

The Parable Exercise

Task 1: *Please read the following parable:*

The Parable

Jane is a young woman about 21 years old. For a long time she has been engaged to a young man named **Bob**, and she is coming from a great distance to meet him for their scheduled wedding. The problem she faces is that between her and her betrothed there lies a river. No ordinary river, mind you, but a deep, wide river infested with hungry crocodiles.

Jane ponders how she can cross the river. She thinks of a man who has a boat, whose name is **Paul**. She approaches and asks him to take her across the river. **Paul** replies, "Yes, I'll take you across the river if you'll spend the evening with me."

Shocked at this offer, she turns to another acquaintance, **Jack**, and tells him her story. **Jack** responds by saying, "Poor **Jane**, I understand your problem, but I don't see how I can help. It's really your problem, not mine."

Jane, in desperation, decided to return to **Paul** and spends the evening with him. In the morning, **Paul** takes her across the river. She completes her journey and arrives in time.

Her reunion with **Bob** is warm, but on the evening before they are to be married, **Jane** feels compelled to tell **Bob** how she succeeded in getting across the river. **Bob** responds by saying, "I can't believe you would do such a thing. I wouldn't marry you if you were the last woman on earth." And he banishes her as a soiled woman.

The next day **Jane** meets **Thomas** who says, "I don't love you, but I will marry you."

What more do you wish that you knew from the story?

Task 2: Write down, in rank order, the character whose behavior you *MOST APPROVE* to *LEAST APPROVE*.

MOST APPROVE	
LEAST APPROVE	

Task 3: Get into small groups of 3-6. Write down, in rank order, the character whose behavior your group *MOST APPROVES* to *LEAST APPROVES*. You must find a group consensus.

MOST APPROVE	
LEAST APPROVE	

Task 4: In your small groups discuss: What aspects of your culture informed your opinion about the behaviors of each person? How do you decide what is morally right and wrong?

Task 5: Working alone, please write 200 words on: What did you learn about other cultures from this exercise? How do other cultures determine whether a behavior is morally preferable over another behavior? What informs moral decision making in other countries?