

**Part 1 INTRODUCTION TO MORALITY**

<b>Syllabus Aim</b>	To explore the human need to order relationships at the personal, communal and global levels.
<b>Syllabus Objectives</b>	As a result of studying this section, the students should: 1. be aware of different descriptions of what it means to be moral
<b>Key Concepts</b>	Morality, influence.
<b>Description of Content</b>	1. Different descriptions of what it means to be moral.
<b>Methodology</b>	These lesson plan resource materials are designed using a variety of methods including concept formation, presentation and interpretation of data, discussion and role-play so as to give students an opportunity to explore and clarify the concepts and to elaborate on their existing knowledge and understanding of the content.

**Procedure**

**Introduction**

Write "Morality?" on the board and brainstorm the students for answers to the question: What words come to mind when you hear / think of the word morality?

Take feedback from the students and note their understanding of morality on the board.

Read dictionary definitions of morality e.g.

Oxford – “1 moral principles or rules. 2 a particular system of morals; 3 being moral, conforming to moral principles; goodness or rightness”

Collins – “good moral conduct; moral goodness or badness....”

Universal English Dictionary – “Doctrines, principles of conduct, based on distinction between right and wrong; moral conduct or character.”

Explain any terminology with which the students are not familiar.

Discuss: Which of the dictionary definitions is similar to your own understanding of morality?  
Which of the dictionary definitions is different from your own understanding of morality?

Note feedback on the board and conclude that morality has to do with what people consider to be the rightness and wrongness of actions and attitudes.

*Written Assignment:*

- A moral person is one who judges in agreement with accepted principles of right and wrong and as a result acts on what is right.
- An immoral person is one who does not act in agreement with accepted principles of right and wrong.

Give examples of characters from books, T.V. programmes etc. which fit each of the categories of moral and immoral persons.

or

*Role play* the following situation from the view point of what they consider to be a moral and immoral person:

- The situation is: You need to buy clothes to create the right impression for an interview. You have no money but you and your friends know a local shop where between 12-1 p.m. there is only one sales assistant on duty. If you go to the shop as a group, one of you might be able to get some clothes while the other talks to the assistant. It is 11 a.m. and you are meeting your friend to decide what you are going to do.
- Ask for volunteers to act in the role-play.
- Assign the roles
- When role-play is complete de-brief and discuss:
  1. Who was playing the moral and immoral roles in this situation?

2. What words or actions made you think the characters were playing the moral or immoral roles?
3. Why do you think this behaviour is moral or immoral?
4. Can you think of anything that might have influenced you to think that this behaviour is moral or immoral?

***Different descriptions of what it means to be moral.***

When judging right or wrong in human situations people may give the following reasons:

- "I'd be afraid I might get caught."
- "I'd feel guilty if I did it."
- "It depends on where you live."
- "We've got to have some standards of behaviour."
- "It's simply a question of doing what you're told."
- "Everyone's doing it."
- "Something tells me it is wrong."

Or Listen to *The Moral Life* Network cassette tape on notions of morality (Side 1 Unit 2).

- Discuss:
- Can you add any more to the list?
  - Why do people differ in their understanding of what is moral?
  - What understanding of right and wrong is in each of these statements?

*Assignment:*

List the following statements on the chalkboard. Read each notion of morality and ask students to match it with a statement. Take feedback on the board as outlined below:

<i>Statement:</i>	<i>Notions of Morality:</i>
• "I'd be afraid I might get caught"	1. What is judged right depends on how good the consequences are for the person doing whatever is planned.
• "I'd feel guilty if I did it."	2. What is judged right depends on the person's feelings about doing whatever is planned.
• "It depends on where you live."	3. What is judged right depends on (or is relative to) the situation.
• "It's important to keep the law of this country. We've got to have some standards of behaviour."	4. What is judged right depends on whether whatever is proposed is in keeping with the laws of the country.
• "It's simply a question of doing what you're told."	5. What is judged right depends on the authority of the person issuing the plan.
• "Everyone's doing it."	6. What is judged right depends on whether or not it is popular or the traditional thing to do.
• "Something tells me it is wrong."	7. What is judged right or wrong depends on the hunch or gut instinct of the person about doing whatever is planned.

Conclude that a person's sense of what is right and wrong depends upon many things. What one person considers is right behaviour another may see as wrong. Thus morality is a universal human characteristic seen in the lives of peoples in all religions and none.

Write Moral Issues on the board and brainstorm students as to what comes to mind.

Take feedback and in probing answers expand students' suggestions to include matters of personal and social morality e.g. cheating; stealing; the arms race; poverty; vandalism, drunk driving; nuclear war; pollution of the environment; drug abuse etc.

When a range of issues have been named on the board, invite individual students to write P beside issues of personal morality and S beside issues of social morality on the board.

Discuss:

1. What is the difference between the issues of personal and social morality?
2. Which issues would have been listed in both categories?

*Written Assignment:* Pick two issues (one of personal, the other of social morality) and describe how people could differ in their understanding of what is moral in each of them.

Read the statements below that act as a guide in judging between right or wrong in human situations for the followers of different world religions. As each statement is read give students time to write in their own words what it is saying about the moral way to behave.

Buddhism	“I will act towards others exactly as I would act towards myself.”
Hinduism	“ <i>This is the sum of duty. Do naught to others which, if done to thee, could cause thee pain.</i> ”
Judaism	“ <i>What is harmful to yourself do not to your fellow men. That is the whole of the law and the remainder is but commentary.</i> ”
Christianity	“ <i>Treat others as you would like them to treat you.</i> ”
Islam	“ <i>None of you truly believe, until he wishes for his brothers what he wishes for himself.</i> ”

Take feedback and discuss:   What do these statements have in common?  
Do these statements apply to personal or social morality?

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*Resources which teachers have suggested include:*

A Time To Live New Christian Way Series 3 Veritas, pages 169 – 172.

Community of Faith Veritas, pages 16-17; 130-134

Community of Hope Veritas, pages 130 – 132.

Cyberclass Manual Scholastech Disk 2

Logos

Show Us The Way New Christian Way Series 2 Veritas pages 42– 45; 55.