

Name: _____

Date: _____

Answer Key: Stoic Stones and Golden Means: A 2nd Grade Ethics Quest

Second graders analyze the 'Middle Way' and Zeno's porch lessons to solve tricky classroom dilemmas during social-emotional learning sessions.

1. Imagine you are very hungry. Aristotle says we should find the 'Middle Way.' If one end is eating nothing and the other end is eating ten cakes, what is the 'Middle Way'?

Answer: B) Eating one healthy snack

The 'Middle Way' or Golden Mean is about balance—choosing the right amount instead of too much or too little.

2. A philosopher named Zeno taught that even if it rains on your picnic, you can still choose to be happy because you cannot control the weather.

Answer: A) True

Zeno was a Stoic who taught that we should focus on our own choices and feelings rather than things we cannot change.

3. Anaxagoras believed that everything in the world is made of tiny 'seeds.' If a person is made of these seeds, what happens when they grow?

Answer: B) They take in more seeds from food

Anaxagoras thought all things contain a bit of everything else, so we grow by adding more 'seeds' through what we eat and drink.

4. Heraclitus said, 'You cannot step into the same river twice.' Why did he think the river is always different?

Answer: B) Because the water is always moving and changing

Heraclitus believed that 'change is the only constant,' meaning the world is always shifting like flowing water.

5. Epicurus taught that the best way to be happy is to buy the most expensive toys in the world.

Answer: B) False

Epicurus actually thought simple things, like talking with friends and being kind, brought the most happiness.

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6. Thales looked at the world and decided everything started from one thing. Since plants, animals, and people all need it to live, he said everything is made of ____.

Answer: C) Water

Thales is considered one of the first philosophers; he observed that moisture is necessary for all life.

7. If a friend is mean to you, a Stoic philosopher like Epictetus would tell you that you should:

Answer: C) Keep your own mind calm and be kind

Stoics believed we analyze our own reactions; we can't control others, but we can control our own kindness.

8. Pythagoras believed that the whole world could be understood using numbers. If he saw a beautiful song, what would he say made it beautiful?

Answer: B) The number and patterns of the sounds

Pythagoras discovered that musical notes have mathematical relationships, linking math to beauty.

9. Diogenes the Cynic lived in a large barrel and told a powerful King to 'stand out of my sunlight' because he didn't care about money or fame.

Answer: A) True

Diogenes practiced 'Cynicism,' which meant living simply and being honest, even if it seemed strange to others.

10. Democritus imagined that everything is made of tiny bits called 'atoms' that can't be cut. If you swap the atoms of an apple with the atoms of a toy, what happens?

Answer: B) The apple would look and feel like the toy

Democritus thought the shape and arrangement of these tiny bits (atoms) determined what an object is.