along with other leaders, founded the Congress Youth League, which called for labor strikes and protests to demand social justice and equality. At the time, Blacks could not vote, though they were the majority in the country. In 1948, the National party implemented a comprehensive system of racial segregation known as *apartheid* (which means “apartness” in Dutch-derived Afrikaans). Under apartheid, individuals were classified by race and given specific rights and privileges based on their race and skin color. Black South Africans were forced to live in impoverished areas, receive inferior education and medical care, and denied a variety of job opportunities.

Mandela helped lead a variety of protests and strikes in the 1950’s. He was beaten and jailed for leading many of these non-violent actions. As president of the Transvaal branch of the ANC, Mandela lead others in intentionally breaking many of the apartheid laws. As a result, Mandela was prohibited from attending public gatherings. In 1955, the ANC, along with other organizations, wrote the Freedom Charter, which called for a nonracial South Africa and social justice for the poor.

After a brutal massacre of unarmed civilians in 1960, the government declared a state of emergency and, as Mandela continued to call for mass demonstrations, sought to arrest him. For 18 months, Mandela escaped the police until eventually he was found in August, 1962.

**“On [Robben Island], we abound in hope. ...I know that my cause will triumph.” (1973)**

Mandela, along with eight other leaders, were convicted of sabotage and treason and sentenced to life in prison in June, 1964. The men were sent to Robben Island, off the shore from Cape Town. In prison, Mandela worked in a bamboo factory, made bricks, and dug in lime quarries.

In 1984, the South African government offered to release him if he agreed to live in the nominally-independent tribal area of Transkei. Mandela rejected the offer, stating that he would only accept an unconditional release. In the 1980’s, protests in South Africa increased and international pressure began to mount against the government. In 1990, President F. W. de Klerk, after legalizing the ANC and 60 other organizations, ordered that Mandela be released from prison. Mandela quickly assumed ANC leadership and, within 6 months, he ordered an end to ANC-inspired violence. Mandela traveled around the world and spoke about the hope of a new South Africa not based on racial divisions. In 1991, all but one of the political parties of the country gathered to develop a framework for a democratic South Africa. On April 27, 1994, the first democratic elections were held and the ANC picked up 62.6% of the vote. Nelson Mandela became president of South Africa. At his inauguration, Mandela invited some of his former captors.

**“This is the time to heal the old wounds and build a new South Africa.” (1994)**

### Issues & Insights

1. Which character qualities and values does Mandela’s life demonstrate?
2. Many hailed the peaceful transition of power in South Africa as a miracle. Research what other factors prevented a violent revolution in the nation.
3. Learn about another country that has had to deal with severe racial divisions.

Mandela formed a national unity government composed of different political factions. The new government began to address a variety of issues, including creating a more equitable health and education system, providing quality housing for all South Africans and overall economic stability. In 1999, Mandela stepped down as president. In 1995, he received the Nobel Peace prize with F. W. de Klerk.