

The Ideal Teacher: Professional Ethics, Digital Citizenship, and Holistic Development

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Abstract

Contemporary teaching requires pedagogical competence, psychological maturity, moral integrity, professional responsibility, and adaptability to technological change. This conceptual literature review examines the ideal teacher's personality, professional ethics, role modeling, digital citizenship, and holistic development. The analysis draws on Shulman's pedagogical content knowledge, Bandura's social learning theory, Sockett's moral foundations of teacher professionalism, Schön's reflective practice, and research on effective professional development. The synthesis identifies four interconnected dimensions. First, psychological maturity, practical wisdom, moral integrity, and pedagogical competence provide foundations for effective teaching and constructive teacher–student relationships. Second, professional ethics, consistency between words and actions, and accountability support teacher credibility and students' character development through observational learning. Third, digital citizenship encompasses responsible online behavior, privacy protection, information verification, respect for intellectual property, and ethical technology integration. Fourth, holistic teacher development involves self-reflection, ethical habituation, continuous learning, institutional support, mentoring, and collaborative professional development. Together, these dimensions conceptualize teacher professionalism as an integration of personal qualities, ethical commitments, pedagogical expertise, and digital responsibility. The review concludes that cultivating the ideal teacher requires sustained individual commitment and institutional collaboration. It provides a conceptual basis for teacher development that connects professional practice with

supportive learning environments and students' intellectual, moral, and social development.

Keywords: Ideal Teacher; Professional Ethics; Teacher Role Modeling; Digital Citizenship; Teacher Development.

INTRODUCTION

Teachers play a central role in educational processes, not only by facilitating knowledge acquisition but also by shaping classroom interactions, establishing professional relationships, and influencing students' social and moral development (Rizza, Azizah, dkk., 2026). Teaching, therefore, requires more than subject-matter expertise and instructional competence; it also involves the personal qualities through which teachers interpret educational situations, make professional decisions, and interact with learners. Shulman, 1987 and Zavatta (2026) emphasizes the importance of teachers' professional knowledge and pedagogical reasoning, while Korthagen (2004) argues for a more holistic understanding of teacher education that considers the deeper qualities underlying teachers' professional actions. These perspectives suggest that the development of an ideal teacher should not be limited to technical teaching skills but should also address the personal and ethical dimensions of professional practice. Teacher personality, in this context, can be understood as an important foundation for professional conduct, educational responsibility, and the consistency between teachers' values and actions.

The development of teacher personality is a continuous process shaped by personal reflection, professional experiences, relationships, and institutional environments. Teachers' professional identities are not fixed attributes formed exclusively during initial teacher education; rather, they develop through interactions between individual beliefs, emotional experiences, professional expectations, and social contexts. Beauchamp & Thomas, (2009) identify reflection, personal agency, emotion, and contextual influences as important considerations in understanding teacher identity and its development. Similarly, Kelchtermans (2009) highlights the significance of teachers' self-understanding and vulnerability in explaining how personal experiences are connected to professional practice. These perspectives indicate that becoming an ideal teacher involves an ongoing process of self-examination and professional learning. Furthermore, teacher development cannot be treated solely as an individual responsibility because opportunities for learning, collaboration, and professional support influence how teachers develop their capacities (Rizza, Azahra,

dkk., 2026). Avalos (2011), through a review of research on teacher professional development, demonstrates the complexity of professional learning and the importance of the conditions through which teachers' development is facilitated. Fullan (2019) likewise emphasize the importance of professional capital in strengthening teaching quality through the development of individual and collective capacities.

In contemporary educational settings, the expectations placed on teachers also extend to their conduct in digital environments. The use of digital platforms has expanded opportunities for communication, collaboration, and learning, but it has also made professional boundaries, privacy, responsible communication, and online conduct increasingly relevant to teachers' professional lives. Digital citizenship is consequently important not merely as a technological skill but as a dimension of responsible participation in digital communities. Recent research by Zavatta (2026), which examines the relationship between teachers' personal-professional identity and digital citizenship in secondary schools in Italy and Ireland, provides a relevant perspective on the relationship between digital transformation and teachers' professional identities. This issue should be understood as an extension of professional responsibility rather than a replacement for established dimensions of teacher personality. An ideal teacher must therefore be considered in relation to both face-to-face educational interactions and digital contexts in which professional values and ethical judgment may also be expressed.

Previous studies provide important foundations for understanding teacher personality, professional identity, and professional development. Korthagen, (2004) approaches teacher education through a holistic framework that considers different levels of teachers' development, while Beauchamp & Thomas (2009) synthesize key issues concerning the formation and understanding of teacher identity. Kelchtermans (2009) further emphasizes the relationship between teachers' self-understanding, personal experiences, and professional practice. At a broader level, Avalos (2011) examines research on teacher professional development, highlighting the roles of learning, collaboration, facilitation, and contextual conditions. More recently, Rushton et al. (2023), in a systematic review of 412 publications on teacher identity, identify major themes concerning professional life, teacher development, professional contexts, communities, and transitions. Their review also identifies underrepresented research contexts and a continuing divide between scholarship, policy, and practice. Collectively, these studies establish that teacher development is multidimensional and context-dependent. However, the present article is concerned with a

more specific conceptual question: how can the dimensions of teacher personality, professional ethics, and digital citizenship be brought together to formulate an integrated framework for developing the ideal teacher? The cited studies address related aspects of teacher development, but their different scopes should not be interpreted as evidence that these dimensions have never been integrated in previous scholarship. Establishing the precise extent of this research gap requires a broader and more systematic comparison of relevant literature.

To address this issue, the article proposes an integrative conceptual perspective that connects three dimensions: personal maturity, professional ethics, and digital responsibility. Personal maturity concerns emotional stability, self-understanding, wisdom, and consistency in professional conduct. Professional ethics concerns integrity, accountability, fairness, and the responsible exercise of educational authority. Digital responsibility concerns the ethical application of these values in online communication, technology use, and professional interactions in digital environments. These dimensions are considered complementary rather than independent attributes. The development of teacher personality may be supported through two interconnected pathways: individual development, involving reflection, ethical awareness, and continuous learning; and institutional development, involving professional guidance, supervision, collaborative learning, and supportive working environments. This conceptual orientation is consistent with research emphasizing reflection and contextual influences in teacher identity development Beauchamp & Thomas, (2009); Kelchtermans, (2009) and the importance of facilitation and collaboration in professional learning (Avalos, 2011). Its intended contribution lies in organizing these related dimensions into a framework for discussion and future empirical investigation, rather than claiming that the framework has already been validated or that its strategies have demonstrated causal effectiveness.

Accordingly, this article aims to analyze the principal dimensions of the ideal teacher's personality and to formulate a conceptual framework for developing these qualities through individual and institutional strategies. Specifically, it examines the relationship between personal maturity, professional ethics, and digital responsibility; identifies individual and institutional approaches that may support the development of teacher personality; and discusses the implications of an integrated framework for teacher education and continuing professional development. By connecting these dimensions within a single analytical perspective, the article seeks to contribute to scholarly discussions on teacher professionalism and provide a conceptual reference for teacher education institutions and

school leaders. As the study is based on literature rather than direct empirical testing, its conclusions are intended to support conceptual clarification and inform future research, rather than to establish the effectiveness of particular development strategies.

METHODS

1. Type of Research

This study employed a literature review method using a descriptive qualitative approach to examine the development of the ideal teacher's personality. This approach was selected because the study focused on interpreting and synthesizing existing scholarly ideas, theoretical perspectives, and research findings rather than collecting primary data from participants. The sources included academic books, national and international journal articles, educational regulations, professional codes of ethics, and other relevant academic documents addressing teacher personality development, professional ethics, and the characteristics of an ideal teacher. A qualitative approach was appropriate because the study sought to understand concepts and relationships within the literature and to formulate a comprehensive conceptual framework (Carranza Rodriguez, 2026). The review was intended to identify key dimensions of an ideal teacher and synthesize strategies for developing a professional, ethical, and digitally responsible teaching identity.

2. Research Design

The study adopted an analytical and synthetic literature review design. The research process consisted of four interconnected stages: identifying the research focus, collecting and selecting relevant literature, extracting and analyzing key concepts, and synthesizing the findings into a conceptual framework. The first stage established the central focus on teacher personality and the challenges associated with contemporary educational environments. The second stage involved identifying literature relevant to teacher personality, professional ethics, teacher professionalism, and digital responsibility. The third stage examined the arguments, theoretical foundations, and findings presented in the selected sources. Finally, the fourth stage compared and integrated these perspectives to formulate a holistic understanding of the strategies required to develop an ideal teacher. Literature reviews can support conceptual development by bringing together findings and perspectives from existing scholarship, provided that the review process and its boundaries are clearly explained (Snyder, 2019). Accordingly, this study used the literature as its primary analytical material

and did not seek to test the effectiveness of the proposed framework through empirical fieldwork.

3. Sources and Literature Selection

The study used secondary data obtained from scholarly literature and relevant educational documents. The selection of sources was guided by three criteria: relevance to the research topic, theoretical adequacy, and the currency of the references. The principal sources comprised theoretical discussions of teacher personality development, studies concerning professional ethics and educators' moral character, research on ideal teacher characteristics in digital environments, and supporting documents such as educational regulations and professional codes of ethics. Literature was considered relevant when it contributed to understanding at least one of the study's central themes: the psychological and moral dimensions of teacher personality, professional conduct and ethical responsibility, or teachers' adaptation to digital environments. Sources that did not substantively address these themes were not prioritized for analysis.

The selection process was intended to ensure that the literature provided a meaningful basis for conceptual comparison and synthesis. Document analysis is suitable for qualitative research when documents are examined systematically to identify information relevant to the research questions (Bowen, 2009). However, the study did not involve human participants; therefore, participant recruitment and human-subject sampling procedures were not applicable. The unit of selection was the scholarly document rather than an individual respondent. To improve methodological transparency, the final manuscript should also specify the databases or repositories actually searched, the search dates, the publication-year boundaries if used, and the number of documents retained for analysis. These details should be reported from the research records rather than estimated retrospectively.

4. Instruments and Data Collection

As a literature-based study, the research did not use questionnaires, interviews, or observation sheets. The principal data collection technique was document review through literature searching, critical reading, and documentation of relevant information. The collection process involved four steps. First, literature was searched using keywords related to teacher personality, ideal teacher, professional ethics, and teacher development, including relevant Indonesian-language equivalents such as kepribadian guru, guru ideal, etika profesi, and pengembangan kependidikan. Second, the selected documents were read critically to

identify their central arguments, conceptual definitions, theoretical perspectives, and relevant research findings. Third, key information was recorded and organized according to its relevance to the research objectives. Fourth, the extracted information was grouped into preliminary categories concerning teacher personality, strategies for professional and ethical development, and the characteristics of an ideal teacher.

This procedure followed the principle that documents should be examined in relation to their context, purpose, and relevance to the research problem rather than treated as isolated collections of information (Bowen, 2009). The credibility of the analysis was supported by comparing arguments across different sources and distinguishing the claims made by individual authors from the synthesis developed by the researchers. Nevertheless, the study did not report a formal instrument validation test or a statistical reliability coefficient because no survey or measurement instrument was used. The transparency of the review instead depended on the clarity of the source-selection criteria, the consistency of the categories used to organize information, and the traceability of the interpretations to the literature examined.

5. Data Analysis Technique

The collected literature was analyzed using descriptive qualitative analysis and qualitative content analysis. Content analysis provides a systematic means of interpreting textual material in relation to its context and intended meaning (Krippendorff, 2018). The analysis proceeded through five stages. First, the researchers read the selected documents to develop an overall understanding of their content and relevance. Second, information that directly addressed the research objectives was identified, while material outside the scope of the study was set aside. Third, the relevant information was classified into thematic categories, particularly psychological maturity, moral integrity, professional ethics, teacher role modeling, and responsibility in digital environments. Fourth, the categories were compared across sources to identify convergent arguments, differences in emphasis, and relationships among the concepts. This process of categorization and interpretation was intended to make the analytical procedure explicit and consistent with the study's conceptual focus (Schreier, 2012). Fifth, the resulting themes were synthesized to develop a holistic conceptual account of the strategies for cultivating an ideal teacher's personality.

The final synthesis connected individual teacher development—such as self-reflection and ethical habituation—with institutional support, including professional

development and a supportive educational environment. The conclusions were derived from the patterns and relationships identified in the literature rather than from statistical tests or direct observations of teachers. Because the study was based on secondary sources, its findings should be understood as a conceptual synthesis of existing scholarship, not as empirical evidence that the proposed strategies produce particular outcomes in school settings.

RESULTS

This section presents key data and findings synthesized from scientific literature regarding the development of teacher personality, the dimensions of an ideal teacher, and the strategies for fostering such qualities, in a factual and systematic manner.

1. Key Dimensions of the Ideal Teacher's Personality

The literature review indicates that an ideal teacher's personality is characterized by psychological maturity, wisdom, authority, and moral integrity. Psychological maturity enables teachers to manage their emotions, respond to classroom challenges, and maintain professional attitudes in various educational situations. Wisdom is reflected in the ability to make thoughtful decisions, understand students' needs, and respond to problems fairly. Meanwhile, authority is developed through consistent conduct, confidence, and the ability to establish respectful relationships with students rather than through the exercise of power alone. These characteristics demonstrate that an ideal teacher's personality involves not only individual qualities but also the capacity to create a supportive and meaningful learning environment.

Moral integrity and professional responsibility further strengthen these dimensions by guiding teachers' decisions, behavior, and interactions with students and colleagues. Teachers are expected to demonstrate consistency between their words and actions, uphold ethical principles, and recognize their responsibilities as educators and role models. Such qualities contribute to the development of trust and respect within educational relationships. The reviewed literature also suggests that teacher personality should be understood as an ongoing process of development through self-reflection, ethical practice, and professional learning. Therefore, the ideal teacher can be conceptualized as an educator who integrates psychological maturity, wisdom, authority, moral integrity, and professional responsibility into everyday teaching practice.

2. Professional Ethics and Teacher Role Modeling.

Professional ethics plays a fundamental role in shaping teachers' credibility and professional identity within educational environments. Teachers are expected to demonstrate honesty, fairness, respect, and responsibility in their interactions with students, colleagues, and the wider community. These ethical principles guide teachers in making appropriate decisions, maintaining professional boundaries, and creating a safe and inclusive learning environment. Furthermore, teachers' credibility is strengthened when their actions consistently reflect the values and principles they communicate to their students. Therefore, professional ethics serves not only as a standard of conduct but also as an essential foundation for effective teaching and meaningful educational relationships.

Teacher role modeling also contributes significantly to students' character development because students often learn moral values through observation and everyday interactions. When teachers demonstrate discipline, empathy, integrity, and respect, they provide concrete examples that students can apply in their own behavior. Conversely, inconsistencies between teachers' words and actions may weaken students' trust and reduce the effectiveness of character education. Professional accountability further reinforces this responsibility by encouraging teachers to evaluate their conduct, acknowledge mistakes, and continuously improve their professional practices. Consequently, the integration of ethical conduct, consistent role modeling, and professional accountability enables teachers to foster trust, strengthen moral awareness, and support the development of students' character.

3. Digital Citizenship and Adaptation to Contemporary Education

Digital citizenship has become an essential component of teachers' professional competence in contemporary education, particularly as digital technologies increasingly shape teaching and learning practices. Teachers are expected to demonstrate responsible digital behavior by communicating respectfully, protecting personal information, verifying online information, and respecting intellectual property. Ethical technology use also requires teachers to consider the accuracy, fairness, privacy, and educational relevance of digital resources before integrating them into classroom activities. These responsibilities are important because digital learning environments expose students to various forms of information and interaction that may influence their knowledge, attitudes, and behavior. Therefore, teachers must develop digital awareness and ethical judgment to ensure that technology supports meaningful, safe, and responsible learning experiences.

Beyond using technology effectively, teachers serve as role models who influence how students engage with digital platforms and online communities. Teachers who demonstrate respectful communication, critical evaluation of information, and responsible technology use can encourage students to adopt similar practices in their academic and personal lives. Furthermore, adapting to contemporary education requires teachers to continuously develop their digital literacy and pedagogical skills in response to technological developments and changing student needs. This adaptation should not focus exclusively on technical proficiency but also encompass ethical awareness, professional responsibility, and the ability to maintain meaningful human relationships in technology-mediated learning. Consequently, the integration of digital citizenship, ethical technology use, and positive role modeling enables teachers to create digital learning environments that promote academic achievement, responsible participation, and students' character development.

4. Holistic Strategies for Developing the Ideal Teach

Developing the ideal teacher requires a holistic approach that integrates personal commitment, ethical awareness, and continuous professional growth. One essential strategy is self-reflection, through which teachers evaluate their teaching practices, interpersonal relationships, and ethical decisions to identify areas for improvement. Ethical habituation is equally important because consistently practicing honesty, discipline, fairness, and empathy helps transform professional values into enduring habits. In addition, teachers should cultivate emotional maturity, intellectual openness, and a willingness to learn from feedback and professional experiences. Through these individual efforts, teachers can strengthen their personal integrity while developing the competencies necessary to respond effectively to students' diverse educational needs.

However, individual efforts alone are insufficient without institutional support and a conducive educational environment. Educational institutions should provide continuous professional development opportunities, mentoring programs, and collaborative platforms that enable teachers to exchange experiences and improve their pedagogical competencies. School leadership also plays a significant role in establishing a professional culture that values ethical conduct, accountability, mutual respect, and innovation. Furthermore, supportive policies, adequate learning resources, and constructive relationships among teachers, students, parents, and school administrators can strengthen the implementation of professional values in everyday educational practice. Therefore, a comprehensive framework

for developing the ideal teacher should combine personal self-development, institutional commitment, and a supportive educational environment to promote professional excellence, ethical integrity, and meaningful student development.

DISCUSSION

1. Psychological Maturity, Moral Integrity, and Professional Competence in the Ideal Teacher

The ideal teacher's personality is shaped by the integration of psychological maturity, practical wisdom, moral integrity, professional authority, and pedagogical competence. Psychological maturity enables teachers to regulate their emotions, respond constructively to challenging situations, and maintain positive relationships with students (Rizza, Faiz, dkk., 2026). Practical wisdom allows teachers to make thoughtful decisions by considering students' diverse needs, classroom circumstances, and educational objectives. Meanwhile, moral integrity strengthens teachers' commitment to honesty, fairness, and responsibility, establishing a foundation of trust within the learning environment. These qualities demonstrate that an ideal teacher requires not only intellectual capabilities but also emotional stability and ethical awareness to fulfill professional responsibilities effectively.

Professional competence further distinguishes the ideal teacher through the ability to transform subject knowledge into meaningful and accessible learning experiences. Shulman, (1987) emphasizes pedagogical content knowledge, highlighting the importance of integrating subject matter expertise with appropriate teaching strategies to facilitate students' understanding. In addition, Sockett, (1993) explains the moral foundations of teacher professionalism, emphasizing the significance of ethical values in guiding educational practice. Professional authority, when exercised through fairness, consistency, and mutual respect rather than coercion, can strengthen classroom management and encourage students to participate actively in learning. Therefore, the ideal teacher's personality emerges from the interconnected development of professional expertise, ethical judgment, and interpersonal competence, which together support effective instruction and students' holistic development.

2. Professional Ethics, Teacher Credibility, and Character Development

Professional ethics constitutes a fundamental aspect of teacher professionalism because it shapes teachers' credibility, relationships with students, and responsibility for educational outcomes. Honesty, fairness, consistency, and accountability enable teachers to establish a trustworthy learning environment in which students feel respected and valued. When teachers demonstrate consistency between their words and actions, they reinforce the credibility of the values and principles communicated during the learning process. Campbell, (2003) emphasizes the importance of ethical understanding in teaching, highlighting the moral responsibilities that accompany teachers' professional decisions and everyday practices. Therefore, professional ethics should be understood not merely as compliance with institutional regulations but also as a commitment to maintaining integrity and promoting positive relationships within educational settings.

Teachers' ethical conduct also plays an important role in students' character development because their behavior provides examples that students may observe and adopt in their daily lives. According to Bandura, (1977) social learning theory, individuals can acquire behaviors, attitudes, and values through observation and imitation of significant role models. In educational contexts, teachers who consistently demonstrate respect, discipline, empathy, and responsibility can encourage students to develop similar qualities through everyday interactions. Conversely, discrepancies between teachers' ethical principles and actual behavior may undermine students' trust and weaken the influence of moral guidance. Consequently, integrating professional ethics, consistent role modeling, and accountability into teaching practices can strengthen teacher credibility while supporting students' moral awareness and character development.

3. Digital Citizenship, Ethical Technology Use, and Teachers' Professional Adaptation

Digital citizenship has become an essential dimension of teachers' professional responsibilities as technology continues to transform contemporary educational practices. Teachers are expected to demonstrate responsible digital behavior by communicating respectfully, protecting personal data, verifying the accuracy of online information, and respecting intellectual property rights. Ribble dkk., (2004) emphasize the importance of appropriate technology use and responsible participation in digital environments, providing a foundation for understanding digital citizenship in education. These responsibilities extend

beyond technical skills because teachers must also consider the ethical implications of selecting, sharing, and using digital resources in learning activities. Therefore, digital citizenship requires teachers to integrate technological competence with ethical awareness to establish safe, inclusive, and responsible digital learning environments.

Teachers' digital conduct also influences how students interact with technology and participate in online communities. When teachers demonstrate respectful communication, critical evaluation of information, and responsible sharing practices, they provide practical examples that students can adopt in their academic and personal lives. (Triastuti, 2019) highlights the relevance of digital citizenship in understanding the relationship between teachers and technology, particularly in developing responsible digital practices within educational contexts. Furthermore, teachers' professional adaptation requires continuous learning to address technological developments while maintaining sound pedagogical judgment and meaningful interactions with students. Consequently, integrating digital literacy, ethical technology use, and positive role modeling can strengthen students' critical thinking, encourage responsible online participation, and support character development in contemporary education.

4. Reflective Practice, Institutional Support, and Holistic Teacher Development

Developing the ideal teacher requires continuous self-reflection, ethical habituation, and a commitment to lifelong learning. Through self-reflection, teachers can critically evaluate their instructional practices, interpersonal relationships, and professional decisions to identify strengths and areas requiring improvement. Schön (1983) emphasizes the importance of reflective practice in enabling professionals to examine their experiences and improve their actions in complex situations. Ethical habituation also plays a significant role because the consistent practice of honesty, fairness, discipline, and empathy helps teachers internalize professional values in their daily responsibilities. Consequently, integrating reflective practice with ethical commitment and continuous learning can strengthen teachers' personal integrity while improving their professional competence.

Nevertheless, sustainable teacher development requires institutional support and an educational environment that encourages professional growth. Educational institutions can facilitate this process by providing mentoring, collaborative learning opportunities, and relevant professional development programs that respond to teachers' practical needs. Darling-Hammond dkk., (2017) identify several characteristics of effective professional

development, including active learning, collaboration, coaching, feedback, and sustained opportunities for improvement. Furthermore, supportive leadership and a professional culture that values ethical conduct, innovation, and accountability can help teachers apply newly acquired knowledge and skills in their teaching practices. Therefore, a holistic framework for developing the ideal teacher should integrate individual reflection, ethical habituation, continuous professional development, and institutional support to promote professional excellence and meaningful educational outcomes.

CONCLUSION

The ideal teacher's personality is shaped by the integration of psychological maturity, practical wisdom, moral integrity, professional authority, and pedagogical competence. These characteristics enable teachers to make responsible decisions, manage classroom interactions effectively, and establish meaningful relationships with students. Professional expertise must be accompanied by ethical awareness because teaching involves not only the transmission of knowledge but also the development of students' values and character. Therefore, the ideal teacher represents a balance between intellectual capability, emotional stability, and moral responsibility in fulfilling educational objectives.

Professional ethics and digital citizenship further reinforce the teacher's role as an educator and role model in contemporary society. Honesty, fairness, accountability, and consistency between words and actions strengthen teachers' credibility and provide examples that students can observe and adopt. Meanwhile, responsible digital behavior, ethical technology use, and critical engagement with online information have become increasingly important as digital technologies transform learning environments. Teachers must consequently integrate professional ethics with digital competence to create educational experiences that promote responsible participation, critical thinking, and positive character development.

Developing the ideal teacher requires a holistic approach that combines individual commitment with institutional support and continuous professional growth. Self-reflection, ethical habituation, and lifelong learning enable teachers to evaluate their practices and strengthen their professional integrity, while mentoring, collaborative learning, and effective professional development provide opportunities for sustained improvement. Educational institutions also have a responsibility to establish supportive environments that encourage

ethical conduct, innovation, and professional accountability. Ultimately, the ideal teacher emerges through the continuous integration of personal development, ethical professionalism, digital responsibility, and institutional collaboration to support meaningful learning and the holistic development of students.

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