

## Individual Practice

Ask students to independently work on the following scenario, applying the same process of ethical decision making.

### Scenario

You and your best friend are taking the same final exam, which will determine whether you both graduate on time. The night before the exam, your friend tells you that he obtained a copy of the test questions in advance and proposes to share it with you. He argues that many other students are likely doing the same, and refusing could put you at a disadvantage.

1. Does this put you in an ethical dilemma? Why or why not?
2. What are the ethical concerns in this situation?
3. How would you apply an ethical decision-making model to determine the best course of action?

### Proposed Answer Key for the Scenario: Academic Integrity vs. Friendship

#### 1. Does this put you in an ethical dilemma? Why or why not?

Yes, this scenario presents an ethical dilemma because it involves a conflict between:

- **Personal Integrity:** Cheating violates academic honesty policies.
- **Loyalty to a Friend:** Refusing the test questions may damage the friendship.
- **Fairness:** If others cheat, refusing to do so may put you at a competitive disadvantage.
- **Future Consequences:** Using the test questions could result in disciplinary actions if discovered.

Since both choices have significant moral and personal consequences, this situation qualifies as an ethical dilemma.

#### 2. What are the ethical concerns in this situation?

- **Academic Integrity:** Using stolen test questions is unethical and violates academic policies.
- **Fairness and Honesty:** Other students taking the test honestly would be unfairly disadvantaged.
- **Personal and Professional Ethics:** Dishonesty in academics can lead to a habit of unethical behavior in the workplace.
- **Consequences of Cheating:** If caught, both you and your friend could face academic penalties, including expulsion.

#### 3. Applying the Ethical Decision-Making Model

### a. Define the Real Issue

The core ethical issue is whether to uphold academic integrity or give in to peer pressure and unfairly gain an advantage.

### b. Key Questions to Better Understand the Situation

1. What are the consequences of using the stolen test questions for me, my friend, and others?
2. How would I feel if other students had an unfair advantage over me?
3. What do the school's academic integrity policies say about this situation?
4. How can I balance maintaining my friendship while making an ethical decision?

### c. Possible Solutions (Alternatives)

1. Accept the test questions and use them to prepare.
2. Refuse to use the test questions but remain silent.
3. Talk to your friend and convince him not to use the test questions.
4. Report the situation to the instructor or school administration.

### d. Evaluate Each Alternative Using the PLUS Model and Ethical Theories

- **Accepting the test questions** violates honesty and fairness (unethical).
- **Refusing but staying silent** avoids direct wrongdoing but does not address the broader ethical issue.
- **Convincing the friend not to cheat** upholds integrity while maintaining the friendship.
- **Reporting the situation** ensures fairness but may harm the friendship and put you at risk of retaliation.

### e. Recommended Course of Action

The best approach is to **refuse to use the test questions and try to persuade the friend not to cheat**. This solution balances integrity and friendship while encouraging ethical behavior. If the friend insists on cheating, reporting the issue may be necessary to uphold fairness.