

A Look at Ethics

This is a great activity to get students thinking about the ethical decisions that they make everyday. You may want to follow each question up by having the students discuss why they chose to stand where they did along the human barometer.

Where do you draw the line?

- Draw an imaginary line down the middle of the room and mark **WRONG** at one end and **ACCEPTABLE** at the other. Call the middle ground **WRONG IN PRINCIPAL BUT ACCEPTABLE**. Then as you read the following questions, ask students to stand in the area that best describes how they would respond.

OR

- Draw an imaginary line down the middle of a sheet of paper and label it with the same phrases in the same areas. Instead of standing, have students mark the different situations on the paper.

1. You move into a new apartment and find that you have cable TV but never received a bill. You keep watching anyway.
2. You have only one semester of college to finish your degree, and you're doing well in all of your classes. On a job application, you say you have a college degree.
3. Your best friend is dating a married man. You know she is headed for trouble but keep quiet.
4. You are stuck in a miserable marriage and your husband refused to give you a divorce. There is a wonderful man in the office who wants to have an affair with you. You decide to grab this chance for happiness.
5. You have a home computer but don't have the same software you use at the office. Your boss says it is OK to take the software home and copy it.
6. You flunked out of college once and are applying to another school. The form asks for all other colleges attended. You decide to leave it blank.
7. Your friend needs a term paper typed. She asks you to type it and make any necessary grammatical and spelling corrections. You agree.
8. The bank makes a \$100 error in your favor. You decide to let them catch it.
9. You suspect that a good friend is cheating on her exams. You decide it is none of your business.

Agree – Disagree Exercise

Forced Choice Exercise to Promote Discussion

INSTRUCTIONS:

- a. Set ground rules of respect, honesty, listening to each other
- b. Agree/Disagree set-up (no middle ground)
- c. Pose statement and direct participants to choose side; discuss in small groups.
- d. Facilitate discussion – each “side” making points, can ask questions of other group.

STATEMENTS:

- Cheating was a part of my high school environment.
- Cheating was not addressed in my high school.
- If my best friend broke a rule, I would cover for him/her.
- If my best friend asked for unauthorized help on an exam or assignment, I would give it.
- The act of copying off of someone’s test is worse than allowing someone to copy off my test.
- Exams should be unproctored.
- Using the same paper twice, for different classes, is academically dishonest.