

D I L E M M A POLLUTION PREDICAMENT

As part of their community service requirement, a group of students decides to study water-pollution levels in a river near their school, where people fish and swim. Every week they take samples from the stream back to school and analyze them in the school lab. From the very beginning they detect significant amounts of pollution that appear to indicate leaks from nearby household septic systems.



When they inquire what it would mean for home owners to fix the problem, they are surprised to learn that it can take thousands of dollars to repair a septic-system leak, since the entire system often needs to be replaced. The students know that the families in this neighborhood are unable to afford such high costs. How should they proceed? If the students blow the whistle, it may mean great hardship for these families. On the other hand, if they don't, what will that mean for the river, the people who spend time there, and the general health of the environment?

WHAT KIND OF DILEMMA IS THIS ?

First, state the two rights that come into conflict:

It is right, on the one hand, to _____

because _____

It is right, on the other hand, to _____

because _____

Then choose the dilemma paradigm (or paradigms) that fits.

TRUTH VS. LOYALTY

SHORT TERM VS. LONG TERM

SELF VS. COMMUNITY

JUSTICE VS. MERCY

WHAT SHOULD THE STUDENTS DO ?

▶ ENDS-BASED APPROACH

If the students reported the sewage problem, what do you think would happen?

On the other hand, if the students didn't do anything, what do you think would happen? _____

What is the greatest good for the greatest number? _____

▶ RULE-BASED APPROACH

What are some of the possible rules of action that the students might follow? List as many as you can.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____

Which of these seems best in this case? _____

If the students followed the rule that seems best, what action would they take? _____

▶ CARE-BASED APPROACH

Who are the "others" in this situation? _____


If the students put themselves in the position of each of the others, what would they do?

If _____ is the other, they would _____

If _____ is the other, they would _____

If _____ is the other, they would _____

So, the students should do the following: _____



IS THERE A THIRD WAY OUT?
[] YES [] NO

If so, explain. _____

In the end, what would you do and why? _____
