

Activity	Let's Get Ethical
Grade	6-8
Learning Intention	Students will explore the role of ethics in decision-making.
SEL Competency	Responsible Decision-Making
Materials Needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Let's Get Ethical discussion questions, cut apart (2 per page)

Educator Note

Every decision has pros and cons, so how do you choose what is best? As we encourage middle school students to become tomorrow's leaders, it is important that we provide them with space and time to discuss their ethical responsibilities when making decisions.

Activity

Begin this activity by explaining that ethics is a philosophy or system of principles that is concerned with what is good for individuals and society. Then, write "Ethical Responsibility" on the board. Ask the class, "What does it mean to be an ethically responsible citizen of the world?" Allow time for students to share their thoughts aloud. Remind them that, as young adults in the world, some of their decisions may have ethical implications.

Divide students into groups of 3. Instruct them that they are going to spend a few minutes in their groups discussing what it means to make decisions in an ethical way. Provide each group with a copy of the Let's Get Ethical discussion questions.

If needed, provide an example of a moral dilemma to get students started, such as:

When the teacher is out of the room, you start horsing around instead of continuing your work. You knock over a stack of books accidentally. The teacher returns before you can pick up the mess. He asks the mess-maker to come forward and face a consequence or else the whole class will be punished with a quiz. Do you confess?

Allow 5-7 minutes for groups to have their discussions. As the groups work, circulate to support group discussions as needed.

When time is up, bring the class back together and ask each group to share aloud one highlight or main idea from their small group discussion.

Virtual Modifications

Pose this question to students in a video meeting or written assignment: “What does it mean to be an ethically responsible citizen of the world?”

- Give students a couple of days to consider this question, do research, and come to their own conclusion.
- Then host a virtual class meeting where you allow each students to share what conclusion they came to.
- As students share, keep track of their responses in a sharable document all students can access.

Let's Get Ethical

What is an example of an ethical dilemma?

How do ethics play or not play a role in your daily decision making?

Give an example of a decision you have made that required you to consider ethical implications.

Do you think ethics are important? Why or why not?

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