



Right & wrong

L Lower

- Lesson 1: What is 'right' and what is 'wrong'?
- Lesson 2: Fairness and unfairness
- Lesson 3: Honesty – finding a purse


LU Lower/Upper

- Lesson 4: Moral dilemmas
- Lesson 5: What is the right thing to do?
- Lesson 6: Forgiveness – the story of the Prodigal Son
- Lesson 7: Fairness – sharing good fortune

U Upper

- Lesson 8: What do we mean by 'right' and 'wrong'?
- Lesson 9: Fairness – King Solomon and his judgement

Lesson 4: Moral dilemmas

LU  30-45 mins

Aim

To understand that we all face difficult moral dilemmas in which the right thing to do is not always immediately clear.

Learning outcomes

Children should be taught:

- to talk and write about their opinions, and explain their views, on issues that affect themselves and society;
- to face new challenges positively by ... making responsible choices ... ;
- to research, discuss and debate topical issues, problems and events;
- to realise the consequences of anti-social and aggressive behaviours, such as bullying and racism, on individuals and communities;
- to reflect on ... moral ... issues, using imagination to understand other people's experiences;
- to resolve differences by looking at alternatives, making decisions and explaining choices;
- that their actions affect themselves and others, to care about other people's feelings and to try to see things from their points of view.

Resources

- **Activity sheet R&W4a:** *Shoplifting.*
- **Activity sheet R&W4b:** *Moral dilemmas.*

Activity

Ask the children what they understand by a 'moral dilemma'. Explain that it is a situation in which there are several possible courses of action from which to choose. Often, there is no solution that is 100 percent 'right', but some actions seem to be more right (or fair) than others. Sometimes, all actions may seem to be right or all may seem to be wrong. Choices have to be made, and this is when we come to the problem of which course of action to take – the moral dilemma.

The children will appreciate the concept better if they look at possible real-life situations. Introduce the shoplifting scenario presented on **Activity sheet R&W4a:** *Shoplifting.*

Organise the children into groups of five or six and give each group a copy of the activity sheet. Ask them to discuss the scenario for 15–20 minutes. One member of the group should fill it in. Then ask one representative to present the group decision of the 'best' solution to the rest of the class.

At a plenary session, discuss these findings with the children. Guide the discussion and:

- note whether the groups come up with similar observations;
- suggest what the preferred solutions might be.

Further suggestions

Give the children **Activity sheet R&W4b:** *Moral dilemmas* as homework. Let them discuss their responses in a follow-up lesson.

Write a story or poem about a moral dilemma.

Differentiation

SEN: Support staff might need to read questions and help children to think through their answers. Prompt to encourage them to make a choice, then follow through by asking them what might happen if they made that particular choice. Explain that there sometimes isn't a clear 'right' answer. Encourage them to reflect whether their first choice was the best one in the circumstances and ask them to explain why. Value their opinions and praise them for using thinking skills.

More able: Pose further questions for these children to consider: 'Might there be special circumstances when it could be a 'good' thing to steal?' Ask them to justify their ideas.

Encourage them to make their own storyboards.

Right and wrong
Activity sheet R&W4a (1 of 2)


Key Stage 2
Part 2

Name: _____ Date: _____

Shoplifting

The problem
You know that your best friend is shoplifting. Just small items: a few sweets, make-up, pencils. You are worried that you might somehow get dragged into things. What should you do?

Possible outcomes
For each one, write down what the consequences might be. Think of things that might happen, such as losing your friend or the involvement of the police.



- Tell your Mum, or another friendly adult you trust.

- Tell an adult with some authority and responsibility, such as a police officer or a teacher.

- Join in – nobody has caught your friend yet.

- Take no notice; ignore what you have seen and say nothing.

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Right and wrong
Activity sheet R&W4a (2 of 2)

Key Stage 2
Part 2

- Tell the friend not to do it because it is wrong and it worries you.

- Tell the friend not to do it 'or else I won't be your friend'.

- Tell all of your friends what is going on.

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Right and wrong
Activity sheet R&W4b (1 of 2)

Key Stage 2
Part 2


Name: _____ Date: _____

Moral dilemmas

Some questions can be answered in a very straightforward and definite way. For instance, we can say exactly how many times England has won the World Cup in football.

Other questions are just a matter of opinion – people may have different ideas, but these may be equally valid.

Other questions deal with how we live; they are about our standards, about what we think is important. These are moral issues, questions of right and wrong. There isn't always an easy answer.



Some of the questions below are moral ones.

Put a tick (✓) against all of these. (Don't give the answers.)

1. What is 25% of 200? <input type="checkbox"/>	8. What is a keyboard? <input type="checkbox"/>
2. What is the capital of the Republic of Ireland? <input type="checkbox"/>	9. Should I use someone else's pencil sharpener without asking permission? <input type="checkbox"/>
3. Should we allow experiments to be carried out on animals? <input type="checkbox"/>	10. Is it wrong to kill a wasp? <input type="checkbox"/>
4. Is it right to hide someone's rubber in a lesson? <input type="checkbox"/>	11. Is it ever right to step on an ant? <input type="checkbox"/>
5. Should a poor mother ever steal food to feed her hungry family? <input type="checkbox"/>	12. How many players are there in a hockey team? <input type="checkbox"/>
6. Is Greece a country in Europe? <input type="checkbox"/>	13. What is the longest river in the world? <input type="checkbox"/>
7. Would it be fair to punish a child who has forgotten his games kit? <input type="checkbox"/>	14. Is it bad behaviour if you pick your nose? <input type="checkbox"/>
	15. Is all pop music wonderful? <input type="checkbox"/>
	16. Do people who have a good diet live longer? <input type="checkbox"/>

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Right and wrong
Activity sheet R&W4b (2 of 2)

Key Stage 2
Part 2

17. Should we all be vegetarians? <input type="checkbox"/>	21. Is it ever right to try and avoid paying your fare on a train? <input type="checkbox"/>
18. Should people who kill other people be locked away for life? <input type="checkbox"/>	22. How many times has Andy Murray won Wimbledon? <input type="checkbox"/>
19. Is it wrong to tell your best friend something you have been told in confidence? <input type="checkbox"/>	23. What could we do to make air travel safer? <input type="checkbox"/>
20. Should motorists ever break the speed limit in a built-up area? <input type="checkbox"/>	24. Are peaches nicer to eat than plums? <input type="checkbox"/>
	25. Are there ever times when children should tell a white lie to their parents? <input type="checkbox"/>

Now, choose one of the questions which you have marked as a moral one:
The moral dilemma I have chosen is:

Is it ever right? Yes No

Is it never right? Yes No

My reasons are:

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