



# A Dishonest Story About an Honest Man

# 2

## ✓ Lesson Objectives

### Core Content Objectives

Students will:

- ✓ Name George Washington as someone admired for his honesty
- ✓ Identify the cherry tree story as a legend

### Language Arts Objectives

The following language arts objectives are addressed in this lesson. Objectives aligning with the Common Core State Standards are noted with the corresponding standard in parentheses. Refer to the Alignment Chart for additional standards addressed in all lessons in this domain.

Students will:

- ✓ Listen to, understand, and recognize a variety of texts, including legends such as “A Dishonest Story About an Honest Man” (RL.K.5)
- ✓ With prompting and support, describe an illustration of George Washington and use pictures accompanying “A Dishonest Story About an Honest Man” to check and support understanding of the read-aloud (RI.K.7)
- ✓ Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to retell the legend of George Washington and the cherry tree (W.K.3)
- ✓ With guidance and support from adults, explore a variety of digital tools to produce and publish a retelling of the legend of George Washington and the cherry tree (W.K.6)
- ✓ Demonstrate understanding of the verb *respect* by relating it to its opposite, *disrespect* (L.K.5b)
- ✓ Distinguish the legend of George Washington and the cherry tree as fantasy and not a true story

- ✓ Retell important facts and information from “A Dishonest Story About an Honest Man”

## Core Vocabulary

**confession, n.** A statement that admits something or says that a person did something wrong

*Example:* Tim felt better after his confession that he ate the last cupcake.

*Variation(s):* confessions

**honest, adj.** Truthful; trustworthy

*Example:* The honest girl told the true story of what happened.

*Variation(s):* none

**legend, n.** A very old story or set of stories that are not completely true

*Example:* The legend of Paul Bunyan tells us that he was a giant man who had a giant blue ox named Babe.

*Variation(s):* legends

**national, adj.** Having to do with or belonging to a nation


*Example:* Brianna was so proud when she learned all of the words to the National Anthem.

*Variation(s):* none

**respect, v.** To think well of someone because of something he or she did; to admire

*Example:* I respect police officers who risk their lives to save other people.

*Variation(s):* respects, respected, respecting

At a Glance	Exercise	Materials	Minutes
<b>Introducing the Read-Aloud</b>	<b>What Have We Already Learned?</b>		10
	<b>Brainstorming Links</b>		
	<b>Purpose for Listening</b>		
<b>Presenting the Read-Aloud</b>	<b>A Dishonest Story About an Honest Man</b>	U.S. map	10
<b>Discussing the Read-Aloud</b>	<b>Comprehension Questions</b>		10
	<b>Word Work: Respect</b>		5
 <b>Complete Remainder of the Lesson Later in the Day</b>			
<b>Extensions</b>	<b>Retelling a Legend</b>	Image Cards 6–9; drawing paper, drawing tools	15



# A Dishonest Story About an Honest Man

2<sub>A</sub>

## Introducing the Read-Aloud

10 minutes

### What Have We Already Learned?

Remind students that in the last read-aloud they heard about the capital city of Washington, D.C. Ask, “Who is that city named for?” (George Washington) Remind students that a president is the elected or chosen leader of a country. Explain that a president has a lot of responsibilities because s/he helps to lead the country.

Remind students that they also heard about different monuments in Washington, D.C., that were created to honor past presidents. Explain to them that there are other ways to remember and honor people. For example, you can tell stories about the great things they did. Tell students that today’s read-aloud tells about the actions of our first president, George Washington.

### Brainstorming Links

Tell students that our first president had special characteristics, or qualities, that most good presidents have. Ask students, “What does it take to be a good president? What kind of person do you need to be in order to lead a whole country?” Have students share their ideas. Tell students that one important characteristic of a good president is honesty, which they will hear about in today’s read-aloud.

### Purpose for Listening

Tell students to listen carefully to hear about George Washington’s honesty.



1 [Ask students to name the person they see in the picture.]

## A Dishonest Story About an Honest Man

← Show image 2A-1: Portrait of George Washington<sup>1</sup>

Almost everyone likes a good story. Some people especially like true stories that tell how real people did real things. Other people say, “I love made-up stories best. A person who tells this kind of story can decide to leave in only the most interesting parts and even make sure there will be a happy ending.”

However, there is a third kind of story that mixes together true and made-up stories. Today’s story is an example of this third type of story and is what we call a **legend**. It is called, “A Dishonest Story about an **Honest** Man.”<sup>2</sup> This story is about George Washington—a real person—who acts in the story in an honest way as he often acted in real life. The true part of the story is that George Washington was a real person, and he was very honest. The made-up part is that he cut down his father’s cherry tree.

2 *Honest* means truthful or trustworthy. *Dishonest* means not honest. This is going to be a story that’s not really true about a man who really was truthful.



3 This is young George Washington with his father, Augustine Washington.

← Show image 2A-2: George Washington and his father<sup>3</sup>

Augustine Washington loved his farm by the river. He loved the rolling, green meadows in which he raised horses and other animals. He loved the woods. He loved the rich soil that allowed him to grow plants for food on the farm or to sell in town. He loved the fruit trees on his farm that gave him beautiful flowers in spring, delicious fruit through the summer and autumn, and graceful shapes to look at in winter.

Augustine especially loved his cherry trees. When his son George was about five years old, Augustine said, “George, I will teach you which sorts of cherry trees grow best here and how to take care of them so that they will grow tall and strong and give delicious fruit.”<sup>4</sup>

4 Were Augustine’s cherry trees important to him? How can you tell?



← Show image 2A-3: Cherry tree cut down

So you can imagine how upset Augustine was to find one day that someone had chopped down one of his prize trees.

This particular day he was walking with his foreman, a man who worked for him and helped him run his farm. Augustine said, “This was no accident. Someone did it on purpose. Look how neat a job of cutting this was; no wild animal could have done that. Who would do such a thing?”

His foreman replied. “I just can’t imagine who would have the nerve to do it, sir, or the reason.”<sup>5</sup>

Caught up in their conversation, the two men did not notice little George Washington approaching from the house. The boy silently listened to the two grown-ups.<sup>6</sup> He looked at his father’s face and saw disappointment and anger.

5 Who do you think cut down the cherry tree?

6 Where is George hiding in the picture?



← **Show image 2A-4: George confessing**

George stepped forward, looking pale and worried. To the shock of his father and the foreman, George said quietly but firmly, “Father, I cannot tell a lie. I chopped down the tree with my little axe. I wanted to see if I could do it, but now I know it was a bad thing to do.”

Augustine Washington looked at his son. He could see from the expression on his face<sup>7</sup> how badly George felt. Meanwhile, the foreman, surprised by the boy’s **confession**, turned back to look at Augustine Washington.<sup>8</sup> He thought, “Mr. Washington sometimes has a very bad temper. Poor George! I hate to think what is about to happen to him.”

7 or the look on his face

8 George Washington’s confession was when he admitted that he was the one who cut down the tree.



← **Show image 2A-5: George forgiven**

But to his surprise, he heard the father tell his son, “It was a bad thing to do, George, and you should be punished for doing it. However, I so **respect** you<sup>9</sup> for coming forward and telling me the truth that, if you will promise not to do such a thing again, I shall not punish you.”

“I promise, Father,” said George, and he kept that promise.

So you see, even as a young boy, George Washington was honest and took responsibility for his actions.

9 or admire or think well of you

Wouldn't it be wonderful if all of us could be like that?

That is the famous legend of "George Washington and the Cherry Tree." It's important to remember that this story about George Washington and the cherry tree is a legend because it is partly true and partly made-up.<sup>10</sup>

- 10 What part of the story was true?  
What part of the story was made up?



◀ **Show image 2A-6: Portrait of Washington**

You might ask, "Was George Washington really an honest man?" Actually, he was! After he grew up and became president of the United States, one of the things for which he was most famous was his honesty.

What is even more interesting is the way in which people looked up to the real George Washington.<sup>11</sup> Washington was not perfect. He made mistakes, as everyone does at times. A few times he made decisions with which his friends disagreed. When that happened, they usually said, "We would have chosen differently, but we know he made this choice for a good reason and not just to help himself."

- 11 *Looked up to* is another way of saying respected. What does the word *respected* mean?



◀ **Show image 2A-7: George Washington and George III**

Even the king of Great Britain, King George III, admired Washington.<sup>12</sup> After King George lost control of the colonies to the people there, who now thought of themselves as Americans, he expected Washington to make himself king of the new nation. Instead, Washington decided to give up control of the army he led and go home to Mount Vernon, his farm in northern Virginia. When King George heard George Washington's plan, he said, "If he can do that, he is the greatest man in the world!"<sup>13</sup>

- 12 Washington fought against the king of Great Britain's armies for many years and won. That's how the colonies (started by the Pilgrims and others) became the United States, a country free from the rule of the king of Great Britain.

- 13 Do you think King George respected George Washington? Why or why not?

George Washington is often described as "first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen." There are many reasons for that: George Washington was the most important leader in winning the war that freed us from the control of Great Britain and the king.<sup>14</sup> Washington was one of the most important people involved in setting up the new government and starting the new country in the right direction. He was also the most admired

- 14 The American colonies no longer had to follow the king of Great Britain's laws. They now had the liberty, or freedom, to make their own laws.



and trusted person in that new country.

◀ **Show image 2A-8: George Washington's legacy**

15 *National* means having to do with a nation.

16 [Show the state of Washington on a U.S. map.]

Today, we still look up to George Washington. In fact, he is considered one of our greatest **national** heroes.<sup>15</sup> His face is on the front of the one-dollar bill and on the front of the quarter. All across America there are cities, towns, and streets named after him, from Washington, D.C., to the state of Washington.<sup>16</sup> More than two hundred years after he died, some people still ask, “What would Washington do?” when making important decisions. George Washington never chopped down that cherry tree, but he left us something that blossoms brightly in all seasons: the example of a brave and honest man.

## ***Discussing the Read-Aloud***

**15** minutes

### **Comprehension Questions**

**10** minutes

If students have difficulty responding to questions, reread pertinent passages of the read-aloud and/or refer to specific images. If students give one-word answers and/or fail to use read-aloud or domain vocabulary in their responses, acknowledge correct responses by expanding the students' responses, using richer and more complex language. Ask students to answer in complete sentences by having them restate the question in their responses.

1. *Literal* What kind of story is the story of George Washington and the cherry tree? (a legend)
2. *Literal* Is a legend a completely true story, a completely made-up story, or a mix of both? (a story that mixes together truth and made-up events)
3. *Inferential* Why is the story of George Washington and the cherry tree considered a legend? (It is true that he was an honest person, but it is not true that he chopped down a cherry tree.)
4. *Literal* In this legend, who cut down the cherry tree? (Augustine's son, George Washington)

5. *Inferential* In this legend, how do you think George Washington felt when he realized what he did was wrong? (He felt sorry; he was worried that he might be in trouble; he felt determined to tell the truth.)
6. *Evaluative* In this legend, why do you think George's father forgave him? (He knew George felt guilty already and was truly sorry for what he had done; he respected George's honesty when he confessed what had really happened.)

[Please continue to model the *Think Pair Share* process for students, as necessary, and scaffold students in their use of the process.]

I am going to ask a question. I will give you a minute to think about the question, and then I will ask you to turn to your neighbor and discuss the question. Finally, I will call on several of you to share what you discussed with your partner.

7. *Evaluative Think Pair Share:* In real life, why do you think George Washington did not make himself king? (He knew that he and others fought to free the people from a king, so making himself a king would be wrong.)
8. After hearing today's read-aloud and questions and answers, do you have any remaining questions? [If time permits, you may wish to allow for individual, group, or class research of the text and/or other resources to answer these questions.]

### **Word Work: Respect**

**5 minutes**

1. In the read-aloud you heard Augustine Washington say to his son, "However, I so *respect* you for coming forward and telling me the truth that, if you will promise not to do such a thing again, I shall not punish you."
2. Say the word *respect* with me.
3. To respect means to think well of someone because of something he or she did, or for who they are.
4. I respect my friend for being honest, especially when it isn't easy.
5. You probably do things every day that show you respect your friends, a member of your family, and your teacher. You can



show that you respect someone by doing something nice for them, or by listening to them when they are talking, or by treating them with kindness. What do you do that shows you respect your teacher? Try to use the word *respect* when you tell about it. [Ask two or three students. If necessary, guide and/or rephrase the students' responses: "I respect [insert your name here] by . . ."]

6. What's the word we've been talking about?

Use an *Antonyms* activity for follow-up. Directions: The opposite of *respect* is *disrespect*, meaning "to not think well of or admire someone or something." If what I say is an example of *respect*, say, "\_\_\_\_\_ respects . . ." If what I say is an example of *disrespect*, say, "\_\_\_\_\_ disrespects . . ." [You may wish to model this for students prior to the first sentence.]

1. Sally does not talk back to her parents. (Sally respects her parents.)
2. Chris trips people on the playground. (Chris disrespects people on the playground.)
3. Rania took the toy from her sister without asking. (Rania disrespects her sister.)
4. The student raised his hand so that he would not interrupt his teacher. (The student respects his teacher.)
5. Jonathan's mother felt proud of him when he admitted that he broke the vase. (Jonathan's mother respects him.)



**Complete Remainder of the Lesson Later in the Day**



# A Dishonest Story About an Honest Man

2<sub>B</sub>

## Extensions

15 minutes

### Retelling a Legend

Show students Image Cards 6 (Young George Washington), 7 (Cut-Down Cherry Tree), 8 (George Confessing), and 9 (Augustine Forgiving George) in random order.

Explain to students that these images tell part of the legend of George Washington and the cherry tree. Remind students that a legend is a story that is part truth and part fiction. Even though George Washington never actually cut down his father's cherry tree and then honestly admitted to it, he really lived and was known to be a very honest man.

Distribute crayons and pieces of paper folded in thirds to students. Ask students to retell the legend of George Washington and the cherry tree, using the four image cards as a guide. Explain to students that they should draw three pictures, one in each segment of their folded paper, with the beginning of the story in the first segment, the middle in the second segment, and the end in the final segment.

After students have drawn their three pictures, have each student share his or her legend with a partner or with the class.

✈ Above and Beyond: For those students who are able to do so, have them write a word or phrase that describes their pictures.

**Note:** For this activity, explore with students various digital tools to create and/or publish their retellings of the legend. Such tools include various student-publishing software and web-based publishing programs.