

Your ethics are your sense of right and wrong. Some people also call your ethics your “morals” while others see a distinction between the two. One differentiation between these two terms is as follows: “Your ethics are what you believe to be right or wrong, while your morals are how well you live by those ethics in your day-to-day life.”

Whether you call them your *ethics* or *morals*, where did these beliefs about right and wrong originate? How did they develop? The only way to answer this question is to dig back into your past, looking for formative moments that helped shape you into the person you are today.

You may also want to analyze the actions of others and how these examples influenced you. *Philosophy for Dummies* puts it this way: “Socrates taught Plato. Plato taught Aristotle. Aristotle taught Alexander the Great, way back when he was just Alexander the Average. But Alexander became great through association with the great man. This is how it works. We become like the people we are around. And not because of what they say. But because of what we see them do” (Morris 120).

Assignment: Use experiences from your own life (autobiography) to tell how your sense of ethics was developed over the years. Talk about people, places, things, and ideas that have influenced you along the way.

Paper Requirements: _____

Questions your paper should answer:

- What are some of your specific beliefs about right and wrong?
 - Where do these beliefs come from? A religion or personal philosophy?
 - Have you always held the same beliefs or did they develop over time?
 - Did you ever have to modify your beliefs?
- Who are some people who helped teach you right from wrong?
 - *How* did those people teach you? Lecturing? Setting examples?
- What were some specific experiences that helped teach you right from wrong?
 - What specific lessons did these experiences teach you?

Grading: You will not be graded on your answers to these questions, but how well you use experiences from your own life to illustrate these answers.

Generic Statements	Specific Examples and Connections
<p>“My dad taught me right from wrong. He always showed me when I was doing wrong. Because of him I learned what was right. I would have to say that my dad was my biggest influence on my morals.”</p>	<p>“My dad taught me right from wrong. One day he caught me digging holes in the yard after he had told me not to. Because he followed through with my punishment, this experience taught me the importance of obeying my parents.”</p>