



EduTrend Contents

P4C · TRUTH AND HONESTY · HIGH SCHOOL

Truth and Trust in Public Life

Should people always tell the truth when it could cause harm?

Ages 15–18

Level: Advanced

60 minutes

Circle and pairs · up to 30

Activity 05

Inside: activity at a glance · step-by-step session plan · facilitator notes · 3 student worksheets · assessment checklist

ACTIVITY 05 · AT A GLANCE

Truth and Trust in Public Life

Students consider three invented cases: an employee who reveals that a company hid a safety risk, a mayor who delays announcing bad news to avoid panic, and a journalist deciding whether to publish a private but newsworthy fact. Teams analyse duties, consequences and trust in each, then the class enquires into whether truth-telling is always required in public life.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the session students can:

- apply ethical reasoning to public cases;
- weigh truth, harm and trust;
- distinguish privacy and secrecy;
- construct a reasoned position.

KEY WORDS

whistleblowing · transparency · trust · privacy · public interest · harm

CURRICULUM LINKS

Citizenship: media and government. Business: ethics. English: argument writing.

1**STIMULUS**

Share something to think about

2**THINK**

Quiet thinking time

3**QUESTION**

Create and choose a question

4**ENQUIRE**

Reason together

5**BUILD**

Agree, disagree, add

6**REFLECT**

Last words

Materials (per class)

- Case cards
- Question and thinking-move cards
- Worksheets 1, 2 and 3

Before the session

- Read the stimulus and note possible concepts.
- Prepare question and thinking-move cards.
- Set out a circle so everyone can see each other.
- Print the worksheets.

SAFETY

Everyone may pass. Discuss ideas, not people, and use the story or invented examples rather than personal situations.

ACTIVITY 05 · SESSION PLAN

Step by step

Stay neutral: ask for reasons, examples and counter-examples rather than giving your own view.

Time	What happens	Say or ask
0–10 min Stimulus	Present the three public-life cases.	<i>"What did you notice?"</i>
10–22 min Questions	Students create questions in pairs and vote on one.	<i>"Which question is most interesting to talk about?"</i>
22–52 min Enquiry	Enquire into the chosen question, building on each other's ideas.	<i>"Should we always tell the truth even when it causes harm?"</i>
52–60 min Last words	Each person says one last thought or passes.	<i>"Has your thinking changed?"</i>

CHALLENGE CARD (print or copy onto the board)

Write a principle for truth-telling in public life and test it on all three cases.

ACTIVITY 05 · FACILITATOR NOTES

The philosophy in brief

The idea of public interest is often used to judge when revealing information is justified.

Trust depends on people believing that what others tell them is generally true.

Common ideas to listen for

- “Transparency always helps.” Timing and privacy matter.
- “Leaders should never withhold anything.” Some secrecy may be justified.
- “Whistleblowers are disloyal.” They may be serving a wider duty.

Adapting the activity

Support

Use one case.

Stretch

Compare with a real public inquiry you research.

WORKSHEET 1

Our questions

Name: _____

Class: _____ Date: _____

Write questions the stimulus makes you wonder about.

Our questions

Question	Who asked	Votes

WORKSHEET 2

Public cases

Analyse.

Public cases

Case	Truth demands...	Harm or trust issue
Employee		
Mayor		
Journalist		

WORKSHEET 3

Last words

Before and after.

Why does trust matter for a society? Before the enquiry I thought... Now I think... because...

FOR THE TEACHER

Assessment checklist

Use during the session. One sheet covers up to eight students; copy as needed.

Student	Asks a philosophical question	Gives reasons and examples	Listens and builds on others

Suggested codes: W = working towards · E = expected · G = greater depth

ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY

Truth and Trust in Public Life is a sample activity from the EduTrend Contents P4C Truth and Honesty programme (high school, level: advanced). Every activity in the programme follows the same format: a practical challenge, a clear session plan, facilitator notes and ready-to-print worksheets, so that teachers, club leaders and parents can run it without extra preparation.

Full 15-, 20- and 32-week programmes are available from EduStore at edutrend.org.

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