

The Golden Rule activities

1) Challenge the students to think of a good moral rule that we could all live by and discuss their suggestions.

2) Ask the students how they feel when someone is unkind, unfair, or cruel to them. Ask them to freeze-frame their faces to show how they would feel. Then ask them to show how they think someone else would feel if someone was unkind, unfair, or cruel to them. Did their faces change? What does that tell us? Do most of us feel a similar way to each other when we are treated kindly or cruelly by others? Does that help us think about how we should treat others?

3) Explain that many humanists use the Golden Rule to help them when deciding what to do. Show the positive and negative versions of the Golden Rule:

- Treat others as you would like to be treated yourself
- Do not treat others in a way you would not like to be treated yourself

Ask the students if they can think of how the Golden Rule might apply in particular cases (e.g. don't bully others if you would not like to be bullied).

Explore if there is a difference between the positive and negative versions.

4) Discuss whether any of your school rules have any connection to the Golden Rule.

5) Hand out the [Examples of the Golden Rule from around the world](#).

Explain that this rule appears to be almost universal. It has appeared in many different religions and worldviews throughout history and across the world.

Students could try to place the sources of the Golden Rule on the map.

Ask the students why they think so many worldviews share this rule.

Explain that many humanists believe this is because it evolved naturally from the fact that we are social animals who live together in communities. Treating each other well helped social groups to build trust, to work together, and to thrive.

6) Discuss the following questions:

- a) If people followed the Golden Rule, would they avoid doing bad things (e.g. lying, stealing)?
- b) If people followed the Golden Rule, would they *always* do the right thing?
- c) Would the world be a better place if everyone followed the Golden Rule?
- d) Is the Golden Rule enough on its own to make us good?

7) Ask the students if they can see any problems with the Golden Rule.

Share and discuss the [Applying the Golden Rule activity](#).

[The Golden Rule information sheet](#) provides content to help students think about this activity.

8) Share and discuss the [The Golden Rule information sheet](#), including some of the criticisms of the Golden Rule and the humanist responses.