

Pre-Reading Ethics Activity

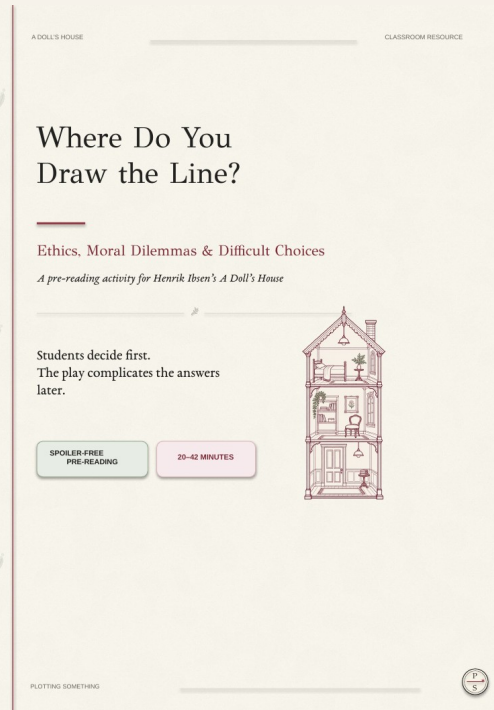
Students decide first. The play complicates the answers later.

8 ethical scenarios

multiple lesson formats

post-reading revisit

teacher guidance



What's Included

A complete pre-reading lesson—not just a set of discussion questions.

A DOLL'S HOUSE CLASSROOM RESOURCE

Choose Your Format

Use the same eight scenarios in the way that best fits your room and your time.

STATIONS Best for movement

Post the cards around the room. Students rotate with the response sheet, then compare answers in small groups.

ETHICS COURT Best for debate

Assign each group one or two cases. Groups deliver a verdict and defend it; classmates may challenge the reasoning.

MORAL LINE-UP Fastest option

Read selected cases aloud and have students place themselves along a continuum from "clearly wrong" to "clearly justified."

SILENT GALLERY Quietest option

Students respond independently, then leave brief reactions beside selected cases before the class discusses them.

Have students choose before they hear anyone else's answer. If they choose "depends," ask: "Depends on what?"

PLOTTING SOMETHING 3

A DOLL'S HOUSE CLASSROOM RESOURCE

Your First Reactions

Mark one choice before discussion. You can change your mind later.

Name _____ Period _____

Case	My call ☐ wrong ☐ justified ☐ depends	How responsible? 1-5	One reason
1	☐ wrong ☐ justified ☐ depends	1 2 3 4 5	
2	☐ wrong ☐ justified ☐ depends	1 2 3 4 5	
3	☐ wrong ☐ justified ☐ depends	1 2 3 4 5	
4	☐ wrong ☐ justified ☐ depends	1 2 3 4 5	
5	☐ wrong ☐ justified ☐ depends	1 2 3 4 5	
6	☐ wrong ☐ justified ☐ depends	1 2 3 4 5	
7	☐ wrong ☐ justified ☐ depends	1 2 3 4 5	
8	☐ wrong ☐ justified ☐ depends	1 2 3 4 5	

Responsibility scale: 1 = barely responsible; 5 = completely responsible

Put a star beside the case you most want to discuss.

PLOTTING SOMETHING 4

A DOLL'S HOUSE CLASSROOM RESOURCE

After the Play: Reconsider

Return to the answers you gave before reading.

Name _____ Period _____

01 The answer I changed most

Case # ____ Before, I thought... Now, I think...

02 The issue I see differently now

Circle one: law • secrecy • sacrifice • marriage • reputation • control • forgiveness

03 A character who made me reconsider

Character: _____ Why: _____

04 The case that now seems closest to Nora's dilemma

Case # ____ The connection is: _____

Big question: What, if anything, did the play change about what a person owes to a spouse, a family, or themselves?

PLOTTING SOMETHING 11

Flexible formats

Stations, Ethics Court, moral line-up, or silent gallery.

Student response

Students commit to an answer and rate responsibility before discussion.

Revisit after reading

Students return to the same ideas after Nora's situation is fully understood.

Eight Spoiler-Free Ethical Scenarios

The cases echo the play's tensions without giving Nora's situation away.

A DOLL'S HOUSE CLASSROOM RESOURCE

Ethics Case Files 3–4

Read each situation. Make your own call before discussing it with anyone else.

03 | The Secret Debt

One spouse secretly takes on a large debt to solve a family problem. They expect to repay it and keep the debt hidden because they do not want their partner to worry. The partner later discovers it and feels betrayed.

YOUR CALL

Which matters more: why the debt was taken on, or the decision to keep it secret?

04 | For Your Own Good

One partner makes an important decision for the other without asking because they are certain the other person will choose badly. The decision works out, but the person who was overruled feels controlled and humiliated.

YOUR CALL

Does being right about the outcome justify deciding for someone else?

PLOTTING SOMETHING 5

A DOLL'S HOUSE CLASSROOM RESOURCE

Ethics Case Files 7–8

Read each situation. Make your own judgment before discussing it with anyone else.

07 | The Unequal Partnership

In a marriage, one partner earns almost all of the household income. Because of that, they believe they should make the major financial decisions. The other partner has money for everyday expenses but is expected to ask before making larger purchases.

YOUR CALL

Does earning more money justify having more control over family decisions?

08 | The Breaking Point

An adult has spent years living the way their family and community expect. Over time, they begin to feel that the role no longer fits who they are or what they believe. Challenging those expectations would disappoint people they care about and could disrupt important relationships.

YOUR CALL

How much should someone sacrifice their own sense of self to meet obligations others depend on?

PLOTTING SOMETHING 7

Topics include secrecy, debt, loyalty, power, reputation, responsibility, and identity.

Students Have to Take a Position

They choose, rate responsibility, explain one reason, and then compare positions.

A DOLL'S HOUSE

CLASSROOM RESOURCE



Your First Reactions

Mark one choice before discussion. You can change your mind later.

Name _____ Period _____

Case	My call ☐ wrong ☐ justified ☐ depends	How responsible? 1-5	One reason
1		1 2 3 4 5	
2		1 2 3 4 5	
3		1 2 3 4 5	
4		1 2 3 4 5	
5		1 2 3 4 5	
6		1 2 3 4 5	
7		1 2 3 4 5	
8		1 2 3 4 5	

Responsibility scale: 1 = barely responsible; 5 = completely responsible



Put a star beside the case you most want to discuss.

PLOTTING SOMETHING



A DOLL'S HOUSE

CLASSROOM RESOURCE



Where Do You Draw the Line?

Place each case on the continuum. Cases may share a position.

Clearly
wrong

1 5 10

Clearly
justified

1. The Emergency Signature

Position: _____

2. The Necessary Lie

Position: _____

3. The Secret Debt

Position: _____

4. For Your Own Good

Position: _____

5. The Second Chance

Position: _____

6. The Cost of Loyalty

Position: _____

7. The Unequal Partnership

Position: _____

8. The Breaking Point

Position: _____

PLOTTING SOMETHING



The point is disagreement with reasons—not racing toward a single ‘right’ answer.

Built to Come Back After the Play

A DOLL'S HOUSE CLASSROOM RESOURCE

After the Play: Reconsider

Return to the answers you gave before reading.

Name _____ Period _____

01 The answer I changed most

Case # ____ Before, I thought... Now, I think...

02 The issue I see differently now

Circle one: law • secrecy • sacrifice • marriage • reputation • control • forgiveness

03 A character who made me reconsider

Character: _____ Why: _____

04 The case that now seems closest to Nora's dilemma

Case # ____ The connection is: _____

Big question: What, if anything, did the play change about what a person owes to a spouse, a family, or themselves?

PLOTTING SOMETHING 11

A DOLL'S HOUSE CLASSROOM RESOURCE

Teacher Connection Key

Use after students have read enough of the play for the connections to matter.

1 **Emergency Signature** Nora's forged signature; motive versus legality; whether repayment changes the moral judgment.

2 **Necessary Lie** Nora's secrecy; protection versus deception; care that becomes paternalism.

3 **Secret Debt** The loan; financial power; trust and autonomy within marriage.

4 **For Your Own Good** Torvald's paternalism; who gets to decide what another adult can handle.

5 **Second Chance** Krogstad and Mrs. Linde; reputation, second chances, and whether people can outgrow past wrongdoing.

6 **Reputation Problem** Torvald's fear of scandal; the limits of sacrifice; love versus self-protection.

7 **Unequal Partnership** Money, allowances, pet names, and the unequal structure of the Helmer marriage.

8 **Breaking Point** Nora's growing recognition that other people have defined her roles; obligation to others versus the need to think and choose for herself.

These are connections, not answer keys. The goal is for students to see how the play complicates judgments that seemed simpler before reading.

PLOTTING SOMETHING 12

Student reflection

Students identify the answer that changed most and connect a case back to Nora's dilemma.

Teacher connection key

A concise guide shows where each scenario connects to the play once those parallels will actually mean something.

Use the Version That Fits Your Period

A DOLL'S HOUSE CLASSROOM RESOURCE

20–25-Minute Quick Version

Enough time to establish the tensions without giving away the play.

3 MIN Commit first Students choose before hearing anyone else's answer. If they choose "depends," they have to say what it depends on.

8 MIN Four cases Use Cases 1, 2, 4, and 7. Students record a first answer and a responsibility rating.

9 MIN Compare positions Poll the room, then invite two students on different sides to explain their reasoning.

3 MIN Exit thought Which mattered most in your decisions today: intent, honesty, consequences, or responsibility?

Save the response sheet if you want to revisit this after the play. Students do not need all eight cases on day one.

PLOTTING SOMETHING 14

A DOLL'S HOUSE CLASSROOM RESOURCE

Full 42-Minute Version

Built for a 42-minute period with about 35 usable minutes.

4 MIN Silent start Students complete Cases 1 and 2 independently.

10 MIN Stations Pairs rotate through the remaining six cases and record quick answers.

8 MIN Moral line-up Choose two divisive cases. Students place themselves on the continuum and defend their position.

8 MIN Written defense Students choose one case and write the strongest argument they can make.

3 MIN Close Ask: "What mattered most today—honesty, loyalty, law, consequences, or something else?" Do not connect the cases to the play yet.

Later: return to the reflection page so students can compare their first answers with what they think after reading the play.

PLOTTING SOMETHING 15

20–25 minute quick version

Full 42-minute version

Both plans preserve the same basic structure: decide first, discuss, then return to the questions after reading.