

B is for Bear Assignment 7

- You will be amazed, parents, how much you child will accomplish by the end of the year with steady, diligent work! As the great English lexicographer Samuel Johnson said, “Great works are performed not by strength but by perseverance.”
- Complete Lesson 7 in your B is for Bear textbook, volume 1. The picture on the right is of Walter Raleigh, the subject of one of the reading selections. Parents might want to read the following and present the information, simplified, to their children.

Walter Raleigh (1552?–1618) was both a writer and statesman in English history. He worked in the court of Queen Elizabeth and was granted wine monopolies. In the queen’s good favor, he was later knighted—he is often referred to as *Sir*

Walter Raleigh. He is most famous to Americans for the failed colony that he set up in Roanoke, Virginia. The first English person born in America, Virginia Dare (b. 1587), was the daughter of two of the colonists there. Raleigh left Elizabeth’s court in 1589 for England where he met up with Edmund Spenser, author of one of the first major works in English literary history, *The Fairie Queene*. When James I ascended the throne Raleigh’s fortunes took a nosedive. He was accused of treason against James I and a plot to overthrow him by to set up Arabella Stuart. As a result, he was sentenced to execution, but given a reprieve. He was then sent to the Tower of London where he spent his days writing, including poetry and *The History of the World*. He was later executed by James I for having captured a Spanish town in South America after being warned not to embroil himself in Spanish affairs.

Another passage in this week’s reading is the famous story of George Washington’s refusal to tell a lie, though it might have seemed convenient or advantageous to do so. Before reading the story, the following questions may be asked:

1. When is it most difficult to tell the truth?

Children as well as adults might be most afraid not to tell the truth when they sense that someone will get angry as a result. Also, they might feel afraid to tell someone the truth when they are ashamed of what they have done. We like people to think good things about us, and as a result we exaggerate our good traits and downplay our faults. We also may fear that other people will not like us if they knew the truth about us.



2. Do children sometimes get punished for telling the truth?

Telling the truth often has consequences, and often the consequences are not what we like. Children should know that parents and teachers in some way should always try to reward children for telling the truth, but sometimes they do not; however, that neglect should not discourage children for being brave.

3. Is it easier to tell the truth or tell a lie?

We might think that telling a lie is easier, but in fact, it is always the hard and even dangerous way, especially when it is made a habit. When we are caught lying, the consequences are much more severe. Admitting truthfully to some wrong doing might have negative consequences, but when we are caught in a lie, we lose much more: we may lose our trust in friends and family, lose our relationships with people, and lose our reputation. One of the worst consequences of lying is that we lose our own sense of truth and falsehood. People who make lying a habit often do not even know that they are lying. That fact should frighten anyone from telling a lie.

4. What is the worst kind of lie?

There are many reasons why people lie, and some of them actually may be for good reasons—to protect our reputation, not to hurt someone’s feelings, to protect others from harm. The worst kinds of lies, though, are those that are told to deceive others for our own advantage. Examples follow.

- *a salesman telling untrue things to a customer about a used car in order to sell it.*
 - *a person running for office saying untrue things about another candidate because it will get him elected.*
 - *a gum company that puts ads out saying that sugar is good for your health. (It may be pointed out that in the previous century such ads were commonplace.)*
 - *drug companies hiding the bad effects of a new medicine in order to make a big profit. (Again, it may be pointed out that such reports are common occurrences.)*
- Complete Lesson 7 of your handwriting book.

- Memorize stanza 2 of John Keats’ “To Autumn.”
- Students should write out Dictation 7, found at the bottom of the online assignment page, in their dictation books. Parents should be writing misspelled words down on the dictation page and going over it. Students should bring their dictation textbooks every week to class for me to review.
- Since this year’s curriculum is titled “B is for Bear,” why don’t I recommend some books on bears this week. There are three:

Alice Dalgliesh. *The Bears on Hemlock Mountain*. 1952. Reprint. Aladdin, 1992. A young boy faces fears alone on a mountain.

Helen Oxenbury and Michael Rosen. *We’re Going on a Bear Hunt*. 1989. Reprint.

Oliver Dunrea. *Old Bear and His Cub*. Philomel, 2010. Simple text for new readers.