Fertile Question: *Where do I draw the line?*

Core Content Area 2: Helping you draw the line

**Lesson 2.1.1** What did Jesus say and do?

**Lesson 2.1.2** Judaism, Buddhism and ethics

**Lesson 2.1.3** Applying religious teachings to ethical issues

**Lesson 2.2.1** What if everybody did that?

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**Lesson 2.3.1** Legal codes and ethical punishment

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**Lesson 2.3.3** Corruption and unjust practices
Fertile Question: Where do I draw the line?

Core Content Area 2: Helping you draw the line

TOPIC 2.1: Religion and ethics

Lesson 2.1.1 What did Jesus say and do?

In the next series of lessons students will explore how religion assists believers to lead an ethical life and draw the line in their own time and context.

Teachers: Before You Start!

1. Familiarise yourself with the resources referred to in this lesson.

For students to explore Christian ethics, select from the following activities:

1. Investigate the scriptural and Catholic Church teachings for leading an ethical life.
   a. Explore the scriptural basis for Christian ethics.
      i. Read the following carefully for a summary of how Christians are called to live.
      
      New Testament moral code

      Not only did Jesus affirm the Ten Commandments, but in Luke 10:25-28, he summarises them into what he called the two greatest commandments: love of God and love of neighbour. Jesus’ life and teachings reveal love as the first essential covenantal attitude and responsibility. In Matthew 5, the Sermon on the Mount defines love not as emotional affection but rather as an active and abiding respect that considers all of humankind as worthwhile and valuable. Christians therefore are called to model a love for others that embraces and forgives even an enemy, and to work for peace, mercy and justice even in the face of persecution. Service is the second essential attitude of Jesus’ covenantal ethics as expressed in Luke 4:18-19. Through love and service, Christians are called to liberate themselves and others from situations of injustice and oppression. Jesus’ new vision was not just for the good of the individual or group but for the promotion of the Reign of God. He challenged existing moral codes and frameworks. Jesus’ powerful new vision remains fresh and relevant to believers today as they go about discerning the value of new, evolving moral codes in a rapidly changing world.
      ii. Identify the key Christian values outlined in the summary above.
      iii. Create a motivational poster using one of the scriptural passages mentioned in the paragraph. Read the passage either in a Bible or on Bible Gateway. Select the text that you would like to promote about Christian ethics. Locate a suitable image that represents the text and use BigHugeLabs Motivator to create your poster.
      iv. Jesus taught his followers to be authentic. In other words, to make sure their actions matched their words. His teachings about forgiveness and non-violence were evident in the way he went to his own death. It also brought him at times, into contradiction with the Law, which for Jews was what guided their moral life. Leading an authentic Christian life of love and service, peace, justice and mercy should therefore be evident in the actions of a Christian believer. A Christian must stand up against unjust laws and practices.

      Read the scripture passage Luke 6:1-11. What does Jesus use as his reason for breaking the Jewish Law of not working on the Sabbath? How might this knowledge and the understanding of Jesus’ teaching assist a Christian believer to draw the line on ethical issues?

b. On many ethical issues the teachings of the Christian traditions are the same. However, they may differ on some issues, eg divorce.
   Explore the ways in which the various Christian denominations’ teachings also might influence a believer’s stance on ethical issues.
   i. Select one ethical issue to explore using the BBC Religion website for a representation of the various Christian denominations’ teachings on that issue. (Click on Ethics for the range of topics). Complete the retrieval chart in Useful Resources to compare and contrast teachings from two denominations.
   ii. Share findings with the class and discuss how the teaching of the denominations examined are or are not in alignment with the values Jesus taught in Christian scripture. Reflect personally on how this teaching would or would not help you to draw the line on this issue.
TOPIC 2.1: Religion and ethics

Lesson 2.1.2 Judaism, Buddhism and ethics

In this lesson students will explore the basis of the ethical teachings of Judaism and Buddhism.

Teachers: Before You Start!

1. Consider inviting a practising Buddhist to answer class questions about the ethical life of a Buddhist, particularly if you are using the suggested Assessment Task for this unit.

For students to explore the basis of the ethical teachings of Judaism and Buddhism, select from the following activities:

1. Investigate the ethical teachings of Buddhism.
   a. View the YouTube clip by way of introduction to what guides the ethical life of religious and lay Buddhists.
      i. What questions come to mind after viewing the video? Share questions to create a class list. (If you are completing the suggested Assessment Task for this unit you might have questions about what a Buddhist might say about the contemporary ethical issue you are investigating).
      ii. Locate the answers to your questions either by interview or by research.
      iii. Reflect on the information about Buddhism you have gained from this activity. What do you think personally would be the hardest thing about leading an ethical Buddhist life?
      iv. Considering the information gained from the activities in the last few lessons, how do you think religion generally contributes as a guide for moral decision-making?

2. Investigate the importance of the Law or Halakhah for Jewish everyday life.
   a. Explore the Judaism 101 website or the BBC website for a comprehensive discussion of the ethical teachings of Judaism.
      i. Complete a PMI chart for the role of the Law in the everyday life of an observant Jew. Share with the class.
Fertile Question: Where do I draw the line?

Core Content Area 2: Helping you draw the line?

TOPIC 2.1: Religion and ethics

Lesson 2.1.3 Applying religious teachings to ethical issues

In this lesson students will compare and contrast the religious teachings of Judaism, Buddhism and Catholicism about an ethical issue.

Teachers: Before You Start!

1. Familiarise yourself with the resources referred to in this lesson.

For students to compare and contrast the religious teachings of Judaism, Buddhism and Catholicism on an ethical issue, complete the following activities:

1. Investigate the ways in which religious teachings provide adherents with a guide to moral decision-making.
   a. Compare and contrast the teachings of three religious traditions on an ethical issue.
      i. Access the BBC Religions website for a list of ethical issues covered on the website.
      ii. Choose an issue to explore, and investigate the teachings about that issue from Catholicism, Buddhism and Judaism or your own faith tradition. (You might need to distinguish between the streams of Buddhism and Judaism). Record your information in a retrieval chart similar to the one in Useful Resources. Note this activity could be done as a group of three with each person responsible for the information from one tradition.
      iii. Use a highlighter (or the highlighting tool in Word) to identify points of similarity and points of difference between the teachings of the three traditions about the ethical issue. Join with other individuals or groups who researched the same issue as you to discuss the following: What components of the issue do the three traditions seem to agree on? How might cultural context contribute to the differences of the teachings of the three faith traditions? Share findings with the class about your chosen ethical issue.
   b. Explore the ways in which religious laws and codes evolve in response to the signs of the times.
      i. Investigate the ways in which religions are challenged to change to reflect new knowledge and signs of the times including new understandings of science and social and cultural evolution. For example: the actions of Martin Luther in 1517 or King Henry VIII in 1534 which led to their excommunication from the Catholic Church and the formation of new Christian denominations, the Lutheran Church and the Church of England.
      ii. Reflecting on what you have learnt from these tasks complete a SWOT analysis on the contribution religious teaching can make to a believer of a particular religion and their moral decision-making for their everyday life.
Fertile Question: Where do I draw the line?

Core Content Area 2: Helping you draw the line

TOPIC 2.2: Ethical frameworks

Lesson 2.2.1 What if everybody did that?

In this lesson students will examine ethical frameworks associated with consequences.

Teachers: Before You Start!

1. Familiarise yourself with the resources in this lesson.

For students to explore ethical decision-making frameworks focused on consequences, select from the following activities:

1. Explore examples of ethical frameworks that don’t require a religious stance.
   a. Investigate examples of moral decision-making based on the consequences of the decision.
      i. View the short (40sec) movie clip about Utilitarianism, an example of a consequentialist ethical approach.
      ii. Discuss the ideas presented to ensure understanding, and then view the short clip Moral theories Scenario 1.
      iii. Discuss with a partner your answer to the question posed: what would a person who decides entirely on utilitarian principles do in this case? Read the Doctor’s oath (Hippocratic Oath) taken by all doctors after graduation. Could a doctor use a strict utilitarian approach to solve this dilemma? Why or why not? See Useful Resources.
      iv. Reflect on other examples that you know of where the decision to act was based on the greatest good for the greatest number (or put another way, the sacrifice of the one or the few for the good of the many, or the end justifies the means).
      v. How would a utilitarian deal with the ethics of illegal downloads? Does the end justify the means? Discuss.
   b. Explore the Kantian ethic that good intentions are more important than consequences.
      i. View the short lecture explaining Kantian ethics. Does the idea that consequences don’t matter and that it’s your good intentions to do the right thing that count, make meaning for you? If one’s duty is to always tell the truth, from a Kantian point of view, is it ever okay to lie?
      ii. Is torture or the threat of torture ever morally right? View the short film discussing both utilitarian and Kantian ethics regarding this issue. Reflect on the real life scenario presented in this film considering both arguments. Discuss the pros and cons of both positions. Is torture ever acceptable? How might Catholic Social Teaching add a voice to this discussion?
Fertile Question: *Where do I draw the line?*

Core Content Area 2: Helping you draw the line

**TOPIC 2.2: Ethical frameworks**

**Lesson 2.2.2 Living according to principles**

In this lesson students will explore another ethical framework that does not refer to actions.

**Teachers: Before You Start!**

1. Review the resources referred to in this lesson.

2. Consider viewing a movie such as *My Sister's Keeper* or similar, as a stimulus for students to discuss the ethical decision-making of the characters in the film.

**For students to investigate virtue ethics, select from the following activities:**

1. Critique Aristotle’s virtue ethics.
   a. Explore the idea that human beings should cultivate virtues if they want to *flourish* (reach their full potential).
      i. View the short film on [virtue ethics](#). How did Aristotle suggest that a person gains full flourishing as a human being? How does this idea compare with Christian ethics?
      ii. Create a list of seven people in the present or the past who display one or more of the virtues described in the film. Name the person, the virtue and an example of the way they enact that virtue.
      iii. Reflect on the characteristics of the three types of people that Aristotle named: the pleasure seeker, the honour seeker and the contemplative. Create a [cartoon](#) that depicts the behaviour of these three character types if they were to attend schoolies. Share with the class.
Fertile Question: Where do I draw the line?

Core Content Area 2: Helping you draw the line

TOPIC 2.3: The law

Lesson 2.3.1 Legal codes and ethical punishment

In this lesson students will explore the importance of law in any time and context as well as considering reasons why law cannot stand alone as a moral corrector.

Teachers: Before You Start!

1. Familiarise yourself with the resources in this lesson.

For students to explore reasons why law cannot stand alone as a moral corrector, select from the following activities:

1. Explore the connections between law, ethics and justice.
   a. For an example of the importance of the Law for Aboriginal people, consider viewing with students The Ten Canoes and analysing the way transgressions of Law were dealt with by this particular group.
   b. Explore the ways in which the value of justice is depicted in symbols.
      i. Read the article Lady Justice and examine the images associated.
      ii. Discuss the intended meaning of each of the three symbols: the scales, the double edged sword and the blindfold.
      iii. Draw your own symbol of justice based on your own knowledge, and information you have gained from the lessons in this unit.
      iv. How does the law assist you to draw the line on what is morally right? Discuss.
   c. Recognising that humans are flawed, explore reasons why some laws must change as new knowledge is gained.
      i. Investigate examples in history of bad laws. How were the laws changed? Who was involved in calling for change? How long did it take for the change to occur? Choose an example to investigate and report back to the class.
      ii. Reflect on a current law in Australia, Queensland, your town or your school that you consider to be a bad law because it violates principles of justice. Write a letter to your local Member of Parliament outlining why you think the law should be changed. Alternatively you could write a letter congratulating the government for changing a law.
      iii. Reflect on the importance of wisdom and discernment with regard to right judgement.
2. Explore the ethics associated with the penalties applied to crime.
   a. Where do you draw the line on the death penalty?
      i. View the short YouTube clip outlining the arguments against the death penalty.
      ii. Would you consider this set of arguments based on a utilitarian approach or a Kantian approach? Discuss. How does the speaker try to convince the listener that a line needs to be drawn on this issue?
   b. Investigate the concept of restorative justice.
      i. Restorative justice allows offenders to make amends for the harm that they have caused. Read the key elements of making amends. Choose one of the elements to explore further by clicking on the link.
      ii. View the following short clip to explore further the connections between restorative justice and the Christian understanding of forgiveness and reconciliation.
Fertile Question: Where do I draw the line?

Core Content Area 2: Helping you draw the line

TOPIC 2.3: The law

Lesson 2.3.2 International law

In this lesson students will explore the development of international laws such as the declaration of human rights.

Teachers: Before You Start!

1. Familiarise yourself with the resources referred to in this lesson.

For students to explore the development of international laws such as the Declaration of Human Rights, select from the following activities:

1. Investigate the importance of International laws for world peace.
   a. Review the activities and responsibilities of the United Nations.
      i. Review the structure and function of the United Nations.
   b. Investigate the importance of international law to govern the world’s oceans.
      ii. Complete a Diamond Nine strategy with a partner after viewing the film, to outline nine key reasons for the development of accepted international law governing the seas of the earth. Place your most important reason at the top. Some of your reasons from your local context may not have been mentioned in the film. Include these as well. Share your Diamond Nine with another pair, justifying to each other why you positioned your reason at the top.
      iii. Read the following article regarding a dispute between Australia and East Timor over who owns the gas and oil resources in the ocean between the two countries. Contribute to a class discussion via Typewithme or similar, outlining what you consider to be the major ethical issues associated with this issue. Find out the latest information on this issue and whether Australia has re-signed the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea.
Fertile Question: Where do I draw the line?

Core Content Area 2: Helping you draw the line

TOPIC 2.3: The law

Lesson 2.3.3 Corruption and unjust practices

In this lesson students will investigate a contemporary issue of corruption.

Teachers: Before You Start!

1. Familiarise yourself with the resources referred to in this lesson.

Students

1. Investigate a contemporary issue of corruption and the ethical issues associated with it.

   a. Choose an issue currently reported in the media about corruption in government within and beyond Australia.
   
      i. Explore the phrase *Power corrupts; absolute power corrupts absolutely*. View the website about this quote and discuss its wisdom and meaning in groups.
   
      ii. List political leaders from past history who fit this description providing evidence of their corruption and injustice. Define what it means to say that something, someone, or some organisation is corrupt and discuss why this is an ethical issue.
   
      iii. Define what it means to say that something, someone, or some organisation is corrupt and discuss why this is an ethical issue.
   
      iv. Working individually or in pairs, select a current or recent inquiry into claims of corruption by searching media sites such as Eureka Street or newspaper sites. Create a timeline of events from when the issue first came to light to the current situation. Include key events along the way. You could use the online timeline from classtools.net by clicking here. Find out the following: Why exactly is the issue one of corruption? How did the issue first come to light? Have there been any negative consequences for the person or people that brought it to light? How is the issue being dealt with?
   
      v. Present your timeline to the class and discuss why the line needs to be drawn on transparency of practices.

   b. For Christians Luke 4:18 is significant as it underpins many Christian acts for justice. These words of Jesus call believers to action against corruption and oppression particularly to the powerless.

      *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free.*

      i. Write a paragraph that evaluates the role and influence of heads of religion speaking out against significant injustices and political corruption in the world. It could be helpful to imagine what might be the effect if religious leaders did not speak out against injustice and corruption in the world or if their voices were stopped.
### Lesson 2.1.1

**Christian teaching on an ethical issue**

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<th>Christian Denomination #2 Key teachings</th>
<th>Values of the teaching aligned with New Testament values</th>
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### Lesson 2.1.3

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The Physician’s Oath

At the time of being admitted as a member of the medical profession:

- I solemnly pledge myself to consecrate my life to the service of humanity;
- I will give to my teachers the respect and gratitude which is their due;
- I will practice my profession with conscience and dignity;
- The health of my patient will be my first consideration;
- I will respect the secrets which are confided in me;
- I will maintain by all the means in my power, the honour and the noble traditions of the medical profession;
- My colleagues will be my brothers and sisters;
- I will not permit considerations of religion, nationality, race, gender, politics, socioeconomic standing, or sexual orientation to intervene between my duty and my patient;
- I will maintain the utmost respect for human life; even under threat, I will not use my medical knowledge contrary to the laws of humanity;
- I make these promises solemnly, freely and upon my honour.
USEFUL RESOURCES

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