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Ethics and Integrity: Choosing Integrity Over Temptation

As a Muslim girl navigating the challenges of high school, I faced an ethical dilemma that challenged my commitment to honesty and integrity. This experience taught me the importance of staying true to my values, even in the face of temptation.

During my sophomore year, I participated in a group project in English class that carried significant weight in our final grade which was 50% of our total grade. As the deadline approached, a group member suggested plagiarizing a portion of our work to ensure a higher grade. I was tempted by the easy way out because of the academic pressure, I knew deep down that it was ethically wrong. At that moment, I found myself at a crossroads, should I break my principles and go along with the dishonest plan for a better grade, or should I remain steadfast in my commitment to honesty, despite the outcome. I made the right choice to reject the suggestion by drawing courage from my faith and the ideals I was raised with. I made the decision to uphold my integrity and complete the project honestly.

This ethical stance came with challenges. Some group members were frustrated with my refusal to engage in their plan which led to tensions within the team due to differing opinions on the approach to the project. Through open discussions, we found common ground and collaborated effectively, despite the remaining tension. However, I stayed resolute, believing that honesty was the only path aligned with my principles. After submitting the project, I felt a sense of pride and relief. Although our grade



wasn't the highest we received a B, it truly reflected our effort and commitment to ethical behavior. More importantly, I preserved my personal integrity and demonstrated the values I hold.

This experience showed me that ethics is a choice we as individuals have to make in our daily lives, not just a theoretical idea. It is a reminder to me that our behavior reflects on us and how we interact with others. I developed a deeper knowledge of the value of integrity and how it affects personal development by choosing honesty over expediency. I now realize that ethics is not about blindly following rules but requires making difficult decisions and standing up for what is right, even when it is easier to compromise. The example I set through my commitment to honesty inspired some of my teammates to question their own actions and the shortcuts they had taken. They recognized the connection between personal fulfillment and self-respect. As I move forward, I'll continue to carry the lessons learned by striving to be a person of integrity and inspiring others to do the same.