



2027

Ethics Olympiad

JUNIOR SCHOOL CASE SET

Welcome to the cases for the 2027 Junior School Ethics Olympiad. The Ethics Olympiad is a collaborative event which encourages students to analyse and discuss real-life, timely, ethical issues. An Ethics Olympiad differs from a debate in that students are not assigned opposing views; rather, they defend whatever position they believe is right and succeed by showing that they have thought more carefully, deeply, and creatively about the cases in question. We are using Zoom to enable schools from throughout the world to participate in this valuable & exciting event.

Thanks for supporting this initiative. Please feel free to email us if you have any queries at: admin@ethicsolympiad.org.

Teachers are encouraged to familiarise students with these cases before the event.

- ❖ **Case 1** – Lunch Box Choices
- ❖ **Case 2** – Mr Indifferent
- ❖ **Case 3** – Keeping a Secret
- ❖ **Case 4** – Fictional Harms
- ❖ **Case 5** – The Present
- ❖ **Case 6** – Buzz out the Window



References: Cases 1, 3, and 4 are original scenarios developed for the 2027 Junior School Ethics Olympiad. Case 2 draws on Mr Indifferent (dir. Aryasb Feiz, 2018). Case 5 draws on The Present (dir. Jacob Frey, 2014), produced by Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg. Case 6 draws on a scene from Toy Story (dir. John Lasseter, 1995), produced by Pixar Animation Studios.

Case 1 - Lunch Box Choices



Every day at lunchtime, students at Hogan Primary bring food from home.

Mia always brings a packed lunch her dad prepares, it often includes chicken, a boiled egg, or fish. Her classmate Jonas does not eat any animal products, and his family believes it is wrong to cause animals to suffer for food.

Jonas has started saying things at the lunch table like: 'That chicken had to die so you could eat it,' and 'I don't think it's kind to eat animals.'

Mia feels embarrassed and upset. She has not had any say in what her dad packs for her lunch. Jonas says he is not trying to be mean, he genuinely believes everyone should think about where food comes from.

Discussion Questions:

1. Is Jonas doing something wrong by sharing what he believes, even if it upsets Mia?
2. Is it fair to judge someone for eating food they did not choose themselves?
3. Some people think eating animals is wrong; others do not. Is this a question with a right answer, or is it just a matter of opinion?

Case 2 - Mr Indifferent



VIDEO LINK: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qLGNj-xrgvY>

Mr Indifferent is a man who walks through the world without helping anyone.

He ignores people who need assistance, steps around problems, and keeps moving.

Then, on one ordinary day, an elderly woman thanks him after he accidentally helps her, and the experience of being genuinely thanked changes something in him.

By the end, he is the one who needs help, and he discovers what it is like to be on the other side.

Discussion Questions:

1. Mr Indifferent is not cruel, he simply does not help. Is ignoring someone who needs help the same as doing something wrong?
2. What actually changes Mr Indifferent? Is gratitude a good reason to start helping people, or should we help regardless of whether we will be thanked?
3. Is there a difference between helping a stranger and helping a friend? Should there be?

Case 3 - Keeping a Secret



Eleven-year-old Tom knows that his best friend, Lily, has been hiding something from her parents: she broke an expensive piece of equipment at school and is afraid to tell them because she thinks she will be in serious trouble.

Lily made Tom promise not to tell.

Tom is worried. The school has already asked students to come forward if they know what happened, and when he visited her house, Lily's parents mentioned the incident without knowing their daughter was involved.

Tom does not want to break his promise, but he also feels uncomfortable holding on to the secret. He wonders whether keeping the promise is really the same as being a good friend.

Discussion Questions:

1. Did Lily have the right to ask Tom to keep this secret? Does asking for a promise put someone in an unfair position?
2. Is keeping a promise always the right thing to do, or are there times when breaking a promise is more important?
3. Tom thinks keeping the secret might not be the same as being a good friend. What do you think a good friend would do here?

Case 4 - Fictional Harms



Mia, Jade and Leo have started a book club. This week they all read a fantasy story called Valkyrie.

They each have a favourite character. Mia loves the hero. Jade loves the funny sidekick who makes people laugh when things are scary. Leo loves Morgana, who is tough and never lets anyone push her around, even though Morgana sometimes treats people badly to get what she wants.

Then Mia says something that starts an argument, "If you like a character, it means you agree with what they do."

Leo gets upset. He says Mia just doesn't like strong characters who don't follow the rules. Mia says that isn't true, she just thinks it's strange to admire someone who hurts others, even in a book.

Jade tries to change the subject. But Mia and Leo are still thinking about the argument.

Discussion Questions:

1. Mia says that if you like a character, it means you agree with what they do. Do you think that's true?
2. Is it okay to like a character who does bad things? Does it depend on why they do bad things?
3. How should we decide which characters are good role models?

Case 5 - The Present



VIDEO LINK: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C_nJJHaNmY

Jake is at home playing video games. His mum brings him a present.. a puppy.

Jake is excited at first, but when he sees the puppy only has three legs, he loses interest and pushes it away. The puppy keeps trying to play with him.

When Jake finally goes outside with the puppy, we see something about Jake that explains why he reacted the way he did.

Discussion Questions:

1. Is it okay to not want something just because it's different, or is that unfair?
2. People sometimes treat others as "less" because of how they look or what they can't do. Is that ever fair? Why do you think people do it?
3. The puppy can still run, play, and be a great friend. Does being different in one way make it any less good as a pet?

Case 6 - Buzz out the Window



VIDEO LINK: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h1D443w5g5U>

Woody has always been Andy's favourite, until the exciting new toy, Buzz, takes all the attention.

Jealous, Woody tries to knock Buzz out of sight behind the desk so he'll be left behind. It goes wrong and Buzz tumbles out of the window. The other toys instantly decide Woody did it on purpose and turn on him.

Discussion Questions:

1. Woody felt jealous because he'd been replaced. Is feeling jealous wrong, or is it only what you do about it that matters?
2. Should an accident and an on-purpose action be treated the same way?
3. Is it okay to want to be someone's favorite? Can you be a good friend and still feel that way?

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