

# Unit – Ethics in CS

## Essential Questions:

How should ethics play a role in our decisions when using computers?

What is an individual's responsibility to act ethically?

What is the government's responsibility to define ethical behavior?

## Lesson #1 – Scruples Game

**Objectives** - SWBAT argue the ethical considerations of the application of computing practices in economic decisions.

**Supporting EQ:** Do companies have an obligation to “do the right thing”?

## Standards (Rhode Island Computer Science Standards)

3-RC-CU-1 Evaluate the ways computing impacts personal, ethical, social, economic, and cultural practices.

## Overview

**Do Now:** What does it mean to act ethically? (This could be the daily attendance question)

**Activity:** Students will take on the role of the CEO of a company tackling a computing related ethical challenge. They will choose a side and argue their case with personal takes. Students will post these takes on a collaborative Jamboard that can be read by their classmates. They will choose one or two of the scenarios to share their opinion on.

## Notes

This is the first lesson of the unit and should be focused on students' personal opinions, rather than their understanding of ethics. This will encourage students to engage, even if they don't have the prerequisite knowledge and vocabulary to argue from an ethical standpoint. They will develop that over the course of the unit.

## Handouts (Digital Form)

Jamboard – Create a Jamboard with a slide dedicated to each of the following scenarios (feel free to change or add your own).

Situation 1: You are the CEO of an electronics company. You outsource your electronics production to a contractor whose low price allows you to make excellent profits on your electronics sales. Recent reports have unearthed the possibility that the contractor is using dirt-cheap prison labor to produce the electronics, which is why they are able to charge you so little. What do you do?

Situation 2: You are the CEO of a startup that makes an app. An advertising firm approaches you about targeting users directly in your key demographic. They offer a reasonable rate and you instantly see your sales increase as a result of this advertising. You then find out that the advertising firm is using data that was obtained without users' permission. What do you do?

Situation 3: You are the CEO of a car manufacturer. You were just informed that your cars have a brake-failure rate of around 0.01%. A recall would significantly affect your company's profits. What do you do?

Situation 4: You are the CEO of a new social networking site. Your company suddenly gains a large influx of users, and you are finally profitable. An internal investigation reveals that the majority of these new users have come to your platform because they were banned from another for hate speech. What do you do?

## Resources

Students should have access to a Jamboard, meaning they need computers/phones with internet access. A communication like Google Classroom will likely be required to deliver the content. Live instruction is not needed for this lesson, as all of the reading and posting is done asynchronously.

## Assignment/Assessments

Jamboard will contain students' takes on various issues, and provide a gallery for other students to view many different opinions on the same topic. Students are expected to interact respectfully.