The Boy Who Cried Wolf

Subject matter: Social studies.
Subject matter objective: Study other Indian tribes to learn where they live and what they raise on their land.

Life skills to be practiced: Honesty – self-discipline.
Life skill objective: Relate the concept of trust building to honesty.

EXPERIENCE

Introduction
An important value of Indian people is honesty and truth. Have you ever told a lie? Have you ever told more than one lie to the same person? After someone tells more than one lie, other people don't trust him or her very much. Today we are going to hear a story about a boy who told too many lies.

Materials
- Copy of the story "The Boy Who Cried Wolf"
- Copies of the worksheet
- Scissors
- Four craft sticks, popsicle sticks, or straws per person
- Scotch tape
- Colors

Lesson
Read aloud the story "The Boy Who Cried Wolf."
Share
1. Why did the people of the village stop coming to help the boy? (He told several lies.)
2. What happens if someone lies too much? (You stop believing what they say.)
3. What is the best way to make sure people believe you all the time? (Tell the truth, be honest, follow the Lakota values.)
4. How is the Navajo tribe in this story different from yours?

Process
1. Have you ever played a trick by telling a lie? Did you think it was funny at first? What happened?
2. You may know someone who lies a lot. When a person like that tells you something, do you believe it? Why?

Activity
Using the worksheet with the four circles, have students color the circles and cut them out. Tape the circles to the craft sticks to make puppets. The students can practice telling the story to each other using the stick puppets.

Generalize
Have the students make up a new story about honesty in small groups. Have them present their stories to the class if there is time, or to each other in small groups.

Apply
Assign a written report on a different tribe – include their location, what they raise on their land, and possibly one or two customs they have.

More challenges
Use a line of dominoes to demonstrate how telling one lie can lead to more and more. As the lies grow, people usually get hurt and trust falls.
The Boy Who Cried Wolf

Once upon a time there lived a young Navajo Indian boy. He had a very important job in his tribe. His job was to guard the flock of sheep. The boy thought that this job was very boring. He decided that he would play a trick on the people of his village. The boy ran to the edge of the village and began to yell for help. The people of the village came running to see what had happened to the boy. He said a wolf was attacking his sheep. The people said they would help him. So they ran to the field where the sheep were grazing peacefully. The boy began to laugh. “I was only joking,” he said. The elders of his village told him that was not a funny joke. The people left the field shaking their heads in disgust.

The next day the boy thought he would play the trick on his people once more. So he ran to the edge of the village and began to yell for help. Once again the people ran to see what was wrong. The boy once again told them that a wolf was attacking the sheep. The people of the village ran to the field where they found the sheep peacefully grazing. The boy laughed so hard that he fell on the ground and began rolling back and forth. The elders of the village told him that this was definitely not a funny joke. “You will be sorry for playing a joke on us,” they said.

Later that week, a wolf crept into the field. “Yum, yum!” said the wolf as he licked his lips. “I will have a tasty dinner tonight.” The boy ran to the edge of the village and called for help. The people of the village came. “Oh, it is just you again,” the elders said. “A wolf is attacking the sheep!” cried the boy. “Yeah, you told us that before,” said the elders shaking their heads. “No, there really is a wolf this time,” pleaded the boy. The people of the village walked away from the boy shaking their heads.

The boy ran back to where his sheep had been grazing. The wolf had taken all of his sheep. The moral of this tale is that no one believes a liar even when he tells the truth.

Sources: Nish, S., Good Ideas to Help Young People Develop Good Character, Josephson Institute of Ethics, pp. 51-52.
Freeman, S., Plays That Show That Character Counts, (Grades K-1), Frank Schaffer Publications, pp. 10-12.