What is Integrity?

Integrity can be defined in many ways; according to Webster, integrity is “the quality or state of being complete”. Oxford defines integrity as “the quality of being honest and having strong moral principles”. Integrity means something different to different people. I define integrity as being honest with oneself and displaying qualities such as bravery and leadership. Stories, novels, or even memories can exemplify and demonstrate the importance of integrity.

To begin, an example of a teacher of integrity is Pattie Mallette. She clearly displays qualities of integrity. Pattie teaches integrity time after time. She is an author, a motivational speaker, and the mother of a world sensational pop star, Justin Bieber. During her jobs, she not only displays integrity, but she also teaches it. In her autobiography, Nowhere But Up, she tells her story, where she stays true to her values. She also tells people how they need to stay true and how to do so in her novel. While she does from school to school telling about her novel, she advises the youth how to stay honest and how to lead a life full of integrity. Lastly, she is a mother and like good mothers, she teaches her son. She taught her son to be honest, brave, and courageous. Those qualities helped led him to the top of the charts when he was only 13. That’s when Pattie had to teach him more lessons about integrity. She taught him to set the truth straight at all times because even if media doesn’t believe him, he still knows he’s doing the right thing. Characteristics like these are the qualities that lead and keep him at the top. Therefore, Pattie Mallette not only displays traits of integrity, but also teaches it.

In addition, in Lord of the Flies, there are many examples of integrity; Ralph stays true to himself even when Jack deceives him. Jack branches off and creates a new tribe. His new tribe was the bad side. Even after most of the stranded children switch to Jacks tribe, Ralph does not. Ralph knows it is not good and, therefore, he does not switch tribes. He stays true to what he knows is right even while he has nothing. True integrity is staying honest when there is nothing left. That is exactly what Ralph displays. Piggy displays these same actions until he dies. He is actually the one that helps keep Ralph on track. Without Piggy to guide Ralph, Ralph might have ended up on Jacks side. In conclusion, although sometimes guidance is necessary, but true integrity is displaying it when there is nothing.

Although it is not nearly as present, short stories also display integrity. In The Story of an Hour, the main character is very honest about her feelings. Even though she is upset that her husband dies, she has some relief and happiness. It is difficult to show these emotions in this specific setting. She is honest with herself and accepts the fact that she is actually pleased by the fact that her husband dies. Being honest with oneself is the first step of integrity. The second step of integrity is displaying characteristics of a person with integrity. In Through the Tunnel, the main character does exactly this. He displays courage and bravery by risking his life by going through the tunnel. Most people who ate integral are also persistent. The main character in this short story is very persistent and determined to fulfill his goal. Finally, the first two steps of integrity are 1) being honest with oneself and 2) displaying characteristics of a person with integrity.

Although many people follow these steps, some do not and are still people of integrity. Some people may not display characteristics of integrity, but they still remain a person of integrity within. Some are afraid to display these qualities, however they know inside, the right thing to do. Also, even though some people are not honest with themselves, they can still be honest to others. They might tell him or herself that they didn’t gain any weight when, in reality they did. That does not mean that they are not a person of integrity, it just means that they are in denial, which is perfectly normal for any human being.

Integrity can be displayed in many different ways. As before shown, integrity is around us much more often than we think. Being honest with oneself is a major portion of integrity that only a select few are able to display. Portraying qualities such as bravery and leadership is a more common characteristic of integrity. However, there are many more ways to show integrity. Integrity has an endless amount of definitions depending on the person. What does integrity mean to you?