

Primary

Exploring Codes for Living

Edited by Joyce Mackley



REtoday
Services

Exploring the 'Golden Rule': what would make the world a better place to live in?

For the teacher

The activities in this section provide speaking and listening, reflecting and responding activities to help children:

- consider the teachings of some religions and suggest a moral code which would enable everyone to live together happily and in peace
- identify similarities and differences between their own suggestions for a 'code for living' and the Golden Rule
- speculate on the potential impact of everyone following the Golden Rule.

Activity 1 How to live a good life: learning from religions

A photocopiable sheet provides children with 30 quotes from five different religions. This reflection and discussion activity has four steps. At each stage, emphasise the need for children to think carefully so that they can give reasons for their views.

1. **Individually:** ask children to spend 10 minutes reading through the statements and to colour in green the five statements they most strongly agree with, orange any others they think are important (but not as important as the first five) and red any they feel are not important for them.
2. **In groups of three:** pupils take it in turns to explain their choices, giving reasons.
3. **As a group** pupils work out a moral code for the world. This should be a statement that sums up the agreed ideas from their discussion.
4. **Using the Golden Rule Information sheet** (page 26) groups respond to the questions:

How is your moral code similar and different to the 'Golden Rule'?

What difference would it make to your school if everyone followed this guidance?

Activity 2 Exploring the Golden Rule

- This activity gets children speculating about what might happen if everyone always sought the best for others, guided by kindness, respect and care.

Information file



The Golden Rule: 'Always treat others as you would like them to treat you.'

- The Golden Rule sums up in one brief statement what millions of people at different times in different places have come to see as the ideal principle of shared living.
- Forms of this code are found in all the major religions and in the writings of the Greek philosophers Aristotle, Plato and Seneca. It provides a foundation of secular morality.
- The Golden Rule asks us to consider the wishes and interests of the other person before acting.
- By following the Golden Rule, actions are guided by kindness, respect and care.

Expectations

The following pupil-friendly criteria could be used to assess children's responses to the activities. Level 4 describes what most 11-year-olds should be able to do.

I can... (Level 3)

- identify some similarities and differences between codes for living suggested by our group and the Golden Rule
- say how I think everyone following the Golden Rule would make a difference to my school.

I can... (Level 4)

- suggest how following a code for living might impact on the actions of someone belonging to a religion
- offer my own reasoned, thoughtful responses to the question of what difference following the Golden Rule might make to my school.

Activity 1 How to live a good life: learn from religions

Here are 30 pieces of teaching about living a good life from five different religions: Islam, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity and Sikhism.


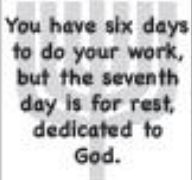
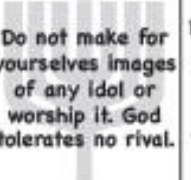
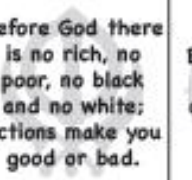
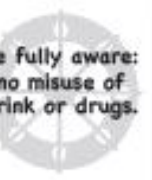




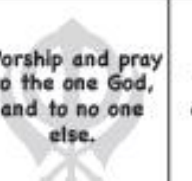



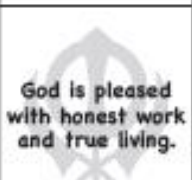
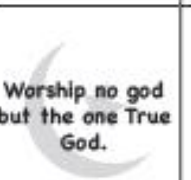
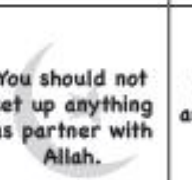
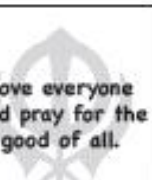

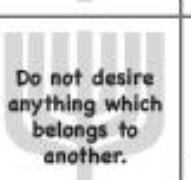
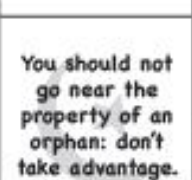
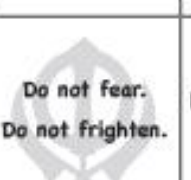
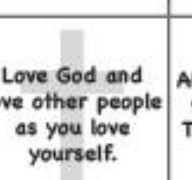
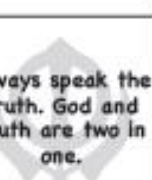
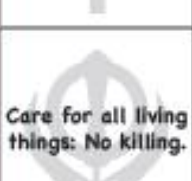
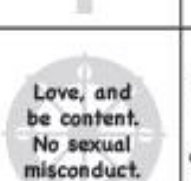
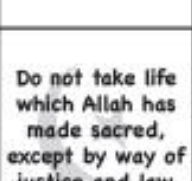
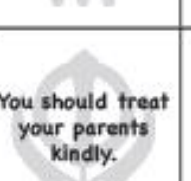
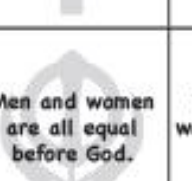
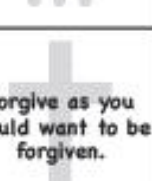
Colour the boxes in green, orange or red to show what you think about these. Spend a bit of time on this – you need to be able to give some reasons for your ideas later.

Green: This is one of my top five ideas about what's good

Orange: I think this is important but it is not in my top five (maximum 20)

Red: I don't think this is very important for me.

9-11

 Be truthful and honest: No lying or wrong speech.	Whatever you say should be just: don't be biased even to your own relatives.	 You have six days to do your work, but the seventh day is for rest, dedicated to God.	 Do not make for yourselves images of any idol or worship it. God tolerates no rival.	 Before God there is no rich, no poor, no black and no white; actions make you good or bad.	 Be fully aware: no misuse of drink or drugs.
 Remember God, work hard and help others.	 Be kind to people, animals and birds.	 Respect your father and your mother.	 Do not steal.	 Worship and pray to the one God, and to no one else.	 Do not accuse anyone falsely.
 Generosity in everything: No theft.	 Do not commit murder.	 God is pleased with honest work and true living.	 Worship no god but the one True God.	 You should not set up anything as partner with Allah.	 Love everyone and pray for the good of all.
 Do not use the name of God for evil purposes.	 Do not desire anything which belongs to another.	 You should not go near the property of an orphan: don't take advantage.	 Do not fear. Do not frighten.	 Love God and love other people as you love yourself.	 Always speak the truth. God and Truth are two in one.
 Care for all living things: No killing.	 Love, and be content. No sexual misconduct.	 Do not take life which Allah has made sacred, except by way of justice and law.	 You should treat your parents kindly.	 Men and women are all equal before God.	 Forgive as you would want to be forgiven.

- Discuss your choices in a group of three. What matters? Why? What's missing?
- Write your own moral code: what THREE precepts or guidance would you give to the world? How would you sum it up? Why? Explain carefully.
- What difference would it make to your school, town, country or the world if everyone followed your guidance?