

Be Honest and Tell the Truth

Includes Activity
Guide for Adults!



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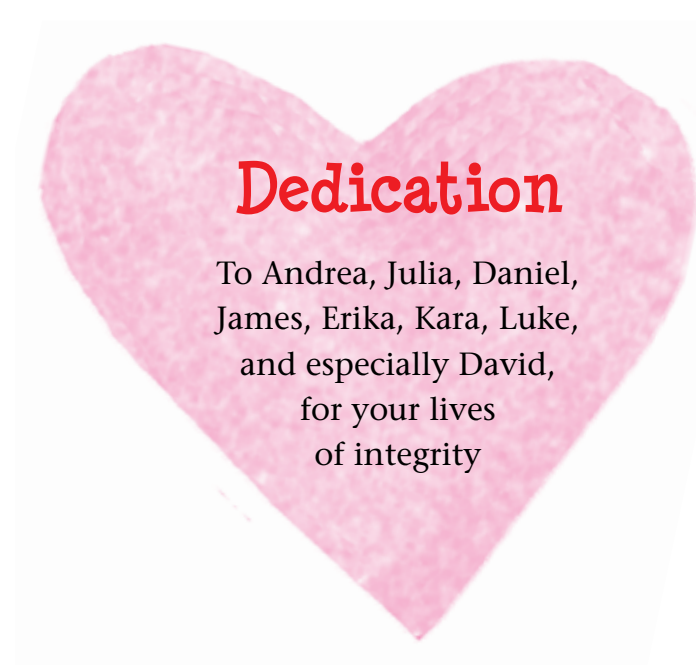
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Free Spirit Publishing Inc.
6325 Sandburg Road, Suite 100
Minneapolis, MN 55427-3674
(612) 338-2068
help4kids@freespirit.com
www.freespirit.com



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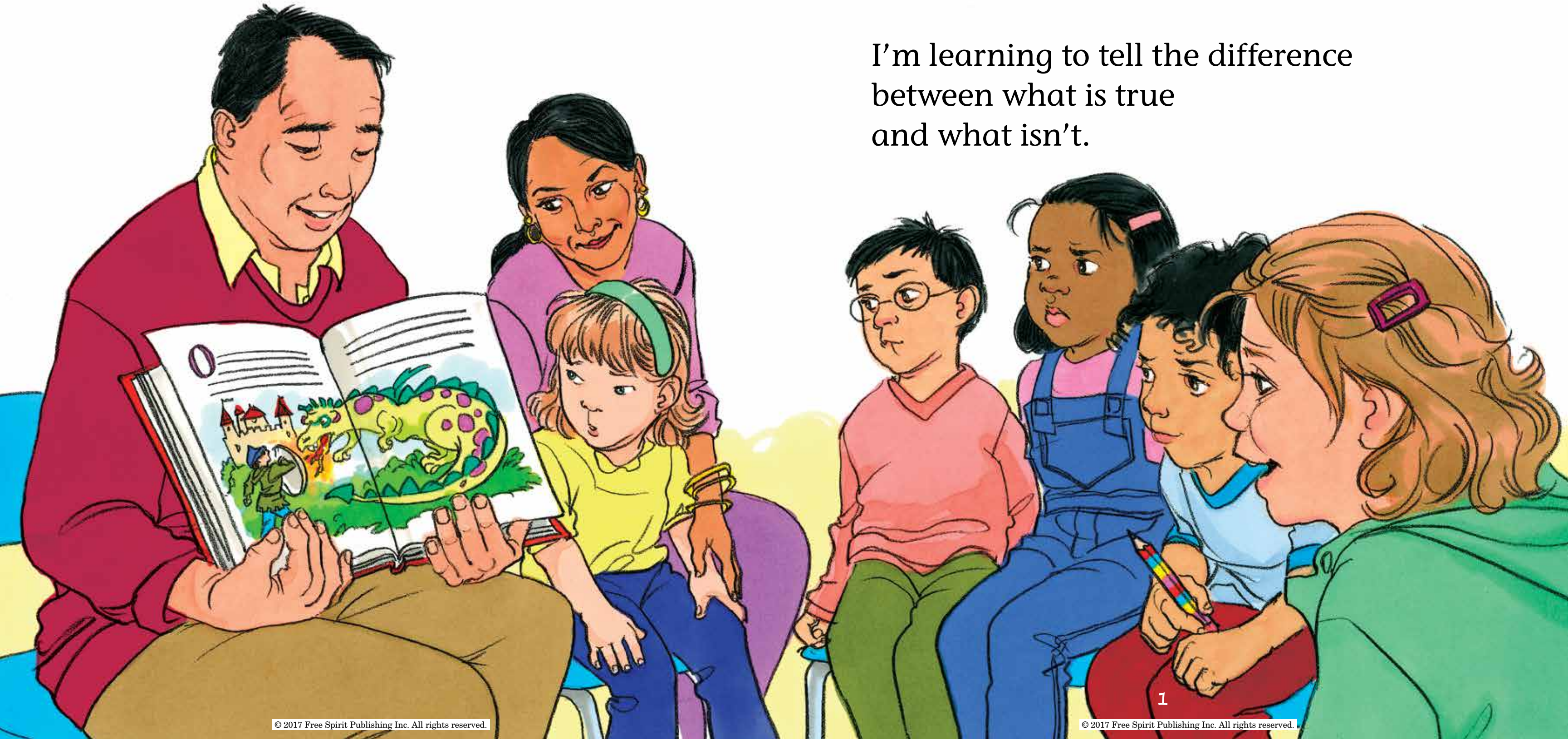
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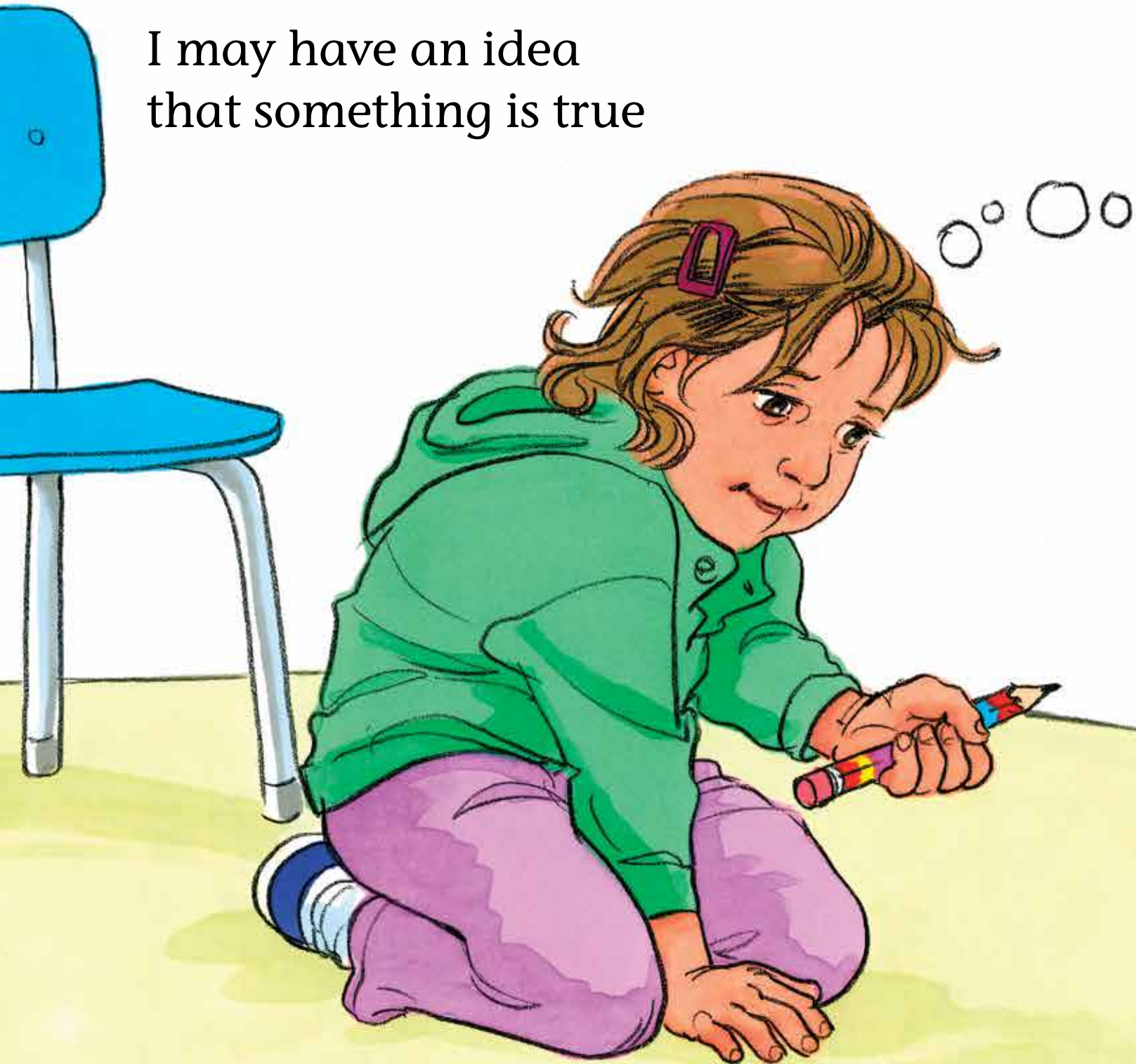
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I'm learning to tell the difference
between what is true
and what isn't.



I may have an idea
that something is true



or that it's the right thing to do.



Ways to Reinforce the Ideas in *Be Honest and Tell the Truth*

Be Honest and Tell the Truth teaches children about telling the truth and acting honestly even when tempted to be deceptive in order to avoid consequences. Honesty requires respect for oneself and others, personal responsibility, and fairness to others. As they practice living honestly, children may develop character traits of courage, dependability, and unselfishness. Here are terms you may want to discuss:

courage: bravery; when you show courage, you do something you believe is right, even if it is hard or you feel afraid

depend: to trust or count on; if people can depend on you, they trust that you'll do what you say

honest: truthful and fair

promise: to say that you will do something and really mean it; when you keep a promise, you do what you said you would do

respect: true politeness toward others; when you show respect to people, you show that you think they are important

As you read each page spread, ask children:

- What's happening in this picture?

Here are additional questions you might discuss:

Pages 1–5

- *(point to page 1)* Do you think the story the teacher is reading is about something that's *real* or *not real*? Could it really happen? How do you know?
- Think of a time you told someone the truth or did the right thing. What happened? How did you feel?
- How do you feel when people are honest with you? How do you think other people feel when you are honest?

Pages 6–15

- Why is it important to tell the truth? What can happen when people lie? *(They may start telling more and more lies; other people might stop believing or trusting them.)*
- Can you think of a time when it would be better *not* to say everything you think or know? *(when it might embarrass the other person; when it is something private that someone else doesn't want to share)*
- Do you think you should keep a secret that someone tells you? Why or why not? *(You may want to address when it is and is not safe to keep a secret.)*

- When is a time that you should tell an adult you trust about a problem even if the person says not to tell? *(If you feel uncomfortable, if something isn't safe, if you think someone may get hurt; it may be helpful to discuss the difference between tattling to get someone in trouble or to get attention and telling an adult so no one is hurt and everyone stays safe.)*

Pages 16–25

- How is it honest to do your own work?
- Think of a time you did something you said you would. How did you feel? How did the other person feel?
- Why is it important to be honest even when no one else knows? What person always knows when you are honest?
- Have you ever made a mistake and told the truth about it? How did that feel?
- What is a way that you can respect other people's things?

Pages 26–31

- *(Point to page 26.)* What do you think the girl plans to do with the money? What would *you* do?
- Think of a person you know who is honest. How do you feel around that person? How would you like people to feel when they are around *you*?

Fostering Honest Behavior

Your response to children's behavior can influence and shape it. Here are some tips that may be helpful:

- **Teach the expected behavior.** It is typical for young children to confuse reality and fantasy; their exaggerations may reflect their true perception of a situation. Gaining a sense of what is true or morally right takes time and experience. Teach appropriate behavior on a regular basis, and ask questions to see if the child understands the expected behavior.
- **Set consequences.** At a quiet time, discuss the consequences that will happen as a result of lying or cheating, such as the temporary loss of a privilege.
- **Speak calmly.** When there are breaches of honesty, talk about the problem calmly. Let the child know that you are aware of the true situation. Don't question, accuse, or moralize at that moment about the importance of honesty. These responses lead to defensiveness, strain the relationship, and make it more difficult for the child to be honest with you. Be matter-of-fact in following through with consequences.
- **Give meaningful praise.** Model appropriate behavior, and notice and acknowledge the examples of honesty that you observe in the child. If a child admits a mistake, praise the child for telling the truth about what happened. You can also praise other children who behave appropriately so that the child can observe and anticipate this kind of positive reinforcement. Positive attention helps children learn to trust you and the safe environment you create and allows room for children to grow and become trustworthy.