

2022-2023 Middle School Ethics Bowl Case Set

To learn more about this event, please visit:

<https://www.ethicsatkentplace.org/student-programs/middle-school-ethics-bowl>

Cases Written by the Writing Committee:

Ayushi Wadhwa (middle school student), Ben Who (high school student),
Claire Cherill (high school student), John Rockwell (middle school teacher),
Juliet Schwartz (high school student), Matt Ferguson (committee
member), and Sonia Nikhil (middle school student)

And edited for final approval by the Middle School Ethics Bowl

Executive Committee:

Ariel Sykes, Deric Barber, Dustin Webster, Erik Kenyon, Karen Rezach, Matt
Ferguson, Michael Vazquez, and Roberta Israeloff

Case 4: Ambiguous AI art

Anita is a sophomore in high school and loves computer programming. One day Anita learned that Artificial Intelligence (AI) can be used to make art. AI art analyzes patterns from artwork created by human artists and uses these works to create new pieces of art. Anita was amazed to discover that one piece of AI art, “Edmond de Belamy,” sold for \$432,500!

For her end-of-year computer programming project, Anita decides to create a Python computer program that allows her to choose images for AI to fuse together. The program worked and Anita soon fell in love with creating AI art. Over the summer, she worked on her AI artwork and decided to go beyond printing the compiled images created by her AI program. After printing the new artwork, she used paint and mixed media to add texture, dimension and color. Anita thought it made her work more original. Her favorite piece was “Broken Sunset” which she posted on Instagram.

“Broken Sunset” garnered a great deal of attention and praise online. Someone even offered to buy it from her for \$2,000! However, Anita had an ethical dilemma when two artists, Katara and Amari, informed her that elements of “Broken Sunset” were from their original artwork. They were upset that Anita did not ask for permission to use their work in the AI program. Katara wanted Anita to share the credit for the art and a share of the money from selling the artwork, but Amari wanted Anita to destroy the artwork. Anita was torn about what to do, but knew that she had to act quickly before the conflict escalated on social media.

Match Question: What should Anita do?

Study Questions:

1. Was Anita acting unethically by making, posting, and considering selling “Broken Sunset”?
2. Is there a difference between being inspired by someone’s artwork and using someone’s artwork?
3. How much does a work of art need to be changed from the original in order to claim that it is a new and original work?