

*SESSION TITLE*

# ETHICS WALKING DEBATE WORKSHOP

**ACTIVITY IN A SENTENCE:**

The goal of this workshop is to provide an open and supportive space in which learners can voice their opinions and insights on societal topics that often pose challenging ethical questions.

**DISCIPLINES INVOLVED IN ACTIVITIES:**

Science, Art, Culture, Religion, Diversity, Equity

**RECOMMENDED AGES:**

14+

**LEARNING ENVIRONMENT (CONTEXT SETTING):**

Open space (if classroom, then move tables and chairs to the side)

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

- Able to reflect on ethics in decision making
- Understanding the difference between inspiration and plagiarism
- Recognising unethical research practices
- Able to participate in ethical debates and discussions

**RECOMMENDED EXPERTISE:**

Preferably learners would have worked with facilitators prior to carrying out this workshop. Facilitators should also be sensitive to cultural, social and religious differences amongst the group.

**SDG LINKS:**

- **Goal 11:** Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
- **Goal 16:** Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

**TIME IT TAKES TO COMPLETE:**

60 – 90 minutes

### MATERIALS / RESOURCES NEEDED:

- Open space
- List of questions (provided)

### TIPS FOR SCALING FOR DIFFERENT AUDIENCES:

Questions may be modified to suit other age groups, however please consider questions that are age appropriate.

## Activity

### Introduction:

The goal of this workshop is to provide an open and supportive space in which learners can voice their opinions and insights. This workshop is usually held at the end of a week with facilitators when the learners are most comfortable with each other and the facilitators.

The facilitators should use their discretion as to what questions should be posed, below is a list of questions that have worked well in the past but every group is different.

When a question is posed learners are invited to move to either side of the room. One side is “Strongly agree” the other side is “Strongly disagree”. learners can stand anywhere on the spectrum.

### Part 1: Delivery

#### 1.1 Room setup

Move all tables and chairs to the side of the room. This workshop works best when learners can move across the length of the room.

#### 1.2 Introduce workshops

Ask learners what they know about ethics.

Explain to learners that they are going to be asked questions and are welcome to give their opinions. The questions don't necessarily have a right answer and every perspective is welcome and valued. The questions cover ethics across both science and art.

#### 1.3 Ground rules

Before any questions are posed to the learners, facilitators should reiterate that learners are expected to be kind, respectful and listen when others are talking. Facilitators need to be especially sensitive to cultural, social and religious differences amongst the group.

## Part 2: Questions

Here is a list of questions we have asked. Not all of these questions have to be asked, omit or add questions depending on your group. Some learners might not be familiar with all of the concepts so be sure to explain the question.

### Intro Questions:

- **Pineapple or pizza?**
- **Cats or dogs?**
- **Coke or Pepsi?**

### Science Questions:

- **Should vaccines be mandatory?**
  - Herd immunity is a form of indirect protection from infectious disease that occurs when a large percentage of a population has become immune
  - Should it be mandatory for some vaccines, but not all vaccines?
  - What should happen if someone refuses to get a vaccine? Should it be a criminal offence?
  - Is bodily autonomy a priority?
  - A nanny state is when the government or its policies are overprotective or interfering unduly with personal choice.
  - Do you think people would feel social pressure to get the vaccine anyway?
  - Should unvaccinated children be allowed into schools, etc.
- **Should parents be allowed to pierce their baby's ears?**
  - Should parents always be able to make decisions about their baby's body?
  - Are we sexualising young girls by adorning them in jewellery?
  - A child can just take it out when they get older?
  - Is it important to follow traditions and culture?
- **Should parents have the right to circumcise their children for non-medical reasons?**
  - If it is part of religion or culture does that always make it ok?
  - Should parents be able to make permanent changes to the body?
  - Should it be more regulated?
  - Should spiritual leaders need medical training?
  - No procedure is guaranteed safe, so should we take the risk?

- **What about for female circumcision/Female genital mutilation?**
  - If it is part of religion or culture does that always make it ok?
  - If it is hard to give birth, it is dangerous for the woman?
  - It is still wrong if it is not dangerous but affects you sexually?
  
- **Are zoos unethical?**
  - Are Zoos important for conservation or are there alternatives?
  - Is it safer?
  - Is it ok to profit monetarily from animals?
  - Is it ok to keep non-native species in Ireland?
  - How do we regulate zoos to keep them accountable?
  
- **Is it ethical to use animals for research and testing?**
  - Is it ok to research and test for cosmetics?
  - When we research and test for medical reasons is it ok?
  - Is human life more important than animal life?
  - Is it problematic that animals can't consent?
  - Can humans really consent when there is a monetary incentive? Eg. does this encourages people in low economic positions to participate in a potentially dangerous situation
  
- **Should we be genetically testing or altering embryos?**
  - If we can alter an embryo to not have a chronic or painful illness should we?
  - Is it ok to make changes to achieve preferable qualities? Eg. Eye color, beauty, strength, intelligence.
  - What characteristics should be allowed to be altered?
  - Could this cause population issues? Eg. sustaining longer lifespans.
  - If wealthy people can afford genetic modification, would there be drastic genetic differences between the wealthy and the rest of the population?
  
- **Should we allow euthanasia/ assisted suicide?**
  - Should people have the right to end their life because of their physical health?
  - Should people have the right to end their life because of their mental health?
  - Should it be criminalised?
  - How could we regulate it so it won't be abused?

### Art Questions:

Note that most bullet points below contain background information on the piece under discussion, not further questions such as in the previous section.

- **Is Santiago Sierra's piece, 160 cm Line Tattooed on 4 People, ethical?**
  - 160 cm Line Tattooed on 4 People (2000).
  - 'Four prostitutes addicted to heroin were hired for the price of a shot of heroin to give their consent to be tattooed. Normally they charge 2,000 or 3,000 pesetas, between 15 and 17 dollars, for fellatio, while the price of a shot of heroin is around 12,000 pesetas, about 67 dollars.' – Santiago Sierra.
  - His works highlight the exploitation of human labour taking place in systems of economic exchange.
  - Sierra focuses on those sections of the community who are most exploited and yet who remain least 'visible' in official terms: illegal immigrants, asylum seekers, prostitutes, drug addicts and the urban poor, unemployed and homeless.
  
- **Does Marina Abramovic's piece, Rhythm 0, raise any ethical concerns?**
  - Rhythm 0 (1974).
  - Her instructions were placed on the table:
  - There are 72 objects on the table that one can use on me as desired. Performance. I am the object. During this period I take full responsibility. Duration: 6 hours (8 pm – 2 am).
  - These included a rose, feather, perfume, honey, bread, grapes, wine, scissors, a scalpel, nails, a metal bar, and a gun loaded with one bullet.
  
- **Was the United Colours of Benetton advertising campaign, La pieta, ethical?**
  - La pieta (1991).
  - The photo of AIDS activist David Kirby was taken in his room in the Ohio State University Hospital in May 1990.
  - Benetton approached the photographer and Kirby family, gaining consent for the use of the photograph and contributing to an acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) foundation.
  - In 2003 the photo was included in the Life magazine collection '100 Photos that changed the world'.
  - A number of AIDS activists believed that the photograph and its use in advertising actually painted AIDS victims in a negative light, spreading fear rather than acceptance. Others perceived the campaign as a vindication of homosexuality.
  - The visual similarity between David Kirby and Jesus.
  
- **Was it unethical to photograph the girl in "the vulture and the little girl"?**
  - The vulture and the little girl (1993).
  - The photo was taken during the Sudanese famine, it was published in the New York Times in 1993. Some people said that Kevin Carter, the photojournalist who took this photo, was inhumane and profiting from the child's suffering.
  - The child was reported to be attempting to reach a United Nations feeding centre about a half mile away.
  - Would it be unethical for him not to photograph this? Then how would we have a record of this to help us stop it happening again?
  - Carter won the Pulitzer Prize for the photo.
  - Carter took his own life in 1994.

- **Should ORLAN be able to physically manipulate her body for art?**
  - ORLAN is a contemporary French artist known for the radical act of changing her appearance with plastic surgery in the name of art, she is the first artist to use plastic surgery as part of her arts practice.
  - “I have been the first artist to use aesthetic surgery in another context—not to appear younger or better according to the designated pattern. I wanted to disrupt the standards of beauty”
  - Should doctors perform procedures like this?
  - Is cosmetic surgery generally ethical?
  - <https://www.irishtimes.com/life-and-style/bones-of-contention-1.736882> – Seamos Nolan dog art