



Introductory note for parents and carers

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

This **Bite** is available in both video and printed (PDF) formats. The same content is covered in each, so simply choose the option that best suits your student's learning environment. There's no need to read along or use the PDF as a worksheet if you choose to use the video version.

If an adult is not available to assist, we recommend downloading the video version as the stories and questions are read to the student for them. It's best if the recording can be paused during the 'thinking time' to allow the child to work through the questions at their own pace.

Bites for the 3 – 6 age group are designed for students to tackle individually, 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 supporting the student to think for themselves.

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 'Okay', 'Hmmm, I wonder...' and 'that's an interesting thought!'.

There is often not a single right answer when it comes to ethical dilemmas. 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 *behind* 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 well-thought-out decisions in a range of circumstances.

Do family and friends come first?

Objectives/ethical concepts explored

- How to distinguish between 'natural moral duties' and 'special moral obligations'.
- How to balance obligations to family and friends against natural duties to others.

Skills developed

- Listening and recalling
- Reasoning
- Evaluating

Essential questions

- Was it mean or unfair of Toby's parents to buy a basketball for him and not for Jake? What makes you say that?
- Would it be different if Jake's parents couldn't afford to buy a new ball and Toby's parents knew that?
- Did Charlie's parents do the right thing in giving money to help the Ethiopian drought relief, or should they have spent the \$500 taking their own children to the Show?

In this topic we encourage students to think about whether we have good reasons to do more for our family and friends than for other people and how we are to balance our natural and special moral obligations.

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/199903>