

Introductory note for parents and carers

Welcome to Primary Ethics Bites! This **Bite** takes 10 - 15 minutes to complete, but you may find the ideas within are revisited in conversations around the dinner table for weeks to come.

Bites for the 3 – 6 age group are designed for students to tackle individually or with one or more siblings or peers. An adult may like to participate by helping to read the stories and questions, by modelling genuine curiosity and by supporting the student to think for themselves.

This **Bite** is available in both video and printed (PDF) format. The same content is covered in each, so choose the option that best suits your student's learning environment. There's no need to download the PDF to use as a worksheet if you have chosen to watch the video.

Aim to be neutral when listening to the ideas expressed by your student and ask them to give the reasons behind their opinion rather than try to do the thinking and reasoning for them. Encourage the student to talk through their ideas by using expressions like "Ok", "Hmmm, I wonder..." and "That's an interesting thought!".

There is often not a single right answer when it comes to exploring an ethical dilemma. In that way, ethics is different to other lessons like maths. Instead, what ethical inquiry helps us do is to look at a situation or idea from different points of view, and to think about the reasons for those points of view. When we do this, we think more deeply about our own views, discover new ideas, and build a deeper understanding of the considerations in each dilemma. We develop our skills in critical thinking and ethical reasoning and our ability to make sound and well thought out decisions in a range of circumstances.

Is it okay to keep animals in zoos?

Objectives/ethical concepts explored

- To engage students in the evaluation of arguments for and against keeping animals in captivity and, in doing so,
- Extend their understanding of what makes a reason a good reason.

Skills developed

- Listening and recalling
- Evaluating.

Essential questions

- What makes a good reason good?
- Is it okay to keep animals in zoos or theme parks?
- To what extent should humans be treated differently from other animals?

This topic aims to engage students in the evaluation of arguments for and against keeping animals in captivity and, in doing so, to extend their understanding of what makes a reason a good reason. Reasoning lies at the heart of ethical judgement. Reflecting on our (and others') ethical beliefs involves evaluating the reasons on which those beliefs are based.

Bites are based on Primary Ethics lessons developed for use by trained adult volunteer facilitators in NSW public schools. Our lessons are based on philosophical ethics and use a 'community of inquiry' approach – the *asking power* of the group – to work together in discussion. The community of inquiry approach provides students with the opportunity to reflect on and form their own responses and consider the ideas of others in a safe and supportive environment.

You can read more about the community of inquiry approach here: <https://primaryethics.com.au/about-ethics-classes/what-happens-in-an-ethics-class/> And watch this video for a great explanation of philosophical ethics: <https://vimeo.com/>