**Truth/Lie Tasks**

The purpose of using Lyon/Saywitz *Materials for Interviewing Professionals* is to assist the child interviewer in “determining whether a child witness understands the difference between truth and lies, and appreciates the importance of telling the truth.” (Lyon/Saywitz, *Qualifying Children to Take the Oath: Materials for Interviewing Professionals*. Revised May 2000).

*For the purposes of use with the Washington State Child Interview Guide, these tasks will be conducted with children pre-school through age 7.*

The following is a synopsis of the above-mentioned article by Lyon and Saywitz, which includes the actual materials for use in the interview. For a copy of their article, go to [http://hal-law.usc.edu/users/tlyon](http://hal-law.usc.edu/users/tlyon).

Lyon and Saywitz developed tasks for the purpose of minimizing young children’s difficulties with defining and discussing truth and lies, and to ensure that young children will not falsely appear competent due to guessing.

The first task, *(truth vs. lie)* evaluates whether the child understands the words “truth” and “lie.” The second task *(morality)* determines whether a child understands the consequence of telling a lie.

- Give the child four different truth vs. lie task problems. If the child answers four of the four problems correctly, this demonstrates good understanding of the concept.
- Emphasize the words that appear in the capital letters in the script when reading the script to the children.
- Once the child gives an answer to an item question, say “okay” in a friendly manner that does not indicate whether they answered correctly.
- Always start with the boy/girl on the left side of the picture.
- Give the child four different morality task problems. If the child answers four of the four problems correctly, this demonstrates good understanding of the concept.
- Emphasize the words that appear in the capital letters in the script when reading the script to the children.
- Once the child gives an answer to an item question, say “okay” in a friendly manner that does not indicate whether they answered correctly.
- Always start with the boy/girl on the left side of the picture.

If the child shows good understanding on the first two items of each task, some of the language may be omitted for the last two items:

- For truth/lie task, “one will tell a lie and one will tell the truth,” may be omitted.
- For morality task, “well, one of these girls/boys is going to get in trouble for what she/he says,” may be omitted.
TRUTH VS. LIE

TASK 1

Here's a picture. Look at this animal--what kind of animal is this?

OK, that's a [child's label].

LISTEN to what these girls say about the [child's label]. One of them will tell a LIE and one will tell the TRUTH, and YOU'LL tell ME which girl tells the TRUTH.

(point to girl on the left) THIS girl looks at the [child's label] and says "IT'S a [child's label]."

(point to girl on the right) THIS girl looks at the [child's label] and says "IT'S a FISH."

Which girl told the TRUTH? (Correct answer is girl on the left).
TRUTH VS. LIE

TASK 2

Here's another picture. Look at this food--what kind of food is this?

OK, that's a [child's label].

LISTEN to what these girls say about the [child's label]. One of them will tell a LIE, and one will tell the TRUTH.

(point to girl on the left) THIS girl looks at the [child's label] and says "IT'S an [child's label]."

(point to girl on the right) THIS girl looks at the [child's label] and says "IT'S a BANANA.

Which girl told the TRUTH? (correct answer is girl on the left).
TRUTH V. LIE

TASK 3

Here's another picture. Look at this toy--what kind of toy is this?

OK, that's a [child's label].

LISTEN to what these boys say about the [child's label]. One of them will tell a LIE, and one will tell the TRUTH.

(point to boy on the left) THIS boy looks at the [child's label] and says "IT'S a BOOK.

(point to boy on the right) THIS boy looks at the [child's label] and says "IT'S a [child's label].

Which boy told the TRUTH? (correct answer is boy on the right)

Which boy told a LIE? (correct answer is boy on the left).
**TRUTH VS. LIE**

**TASK 4**

Here's another picture. Look at this food--what kind of food is this?

OK, that's a [child's label].

LISTEN to what these boys say about the [child's label]. One of them will tell a LIE and one will tell the TRUTH.

(point to boy on the left) THIS boy looks at the [child's label] and says "IT'S a [child's label]."

(point to boy on the right) THIS boy looks at the [child's label] and says "IT'S a CARROT."

Which boy told a LIE? (Correct answer is boy on the right).
MORALITY

TASK 1

Here's a School Principal. He wants to know what happened to these boys.

Well, ONE of these boys is GONNA GET IN TROUBLE for what he says, and YOU'LL tell ME which boy is GONNA GET IN TROUBLE.

LOOK [child's name],

(point to left boy) This boy tells the TRUTH.

(point to right boy) This boy tells a LIE.

Which boy is GONNA GET IN TROUBLE? (Correct answer is boy on the right).
MORALITY

TASK 2

Here's a School Nurse. She wants to know what happened to these boys.

Well, ONE of these boys is GONNA GET IN TROUBLE for what he says.

LOOK [child's name],

(point to left boy) This boy tells a LIE.

(point to right boy) This boy tells the TRUTH.

Which boy is GONNA GET IN TROUBLE? (Correct answer is boy on the left.)
MORALITY

TASK 3

Here's a Teacher who comes to visit these girls at home. He wants to know what happened to these girls.

Well, ONE of these girls is GONNA GET IN TROUBLE for what she says.

LOOK [child's name],

(point to left girl) This girl tells a LIE.

(point to right girl) This girl tells the TRUTH.

Which girl is GONNA GET IN TROUBLE? (Correct answer is girl on the left).
MORALITY

TASK 4

Here's a Grandma. She wants to know what happened to these girls.

Well, ONE of these girls is GONNA GET IN TROUBLE for what she says.

LOOK, [child's name],

(point to left girl) This girl tells the TRUTH.

(point to right girl) This girl tells a LIE.

Which girl is GONNA GET IN TROUBLE? (Correct answer is girl on the right).