Believe You Me

A note: Because of the adult nature of the episode, this exercise is meant only to reflect on the themes contained therein without an expectation that any youth learners will listen to it – the exercise is not dependent on knowledge of the episode or its contents. In addition, this particular exercise is best used with those in grades 5 and up.

1.) Invite your students to reflect on a time when they may have told a lie or a partial truth. This could be to parents, to friends, to a teacher, etc.

2.) Ask participants to think about why they told this lie or left out important parts of their story. Were they worried that they would lose out on something? Did they feel like they were competing with others? Did they not want to reveal that they lacked knowledge? Ask them to write down some of these feelings and observations.

3.) Next, have them write down the details connected to the place and time during which they told this false or incomplete narrative. How old were they? Who was in the room? What occurred right before, and what took place right after?

4.) Now ask them to write down story they told – the lie or partial truth – in as much detail as possible.

5.) Next, have them combine these elements to tell the full story in a single, written narrative: begin with the surrounding details, move into their feelings, and then culminate in the telling of the lie/half-truth.

6.) Finally, invite all participants to write an ending to this story that expresses either:

   a.) What occurred as a result of their actions. This could be something that happened involving others, or it could simply be a telling of their feelings in the moments or days following the event.

   Or

   b.) What they could have done differently. Maybe they could have told the truth, said, “I don’t know,” or just asked a question.

7.) Ask your students to share any reflections on the story, including what they learned from processing this, and/or what they might do in a similar situation in the future.