

By Julia Ventura
(Based on a true story)

“Choose the right! There is peace in righteous doing”
(Hymns, no. 239).

South Africa, London, Reno, Argentina, Maine . . .
The names of countries, capitals, cities, and states swirled through Julie’s mind as she watched her geography teacher, Ms. Simmons, pass out tests at the front of the room.

Julie tapped her feet on the floor. It wasn’t that she didn’t like geography—she loved it! But she was nervous about labeling the map. What if she mixed up Spain and France again?

Tate turned around in his chair and handed back a stack of tests. Julie took one and handed the rest to her friend Allie

behind her. She drummed her pencil against her lower lip and stared at the paper. It had a big map of the world on it with lots of lines for her to fill in. Where should she even start?

She glanced up. That’s when she noticed that something strange was going on.

One of the boys was hiding a smile and pointing toward the front of the room. Other kids were noticing and starting to whisper.

Julie looked where the boy was pointing. Her heart started to pound.

A map of the world was still taped on the board! Ms. Simmons had forgotten to take it down, and all the answers were right there for everyone to see!

Julie noticed that something strange was going on.



Quickly Julie ducked her head. She didn’t want to look at the map. That would be cheating. But it was suddenly very hard to keep her eyes on her test.

Maybe I can do my best without looking, she thought. And then I’ll just double-check my answers at the end. But no, that would be cheating too.

The longer she sat there, the worse Julie felt. Even if she didn’t look at the map, she wouldn’t feel completely honest if she didn’t tell Ms. Simmons about it.

Holding her breath, Julie slowly raised her hand.

Ms. Simmons walked down the aisle to her desk.

Julie felt like the whole class was glaring at her. Her face turned bright red with embarrassment.

“Yes, Julie?” Ms. Simmons asked. “Do you need something?”

“Ms. Simmons, I think you accidentally left the map on the board,” Julie whispered.

“Oh, dear. Thank you for pointing that out, Julie.” She walked over and took it down.

Julie heard some grumbling around her, but she kept her head down and focused on her test. The tension in the room seemed to melt away. I probably wasn’t the only one who wanted to say something, she thought.

It was a lot easier to finish the test without feeling tempted to look at the board.

Julie was glad that she had kept her teacher’s trust. Most important, she knew that Heavenly Father would be happy with her choice to be completely honest. Heavenly Father, she prayed silently, thank Thee for giving me the courage to speak up. ♦

The author lives in Georgia, USA.

GEOGRAPHY

HONESTY

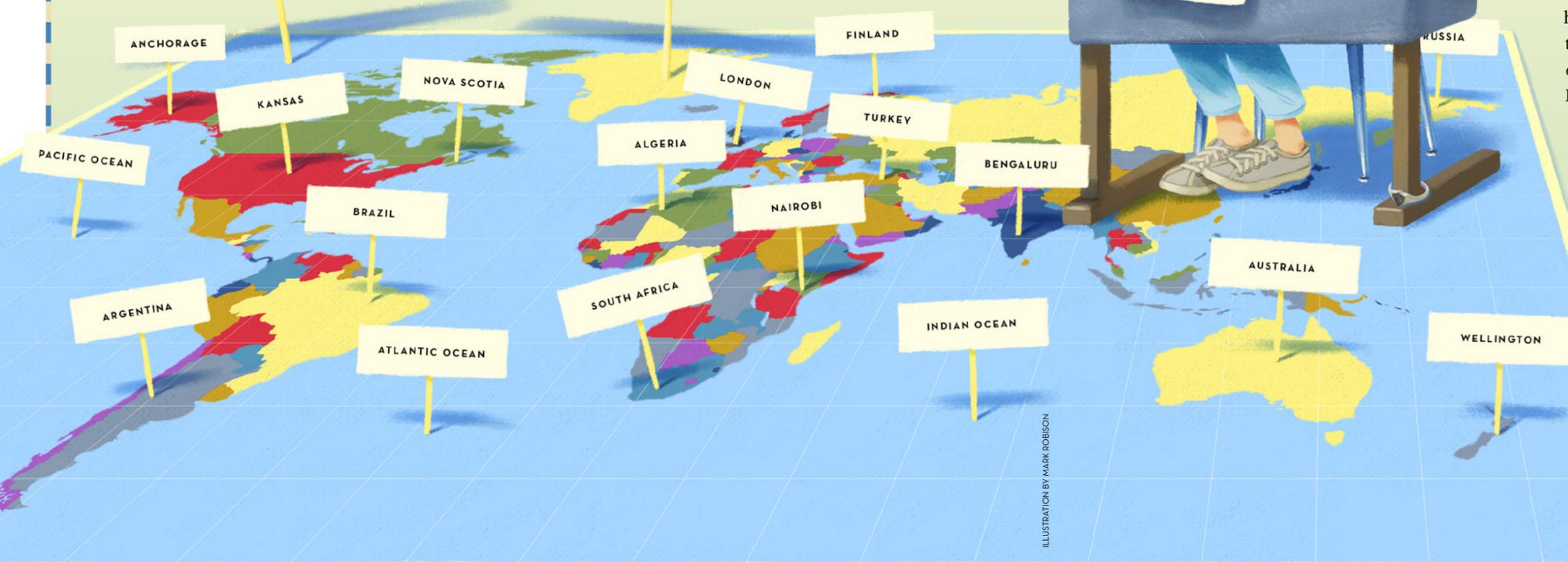


ILLUSTRATION BY MARK ROBISON

Once I noticed that my teacher had gotten my test score wrong. I knew I had to be honest. I walked up to her desk and told her. She looked at it and said, “Thank you for your honesty.” To my surprise, she told me to keep my score because I had been honest! The best reward was that I felt good inside for doing what was right.



Raquelle S., age 10, California, USA