

Telling lies

Discussion

Work in pairs. Choose one of the subjects below to talk about for two minutes. During the discussion try to tell one lie to your partner. At the end of the discussion, tell your partner what you think he or she has lied about.

holidays schools work sport travel a hobby

Is it possible to go through life only telling the truth?

Reading

Read the article quickly. Decide whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F).

1. Lord Archer went to school at Wellington College.
2. At one time he lost a lot of money.
3. He was involved with a prostitute.

ARCHER GOES

Jeffrey Archer pulled out yesterday from the election to become mayor of London after admitting that he had persuaded a friend to lie for him in court in 1986. He could now face criminal charges.

This is, of course, not the first time that Archer has been economical with the truth. Early in his political career the rumour spread that he had attended the famous Berkshire school, Wellington College. In fact, he had studied at the far more ordinary Wellington School in Somerset. It was also widely believed that he had studied for an MA at Oxford University. In reality, he took part of a postgraduate diploma course – a course for which he was not qualified. Elected to Parliament in 1969, he was said to be the youngest MP ever. Not true.

There is no doubting his ability to make money. By 1974 he had already made a fortune in business,

but various investment mistakes over a number of years meant he lost it all and was left with huge debts. Resigning from Parliament, he started writing to pay back what he owed. His novels became best-sellers and have earned him as much as £50 million over the years.

He returned to politics in 1985, but was forced to resign a year later following stories that he had sent £2000 to a prostitute, Monica Coghlan. Some newspapers suggested in their reports that Archer had had sex with Ms Coghlan. He took legal action and won libel damages of £500,000.

Jeffrey Archer became Lord Archer in 1992 but questions over his financial dealings continue to this day and his ability to exaggerate simple facts seems not to have diminished. So, will he survive this latest scandal? Only time will tell, but Archer has a reputation for being able to bounce back.

Read the article again and answer these questions:

1. Why did Archer resign in 1974?
2. Why did he resign in 1986?
3. Why did he take some newspapers to court?
4. Why did he decide not to stand as Mayor of London?

Discussion

1. Should people who have been caught telling a lie be banned from holding public office?
2. Are there any public figures in your country who have continued in public life despite questions about their past? Who? What are they supposed to have done?

Discussion

Answer these questions on your own first. Then compare your answers with a partner.

Have you ever lied about any of the following?

1. Your qualifications in a job application
2. To your parents about something important
3. Your age
4. When a friend asked to borrow some money from you
5. When being interviewed by the police
6. When you were late for work or school
7. When giving someone your address or phone number
8. When you were going through customs
9. On an income tax form
10. Your salary

Language

Look at this sentence from the text:

This is, of course, not the first time that Archer has been economical with the truth.

Being economical with the truth is another way of saying **lying**. Below are some more ways of talking about lying and dishonesty. Put the missing words back into the expressions below:

answer	lie
teeth	pack
inch	leg

- a. He's lying through his
- b. I told him a little white
- c. I don't trust him an
- d. Just give me a straight
- e. He's pulling your
- f. He told us a whole of lies.

Now use the correct form of the verbs from the expressions in these sentences:

1. Jack told me he'd had dinner with Tony Blair.
> And you believed him? I think he was your leg.
2. I asked him three times if he'd borrowed my Walkman and he wouldn't me a straight answer.
3. I'm sure Jim stole my wallet. He says he never came in the room but I think he's through his teeth.
4. There's something a bit strange about the new boss.
> I know. I don't him an inch.
5. I've just found out that Kathy hasn't been very honest. She's me a whole pack of lies.
6. I'm basically a very honest person, but I suppose I a little white lie from time to time.

Tell the truth!

Work in pairs. Discuss what you would do in these situations:

1. It is a beautiful sunny day and some of your friends, who are on holiday, have decided to go for a picnic. They ask you to go. Do you:
 - a. call your boss and say you are ill?
 - b. call your boss and ask for the day off?
 - c. tell your friends you have to go to work?Or would you do something else?

2. When leaving a car park, you accidentally bump into the car parked next to yours and damage it slightly. Do you:
 - a. leave a note of apology on the windscreen with your name and address?
 - b. wait for the other driver to come back?
 - c. leave the car park as quickly as possible?Or would you do something else?

3. You are in the supermarket. You pick up a box of eggs to put in your basket and drop it accidentally, breaking some of the eggs. Do you:
 - a. put it back on the shelf?
 - b. buy it anyway?
 - c. give it to an assistant and say you found it like that?Or would you do something else?

4. You pay for something with a £10 note but you are given change for £20. Do you:
 - a. give back the extra £10?
 - b. keep the extra £10 for yourself?
 - c. keep the extra £10 but give it to charity?Or would you do something else?