

Volume 13, Number 2, January 2017

Lesson plan

Kant's deontological ethics

Jon Mayled

The big picture	Deontological thinkers argue that moral actions, such as telling the truth, have intrinsic worth and carry their own moral force.
Learning objectives	<p>What? Kant's deontological ethics: key points, strengths and weaknesses.</p> <p>Why? To compare, evaluate and analyse different versions of these ethics.</p> <p>How? After studying this topic, students should be able to define what Kant meant by deontological ethics. Also, they can explain their strengths and weaknesses and differing responses to their use.</p>
Starter activity	Create a list of examples of right and wrong actions. Then discuss them with the person next to you. Find any common actions that you agree on and also actions that you disagree on.
Lesson activities	<p>(a) Go through the difference between teleological ethics and deontological ethics and then ask students to write the differences on the board and decide which system they think works best.</p> <p>(b) Create a table with the main strengths and weaknesses of the two ethical systems.</p> <p>(c) In groups create a quiz based on Kant's deontological ethics. Record the questions and answers.</p>
Plenary	<p>Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the elevated place Kant affords human reason point towards human dignity and rights or does it deny the importance of emotions, affection and, above all, love? • Does Kant's separation of ethics from consequences liberate moral agents from the impossibility of predicting consequences or does it permit humans to self-righteously perform actions which most, if not all, would intuitively sense are wrong?
Homework task	Complete a timed essay question on deontological ethics at home.
Assessment opportunities	Using the mark scheme, students should peer-assess their work with feedback from the teacher. You can also use the quizzes the students created at the start of the lesson to recap.
Differentiation	Teachers may wish to put key points on a worksheet for dyslexic or EAL students.

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