

Ethical Perspectives Review

Summary

Students practice their understanding of ethical perspectives by matching them with different hypothetical scenarios.

Student Handout: Ethical Perspectives Review

Teacher Instructions

Provide students with the Ethical Perspectives Review sheet and let them match each perspective with a scenario.

Discuss in small groups and then as a class.

Answers to Ethical Perspectives Review Sheet

The scenarios are matched with the following perspectives:

1. Care (The group pays attention to the vulnerable population, and acknowledges the importance of relationships)
2. Principles (The doctor exemplifies the principle of respect for persons, in providing the patient with the autonomy to make their own self-determining choices)
3. Outcomes (Ultimately, the action of the soldier will save the lives of many more people)
4. Moral Rules and Duties (Ted is honoring a duty to aid his co-worker)
5. Virtue (The missionary's character and purpose in life is aligned with his virtuous actions)

Ethical Perspectives Review

Identify the following decisions according to the ethical perspective being adhered to. Support your choice with the reasoning you used. The choices for ethical perspectives are: Principles, Outcomes, Moral Rules and Duties, Virtue Ethics, and Care.

CASE 1

A group of Peace Corps volunteers are sent to an East African country to help design homes for the people of a poor village. Once they arrive however, they discover the women and children are in greater need of a school and health care facility and that the homes would mainly benefit the high status males of the village. The volunteers decide to work with the women to design and build facilities for them.

Perspective:

Reasons:

CASE 2

A doctor attending to the care of a young woman recovering from breast cancer discovers the cancer has spread to her lymph nodes and appears terminal. There is a new treatment that has a very slight chance of helping and is very painful and expensive. The doctor tells the young woman about this treatment along with other options to let her make the final decision.

Perspective:

Reasons:

CASE 3

In Germany during 1942 a soldier finds himself in a crowd with his leader, Adolf Hitler. He views Hitler as ruthless and dangerous to his country. He knows that many people have already died because of his policies, and many more are likely to die in the future. He decides to kill Hitler.

Perspective:

Reasons:

CASE 4

Ted, an insurance agent, receives a phone call from a fellow agent who works in the same office, asking for a ride to work because his car has broken down. Ted had intended to use the drive to work to view some property he would like to buy but picking up his co-worker would not leave him time to do this. He decides not to refuse the co-worker's request. Ted believes that if he were in the same situation, he would want someone to give him a ride.

Perspective:

Reasons:

CASE 5

Thomas, a missionary doctor in El Salvador, was told by the government to abandon his work and return to the United States. Thomas doesn't even consider stopping his work with the poor people of the countryside, which he considers his purpose in life.

Perspective:

Reasons:

Ethical Perspectives and Familiar Examples

Summary

Students derive, construct, and explain the main ethical perspectives based on familiar examples (cheating, fairy tales).

Teacher Instructions

Cheating: Choose a familiar situation in which a straightforward ethical question is raised, such as the decision whether or not to cheat on homework. Elicit from students the reasons why one should not cheat. After all ideas have been recorded, ask students whether any reasons are similar and could be ‘grouped’ together. Usually, there are arguments that focus on each perspective:

Moral Rules: ‘It is a rule that cheating is unacceptable, it is my duty not to cheat no matter what the consequences.’

Virtues: ‘Good people don’t cheat’

Outcomes: ‘You might be punished if caught’ or ‘It might impact your ability to really learn the material’.

Principles: ‘Each person needs to make their own decision about whether or not to cheat’ (Autonomy), ‘It’s not fair to other kids’ (Justice), ‘It might hurt others’ (Beneficence/ Nonmaleficence).

Care: ‘Cheating might hurt my relationships with others, I might not be trusted again if caught’.

Point out to students the formal names of these general groupings.

Fairy Tales: Have students think about famous stories or fairy tales that emphasize one of the perspectives as their message. This could be done by eliciting stories from the students, or presenting them with a range of stories and asking them to select ones that typify the perspective. For, example:

Moral Rules: Little Red Riding Hood
(Little Red Riding Hood is compelled by duty to visit her grandmother)

Virtues: Pinocchio
(Geppetto tells Pinocchio to do the ‘right thing’)

Outcomes: Jack and the Beanstalk, Robin Hood
(The ends justify the means)

(From Access Excellence: Using Fairy Tales to Promote Retention of Ethical Systems: http://www.accessexcellence.org/AI/AEPC/WWX/1992/fairy_tales.html)

Ethical Theories and Perspectives Skits and Quiz

Summary

Students create short skits that highlight different ethical perspectives.

Student Handouts: Ethical Perspectives/Theories Skit Notes, Ethical Perspectives Grade Sheet, Ethical Perspectives Quiz

Teacher Instructions

Students have the opportunity to practice their understanding through the development and presentation of dramatic skits. After reviewing the different ethical perspectives, divide students into groups. Provide each group with the name of an ethical perspective/theory. Instruct them not to let other groups know which perspective they have.

Review the Ethical Perspectives Grading Sheet, or highlight the important elements:

- A clear dilemma must be presented, with multiple possible solutions that could be justified
- Important key words and phrases must be used.
- Everyone should speak clearly and not simply read their lines, and groups should practice.
- The solution must clearly relate to the ethical perspective being demonstrated.

Provide approximately 15 minutes for each group to develop a 2-minute skit which will highlight the main points of their perspective and which involves all group members.

One especially helpful technique is to have students provide voices that highlight what characters are thinking.

Students are not allowed to actually name the perspective in their skit.

Allow each group to perform. During the performance, students should note key words that provide clues on their Skit Notes sheet. After each performance, ask each audience group to spend a minute discussing the skit, summarizing the dilemma, and trying to come to consensus on the perspective portrayed. Be sure that each audience group can verbalize the reasons why they chose that perspective, and to record those reasons on their Skit Notes sheet.

Use the Ethical Perspectives Grade Sheet for evaluation.

The Ethical Perspectives Quiz can be used to test for understanding afterwards. Alternatively, it can be given before the skits are assigned.

Answers to Quiz

1. B 2. E 3. A 4. C 5. D

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Ethical Perspectives Skit Notes

Procedures: For each of the skits presented, you are responsible to take notes to familiarize yourself with each of the perspectives presented. The material from these skits will be referenced in future quizzes and tests. For each group:

- Provide a short summary of the dilemma.
- Indicate the key words or phrases used.
- Indicate the perspective or theory that you believe is being used. (Moral Rules and Duties, Virtue-based, Outcomes-based, Principles-based, Care-Based)
- Explain your reasoning for why you believe a specific theory is being demonstrated.

Group 1

Summary of dilemma:

Key words or phrases:

Perspective demonstrated :

Reasoning:

Group 2

Summary of dilemma:

Key words or phrases:

Perspective demonstrated :

Reasoning:

Group 3

Summary of dilemma:

Key words or phrases:

Perspective demonstrated :

Reasoning:

Group 4

Summary of dilemma:

Key words or phrases:

Perspective demonstrated :

Reasoning:

Group 5

Summary of dilemma:

Key words or phrases:

Perspective demonstrated :

Reasoning:

Group 6

Summary of dilemma:

Key words or phrases:

Perspective demonstrated :

Reasoning:

Group 7

Summary of dilemma:

Key words or phrases:

Perspective demonstrated :

Reasoning:

Group 8

Summary of dilemma:

Key words or phrases:

Perspective demonstrated :

Reasoning:

Ethical Perspectives Grade Sheet

Group Names: _____

Period: _____

Description of Skit: _____

Key words or phrases: _____

Skit involved the following:

_____ Dilemma (5 points)

- Clear dilemma is presented that has multiple solutions that could be justified (5 pts.)
- Dilemma is presented that has multiple solutions but most are not very justifiable (4 pts.)
- Dilemma is presented that only has one solution that would be considered ethical (3 pts.)
- No clear dilemma is presented (0 pts.)

_____ Key words or phrases (5 points)

- Key words and/or phrases are used that are easily distinguishable and are clearly related to the perspective demonstrated. (5 pts.)
- Key words and/or phrases are used but do not clearly relate to only the perspective demonstrated. (4 pts.)
- Only 1 or 2 unclear keywords and phrases are used that do not easily identify the perspective demonstrated. (3 pts.)
- No key words or phrases are used (0 pts.)

_____ Presentation (5 points)

- Everyone spoke clearly and are not just reading. Group has clearly practiced (5 pts.)
- Everyone spoke but some were not clear and some practice was needed (4 pts.)
- Not everyone spoke and it was clear that practice was needed (3 pts.)
- Very few people spoke and the skit was very unorganized and demonstrated little to no practice (0 pts.)

Names of individuals who clearly showed little preparation:

(An additional point will be deducted from these students)

_____ Solution (5 points)

- Solution focuses on the perspective assigned and encompasses the ideals of that perspective – almost all students figured it out (5 pts)
- Solution uses the perspective demonstrated but could be confused with another perspective – most students figured it out (4 pts.)
- Solution uses some of the ideals but also included others – only about half of the students figured it out (3 pts.)
- Solution did not clearly demonstrate the perspective – Most students could not figure it out. (0 pts.)

_____ **Total** (20pts)

Ethical Perspectives Quiz

Match each ethical perspective below with the appropriate phrase. After choosing a perspective, explain why you did so.

A. Moral Rules and Duties **B.** Outcomes **C.** Virtues **D.** Principles **E.** Care

_____ 1. The ends justify the means.
Explain why you made this choice:

_____ 2. The focus is on the importance of personal relationships and helping those who may not be able to speak for themselves and are vulnerable.
Explain why you made this choice:

_____ 3. Actions are important, as well as the obligation to act in a moral way.
Explain why you made this choice:

_____ 4. Ethical decisions depend on the character of a person.
Explain why you made this choice:

_____ 5. Considering respect, harms/benefits, and justice are important.
Explain why you made this choice: