

Keeping Promises

Character Skills

- Trustworthiness
- Responsibility

SEL Skills

- Responsible decision-making
- Social awareness

Academic Skills

- Critical and Creative Thinking
- Self-Direction and Engagement

Instructions

Use these stories and questions to have a discussion with your students on the meaning of promise keeping, why it is important, and what to watch for when making promises.

Discussion

Everybody knows that promises are not meant to be broken. The person making the promise is trusted to keep their word. But the person making the promise must make sure it's not a promise to do anything wrong.

- What does it mean to keep a promise?
- How important are promises to you?

Let's look at some real-life examples of promise keeping.

Forgetting a promise: Your mom asked you to promise to pick up your room before she took you to soccer practice. But you forgot and your mom is now asking you, "Didn't you promise to clean up your room for me?" What would you say to your mom? Why would you answer this way?

Failing to keep a promise: Sometimes failing to keep a promise is a very selfish act. Here is an example: A young woman goes to the library and checks out popular books. As the librarian stamps each one, he reminds the girl to return these books in two weeks because many people like them so it's important to have them back on time. The girl says, "Sure, I promise to have them back here by then." Three weeks pass. Late book notices are sent to the girl, and overdue fines pile up. In the meantime, others are waiting for the library books to become available. Do you feel bad for the people who want to check out the books? What does her behavior show?

Deciding to keep a promise: What would you do if a friend said he wanted to tell you a secret, but before he told you, you had to promise not to tell anyone? You swear not tell. Then he shares his secret: he stole some money from someone. What would you do? Why would you answer this way? Has this ever happened to you? The last example shows how important it is to find out as much as possible before you make a promise. Make sure you can keep your promises before you make them.

Definitions

Trustworthiness

- Be honest; don't deceive, cheat, or steal
- Have integrity; do what you say you'll do
- Keep your promises
- Be loyal; stand by your values

Responsibility

- Do what you are supposed to do; try your best
- Persevere; keep on trying
- Be self-disciplined
- Think before you act; consider the consequences
- Be accountable for your words, actions, and attitudes

Responsible Decision-Making

Make decisions based on rationality, ethics, and effectiveness

Social Awareness

Assess the feelings of others and be sensitive to the feelings and needs of others

Critical and Creative Thinking

Acquire, remember, understand, and apply knowledge

Self-Direction and Engagement

Fully engaged in the educational process and connected to the school community

These materials are presented by:



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