

Honesty and Deception

How many of the following words and phrases do you use to express the concepts of honesty and deception?

- Seeing is believing.
- the unvarnished truth
- true blue
- as honest as the day is long
- hoodwink
- pull the wool over one's eyes
- sleight of hand
- sell one a bill of goods

The number and variety of expressions for the concepts of truthfulness and trickery illustrate their importance in our lives. The words in this lesson will help you to add more specific terms for honesty and deception to your vocabulary. While you will probably never go to the extremes of Diogenes, the cynical Greek philosopher who wandered through Athens carrying a lantern in broad daylight in order to search for an honest person, these words will help you to distinguish between fact and falsehood.

WORD LIST

- belie
- clandestine
- collusion
- dissemble
- nefarious
- perfidious
- probity
- scrupulous
- spurious
- stratagem

DEFINITIONS

After you have studied the definitions and example for each vocabulary word, write the word on the line to the right.

1. **belie** (bī-lī') *trans. verb* a. To picture falsely; misrepresent; disguise. b. To show to be false; contradict. c. To disappoint or leave unfulfilled.

EXAMPLE The new teacher's strictness *belied* her usual easygoing nature.

2. **clandestine** (klān-dēs'tīn) *adjective* Concealed or kept secret, often for unlawful purposes. (From the Latin word *clandestinus*, meaning "secret")

RELATED WORD **clandestinely** *adverb*

EXAMPLE Before the practice of the "smoke-filled room" was abolished, presidential candidates were often chosen in *clandestine* meetings held by influential politicians.

3. **collusion** (kə-lōō'zhən) *noun* A secret agreement between two or more persons for a deceitful or fraudulent purpose; conspiracy. (From the Latin *com-*, meaning "together," and *ludere*, meaning "to play")

RELATED WORD **collude** *verb*

EXAMPLE Winters was found guilty of espionage and *collusion* with the enemy.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. **dissemble** (dī-sēm'bəl) *trans. verb* **a.** To disguise or conceal behind a false appearance: *dissemble one's fears with laughter.* **b.** To make a false show of; feign. *intrans. verb* To conceal one's real motives, nature, or feelings under a pretense. (From the Old French *des-*, indicating reversal, and *sembler*, meaning "to appear" or "to seem")

RELATED WORD **dissemblance** *noun*

EXAMPLE No longer able to *dissemble* her annoyance, Beth rebuked the waiter for his short temper and inattentive service.

5. **nefarious** (nə-fâr'ē-əs) *adjective* Extremely wicked or infamous; evil; villainous. (From the Latin *ne-*, meaning "not," and *fas*, meaning "something permitted or ordained by law")

RELATED WORDS **nefariously** *adverb*; **nefariousness** *noun*

EXAMPLE During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, *nefarious* pirates kidnapped travelers and sold them as slaves.

6. **perfidious** (pər-fid'ē-əs) *adjective* Disloyal; treacherous. (From the Latin *per-*, meaning "through," and *fides*, meaning "faith")

RELATED WORDS **perfidiously** *adverb*; **perfidy** *noun*

EXAMPLE In putting his ambitions before his devotion to Duncan, Macbeth proves to be a *perfidious* servant of his king.

7. **probity** (prō'bī-tē) *noun* Complete and confirmed integrity; uprightness. (From the Latin word *probus*, meaning "honest")

EXAMPLE In his pamphlet *J'Accuse*, Emile Zola defended the *probity* of Alfred Dreyfus.

8. **scrupulous** (skrōō'pyə-ləs) *adjective* **a.** Acting in strict regard for what is considered right or proper; having principles. **b.** Very conscientious and exacting: *scrupulous attention to detail.*

RELATED WORDS **scruple** *noun*; **scrupulously** *adverb*; **scrupulousness** *noun*

EXAMPLE When she learned that her brother had entered the photography contest, Mrs. Crowell's *scrupulous* sense of fairness prompted her to resign from the panel of judges.

9. **spurious** (spyōōr'ē-əs) *adjective* **a.** Lacking authenticity or validity; false. **b.** Constituting a forgery. (From the Latin word *spurius*, meaning "false")

RELATED WORDS **spuriously** *adverb*; **spuriousness** *noun*

EXAMPLE Fred did not realize that he had been swindled until he attempted to cash the *spurious* check.

10. **stratagem** (strāt'ə-jəm) *noun* **a.** A clever scheme or trick designed to attain a goal. **b.** A maneuver designed to deceive or surprise an enemy. (From the Greek words *stratos*, meaning "army," and *agein*, meaning "to lead")

EXAMPLE Harley devised a *stratagem* to ensure Ahmed's attendance at the surprise party.

4. _____
USAGE NOTE Do not confuse *dissemble* with *disassemble*, which means "to take apart."

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____