Developing an ethical dilemma

A good research question is the foundation of a strong, interrogative reflective project. The question must identify a clear ethical dilemma that is open to more than one possible answer.

Here’s how to begin!

1. The Issue
   Find an issue that is connected to your career-related study.
   - Example
     Field of study: Business studies
     Possible issues:
     - Child labour
     - Pay
     - Worker rights
     - Advertising ethics

2. The Question
   Formulate a question that simply asks you to describe what you know about the issue. DO NOT STOP here or your project will just be descriptive and not interrogative!
   - Example
     Is child labour common in some countries?

3. One step further
   Revise your question so that it asks for one solution to the problem or issue.
   - Example
     How does child labour affect both the children and the economy in a country and what is being done to prevent it?

4. Multiple Solutions
   Try to think of an ethical dilemma related to the issue and open up the question so that it leads to multiple answers.
   - Example
     How concerned should we be with child labour?

5. Enlarge the focus
   Now focus on the ethical dilemma and enlarge it so that the question goes beyond the limits of the original observation. You should have more than one possible answer and require the use of an argument to make your viewpoint clear.
   - Example
     Knowing that many poor communities rely on income from all family members, should child labour be entirely illegal?

Now you’re ready to begin your research and plan out your reflective project!