High School Ethics Bowl Template for Cases

□ Main Issue
  o What is the moral question? What makes this an ethical issue?
  o Before jumping to whether an issue is right or wrong, try to identify the main details of the case. What stands out as an important detail/piece of evidence?
  o Do you notice any assumptions in the case or study questions? An assumption is an unstated claim; an implicit idea or statement that is not supported by evidence and is not explained in any of the sentences. For example, the question: ‘Should the government limit people from having no more than 2 children or no more than 4 children?’ assumes that the government should be able to limit the number of children at all. Why should we assume that the government can limit the number of children a person can have? This is a substantial claim that needs evidence and argumentation (we cannot just assume it).

□ Position
  o Try to identify two or more positions/stances that you could take in response to the case/study question.
  o What are the various ways you could approach/respond to this case?
  o Can you re-formulate the study questions to identify a new issue?
  o Does the case leave out any important information?

□ Reasons
  o For each position, identify the main reasons (evidence) in support of that position.
  o For each position, identify the main reasons (evidence) against that position.
  o You will need to do some outside research to find evidence—if a case cites a particular law, then read several articles about the law. If the case cites female infanticide as a reason to end the One Child Policy, then search for statistics on the number of female infanticides and what is being done to end this practice.
  o Citing statistics can inform your position, but statistics will not answer whether something is right or wrong. For instance, even if there are __ billion chickens killed each year, it does not follow that this practice is wrong. You have to provide additional reasons why it is wrong to kill non-human animals.
  o Organize these reasons like an outline of a paper:
    ▪ Reason A
    ▪ Reason B
    ▪ Reason C
    ▪ Conclusion
  o Organize your reasons for the two main positions, so you can argue either side of the case and raise new ideas/objections during the Ethics Bowl.