

An activity to prompt a *Laws of Life* essay after reading *The Great Gatsby*

Main Objective: Students will seek to understand the characters Daisy, Nick, and Jay Gatsby from *The Great Gatsby*¹ by analyzing how integrity is demonstrated in their lives. Students will also evaluate how integrity (as a positive *law of life*) could impact their own life².

Recommended Time	Supplies/ Activity Directions
10 Mins →	<p>Supplies: Board space, overhead or flip chart</p> <p>(Opening) Do Now:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Write out the following question to prompt student response and discussion. “What does the word <i>integrity</i> mean to you? Please think of an example of how someone can demonstrate integrity.” 2) As defined by Merriam-Webster, integrity is “the firm adherence to a code of moral or artistic values (incorruptible) along with the quality or state of being complete or undivided while also defined by the synonym of honesty”³. 3) On the board, record the student responses from the class to create working definition integrity and actions that illustrate someone acting with integrity.

Suggested Teacher Script:

- 1) *Today, I'd like you to help define the word integrity. What does the word integrity mean to you? Using a clean sheet of paper, write out your definition of integrity and examples of where integrity applies in everyday life. Let me give you five minutes and then we will discuss this as a class.*
- 2) *Thank you for participating; let's hear what you have written down. Who can give me one definition of integrity and an example of it? (Take responses and summarize main points).*
- 3) *Let's compare your ideas to a formal definition-- *SEE WEBSTER'S DEFINITION ABOVE* How does your interpretation and description compare to this definition? [encourage student response] Today we will be taking this definition and apply it to the three main characters in *The Great Gatsby*. In small groups you will examine the choices and actions of Daisy, Nick and Jay Gatsby to see if they possess qualities that exhibit integrity (positive or negative) and how their choices and actions affect their lives.*

Recommended Time	Supplies/ Activity Directions
10 Mins →	<p>Supplies: The Charting Integrity Worksheet for each student</p> <p>Analyzing Character Maps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Have students create groups of two or three and follow the directions listed on the Charting Integrity Worksheet. Students should identify the main qualities of the three characters and discuss whether or not the characters exhibit integrity.
10 Mins →	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2) Once students are finished they can discuss their observations with the whole class

¹ Fitzgerald, F. S. (1925). *The Great Gatsby*. Sioux Falls, SD, NuVision Publication.

² Developed by Shannon Romagnolo and Rachel Mahler

³ From <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/integrity>, accessed on August 8, 2010.

Suggested Teacher Script:

- 1) *Working in groups of two or three, complete the Charting Integrity Worksheet provided. Please find specific examples from the book to support how integrity (positive or negative) was demonstrated by each character.*
- 2) *Now that you have completed your group's Charting Integrity Worksheet, let's discuss your observations as a class.*

Recommended Time	Supplies/ Activity Directions
Homework 5 Mins →	Supplies: You and the Character writing prompt Homework: Students will refer to their Charting Integrity Worksheet and answer the following questions as a foundation for an essay assignment. In their essays students should answer : <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Which character in the story best demonstrates integrity? (positive or negative)2) How does this character demonstrate integrity?3) How would this example of integrity help or harm the student in achieving their own life goals?

Suggested Teacher Script:

For tonight's homework I would like you to outline and draft a 750 word essay regarding one of the three characters you examined today. You will answer the questions listed on the directions sheet and identify which character best demonstrates our definition of integrity (positive or negative. Please describe specific examples from the book. Also, how would this example of integrity help or harm you to achieve your life goals? This will serve as a rough draft for your final essay.

Connection to Final Laws of Life Essay:

Today's activity and homework assignment serve as a catalyst to outline and draft a *Laws of Life* essay with a focus on integrity. The following rubric is a guide for students to participate in a peer review seminar during the writing process as well as a guide for your own grading. We encourage the writing process take place immediately following the Charting Integrity activity to help students attain a full understanding of integrity (positive and negative) in The Great Gatsby and how integrity may apply in their own lives.

CHARTING INTEGRITY

Directions: After reading through to chapter 9 in *The Great Gatsby*, gather in groups of two or three to do the following:

- Identify one example where each character demonstrates their integrity (positive or negative).
- Cite specific examples and page numbers.
- With group members discuss the ethical/moral principles of each character and identify if they are positive or negative aspects of their lives.
- Discuss how a specific character's integrity (positive or negative) would help or harm you to achieve your own life goals.

Daisy

Nick

Jay Gatsby

INTEGRITY AND THE GREAT GATSBY

Name:

Date:

Directions: In the space provided outline and draft a 750 word essay answering the following questions: 1) Which character (Daisy, Nick or Jay Gatsby) do you think most clearly illustrates integrity (positively or negatively) and why? 2) How would this example of integrity help or harm you to achieve your own life goals? Please refer to the Charting Integrity Worksheet completed in class.

Integrity Essay Grading Rubric

Directions: Please use the rubric below to grade the Integrity Essay. When grading the essay use the comments row to note specific editing suggestions and indicate whether the student has A, B, C, or D quality for each component of the rubric.

POSSIBLE GRADE:	A	B	C	D	Comments
INTRODUCTION Background/History Thesis Statement	Well-developed introduction engages the reader and creates interest, contains detailed background information, Thesis clearly states a support or rebuke of integrity demonstrated by selected character(s)	Introduction creates interest, Thesis clearly states a position.	Introduction adequately explains the background, but may lack detail, Thesis states a position but is awkwardly written	Background details are a random collection of information, unclear, or not related to the topic. Thesis is vague or unclear	
MAIN POINTS Body Paragraphs	Three or more well developed main points directly related to the thesis, supporting examples are concrete and detailed, the narrative is developed with a consistent and effective point-of-view, illustrating the essay with detail	Three main points are related to the thesis, but may lack details, the narrative shows events from the author's point of view using some details	Three main points are present, but without much detail, the narrative describes the events, but may lack details and organization.	Less than three main points, and/or poor development of ideas, the narrative is undeveloped, with vaguely connected examples	
ORGANIZATION Structure Transitions	Logical progression of ideas with a clear structure that enhances the thesis, transitions are mature and graceful with connecting vocabulary.	Logical progression of ideas, transitions are present throughout essay.	Organization is evident, transitions are present, but often not well constructed.	No cohesive organization, transitions are unclear or not present	
STYLE Sentence flow, Variety Word Selection	Writing is smooth, skillful, and coherent, sentences are strong and expressive with varied structure, words are well chosen	Writing is clear and sentences have varied structure	Writing can be awkward and sentences may lack variety	Writing is confusing, hard to follow, contains fragments and/or run-on sentences and inappropriate word use	
MECHANICS Spelling and Punctuation,	Punctuation and spelling are correct with no errors	Punctuation and spelling are generally correct with few errors (1-2)	A few errors in punctuation and spelling (3-4)	Distracting errors in punctuation and spelling (5 +)	
CONCLUSION	Conclusion effectively wraps up essay and provides memorable synthesis	Conclusion effectively summarizes thesis	Conclusion is recognizable and attempts to tie up thesis points	Conclusion does not summarize main points of thesis	