

Chapter 13 Ethics Lesson Plans

Bastian, Sue et al. *Theory of Knowledge*. Edinburgh, UK: Pearson Educational, 2008. Pp. 237-256

- I. How do morals matter?
 - A. *Handout*: TOK Subject Guide, pp. 44-45
 1. *Handout*: Woolman Ethics, Website
 - B. Jean Jacques Rousseau
 1. *Exercise*: Social Contracts p. 238
 2. *Class Jig Saw Activity # 1*: The class will be divided into four groups—A, B, C and D—by counting off at your seats. Each group A, B, C and D will be assigned one of the three Discussion Questions below. Students in each group A, B, C and D will now count off 1, 2, 3 and 4 for the next stage of the activity. Each group A, B, C and D will discuss the meaning of the assigned quote [fifteen minutes]. Students should apply what they have learned so far in any of their classes, in this class, or in personal experience / research. Their explication of the quote should eventually find concrete examples to illustrate their point. Each student should make notes of the group’s conclusions. Then four new groups 1, 2, 3 and 4 will be formed. Their task will be to synthesize (if possible) the meaning of the three quotes [twenty minutes]
 - a. In what ways might a moral judgment differ from other judgments?
 - b. Are ethical differences between people the result of holding different sets of values?
 - c. Does morality necessarily involve action, or can it involve thoughts and attitudes alone?
 - d. In what ways might justifications for moral beliefs be influenced by assumptions about human nature—whether humans are by nature good, evil, or amoral?
- II. Can we ever agree on moral values?
 1. *Reading*: van de Lagemaat,” Jack and Jill,” Website
 2. *Exercise*: The Liar’s Paradox p. 239
 3. *Exercise*: Rank Ordering p. 240
 - B. Concept analysis
 1. *Reading*: Alchin *Just Rewards*
- III. Belonging to a moral community
 1. *Exercise*: Do you belong to a moral community p. 241
 2. *Web Based Exercise*: Moral Sense Test [<http://moral.wjh.harvard.edu/>]
 3. *Class Jig Saw Activity # 2*: The class will be divided into four groups—A, B, C and D—by counting off at your seats. Each group A, B, C and D will

be assigned one of the three Discussion Questions below. Students in each group A, B, C and D will now count off 1, 2, 3 and 4 for the next stage of the activity. Each group A, B, C and D will discuss the meaning of the assigned quote [fifteen minutes]. Students should apply what they have learned so far in any of their classes, in this class, or in personal experience / research. Their explication of the quote should eventually find concrete examples to illustrate their point. Each student should make notes of the group's conclusions. Then four new groups 1, 2, 3 and 4 will be formed. Their task will be to synthesize (if possible) the meaning of the three quotes [twenty minutes]

- a. Why and how does knowledge matter in ethical conflicts?
- b. What are the justifications for, and implications of, claiming that there are universal standards for morality, or that there are societal standards of morality, or that there are only individual standards of morality? Are the three positions mutually exclusive?
- c. If moral claims are in conflict, does it follow that there is no such justifiable concept as right or wrong?
- d. When confronted by an unjust situation, is a person obliged to act? If the unjust situation is in the context of friendship or family, does this make a difference? Should this make a difference? Are there ethical constraints on the actions that a person should take to "right a wrong"?

B. Subjectivity and relativity

1. *Exercise: Moral Relativism* p. 247
2. *Reading: Alchin Should Euthanasia Be Legal?* Website

IV. Reasons and emotions in moral judgements

1. *Reading: Daniel Goleman Developing emotional intelligence*, Website
2. *Reading: Monty, McKeever. "An Interview with Daniel Goleman."* Website
3. *Reading: Daniel Goleman: Are Women More Emotionally Intelligent Than Men?* Website
4. Arrange for class time in the media center in order to use the computer lab
5. *Web Based Exercise: www.philosophyexperiments.com Should you kill the fat man?*
 - a. *Web Based Exercise: www.philosophyexperiments.com Should you kill the back packer?*
6. *Class Jig Saw Activity # 3* The class will be divided into four groups—A, B, C and D—by counting off at your seats. Each group A, B, C and D will be assigned one of the three Discussion Questions below. Students in each group A, B, C and D will now count off 1, 2, 3 and 4 for the next stage of the activity. Each group A, B, C and D will discuss the meaning of the assigned quote [fifteen minutes]. Students should apply what they have learned so far in any of their classes, in this class, or in

personal experience / research. Their explication of the quote should eventually find concrete examples to illustrate their point. Each student should make notes of the group's conclusions. Then four new groups 1, 2, 3 and 4 will be formed. Their task will be to synthesize (if possible) the meaning of the three quotes [twenty minutes]

- a. What knowledge of morality may be gained by focusing attention on the **individual** making moral judgments? Is freedom of choice a necessary condition for making moral judgments? Should the person's intentions be the criterion for deciding whether an action is right or wrong? Are people always aware of their real intentions or motives?
- b. What knowledge of morality may be gained by focusing attention on the features of the **moral judgment** or **act** itself? Are some thoughts or actions intrinsically right or wrong, independent of circumstances? Is it possible to establish firm principles to determine moral action? If so, on what basis? On the basis of reason? Divine revelation? Is it possible to rank principles in order of importance? What are "human rights" and on what basis do they rest?
- c. What knowledge of morality may be gained by focusing attention on the **consequences** of the thoughts or actions? Which matters more, the consequences for individuals or the consequences for the group? Can consequences be quantified or weighed scientifically?
- d. What knowledge of morality may be gained by focusing attention on the social, cultural or historical **context** of the moral judgment? Is a shared moral code a necessity for a harmonious society? To what extent can acceptance of dissent be a feature of a shared moral code? To what extent do moral values differ, depending on the society or the historical time? For example, can a practice such as slavery be right in one era or region and wrong in another? Can the practices of one society be judged with any validity by applying the values of another generation or another culture? Do some values seem to be universal, or nearly so?

V. Judging moral behavior

1. *Exercise: Judging Moral Behavior* p. 247
2. *Reading: Alchin: Should the Death Penalty Be Brought Back?* Website

B. Two classical theories

1. Immanuel Kant—deontological
2. John Stuart Mill—utilitarian
3. *Exercise: Deontological or utilitarian*
 - a. *Reading: Alchin: Should Abortion be Legal?* Website
4. Arrange for class time in the media center in order to use the computer lab
 - a. *Web Based Exercise: www.philosophyexperiments.com* **Framing**

- the epidemic**
- b. *Web Based Exercise:* www.philosophyexperiments.com **Morality Play**
- c. *Web Based Exercise:* www.philosophyexperiments.com **The Envelop and the Vintage Sedan**
5. *Class Jig Saw Activity # 4:* The class will be divided into five groups– A, B, C, D and E –by counting off at your seats. Each group A, B, C, D and E will be assigned one of the three Discussion Questions below. Students in each group A, B, C, D and E will now count off 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 for the next stage of the activity. Each group A, B, C, D and E will discuss the meaning of the assigned quote [fifteen minutes]. Students should apply what they have learned so far in any of their classes, in this class, or in personal experience / research. Their explication of the quote should eventually find concrete examples to illustrate their point. Each student should make notes of the group’s conclusions. Then three new groups 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 will be formed. Their task will be to synthesize (if possible) the meaning of the three quotes [twenty minutes]
- a. How important are values (“principles”, “ideals”) in politics? Is politics primarily concerned with what **is** or what **ought to be**? Is it better for society if politicians are skilled in the workings of power, or if they have strong principles that govern their actions?
- b. Are the following ideas political, ethical, or both: justice, rights, social responsibility, equality and freedom? Is the concept of property an ethical idea? Is the concept of society an ethical idea?
- c. To what extent are political systems such as autocracy, democracy, theocracy, capitalism and communism, in their ideal forms, allied with ethical ideas of the right way for people to live in a society? To what extent might each system embody different concepts of justice and social responsibility?
- d. What is the influence of politics on other areas of knowledge, such as the natural and human sciences, history, and the arts? What, conversely, might be the influence of these other areas of knowledge on politics?
- e. When the moral codes of individual nations conflict, can criteria be developed for an international morality that transcends them? What are the justifications for, and functions of, such ethical and political documents as the Geneva Conventions for warfare or the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights?
6. One moral issue: lying
7. *Exercise:* Lying p. 251
8. *Exercise:* Rectification of names p. 252
9. *Exercise:* Lewis Thomas p. 253
10. *Class Jig Saw Activity # 5:* The class will be divided into five groups– A,

B, C, D and E –by counting off at your seats. Each group A, B, C, D and E will be assigned one of the three Discussion Questions below. Students in each group A, B, C, D and E will now count off 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 for the next stage of the activity. Each group A, B, C, D and E will discuss the meaning of the assigned quote [fifteen minutes]. Students should apply what they have learned so far in any of their classes, in this class, or in personal experience / research. Their explication of the quote should eventually find concrete examples to illustrate their point. Each student should make notes of the group’s conclusions. Then three new groups 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 will be formed. Their task will be to synthesize (if possible) the meaning of the three quotes [twenty minutes]

- a. Are there ethical obligations for humanity to treat the natural environment in a certain way? Are there constraints? If so, are the obligations and constraints based solely on a concern for the indirect effects on humanity, or are there other issues and principles involved?
- b. Should research be subject to ethical principles, or is the pursuit of knowledge through research intrinsically worthwhile and, of itself, value-free? Do some areas of knowledge (mathematics? natural science?) create knowledge that is more value-free than others (human science? history)?
- c. What ethical responsibilities do researchers have when they are working with human subjects? In what ways do these differ from the ethical responsibilities they have when working with animals?
- d. Are there some types of knowledge that should not be sought on ethical grounds?
- e. What moral responsibilities do we have with regard to knowledge that has been created or published by others (intellectual property)? What moral responsibilities do we have with regard to the Internet? What ethical issues are raised by highly skilled Internet users breaking into private and public computer systems?

11. *Reading:* Today’s World: A Different Voice p. 254-5

12. *Reading:* The Dalai Lama