

ETHICS LESSON PLAN

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Preliminaries

Total Time: 35 minutes

Ages: 6-7 years old (first graders)

Materials for Students: none

Materials for Instructors: computer with speaker (Monika bring), video of *What Small Rabbit Heard*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g-qTMNF7nn4>

Learning Objectives: Understand the difference between what one intends and what actually happens. Consider the question, “Is it the intent of the agent or the outcome of an action that makes the action right or wrong?” Consider challenges to consequentialism.

Introduction

5 min

Personal Introduction: My name is Iman. My name is Monika. We are college students at Tufts University, and we study philosophy.

Introduction to Philosophy (review): What is philosophy? Talk about the difference between closed questions (What time is it?) and open questions (What is time?). [Other examples: What is friendship? What is love? What is happiness?] Philosophers wrestle with open questions that have no settled answers. Philosophers have different opinions about how to answer these questions. They give *reasons* to support their points of view. Emphasize “I agree because...”/ “I disagree because...” language. Give example (using this language) or ask students to give example.

Anyone can be a philosopher! Today, we will be doing philosophy, and more specifically, ethics.

Introduction to Ethics: What is ethics? Ethics is a branch of philosophy. Philosophers who study ethics asks questions about what makes actions right or wrong, and what duties we have to other people (or animals or nature in general). Some ethicists try to come up with principles to guide us when we have tough decisions to make about what we ought to do.

What Small Rabbit Heard

15 min

Play video of book reading (5 min)

Discussion (10 min)

Questions to ask throughout video (pause video):

- What did Big Rabbit intend for Small Rabbit to do? What actually happened?

What Big Rabbit Said:

What Little Rabbit Heard:

Try to keep up!

Jump in the mud!

Does Big Rabbit want Little Rabbit to jump in the mud?

Stay with me please!

Roll in the leaves!

Does Big Rabbit want Little Rabbit to roll in the leaves?

I want you to wait!

Open the gate!

Does Big Rabbit want Little Rabbit to open the gate?

Button your coat!

Ride the goat!

Does Big Rabbit want Little Rabbit to ride the goat?

Keep very still!

Roll down the hill!

Does Big Rabbit want Little Rabbit to roll down the hill?

Wait for me!

Climb the tree!

Does Big Rabbit want Little Rabbit to climb the tree?

Don't go inside!

Find somewhere to hide!

Does Big Rabbit want Little Rabbit to find somewhere to hide?

General questions:

- Why doesn't Little Rabbit do what Big Rabbit tells him to do?
- Is Little Rabbit behaving or is he just being annoying? Give reasons.
- Does Big Rabbit become angry when Little Rabbit doesn't do what he's told? Why/why not?
- Would it have been fair if Big Rabbit became angry when Little Rabbit didn't do what he's told? Why/why not?

Transition (movement): Have students stand up and form a new circle. Ask them to sit next to a new classmate for the next activity.

Activity: Telephone

15 min

Explain the game of Telephone.

Have students form a straight line (Monika stationed at one end and Iman in the middle, or vice versa). Monika/Iman comes up with a goofy sentence and whispers it to the student standing next to her. Each student does this in turn. The last student in the line reports to the group what he/she heard.

Questions:

- Ask Monika/Iman, “Is this what you “intended” or “meant to” say?
- How did the message get changed?
- Can you remember a time when someone didn’t understand what you were saying?
- Can you remember a time when you didn’t understand what someone else was saying?
- Did you ever intend to do something and something else actually happen?
 - What did you intend? What actually happened?
 - How did you feel when things didn’t go as you intended?