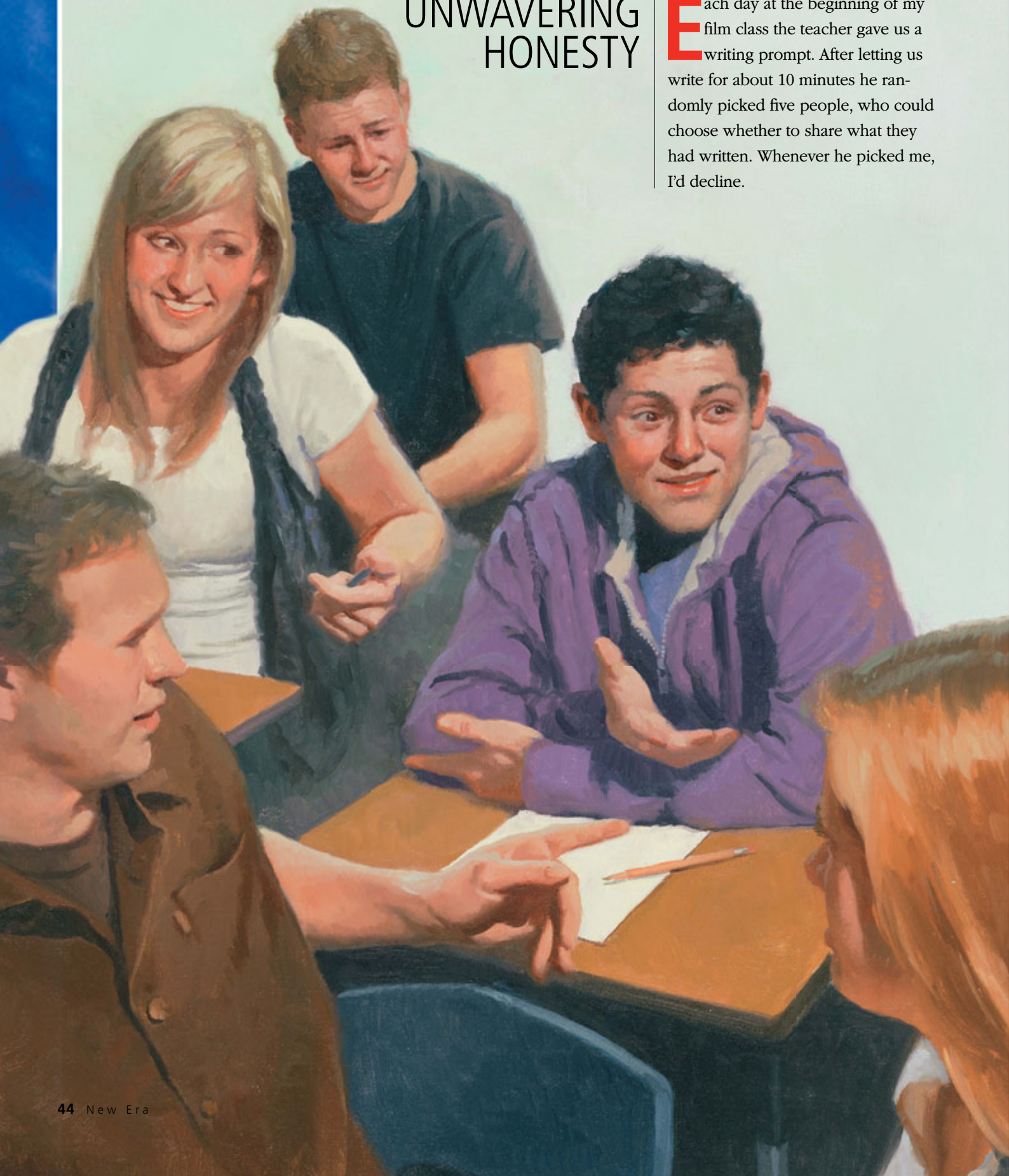


UNWAVERING HONESTY

Each day at the beginning of my film class the teacher gave us a writing prompt. After letting us write for about 10 minutes he randomly picked five people, who could choose whether to share what they had written. Whenever he picked me, I'd decline.



One day the prompt was “Are there certain kinds of stealing or borrowing without permission that are OK? What’s the difference? When was the last time you stole something?”

I wrote an answer to the prompt and didn’t think much of it. After a few minutes the teacher started calling on people to share. I noticed that the first four people each had a story of what they had stolen and how they stole it. Then he called my name. Even though I usually said no, I got a feeling to share what I wrote. I started talking about how I didn’t think there was any good kind of stealing. Then I answered the part about the last time you stole something: I’ve never stolen anything in my life. Right away my teacher didn’t believe me and everyone in the class thought I was lying. I insisted that I was telling the truth. After about five minutes of my being called a liar, the teacher said, “I’m going to call your mom and ask if you’ve ever been caught stealing.” I told him to go ahead and do it. Then he left the classroom to call my mom. While he was out of the room, most of the kids in the class kept saying I was lying, and I didn’t understand what the big deal was.

The teacher came back into the class and everyone asked him what my mom had said. He announced to the class that my mom had verified that I had never stolen anything. Some of the kids weren’t convinced, but most of them were just shocked. My teacher was impressed and actually said, “You’re a better human than I am.”

COMPETING FOR MODESTY

Being modest has its rewards! For one of my Personal Progress goals, I chose to make something for my 4-H project that would be modest and help me share my values with the community. I made a skirt, entered it into a 4-H fashion show, and modeled it. As I modeled, the judge looked to see if the outfit was age appropriate and how it fit; she also evaluated my demeanor. The judge commented on how she loved the skirt and how the shirt I chose complemented the modesty of the skirt. She praised me for the courage I had to choose an outfit that was age appropriate and modest. Other girls that I competed against had made outfits that

were more elaborate and revealing. It made me feel good to know that I had followed the teachings that I had learned in Young Women about virtue. I felt good about what I had done (and winning a ribbon made it all the better). Even if I hadn’t placed in the competition, I know that doing the right thing gives you rewards.

Megan J., Oregon, USA

I’m grateful to my mom for teaching me the importance of being honest. Until that day in film class I never thought that honesty was that rare. I’m glad that I took the opportunity to share with the class what I wrote and that my mom was there to back me up. With the help of my mother, I’ve become a trustworthy person.

Jordan P., California, USA

THOUGHTS ON REVELATION

This Sunday I was sitting in Young Women listening to a lesson on revelations and how to get them.

Earlier that week I had been praying and asking Heavenly Father for help in being a better person and daughter. I expected a big *wow* feeling, but I never got one. I got thoughts in my head, saying, “Is that what Jesus would do?” or “Do this for your mom,” and I thought that was me thinking.

But in church I realized God doesn’t always give you a loud answer. Sitting there listening, I felt the Spirit so much—the biggest, warmest feeling ever. I almost started crying. I now know that God doesn’t talk to you loudly or publicly. Sometimes it is just a quiet answer in your mind that you should follow.

Ashley D., Nevada, USA

Military life is extremely stressful and always changing. Families constantly move, change schools, and in some cases switch countries. I know how awkward it is to be in a new school and new house and how long it takes to become acquainted with a new area, just to move again a little while later. My whole life I have been a military kid. I've always moved, made new friends, and changed my daily habits. Nothing was ever the same for more than three years at a time. Keeping in touch with old friends was always in my heart, but not

THE CHURCH IS A CONSTANT

always on paper or by phone.

Some people wonder how I was able to handle all the stress from my dad's job, but the truth is, I wouldn't have been able to do it if it wasn't for the Church. No matter where I went, I always had the Church to turn to—it's been something I can depend on. Even if the ward members, Church buildings, and ways to get to Church meetings change, the sacrament prayers are always the same. Home teaching, missionary

work, and Sunday school and Young Women lessons are all the same. I can count on having fast Sundays the first week of the month, having Primary programs once a year, early-morning seminary every day, and Mutual in the middle of the week. All of these things have been different in each place I've lived in, but no matter what, I can go to church to learn and to worship Heavenly Father and Jesus.

Sometimes I wish I had the same house my whole life and that the members in my ward would have known me since I was in Primary, but then I think back on my life and the wonderful experiences I've had with my family. No matter where I go or where I end up in the world, the gospel will always be there, constant and unchanging.

Christine W., Virginia, USA

Instant Messages features personal experiences, insights into favorite hymns and scriptures, and other uplifting thoughts. If you have a personal experience that has strengthened your testimony and you'd like us to consider it for Instant Messages, please send it to us by going to newera.lds.org and clicking on Submit Your Material.

You can also e-mail it to newera@ldschurch.org or send it to:

New Era, Instant Messages

50 E. North Temple St., Rm. 2420

Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024, USA

Please limit submissions to 400 words or fewer. They may be edited for length and clarity.

