

### HOW HONEST ARE YOU?

**Age:** Teenager/Adult

**Level:** Intermediate (B1)

**Time:** 30 minutes

**Activity:** In this lesson, students will:

1. Have a discussion about honesty
2. Do a questionnaire about honesty

**Language focus:** vocabulary relating to honesty

**Materials:** one copy of the worksheet per student

#### PROCEDURE

1. Ask students how honest they think they are – very honest, quite honest or not very honest. Tell them to read the paragraph in Exercise 1 and discuss the question with their partner. While they are working together, move round the class and monitor the discussions, making a note of any emergent vocabulary.
2. Before the students start the quiz in Exercise 2, introduce some related vocabulary:
  - a practical joke*
  - a fake (n), fake (adj)*
  - to lie / to tell a lie*
  - lying (n)*
  - a liar*
  - a white lie*
  - to tell the truth*
3. Explain that some questions in the questionnaire require students to give answers based on their own experience. Others have answers which can be backed up by research. Some have correct and incorrect answers. Where students give answers based on their experience, they should tell the story about what happened.
4. Ask students to complete the questionnaire individually, then compare and discuss their answers in pairs or small groups.
5. Check through some questions with the whole class. Encourage students to relate personal stories, such as when they were the victim of a practical joke, when they lied about their age, etc.
6. Students read the answers at the bottom of the page to find out the answers to the factual questions.

### HOW HONEST ARE YOU?

#### Exercise 1: Discussion

*Honesty is the best policy.*

This famous phrase, said to have been coined by Benjamin Franklin more than 250 years ago, is one that is still used the world over today. We are told that it is better to tell the truth than to tell a lie. But is this always the case? Are there any situations when it is better to tell someone a white lie rather than tell them the truth?

#### Exercise 2: Quiz

- Have you ever been the victim of a practical joke?
  - Yes.
  - No.
  - I'd rather not talk about it.
- Are you a very gullible person?
  - Yes.
  - No.
  - What does gullible mean?
- Have you ever knowingly bought a fake? (a watch, pair of jeans, perfume ...)
  - Yes.
  - No.
  - I'm not sure.
- Have you ever been sold a fake without realizing it?
  - Yes.
  - No.
  - I'm not sure.
- How can you tell if a Rolex watch is fake or not?
  - By its weight.
  - By the way the second hand moves.
  - By the holographic number on the back.
- If you found a wallet containing some money, family photographs and a phone number, what would you do?
  - Keep it – finders keepers, losers weepers!
  - Phone the number and try to return it.
  - Leave it where I found it.
- Which of the following do you think people do when they are lying?
  - Use shorter sentences and speak faster.
  - Avoid making eye contact.
  - Move uncomfortably.
- How often do you lie?
  - Often.
  - Sometimes.
  - Never.
- Did you answer the last question truthfully?
  - Yes.
  - No.
  - Mind your own business.
- How many of the people in your English class do you think chose 'never' in question 8?
  - None.
  - A minority.
  - A majority.
- Have you ever lied about your age?
  - Yes.
  - No.
  - I can't remember.
- If your best friend asked you to lie for them by saying s/he had spent the weekend with you, what would you do?
  - Agree to do it.
  - Refuse and give your reasons.
  - Never talk to them again.

### HOW HONEST ARE YOU?

13. People say that the truth can hurt and that it is often better to lie. What do you think?
- a. One should always tell the truth even if it hurts.
  - b. Lying occasionally is acceptable.
  - c. Lying is the best way to keep people happy.
14. To be a good politician, you have to be a good liar. Do you agree or disagree with this statement?
- a. I agree.
  - b. I disagree.
  - c. I don't know.
15. What is the condition of pathological lying called?
- a. Mentirosalis.
  - b. Pseudologia phantastica.
  - c. Münchhausenitis.

Answers (if you're reading this before doing the exercise then you aren't very honest!)

3. Counterfeits have been around since 7000 BC when the first trademarks appeared. Fifty per cent of people who buy counterfeit luxury goods think they are genuine.

5. On fakes the second hand of a Rolex usually jumps from second to second, whereas the genuine hand moves smoothly.

6. In a test in Britain, wallets were dropped in stations, car parks and supermarkets. Of the 80 wallets, 65 per cent were returned. Many of the wallets were returned by people in need of money, while some of the people who kept the money were apparently prosperous.

7. Liars make more eye contact and make fewer movements.

15. b - Pseudologia phantastica.