



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 audio 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 audio.

If an adult is not available to assist, we recommend downloading the audio 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 student to work through the questions at their own pace.

Bites for the K – 2 age group are designed for students to tackle individually, with one or more siblings or peers, and/or with the assistance of an adult. The adult's role is to read the stories and questions (if using the PDF), model genuine curiosity and to support 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.

Can we be sure?

Objectives/ethical concepts explored

- Whether generalising, from very limited past experience, is likely to lead us astray.
- Whether, whenever we infer from past experience (however extensive it is), we still run a risk of drawing a false conclusion.

Skills developed

- Listening
- Recalling
- Reasoning
- Decision-making

Essential questions

- If you know one brown dog that barks and growls, can you say that every other brown dog will bark and growl too?
- If most big dogs are gentle and well-trained, does that mean that all big dogs are gentle and well trained?
- Could Scarlett win, even though Ella has beaten her in every single race they've ever had?

In this topic we focus on asking students to make their best guesses, by thinking carefully when they don't have all the information that they need to be sure.

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>