



The Grey Zone

Ethical Dilemmas for Kids

Why Play?:

The world is complicated. As we grow older, it becomes more obvious that there is not always a right and wrong in every situation. Use this game to help students understand various perspectives by having them argue the viewpoint of their card. Through this exercise students practice their critical thinking and communication skills while empathizing with ideas they may not necessarily agree with. The goal – to understand that there's not always a clear right or wrong. – and to gain a better understand of their own morals and ethics.

How to Play:

- 1) Pass out the cards.
- 2) Have students find their partner based on the title of their card.
- 3) Students debate with one another, defending the viewpoint of their card.
- 4) Share what happened in a larger group during their discussion. Was there a clear right or wrong? Were both viewpoints right (or wrong)? How did it feel to argue the perspective they received? Was it hard to argue a perspective they didn't necessarily agree with?
- 5) What insights did they gain about their own morals or ethical code?

To cheat or not to cheat?

Your best friend has been really distracted lately by some family issues. Test day has arrived and they are unprepared. They ask you if they can peak at your desk and look at your answers. What do you do?

A

You tell your friend you are sorry, but it is never okay to cheat.

The bike accident

You're riding your friend's bike. They worked really hard to buy it themselves. You see an obstacle in your path. If you turn it will cause you to crash and hurt yourself, but the bike will be fine. If you hit it straight on, the bike will be destroyed, but you should be safe. What do you do?

A

You turn away.

Ghosting

You tried to make a new friend and it didn't work out. This person keeps asking you to hang out, but you really don't want to. You need to nicely make it clear you'd prefer to not nurture this friendship. What do you do?

A

Have a face to face conversation to gently tell them how you feel.

Two-faced Friend

You accidentally overhear one of your friends talk very badly about one of your other friends. You know your friend would be crushed if they learned of what you heard.. What do you do?

A

Tell your friend. They deserve to know the truth.

To cheat or not to cheat?

Your best friend has been really distracted lately by some family issues. Test day has arrived and they are unprepared. They ask you if they can peak at your desk and look at your answers. What do you do?

B

You sympathize with your friend and tell them no problem.

The bike accident

You're riding your friend's bike. They worked really hard to buy it themselves. You see an obstacle in your path. If you turn it will cause you to crash and hurt yourself, but the bike will be fine. If you hit it straight on, the bike will be destroyed, but you should be safe. What do you do?

B

You hit it straight on.

Ghosting

You tried to make a new friend and it didn't work out. This person keeps asking you to hang out, but you really don't want to. You need to nicely make it clear you'd prefer to not nurture this friendship. What do you do?

B

Ignore them until they get the point. You want to spare their feelings.

Two-faced Friend

You accidentally overhear one of your friends talk very badly about one of your other friends. You know your friend would be crushed if they learned of what you heard.. What do you do?

B

Play it out to see what happens. It's not your place to disturb your friendship circle.

Approval

You really excel at a certain activity. Your parents have invested a lot of time and resources so that you can meet your full potential. For the last year or so, your heart hasn't been in it. What do you do?

A

Keep going. You shouldn't waste your talents and your parents would be disappointed.

Recycling

You have learned that plastic pollution is very harmful. You read that most plastic recycling does not actually get recycled. What do you do?

A

You keep recycling anyways. What else can you do?

They do it...

There's a water shortage in your area due to drought. It's very hot, and you want to cool off. Others in your neighborhood are ignoring the restrictions. What do you do?

A

Fill up a small pool to dip your feet. If everyone else is doing it, why shouldn't you?

Popularity

You get invited to a party and almost the whole school will be there. The only catch - your best friend isn't invited. What do you do?

A

Stay with your friend.

Approval

You really excel at a certain activity. Your parents have invested a lot of time and resources so that you can meet your full potential. For the last year or so, your heart hasn't been in it. What do you do?

B

Say thank you to your parents, but tell them you don't wish to pursue this path any longer.

Recycling

You have learned that plastic pollution is very harmful. You read that most plastic recycling does not actually get recycled. What do you do?

B

Stop buying single use plastic.

They do it...

There's a water shortage in your area due to drought. It's very hot, and you want to cool off. Others in your neighborhood are ignoring the restrictions. What do you do?

B

Head to the public pool. You want to don't want to make the problem worse.

Popularity

You get invited to a party and almost the whole school will be there. The only catch - your best friend isn't invited. What do you do?

B

Go to the party.

The Outcast

There's a student in your class that's a bit out of place. Their clothes are out of style and sometimes they may even smell a bit. Other students are often brutal to this kid, but you know if you stick up for them they will terrorize you too. What do you do?

A

You reach out to the student to see if they are okay and if they need anything.

The Teacher

You feel like your teacher doesn't like you. They never seem to call on you when your hand is raised and don't seem to notice you exist. It's making you feel discouraged. What do you do?

A

Go directly to the teacher after class to tell them how you feel.

The Game

You have a friend who is quite spoiled, and doesn't like to share. They have a video game at their house they never play that you would love to borrow. You know if you ask them they will say no. What do you do?

A

Take it. You know they won't miss it and you plan to return it.

Social Media

Someone you know posts something in appropriate on social media that stereotypes a group of people. You know that this person is not very open-minded. What do you do?

A

You respectfully comment that their post is offensive and that they should try to do better.

The Outcast

There's a student in your class that's a bit out of place. Their clothes are out of style and sometimes they may even smell a bit. Other students are often brutal to this kid, but you know if you stick up for them they will terrorize you too. What do you do?

B

You go directly to the students bullying the student and tell them their actions are out of line.

The Teacher

You feel like your teacher doesn't like you. They never seem to call on you when your hand is raised and don't seem to notice you exist. It's making you feel discouraged. What do you do?

B

Disengage in class. If this teacher doesn't respect you, why should you participate?

The Game

You have a friend who is quite spoiled, and doesn't like to share. They have a video game at their house they never play that you would love to borrow. You know if you ask them they will say no. What do you do?

B

Ask them if you can borrow it even though you know you will get rejected...

Social Media

Someone you know posts something in appropriate on social media that stereotypes a group of people. You know that this person is not very open-minded. What do you do?

B

Feel any comment will cause a social media war and decide to invest your energy elsewhere.

Snitching

Your friend is doing something bad and you are concerned for their safety. You know they would be angry with you for seeking help, and probably never speak to you again. Do you tell an adult what is going on?

A

Of course. It's not snitching, it's getting support so your friend doesn't harm themselves.

Excess

You already have everything you need. Your Grandma says for your birthday she will give you \$50 that you can spend on yourself or that she will donate to a cause you care about. What do you choose?

A

You decide to go shopping. You could plan ahead and get new shoes for summer.

Collaboration

You have a big project due in a week. Some of your team members are not contributing enough, and it seems as if you want to save your grade the workload will fall on you. What do you do?

A

Tell your teammates you are not doing the extra work and if they don't do their part you will go to the teacher.

The Shark

There is a "dangerous" shark that is swimming close to the shoreline. It's causing the beach to be closed. What do you think should be done?

A

Nothing. The shark is just living in its home and many species are already dwindling in numbers.

Snitching

Your friend is doing something bad and you are concerned for their safety. You know they would be angry with you for seeking help, and probably never speak to you again. Do you tell an adult what is going on?

B

It's not your place to tell on anyone. They are responsible for their own actions. Let the pieces fall where they may.

Excess

You already have everything you need. Your Grandma says for your birthday she will give you \$50 that you can spend on yourself or that she will donate to a cause you care about. What do you choose?

B

You decide to give to a cause you love. Others need it more than you.

Collaboration

You have a big project due in a week. Some of your team members are not contributing enough, and it seems as if you want to save your grade the workload will fall on you. What do you do?

B

You don't want to upset anyone and take on the extra work load.

The Shark

There is a "dangerous" shark that is swimming close to the shoreline. It's causing the beach to be closed. What do you think should be done?

B

You support the shark being hunted. It could potentially hurt humans.