

Audrey Ledbetter & Tyler Munowitz  
Lesson plan 1: Absolute Rules  
~45 minutes

**Goals:**

- Introduce the tension between absolutism and consequentialism
  - Try to come up with an objective rule
- Encourage students to question the very nature of rules

**Discussion:**

Start with a relevant clip that gets everyone on the same page: lying is wrong. (~10min)

- Operation Varsity Blues - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LFHj8e7mU\\_I](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LFHj8e7mU_I)
- Lori Loughlin & Massimo Giannulli paid over \$500k to get their daughters Olivia and Isabella into USC
- They were portrayed to look like members of the crew team
- Do you have the intuition that this was wrong? Why?
  - Try to get students to bring up lying before telling them our rule

Introduce “do not lie” as an objective rule (~20min)

- Can anyone think of exceptions to this rule?
  - Write down each exception, will likely end up with a long list
  - Have each person who offers an exception provide an example (introduce idea of a counterexample) and an explanation for why it’s an exception
- Examples we can offer if discussion gets slow
  - Tie in ‘what-ifs’ regarding Varsity Blues: What if Olivia Jade went onto cure cancer at USC? What if Olivia had the qualifications for USC but lied her way in anyway?
  - Axe murderer—an axe murderer comes to your house and asks where your friend is, who you know is upstairs. Do you tell the murderer where to find your friend? Or do you break the “do not lie” rule?
  - Cheating
  - Positive COVID tests
- Ask if others can come up with defenses of the original rule. Does anyone think that we should make no exception? Are any of the exceptions we have come up with questionable?

**Concluding questions** (~10-15min)

- Are these exceptions to the rule conflicting with other rules?
- Is this final rule objective?
- Is it possible to create an objective rule?
- If rules can’t be objective, what purpose do they serve?