



Topic on a Page for AQA AS / A Level Year 1

Component 1B: Ethics

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Teacher's Introduction

This resource covers the AS / A Level Year 1 AQA Religious Studies specification for Component 1B: Ethics, and includes the following content:

Normative ethical theories

- Deontological: natural moral law with reference to Aquinas
- Teleological: situation ethics with reference to Fletcher
- Character-based: virtue ethics with reference to Aristotle


Remember!

Always check the exam board website for new information, including changes to the specification and sample assessment material.

The application of natural moral law, situation ethics and virtue ethics

- Issues of human life and death: embryo research, cloning and designer babies; abortion; voluntary euthanasia and assisted suicide; capital punishment
- Issues of non-human life and death: use of animals as food and intensive farming; use of animals in scientific procedures and cloning; blood sports; animals as a source of organs for transplants

The resource is split into five sections as follows:

1. **A4 teacher information pages.**
 2. **Seven A3 revision posters**, between them covering the specification content. These are labelled: **1** to **7**. These posters are intended as a summary of all topic material, focusing on the main points rather than the detail, so that all important areas are covered without going into too much depth.
 3. **Seven A3 subtopic sheets with activities.** Each of these sheets covers one subtopic and provides write-on activities for students to complete. Answers can generally be found in the A3 revision posters themselves, but are also provided in a separate answer document (see section 5). These are labelled with numbers inside white circles: **7**.
- Exam-style questions, modelled on those found in the AS / A Level exam, are marked by a pencil icon: 
4. **Sixteen A4 subtopic revision posters.** These provide answers for the main activities given in the A3 subtopic activity sheets. As revision posters, these can be used as a summary for each area, and have enough space for teacher or student annotation. These are labelled with numbers inside black circles: **16**.
 5. **A4 answer sheets.** These pages provide more detailed answers to the questions on the A3 subtopic activity sheets; in particular, the long-answer questions. Student-friendly, AQA-style mark schemes are also provided for the exam-style questions.

All posters can be displayed on classroom walls, or given to students to learn in lessons or at home.

As a whole, the resource can be used to help students to consolidate knowledge at the end of a topic/subtopic, or to revise before a test or an exam. Different styles and layouts are used to make the information interesting and to help the students engage with the information in a productive way.

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The Original Theory

Aristotle formed the **classical foundation**, which was based around *telos* and *eudaimonia*. **St Paul's Letters** formed the **biblical foundation**. Aquinas' theory of natural law is heavily influenced by these two writings.

Aquinas took up Aristotle's ideas and combined them with Christian teachings about God. He believed that morality could be derived from two different sources – the Bible and reason. He posited the key **precepts**, the **primary precepts** and the **secondary precepts** in order to posit his idea of natural moral

Natural moral law is both legalistic and absolutist.

Absolutism:
That one version of morality holds in all places, at all times, and for all people; it is universal. If it is a moral law that persons 'should not steal' then they simply should not steal; it is inherently wrong regardless of situation.

Legalism:
At the simplest level, legalism can be understood as the idea that when it comes to morality, we should follow the laws that are based on previously established law. Aquinas used the laws of the Torah by Orthodox Jews and the Islamic observance of Sharia law as a basis for his approach to morality in this sense.

Deontology stems from the Greek word for duty. Deontological ethics are duty-based ethics.

Deontological Ethics

Natural Moral Law

Modern Adaptations to the Theory

Principle of Double Effect

Double Effect While primary precepts were **absolute**, Aquinas recognised situations where it is not possible to do good without also doing bad. It holds that a bad consequence does not make an act morally wrong so long as that bad consequence is not intended.

Proportionalism

Proportionalists would hold that in a given situation it becomes clear what is a proportionate reason.

Hoose argued that we should generally follow natural moral law until there is a significant reason that would mean it was fair to temporarily set aside these rules. Therefore, acts are not inherently or always evil. This is **proportionalism**.

The Issue of

According to natural law, theft is immoral because it violates a number of the primary precepts. For example, the precept of worshipping God. It is considered to be against the commandments of God. To steal is against God – as in the Ten Commandments, it is (Exodus 20:15 NRSV). By breaking this rule, worshipping God is broken. Theft also violates the precept of pursuing an ordered society, as it violates the surrounding material possession and ownership.

'You shall not steal'
Exodus 20:15

However, in some circumstances exceptions to the law which would view theft as being acceptable. For example, proportionalism would argue that there is a proportional reason to break a law, which then it might be acceptable.

An example of this might be Jean Valjean in *Les Misérables*, who stole a loaf of bread to feed his starving family. The primary precept of preservation of life would be a proportional reason to steal. If stealing is justified by upholding the primary precept of preserving life, it can be considered to be acceptable in Berners.

Natural Moral Law:
It is the ethical theory of the Catholic Church. It states that there is a law inherent in the world which must be followed. It was first formulated by St Thomas Aquinas. He put forward his argument in a series of **precepts**:

Key Precept:
The moral principle from which all else is derived: that we should aim to do good and to avoid doing evil.

Primary Precept:
Fundamental rules which can never be broken and from which secondary precepts are drawn: preserve life, reproduce, educate children, worship God, create an orderly society.

Secondary Precept:
Rules developed on the basis of primary precepts, deduced from primary precepts.

Modern example: from the primary precept of 'preserve life', the Catholic Church has argued for the immorality of abortion based on the view that it ends a life.

When Gentiles, who do not possess the law, do instinctively what the law requires, these, though not having the law, are a law to themselves.

Romans 2:14

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Joseph Fletcher & the Basics of Situation Ethics

- Fletcher did not think that legalism or living without any moral codes whatsoever were attractive ways of living. Situationalism, Fletcher's proposed idea, is positioned in the middle of the two.
- On the one hand, unlike the antinomian, Fletcher believes people must have some principle or concept to appeal to when making an ethical decision. This is **agape**, and the maxims derived from it.
- On the other, unlike the legalist, Fletcher believes that principles cannot be so absolute and inflexible that a decision which flies in the face of a maxim is a decision which flies in the face of God.
- This ethical theory is **teleological** because it is concerned with the outcome of actions. It also results in the demonstration of **love** because it believes that there are four presuppositions and six principles which will enable someone to make an appropriate moral response.

Fletcher's Six Fundamental Principles

- 'Only one thing is intrinsically good; namely love: nothing else at all'
- 'The ruling norm of Christian decision is love: nothing else'
- 'Love and justice are the same, for justice is love distributed, nothing else'
- 'Love wills the neighbour's good, whether we like him or not'
- 'Only the end justifies the means, nothing else'
- 'Love's decisions are made situationally, not prescriptively'

Fletcher's four presuppositions	Explanation
Pragmatism	Moral demands should be practical and achieve the intended outcome or result, which is love.
Relativism	All situations should be assessed on how best to demonstrate love, rather than through following moral laws which use the words 'never' or 'always'.
Positivism	Being able to say that 'God is love' on the basis of faith, rather than on the basis of experience. The moral agent has to decide, for themselves, whether or not God, that love is the most important thing of all.
Personalism	Demands that the needs and interests of people are considered first, not the demands of moral law.

Cultural Background

The foundation for situationalism was developed in a time of change worldwide in the 1960s and 1970s, including:

- Women in the workforce
- Vietnam War
- Kennedy assassination
- Civil rights movement
- Contraceptive pill and sexual revolution
- Hippy and student culture

Antinomianism

Situationalism

Legalism

Agape:
One of the Greek words for love. It is an attitude of generosity that expects nothing in return. It is the love Jesus shows to humanity.

Strengths

- It responds to social and modern moral sentiment.
- It is in keeping with Jesus' teaching.
- It gives modern Christians a way beyond the strict boundaries of traditional, legalistic morality.
- It provides flexibility and realism.
- Agape is widely considered 'love' to be an undesirable

Teleological Ethics

Situation Ethics

Telos is a Greek term which Aquinas adopted from Aristotle – it means 'end' or 'purpose'. This is the root of the term 'teleological'.

Teleological ethics is an ethical system which serves an end or purpose.

The Issue of Theft

Situation ethics is a Christian form of ethics encouraged within Christian teaching. Most situation ethicists will view stealing as wrong. However, situation ethics aims to see if there is an agape in a contextual basis, meaning the most loving thing to do.

This is well explained through the story of Jean Valjean in *Les Misérables* who was specifically stealing a loaf of bread (as she was starving to death). A situation ethicist would consider this to be a moral action.

However, if an individual chose to steal because they felt entitled to the bread or because they were hungry for it, then this would be considered wrong. Intent is the key issue.

'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.'
Matthew 22:39

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Aristotle

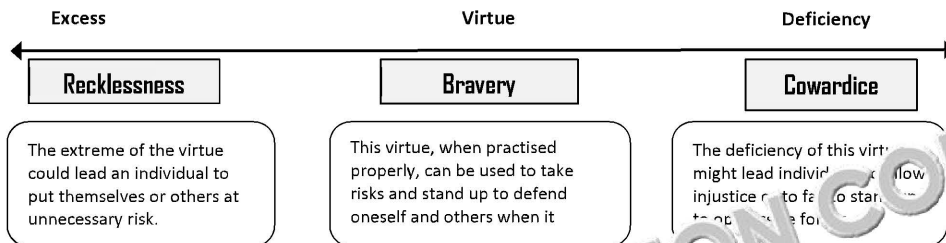
Aristotle was an influential Greek philosopher whose thoughts are at the heart of virtue ethics. His form of virtue ethics is a form of character ethics. His form of ethics posits that there are a series of virtues which human beings should adhere to. Aristotle believes in a hierarchy of souls at the top of which are humans – which is on the basis of the human ability to reason. The moral choices we encounter each day need to be navigated using this reason – hence Aristotle's development of virtue ethics.

'Living Well': The Concept of Eudaimonia

For Aristotle, goodness consisted of something called 'eudaimonia' or 'flourishing'. Every object has a certain function or purpose which it can do. Since everything has its particular use, so must humans. Aristotle believes that our rationality which separates us. Our ultimate good is to exercise our capacities in the pursuit of Eudaimonia. Eudaimonia is a Greek word meaning 'the good life' and is often referred to as happiness, but Aristotle uses it to refer to the 'good life' or 'flourishing'. It is an individual state, but also involves social interaction – living in harmony and cooperation with others.

The Golden Mean: Virtues and Vices

To work out what can be considered a virtue, Aristotle said moral agents need to find the mean or **balance between two vices**, avoiding excess or deficiency of any virtue. To work this out, individuals need to use **practical wisdom (phronesis)**. This is an individual process of working out what virtue is suited to each situation and to each individual. Thus there can be no rules or maxims about how to act. Individuals use their autonomy and intellect to work it out and then put it into practice. An example of this is below:



The example of virtuous people can be useful in determining virtuous behaviour. This idea within virtue ethics is that by identifying virtuous people and learning from them, we can imitate their virtuous behaviour and subsequently become virtuous ourselves. However, examples are also not to be worshipped or idealised in any way, as everyone has flaws. Not everyone can copy a template of another's actions. Also, people are not always virtuous, so it might be hard to know who the right person is to use as an example.

Historical and Cultural Influences on Aristotle's Virtue Ethics:

Virtue ethics is found first in Plato, but it was his student Aristotle who developed it into a fully fledged moral philosophy. The Ancient Greek culture emphasised many of the virtues listed by Aristotle in the *Nicomachean Ethics*. Both Aristotle and Plato belonged to the Athenian upper class, and their descriptions of the virtuous individual are likely tied very closely to their conception of the ideal gentleman. Aristotle grounded the goodness of the virtues in what he considered to be human nature.

Aristotle and the Virtue Ethics

Character-based Ethics

Virtue Ethics

Strengths

- Virtue ethics emphasises a moral response.
- The moral well-being with factors being affected when making different choices.
- Things are taken into account.
- It also goes beyond (i.e. through)

The Issue of Theft

The founder of virtue ethics, Aristotle, considered theft, in Aristotle's thought, is 'an action' – an action which is performed in a way that can be considered to be moral in any way.

Just as one cannot cheat on one's spouse and be considered to be virtuous, one cannot steal and be considered to be virtuous. In this way, stealing is always wrong.

However, it is important for modern virtue ethicists that the way in which Aristotle approached virtue ethics was informed by his experience. He and his students were largely wealthy men of status, for whom stealing was motivated only by greed. This would not be the case for a modern virtue ethicist.

However, when applied to more vulnerable people, stealing due to necessity (e.g. stealing food to survive) then a modern virtue ethicist might consider it to be the virtue of valuing life over property.

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Situation Ethics on Designer Babies and Cloning

Joseph Fletcher, the founder of situation ethics, argued that the use of genetic engineering to improve the human race should not be totally rejected, as long as love is the reason behind the changes. If the aim is to lovingly improve the health of the human race (as opposed to, for example, being motivated by hatred of disabilities) then it could be considered to be okay. By eliminating genetic conditions through the use of genetic engineering, Fletcher argues agape could be served by improving quality of life for those who would have otherwise struggled with genetic conditions.

He stipulated, however, that there would need to be considerable regulation in place to ensure that this practice is not abused.

However, considering that situation ethics is a Christian ethical system, this allowance could be interpreted as contradicting Christian teachings. Such practices as genetic engineering could be seen as a violation of God's will and also as a form of discrimination against the most vulnerable in society. It could be considered to disproportionately affect those who are considered to be 'lowly' in society (i.e. those with genetic conditions). It might be considered unloving to intentionally genetically engineer away from such conditions as it would be seen as taking away the right to life of those who do have that condition.

Virtue Ethics on Designer Babies and Cloning

Virtue ethics might oppose designer babies for a number of reasons. The first is that, as a teleological ethical system, it relies on identifying a specific set of ends for human activity. However, if humans changed enough through DNA editing, these might eventually change or become unrecognisable, meaning the language of virtue ethics might not apply in the same way. Another reason might be that creating specific genetic diseases, the creation of designer babies might not be considered to express or demonstrate any specific virtue. Rather than trying to improve future human beings, it can be seen that the aim of the virtuous person is improving the lives of, and demonstrating virtues to, those immediately around them.

Natural Law on Designer Babies and Cloning

Natural law might oppose designer babies in a number of ways. One way is that designer babies might prevent the ordering of society, especially if it heightens and influences inequalities and abuses between those who are rich and poor. However, another might simply be from the primary precept of reproduction, and biblical texts that emphasise human beings as made in the image of God. These would indicate that it is simply wrong to interfere with nature, and as such designer babies are going against God's plan.

'Designer Babies' is the term for genetically engineered fetuses designed to have specific characteristics. This could either be in the efforts of avoidance of genetic conditions or due to desire for specific characteristics (e.g. gender). Cloning is artificially creating an exact genetic copy of another being through artificial fertilisation and gestation.

Situation Ethics on Abortion

- Situation ethics approaches each individual case of abortion differently depending on context.
- Joseph Fletcher himself used the example of abortion in his text *Situation Ethics* (1962) to posit his theory of situation ethics.
- He argued that in a situation such as rape – in which he would consider abortion to be the most loving route to take for the sake of the mother – surely, to save a young woman the trauma of carrying and birthing a child following a rape would (he argues) be the most loving course of action.
- A common example used is the Angel of Auschwitz, a doctor who performed multiple abortions on Jewish women during the Holocaust, thus saving them from the gas chambers.

Designer Babies and Cloning

Issues of Human Life and Death (a)

Abortion

Abortion is the medical termination of a pregnancy. It is legal in the UK before 24 weeks' gestation, following the Abortion Act in 1967.

It is a controversial action around which the following issues are key:

- Issues of the status of the foetus
- Issues of quality of life (of the foetus)
- Issues of quality of life (of both the mother and the foetus)
- Ideas of autonomy
- Method of conception (e.g. instances of rape and/or incest)

Natural Law on Abortion

- Traditionally, abortion is thought to clash with two **primary precepts**, 'to preserve life' and 'to reproduce'.
- By accepting that a foetus is a life then abortion, by destroying it, directly contradicts the precept 'to preserve life'.
- Similarly, abortion, since it ends a pregnancy, also directly contradicts the precept 'to reproduce'.
- That said, the **doctrine of double effect** has often been invoked by the Catholic Church to justify abortion in special circumstances, usually if, by giving birth, the mother's life is put at risk.
- At such times, although performing an abortion results in a bad consequence (the death of an unborn foetus), the intention (to save the mother's life) is good.

Virtue Ethics

- Aristotle himself addressed the issue of abortion, arguing that it is worse to have children than they are to be born, and that it is worse to abort than to have an abortion. He argued that it is worse to abort than to have an abortion, and that it is worse to abort than to have an abortion.
- However, he emphasised that it is worse to abort than to have an abortion, and that it is worse to abort than to have an abortion.
- This means that within Aristotle's virtue ethics there is a differentiation between stages of development of the foetus. A collection of cells is of less value than, say, a foetus gestating during the third trimester.
- In virtue ethics, the intent behind an abortion should also be considered. If an individual is, for example, seeking an abortion because they do not wish their appearance to change during pregnancy, then this would be considered immoral as it has a vain motivation.

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Virtue Ethics on Voluntary Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide

- There is no clear guidance on the application of virtue ethics to either voluntary euthanasia or assisted suicide.
- The idea of eudaimonia is central to the debate about the morality of euthanasia. Eudaimonia (human happiness/flourishing) is considered to be the purpose of human life. If an individual is no longer able to achieve this end, due to being in a medical condition such as PVS (persistent vegetative state), then euthanasia would be considered permissible. This line of argument marries with the idea of quality of life and quality of life.
- However, it should also be noted that there is value in suffering. Therefore, this may lead some virtue ethicists to view that value as being an argument against the practice of euthanasia.



Situation Ethics on Voluntary Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide

- Agape love is at the heart of situation ethics and, therefore, in the instance of voluntary euthanasia and assisted suicide, the morality of choices is situational.
- The founder of situation ethics was a proponent of voluntary euthanasia for those who wish to undergo it.
- He argued that it is the loving thing to do for an individual who is experiencing extreme suffering to allow them to die in the way they wish to and to relieve their suffering.
- However, situation ethics might not support voluntary euthanasia and assisted suicide in every situation – it would only occur in the instance where this is the most loving thing to do.

Voluntary euthanasia is the ending of a life of someone at their request via an intentional medical intervention (i.e. medication). Assisted suicide is the act of enabling an individual to end their life via a medical manner, such as by providing them with life-ending drugs. The differentiation lies in who is administering the drugs – in the case of voluntary euthanasia, the life-ending drugs are administered by a doctor or professional, whereas within assisted suicide, the life-ending drugs are administered by the individual wishing to die. Both of these are currently illegal in the UK.

Voluntary Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide

Issues of Human Life and Death (b)

Natural Law on Voluntary Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide

- Euthanasia is the practice of ending a life, which is the intentional violation of one of the primary precepts of natural law – the preservation of life. Therefore, generally speaking, euthanasia is considered to always be immoral within natural law.
- It is considered to subvert the order of society (another primary precept) as it subverts the natural role of a doctor (to save life rather than end it) and places human beings in the position of choosing when to end a life.
- However, some people posit that the doctor's role is to relieve suffering and that this enables voluntary euthanasia or assisted suicide.
- This is the idea that actions that result in bad moral consequences are permissible as long as they were intended to bring about good things.
- If we apply this doctrine to voluntary euthanasia and assisted suicide, we arrived at the idea of the administration of a fatal dose of painkillers.
- Emphatically – this cannot be done on purpose. This should be done with the intent to alleviate pain (a good consequence); however, it has the additional effect of killing the patient (a bad consequence). Because the direct intent is not to kill, it is considered to be permissible.

Virtue Ethics on Capital Punishment

- Aristotle, the founder of virtue ethics, offers no direct application of virtue ethics to the issue of capital punishment.
- However, it should be considered that it was a common practice at his time and his omission of talking about this might be viewed as support or acceptance of the practice.
- One important part of capital punishment is the idea that it provides justice for the victims of heinous crimes – the idea of a just punishment for a crime being equally weighted.
- Justice, within virtue ethics, is one of the virtues for which no excess can be experienced.
- Therefore, it could easily be argued that capital punishment is easy to justify as it serves the purpose of justice.

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Situation Ethics on Cloning

- If cloning could be used towards a loving outcome (such as having a positive result on medical development, meat production, environmental solutions, etc.) then this would be considered to be a moral choice.
- If artificial cloning were to cause pain to an animal (e.g. genetic issues as a result of their unnatural creation) this would not be considered to be moral.

Virtue Ethics on Cloning

- Aristotle gave no direct guidance on cloning, as it was not possible during his time.
- However, he did not see animals as creatures to whom humans are required to show virtue; therefore, if it could be shown that benefit could be gained through cloning, then the ethics would probably be considered as permissible.

Virtue Ethics on Scientific Experimentation

- Much like Aquinas, Aristotle believed in a hierarchy within the world in which humans are above animals.
- Therefore, he would consider it permissible for humans to use animals; however, modern virtue ethicists might posit that virtue should be extended to all creatures and, therefore, the suffering of the animals often endured in scientific experimentation would not be considered virtuous.

Natural Law

- The main issue Aquinas has with the process of cloning is that it is not a natural process – it disturbs the natural order.
- Natural law holds very strongly that the order in which things are within nature should not be disturbed; as all cloning takes place artificially this would violate this natural order and potentially a human being could place themselves in the place of God by creating life.



Cloning is the practice of making a direct genetic copy of a being via scientific experimentation – this has been achieved using animals' DNA. The most famous incident is the creation of Dolly the sheep.

Cloning

Issues of Non-human Life and Death (a)

Scientific Experimentation

The Use of Animals as Food and Intensive Farming

Virtue Ethics on the Use of Animals for Food and Intensive Farming

- Aristotle believed in a hierarchy in the world, and placed human beings at the height of this hierarchy. For this reason, he believed that it is not immoral to eat meat. The virtues required within virtue ethics are only extended to other human beings. However, the attitude required in order to cause undue suffering to an animal through intensive farming may be considered to be a violation of a virtue in the hierarchy and is, therefore, immoral.
- Modern virtue ethicists would consider that animals are entitled to virtuous treatment as well as humans; therefore, they would not eat meat or practise intensive farming.
- They may also consider the harmful effect intensive farming has on the environment in terms of examining the impact this will have on future generations of humans. They have a responsibility to treat future generations with virtue, and, therefore, this might impact how they navigate this issue.

The eating of animal products is traditionally seen as a normal part of Western society; however, recent developments in farming methods have meant that larger amounts can be produced (via intensive farming). This results in a decreased quality of life for animals, and, therefore, there is an ethical objection many have made against this practice. There are ethical debates around the idea that animals can be killed.

Situation Ethics on the Use of Animals as Food and Intensive Farming

- Situation ethics are governed by the principle of agape.
- The concern here is whether or not human beings have a duty to treat all beings with agape love is only extended to human beings, and not animals.
- Many situation ethicists believe that the most loving thing to do is not to eat meat. There are others who may eat meat, but choose to only eat free range meat (meat from free range farming) as they believe this to be the most loving way to approach the issue of eating the meat is fine, but that intensive farming is wrong.
- Largely situation ethicists would also consider the impact on human beings created by intensive farming can often put undue strain on environments as well as disproportionately affecting

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Natural Law on Blood Sports

- Aquinas viewed animals as only having instrumental value – this meant that he considered their only value to derive from the way in which they can be used by humans.
- For this reason, Aquinas would have no issue with the practice of blood sports.
- However, one way in which blood sports might be considered to be wrong in natural law is the potential that the kind of violence which can be fostered in individuals and communities which practise or engage in blood sports might spill over into their treatment of human beings.
- This has the potential to lead to behaviour which is directed towards humans, which would be an issue for Aquinas.
- Furthermore, allowing blood sports to continue could potentially threaten the stability of society. To violate this would be an issue for Aquinas as it would violate the primary precept of the order of society.

Situation Ethics on Blood Sports

- Situation ethics would largely oppose blood sports.
- In the interest of agape, there is very little that can be gained toward this end by blood sports.
- The only benefit that blood sports might offer for humans is their entertainment value, but entertainment derived from the infliction of needless, bloodthirsty motivations.
- Entertainment is considered to be a value of lower importance to situation ethics, coming far further down the list than the service of agape.
- Furthermore, humans can entertain themselves through means which do not cause harm to animals.
- However, it is important to remember that this will always be depending on the situation, as it is situation ethics.

Blood sports are a form of sport in which humans observe or interact with animals in such a way that causes harm to the animal. Forms of this include dog fighting, cock fighting and hunting. These activities are undertaken only for human entertainment, rather than for any other benefit, such as the slaughtering of animals for food.

Blood Sports**Issues of Non-human Life and Death (b)****Virtue Ethics on Blood Sports**

- Virtue ethics are centred around the thoughts of Greek philosopher Aristotle – a fact which becomes important when discussing blood sports.
- Blood sports were highly common during the time of Aristotle, and the fact that he did not condemn them indicates that he did not see them as an issue.
- Virtue ethics extend equally to other human beings, and, therefore, it is not necessary to treat animals with respect.
- However, many modern ethicists have countered that ethical virtue treatment should be extended to animals also; therefore, they would argue that there is no benefit to human life apart from entertainment.
- For this reason, they would oppose blood sports.

**Issues of Non-human Life and Death (c)
Transferring Organs from Animals**

- Traditionally it is thought that the founder of virtue ethics, Aristotle, would have been in favour of organ transplanting from animals.
- This is for a number of reasons, not least because it serves the virtue of using human reason to solve the problem posed by issues with human organs. There are more people in need of organs than are willing to donate them, and by transplanting them from animals this issue is solved.
- Furthermore, this displays the virtues of compassion and mercy towards the person receiving the transplant, which would be considered to be a positive.
- However, virtue ethicists who extend virtues to animals may think it immoral to use them as a source of organs.

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Deontological Ethics - Natural Moral Law

1. Fill in the gaps. Use the words in the box below.

Early Development of Natural Moral Law

Aristotle formed the classical foundation which was based around **A** _____ and **B** _____. St Paul's letters formed the biblical foundation. **C** _____ took up Aristotle's idea of a final cause and combined it with Christian teachings about God. He believed that morality could be derived from **D** _____ different sources – the Bible and reason. He posited the key precepts, the primary **E** _____ and the secondary precepts in order to posit his idea of natural moral law.

Choose the correct word from the box below to fill in the gaps.

Choose	precepts	telos	reason
eudaimonia	Aquinas	two	proportionalism

Deontological Ethics

Natural Moral Law

F _____ argued that we should generally follow natural moral law until there is a significant **G** _____ that would mean it was fair to temporarily set aside these rules. Therefore, acts are not inherently or always evil. This is **H** _____.

2. Fill in the definitions of the different forms of natural moral law.

Primary Precept

Secondary Precept

Key Precept

3. What is meant by the term 'proportionalism'?

4. What is meant by the term 'double effect'?

4. Explain how each of the Bible verses on the scrolls impacts natural law theory regarding the issues of lying and theft.

A)

'You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour'
(Exodus 20:16)

B)

'You shall not steal'
(Exodus 20:15)

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Teleological Ethics - Situation Ethics

1. Which of the following word for love is important within Christian situation ethics? Write the correct letter in the box below.

- a) Philia
- b) Eros
- c) Ludus
- d) Agape

2. Explain how the answer to question 1 fits into Fletcher's situation ethics.



5. In the space below, fill in the fundamental principles of Joseph Fletcher.

Fundamental principles

Fletcher's four presuppositions	Explanation
Pragmatism	
Relativism	
Positivism	
Personalism	

3. Fill in the gaps with the missing words regarding the strengths and weaknesses of agape.

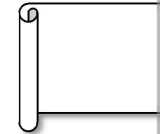
Strengths

It responds to social and moral **A** _____.
 It is in keeping with Jesus' biblical rejection of **B** _____.
 It provides **C** _____ and responsibility.
D _____ is widely considered to be desirable.

Weaknesses

Pope **E** _____ of moral law.
 Jesus condemned so
 Peter **F** _____ argues
 confuses agape and
G _____. It could
 be easily **H** _____
 rather than what is
 William Barclay argu
I _____ an

4. In the space
verse comm



7. Give an example of an ethicist who might be justified.

8. Give an example of an ethicist who might be justified.

Teleological Ethics

Situation Ethics

Joseph Fletcher

6. Fill in the gaps with the missing words regarding the presuppositions of Fletcher's four presuppositions.

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Character-based Ethics - Virtue Ethics

1. In the space below, fill in the name of the Greek philosopher who posited virtue ethics.



2. Explain the concept of eudaimonia in virtue ethics.

3. In the boxes below, give an example of a virtue, its excess and its deficiency. Explain each one underneath.



Character-based
Ethics

Virtue Ethics

Excess

Virtue

Deficiency

5. Give three strengths of virtue ethics.



4. What is meant by...

6. Give three weak...

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Issues of Human Life and Death (a)

A '_____ Babies' is the term for genetically engineered fetuses designed to have specific **B** _____. This could either be in an effort to prevent a genetic condition or due to a desire for specific characteristics (e.g. gender). **C** _____ is artificially creating an exact genetic copy of another being through artificial fertilisation and gestation.

Abortion is the medical **D** _____ of a _____. It is legal in the UK before 24 weeks' gestation following the Abortion Act in 1967. It is a controversial practice and various ethical issues are key:

- Ideas of **E** _____
- Ideas of **F** _____ of life (of the foetus)
- Ideas of **G** _____ of life (of both the mother and the foetus)
- Ideas of autonomy
- Method of conception (e.g. instances of rape and/or incest)

H _____ are the beginning stages of cells during pregnancy. When allowed to develop, an embryo will become a foetus which will eventually become a baby. Embryo experimentation is the use of scientific research and testing on **I** _____ with the aim of developing treatments/cures for existing conditions in the medical field. For example, human embryos contain stem cells which can be used to treat specific chronic, debilitating **J** _____. However, in order for these experimentations to take place, the embryonic cells are destroyed. The key ethical issues concern focus around whether or not these cells can be considered to have **K** _____.

Natural Law

Situation Ethics

Issues of Human Life and Death (a)

1. Fill in the blanks

2. Emily is a scientist working on embryonic stem cell research. In the boxes below, explain how each ethical system would view her line of work.

Virtue Ethics

3. Read the scenario and identify the error in the bioethics principle.

- a) Abortion only violates the sanctity of life.
- b) The reason behind the decision is more important to virtue ethics than the consequences.
- c) Joseph Fletcher's principlism states that the ends justify the means, even if it means violating the sanctity of life.
- d) The doctrine of the double effect is used to justify abortion.
- e) Virtue ethics does not focus on the stage of foetal development.

4. Explain how the different ethical systems would view the scenario.

4. Explain how the different ethical systems would view the scenario.



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1. Fill in the blanks below.

Voluntary euthanasia is the ending of a life of someone at their request via an

A _____ medical intervention (i.e. medication). **B** _____

_____ is the act of enabling an individual to end their life via a medical manner such as providing life-ending drugs. The differentiation lies in who is administering the drugs – in the case of voluntary euthanasia, the life-ending drugs are administered by a **C** _____, whereas within assisted suicide, the life-ending drugs are administered by the **D** _____ wishing to **E** _____.

Both of these are currently **F** _____ in the UK.

G _____ punishment is the state intentionally ending the life of an individual as a result of said individual being convicted of a serious **H** _____ (such as murder). This was a practice in the UK until 1963. It remained technically a punishment for treason and piracy (although it was never carried out) and was finally outlawed completely in 1998. **I** _____

_____ include hanging, **J** _____, death by firing squad and the electric chair. It is still a legal practice in many countries, including certain states of the **K** _____.

2. Below, and right, are two case studies of real-life events. Use your knowledge of the ethical theories to briefly describe how each of these schools of ethical thought would approach each case.

(a) *Tony Bland (1970–1993) was a British man who sustained severe injuries during the 1989 Hillsborough disaster. He was placed in a permanent vegetative state for four years before a UK court permitted the removal of artificial nutrition and treatment. This resulted in his death.*

Issues of Human Life and Death (b)

Natural Law

Natural Law

Situation Ethics

Situation Ethics

Virtue Ethics

Virtue Ethics

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Issues of Non-human Life and Death (a)

- Write the correct multiple-choice answers in the gaps.

The eating of animal products has traditionally been a normal part of Western society; however, recent developments in farming methods have meant that larger amounts of meat can be produced (via

A _____ far _____ result in a decreased **B** _____ for the animals being farmed, which is an ethical objection many have made against this practice. Furthermore, there are ethical debates around the idea that animals can be killed and eaten.

Aquinas believed in a **C** _____ as instituted by God in the Bible. This hierarchy influenced the formation of Natural Law. In this hierarchy, human beings are placed at the top, above animals. This heavily informs Aquinas' view – because humans have souls over animals, Aquinas would consider the consumption of meat to be completely **D** _____.

A Hierarchy	Creative Length level	New-Age Quality System	Intensive Validity Concept
D forbidden	encouraged	discouraged	permissible
E Situation	Virtue	Religious	Muslim
F Level	Hierarchy	Concept	System
G Animals	Humans	Non-humans	Souls

Many **E** _____ ethical things to do is not to eat meat. There are others who may eat meat (meat produced through _____) but this to be the most loving way.

Aristotle believed in a hierarchy of human beings at the head of the hierarchy. For this reason, it is permissible to eat meat as virtues are extended to animals.

Issues of Non-human Life and Death (a)

- Fill in the speech bubbles around Dolly the sheep with the way in which each ethical theory views cloning.

Situation Ethics

Natural Law

Virtue Ethics

- 'Scientific experimentation on animals is never be justified.' Agree or disagree?

- 'Scientific experimentation on animals is never be justified.' Explain your answer.

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Issues of Non-human Life and Death (b)

1. Which of the following refers to Aquinas' view of the value of animals?

- a) Inherent value
- b) Intermittent value
- c) Instrumental value
- d) Involuntary value

Issues of Non-human Life and Death



3. Read the speech bubbles below, and in the boxes write which school of ethical thought each view belongs to.

a)

'Animals are below human beings in the hierarchy of existence, and, therefore, human beings are able to use animals for whatever end they wish and they need not worry at all about the need to treat them in an ethical way – it's a human prerogative to treat them in any way they wish.'

b)

'Love should be the end of every decision we make – so we need to decide whether or not the treatment of animals should be loving, or a loving outcome for human beings has precedence over the treatment of animals.'

c)

'Only human beings are required to be treated with virtue, so it isn't important to treat animals in a virtuous manner. However, it should be considered how one's virtue might be impacted by immoral treatment of animals.'

2. Fill in the gaps in the paragraph below using the words in the box.

A _____ sports are a form of sport in which humans use animals in such a way that _____ harm to the animal. Forms of this include _____ fighting and _____ hunting. The _____ activities are undertaken only for human benefit, such as the slaughtering of animals for food, or for any other benefit, such as the slaughtering of animals for medical research.

Sometimes animals are used as a **C** _____ for organs used in human medicine, whose organs are failing. The need for human organ donors far **D** _____ the number of willing donors, meaning that scientists have proposed the use of animals as _____ ethical considerations.

- | | | | | |
|----------|---------------|-----------|-----------|----------------|
| A | Gut | Olympic | Blood | Competitive |
| B | entertainment | benefit | nutrition | disappointment |
| C | test | scapegoat | source | receptacle |
| D | underweighs | condemns | ruins | outweighs |

4. In the boxes below, explain how each school of thought would approach the issue of blood sports.

Natural Law

St Thomas Aquinas Ethics

Virtue Ethics

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Normative Ethical Theories: Deontological Ethics (1)

Aristotle formed the **classical foundation**, which was based around telos and eudaimonia. **St Paul's Letters** formed the **biblical foundation**. Aquinas' theory of natural law is heavily influenced by these two foundations. **Aquinas** took up Aristotle's ideas and combined them with Christian teachings about God. He believed that morality comes from two different sources – the Bible and reason. He noted that there are **primary precepts** and the **secondary precepts** in which he deposited his idea of natural moral law.



Natural Moral Law:

It is the ethical theory of the Catholic Church that there is a law inherent in the world from God which must be followed. It was first formulated by St Thomas Aquinas. He put forward his argument in a series of **precepts**:

Key Precept:

The moral principle from which all else is derived: that we should aim to do good and to avoid doing evil.

Primary Precept:

Fundamental rules which can never be broken and from which secondary precepts are drawn: preserve life, reproduce, educate children, worship God, create an orderly society.

Secondary Precept:

Rules developed from the primary precepts, deduced from primary precepts.



When Gentiles, who do not possess the law, do instinctively what the law requires, these, though not having the law, are a law to themselves.

Romans 2:14



Natural Moral Law (1)

The Original Theory

Modern Adaptations to the Theory

Principle of Double Effect

Double Effect While primary precepts were **absolute**, **Aquinas** recognised situations where it is not possible to do good without also doing bad. It holds that a bad consequence does not make an act morally wrong so long as that bad consequence is not intended.

Natural law is a legal system based on moral principles.

Moral principles are 'precepts' for the law.

Primary precepts are the foundation of the law.

Secondary precepts are derived from the primary precepts.

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Normative Ethical Theories: Deontological Ethics (2)

Strengths

- It is compatible with and common to everyone.
- It is an objective theory – certain actions are inherently right or wrong.
- Double effect and proportionalism give a degree of flexibility.
- Evolutionary psychologists (e.g. Dawkins) argue that aspects of our moral behaviour are defined genetically which might support the idea that morals are instinctive or naturally instilled in us in some way.

Lying is immoral according to natural law. It violates the primary precept of respecting God, much like theft, because it is directly forbidden in the Ten Commandments in Exodus. It is also considered to violate the primary precept of pursuing an ordered society because falsehoods create issues in communication within society, leading to malfunction. This is an example of divine command ethics, because it sources morality from the commands of a deity.

'You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour'
Exodus 20:16 NRSV

Strengths and Weaknesses

Weaknesses

- Nature does not always seem to be good; there are many things which are instinctual to us that might not necessarily be moral.
- Atheists are unlikely to follow this supposedly universal ethic as it is inextricably tied to belief in God.
- Issues with infertility would challenge the primary precept of the importance of natural reproduction.
- It suffers from the naturalistic fallacy (is/ought) – just because something is, it is a leap of logic to infer that this makes a statement about how something ought to be.
- Feminist critics have argued that it could be viewed as sexist as the primary precept of procreation could reduce women to only having value in their biological reproductive function.

Natural Moral Law (2)

Application of The

However, in some circumstances exceptions can be made in natural law which would view theft as being the morally correct choice. For example, proportionalism would argue that as long as there is a proportional reason to break a law, which upholds another precept, then it might be acceptable.

An example of this might be Jean Valjean from the novel *Les Misérables*, who stole a loaf of bread to feed his starving niece. The primary precept of preservation of life would be deemed a proportional reason to steal. If stealing somehow serves the purpose of upholding the primary precept of an ordered society, then it can be considered to be acceptable in Bernard Hoose's proportionalism.

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Normative Ethical Theories: Teleological Ethics (1)

- Fletcher did not think that legalism or living without any moral codes whatsoever were attractive ways of living. Situationalism, Fletcher's proposed idea, is positioned in the middle of the two.
- On the one hand, unlike the antinomian, Fletcher believes that moral decisions should have some principle or concept to appeal to when making a moral decision. This is **agape**, and the maxims derived from it.
- On the other, unlike the legalist, Fletcher believes that these principles cannot be so absolute and inflexible as to require a decision which flies in the face of common sense.
- This ethical theory is teleological because it is concerned with the outcome of actions, whether actions result in the demonstration of love. Fletcher believes that there are four presuppositions and six principles which will enable someone to make an appropriate moral response.

Fletcher's Six Fundamental Principles

- 'Only one thing is intrinsically good; namely love: nothing else at all'
- 'The ruling norm of Christian decision is love: nothing else'
- 'Love and justice are the same, for justice is love distributed, nothing else'
- 'Love wills the neighbour's good, whether we like him or not'
- 'Only the end justifies the means, nothing else'
- 'Love's decisions are made situationally, not prescriptively'

Cultural Background:

The foundation for situation ethics was laid during a time of change worldwide in the 1960s and 1970s.

- World War II
- Vietnam War
- Kennedy assassination
- Civil rights movement
- Contraceptive pill and sexual revolution
- Hippy and student culture

Antinomianism

Joseph Fletcher & the Situation Ethics

Situation Ethics (1)

Fletcher's four presuppositions

Pragmatism

Moral results

Relativism

All situations are different

Positivism

Being experienced, love is a fact

Personalism

Demands the decision

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Normative Ethical Theories: Teleological Ethics (2)

Strengths

- It responds to social and moral change, meaning that it fits well with modern moral sentiment.
- It is in keeping with Jesus' biblical rejection of legalism.
- It gives modern Christians who are uncomfortable with moral absolutism, legalistic and strict boundaries of natural law a way to practice their religious faith.
- It provides flexibility and responsibility.
- Agape is widely considered to be desirable – few would consider 'love' to be an undesirable end.

Strengths and Weaknesses

Weaknesses

- Pope Pius XII criticised it and **emphasised moral law**. For some Christians, such as those within the Catholic Church, this would be a significant issue. The Pope is considered to be the closest person to God, and the most in tune with the will of God. To decry situation ethics as immoral, it would mean such a Christian would struggle with this.
- Jesus condemned some **actions as always wrong**.
- Peter Vardy argues that situation ethics confuses actions and goals, and gives no clear guidance.
- It could be easily abused to get what individuals want rather than what is moral.
- William Barclay argues that it creates dangers of moral mistakes and harm.

As with any application of situation ethics, the only blanket rule that is applied here is the service of love (agape). Great value is placed on love rather than the value of truth. As with theft, lying is also encouraged within traditional Christian discourse, which had a heavy emphasis on Christian practice. As situation ethics is a Christian ethical practice, this should be considered.



The Issue of

Situation Ethics (2)

This is well explained through the use of an example. Jean Valjean in *Les Misérables* was imprisoned for stealing – specifically stealing a loaf of bread to feed his niece to eat (as she was starving to death). A situation ethicist would consider this to be a moral action as it was a loving course of action.

However, if an individual chose to steal a loaf of bread because they felt entitled to the bread or simply because they felt like paying for it, then this would be considered immoral. Here, the intent is the key issue.

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Normative Ethical Theories: Character-based Ethics (1)

Aristotle was an influential Greek philosopher whose thoughts are at the heart of virtue ethics. His form of virtue ethics is a form of character ethics. His form of ethics posits that there are a series of virtues which human beings should adhere to. Aristotle believes in a hierarchy of virtues at the top of which are human virtues, which are the basis of the moral life. The moral choices that we make each day need to be navigated through reason – hence Aristotle's development of virtue ethics.



Aristotle and the
Basics of Virtue Ethics

Virtue
Ethics (1)

Excess

Recklessness

The extreme of the virtue could lead an individual to put themselves or others at unnecessary risk.

This virtue properly risks and oneself

'Living Well': The Concept of Eudaimonia

For Aristotle, goodness consisted of something called Eudaimonia ('good living' or 'flourishing'). Every object has a certain function, a particular thing that it alone can do. Since everything has its particular use, so must humans. Aristotle thinks it is our rationality which serves this purpose. Our ultimate good is to exercise our rational capacities in the pursuit of Eudaimonia. Eudaimonia is a Greek word meaning 'the highest good' and is often referred to as happiness, but Aristotle uses it to refer to the 'good life' / 'human flourishing'. It is not just about individual happiness, but also involves social interaction – living in harmony and cooperation with others.

The Golden Mean

To work out what is considered a virtue, Aristotle said moral agents need to find the mean or **balance** between two vices, avoiding excess or deficiency of any virtue. To work this out, individuals need to use **practical wisdom (phronesis)**. This is an individual process of working out what virtue is suited to each situation and to each individual. Thus there can be no rules or maxims about how to act. Individuals use their autonomy and intellect to work it out and then put it into practice. An example of this is below:

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Normative Ethical Theories: Character-based Ethics (2)

Strengths

- Virtue ethics are centred on the individual so emphasises the role of the person in the making of a moral choice. This emphasises personal moral responsibility, which many see as a positive thing.
- The multifaceted nature of virtue ethics carries well with human experience. It takes all the factors into consideration when a choice is being approached. This mirrors what we do when making a moral choice that involves many different factors to consider.
- Things such as emotions are considered also, taking undue emphasis away from reason.
- It also gives us a way to gauge morality in others (i.e. through the example of a virtuous person).

Strengths and Weaknesses

Weaknesses

- Some virtues are considered to be more important in some cultures. If virtues are not universal, then this causes issues with the application of virtue ethics worldwide.
- It can be used as a general guideline, but it falters when faced with extreme moral dilemmas; thinking of virtues in depth does little to assuage the suffering of those in extreme poverty.
- Virtues can also be difficult to practically apply due to their nature of being subject to interpretation. If individuals applying virtue ethics can view different virtues differently. Because of this, this could lead each of them to make different moral choices, which are not necessarily valid.
- Virtue ethics is flexible that it can be interpreted in many different ways. This means that people can use the same form of ethics and come to vastly different conclusions. How then can meaningful decisions be made using virtue ethics?

For Aristotle (and by extension, virtue ethics), lies are not as simple as they are. Lying is primarily a social action, and it serves a social function. Lying is not simply telling of an untruth, it might be omission or giving of a false impression – all forms of falsehood are encompassed within lying.

If we consider truthfulness to be a virtue, then virtue ethics dictates that we must treat the other human being with this virtue. Therefore, we must always tell the truth and lying would be considered to be immoral.

Virtue Ethics (2)

The Issue of Theft

The founder of virtue ethics, Aristotle, has a very strong view of theft. Theft, in Aristotle's thought, is what is known as a 'base action' – an action which is performed in a way which can never be considered to be moral in any way.

Just as one cannot cheat on one's spouse in a way which is considered to be virtuous, one cannot steal in a moral way or towards a moral purpose. In this way, virtue ethics sees theft as always wrong.

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The Application of Natural Moral Law, Situation Ethics and Virtue Ethics to Issues of Human Life and Death (1)

Situation Ethics on Designer Babies and Cloning

Joseph Fletcher, the founder of situation ethics, argued that the use of genetic engineering to improve the human race should not be totally rejected, as long as love is the guiding principle and the changes. If the aim is to lovingly improve the health of the human race (as opposed to, for example, being motivated by hatred of disabilities) then it should be considered to be okay. By eliminating genetic conditions through the use of genetic engineering, Fletcher argues agape could be served by improving quality of life for those who would have otherwise struggled with genetic conditions.

He stipulated, however, that there would need to be considerable regulation in place to ensure that this practice is not abused.

However, considering that situation ethics is a Christian form of ethical conduct, this allowance can be countered by biblical teachings. Such practices as genetic engineering could be seen as a violation of God's will and also as an action taken in discrimination against the most vulnerable in society as it would disproportionately affect those who are considered to be 'lowly' in society (i.e. those with genetic conditions). It might be considered unloving to intentionally genetically engineer away from such conditions as it would be seen as taking away the right to life of those who do have that condition.

'Designer babies' is a term for genetically engineered foetuses designed to have specific characteristics. This could either be in the efforts of avoidance of genetic conditions or due to desire for specific characteristics (e.g. gender). Cloning is artificially creating an exact genetic copy of another being through artificial fertilisation and gestation.

Designer Babies and Cloning

Virtue ethics may view the designer babies system, it relies on the idea that if humans change or become unrecognisable, the same way. By curing diseases, the creation of designer beings, it can be seen as a demonstration of agape and demonstration of love.

Natural law might argue that designer babies prevent the original inequalities and might simply be a way of emphasising human dignity that it is simply going against God's will.

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The Application of Natural Moral Law, Situation Ethics and Virtue Ethics to Issues of Human Life and Death (2)

Situation Ethics on Embryo Experimentation

- A situation ethicist will always seek to take the action which best serves agape.
- One of the four working principles of situation ethics is the principle of love. This is the idea of emphasis on the importance of the individual person. When applied to the issue of embryo experimentation the question is posed: when approaching embryo experimentation, does one have to consider an embryo a person?
- If an embryo is considered a person, then it would be considered to be the most loving thing to allow that person to live (i.e. not to conduct the experimentation and destroy the embryo). However, if one took the approach that the embryo is not yet a person, then it could be considered the most loving thing to conduct the experimentation as it would have immeasurable positive benefit for the individuals who can experience the medical benefit.

- With a disclosure of natural law, due to the 'thin' in Aquinas' thought, life is considered as a continuum. This would mean that an embryo, a collection of human life and must be respected and given the same status as a fully formed human.
- Therefore, the primary precept of preservation of life would mean that an embryo, a collection of human life and must be respected and given the same status as a fully formed human.
- In a similar vein, embryo experimentation also violates the primary precept because it destroys an embryo during the gestation process.
- If one views an embryo as being a human life, then it would be considered to be the most loving thing to allow that person to live – which violates the primary precept of worshiping God.
- Exodus 20:13 it states that 'You shall not murder'.
- A natural law theorist would view the destruction of an embryo as murder, and, therefore, that it would be in violation of the primary precept of worshipping God.

Embryo Experimentation

Embryos are the beginning stage of a developing pregnancy. When allowed to develop, an embryo will eventually become a fetus which will eventually become a baby. Embryo experimentation is the use of scientific research and testing on embryos with the aim of developing treatments/cures for existing conditions in the medical field. For example, human embryos contain stem cells which can be used to treat specific chronic, debilitating illnesses. However, in order for these experimentations to take place, the embryonic cells are destroyed. The key ethical issues concern focus around whether or not these cells can be considered to have personhood.

- If eudaimonia is the end goal, then it would be weighed up between the benefits of the experimentation and the loss of the embryo.
- By using stem cells to develop treatments/cures for individuals in their daily lives, the use of stem cells to develop treatments/cures for a paralysed person would be considered to be the most loving thing to do of virtue ethics.
- Furthermore, virtue ethics would extend only to the individuals who are not then virtuous behaviour towards this group, making it difficult to extend to them.
- However, if we do consider the embryo as a person, then it would be considered to be the most loving thing to allow that person to live – which violates the primary precept of worshiping God.

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The Application of Natural Moral Law, Situation Ethics and Virtue Ethics to Issues of Human Life and Death (3)

Situation Ethics on Abortion

- Situation ethics approaches each individual case differently depending on context.
- Joseph Fletcher himself used the case of abortion in his text *Situation Ethics* (1962) to illustrate his theory of situation ethics.
- He argued that in a situation such as rape – in which he would consider abortion to be the most loving route to take for the sake of the mother – surely, to save a young woman the trauma of carrying and birthing a child following a rape would (he argues) be the most loving course of action.
- A common example used is the Angel of Auschwitz, a doctor who performed multiple abortions on Jewish women during the Holocaust, thus saving them from the gas chambers.

Abortion

Abortion is the medical termination of a pregnancy. It is legal in the UK before 24 weeks' gestation following the Abortion Act in 1967.

It is a controversial practice, around which the following issues are key:

- Ideas of personhood
- Ideas of sanctity of life (of the foetus)
- Ideas of quality of life (of both mother and the foetus)
- Ideas of autonomy
- Methods of abortion (in instances of rape and/or incest)

- Traditional view of life with two parents
- By accepting this, it contradicts the traditional view
- Similarly, a precept 'to love thy neighbour' is contradicted
- That said, the Church has a duty to support the mother's life
- At such times, the death of the foetus is a necessary evil

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The Application of Natural Moral Law, Situation Ethics and Virtue Ethics to Issues of Human Life and Death (4)

Voluntary euthanasia is the ending of a life of someone at their request via an intentional medical intervention (e.g. medication). Assisted suicide is the act of enabling an individual to end their life via a different method, such as by providing them with life-ending drugs. The differentiation lies in who is administering the drugs – in the case of voluntary euthanasia, life-ending drugs are administered by a doctor or professional, whereas within assisted suicide, the life-ending drugs are administered by the individual wishing to die. Both of these are currently illegal in the UK.

Situation Ethics

- Agape love is the central principle of Situation Ethics.
- The foundation of Situation Ethics is the belief that those who are suffering should be helped.
- He argued that the only way to achieve this is by experiencing the love of God and to end suffering.
- However, within assisted suicide, it is the moral duty of the doctor to end suffering.

Voluntary Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide

Natural Law on Voluntary Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide

- Euthanasia is the practice of ending a life, which is the intentional violation of one of the primary precepts of natural law – the preservation of life. Therefore, generally speaking, euthanasia is considered to always be immoral within natural law.
- It is considered to subvert the order of society (another primary precept) as it subverts the natural role of a doctor (to save life rather than taking it away).
- However, some people posit that the doctrine of double effect enables voluntary euthanasia or assisted suicide in certain situations.
- This is the idea that actions which have both good and bad moral consequences are permissible as long as they were intended to bring about good things.
- If we apply the doctrine of double effect to voluntary euthanasia and assisted suicide, we arrived at the idea that administering a fatal dose of painkillers is permissible.
- Emphatically, this cannot be done on purpose. This should be done with the intent to alleviate pain (a good consequence); however, it has the additional effect of killing the patient (a bad consequence). Because the direct intent is not to kill, it is considered to be permissible.

- There is no doubt that voluntary euthanasia is a moral issue.
- The idea of voluntary euthanasia is the purpose of being able to end one's life.
- However, the thought of voluntary euthanasia is a view that

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The Application of Natural Moral Law, Situation Ethics and Virtue Ethics to Issues of Human Life and Death (5)

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Capital punishment is the state intentionally ending the life of an individual as a result of said individual being convicted of a serious crime (such as murder). This was a practice in the UK until 1963. It remained legal for punishment for treason until 1998, although it was never actually used. It was finally outlawed in 1998. Forms of capital punishment include hanging, lethal injection, death by firing squad and the electric chair. It is still a legal practice in many countries, including certain states of the USA.

- In situation ethics, the service of agape is the key. Regarding capital punishment, there are multiple views.
- Firstly, it could be argued that it can never be justified as someone has committed a heinous crime. Instead, forgiveness and reconciliation should be emphasized within the teachings.
- However, it could also be argued that to execute someone who has definitely continued to kill innocent people might be considered to be unloving towards them. This could be argued to outweigh this.
- Therefore, there are two key differing ways in which situation ethics could be argued to lay the emphasis once again on the context.

Virtue Ethics on Capital Punishment

- Aristotle, the founder of virtue ethics, offers no direct application of virtue ethics to the issue of capital punishment.
- However, it should be considered that it was a common practice at his time and his omission of talking about this might be viewed as support or acceptance of the practice.
- One important part of capital punishment is the idea that it provides justice for the victims of heinous crimes – the idea of a just punishment for a crime that is equally weighted.
- Justice, within virtue ethics, is one of the virtues for which no excess can be experienced.
- Therefore, it could easily be argued that capital punishment is easy to justify as it serves the purpose of justice.

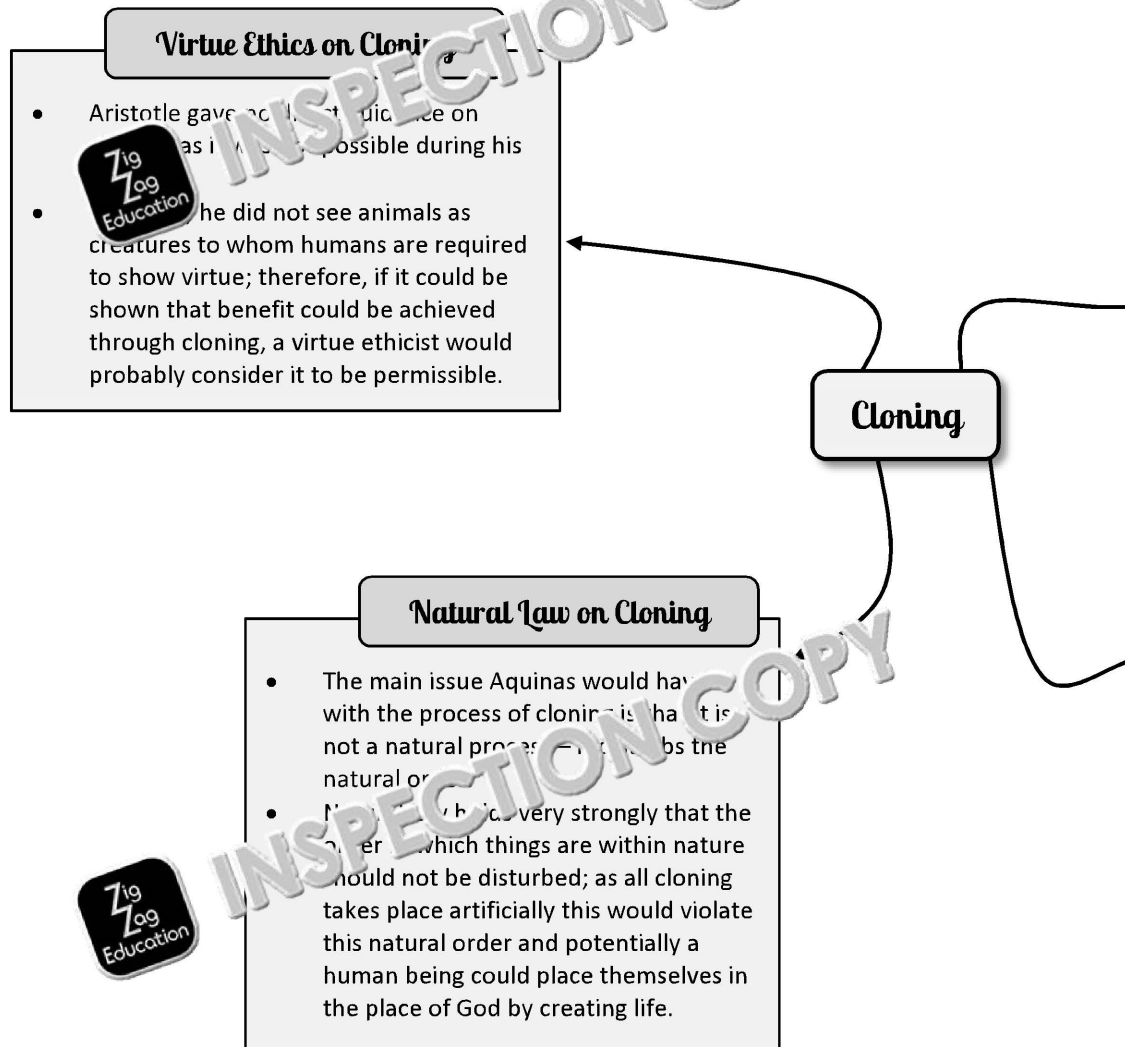
Capital Punishment

- Thomas Aquinas, the founder of natural law, considers capital punishment to be permissible in certain circumstances. He states that 'whoever shall murder a man shall be murdered' and prohibits the killing of other people.
- Capital punishment for crimes as serious as homicide is seen as necessary to maintain the precept of maintaining an ordered society. This supports the use of the death penalty.
- It would then be considered not only permissible, but also necessary, for certain crimes.
- However, capital punishment is the practice of killing someone, which is a preservation of life. This is a key principle of natural law. When evaluating the approach of natural law theorists to capital punishment, it is important to consider the following points:
- Natural law is based on the Bible, verses of which state that capital crimes when these crimes are detrimental to the community.
- Therefore, someone who is following natural law would be in support of the death penalty.

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The Application of Natural Moral Law, Situation Ethics and Virtue Ethics Issues of Non-human Life and Death (1)

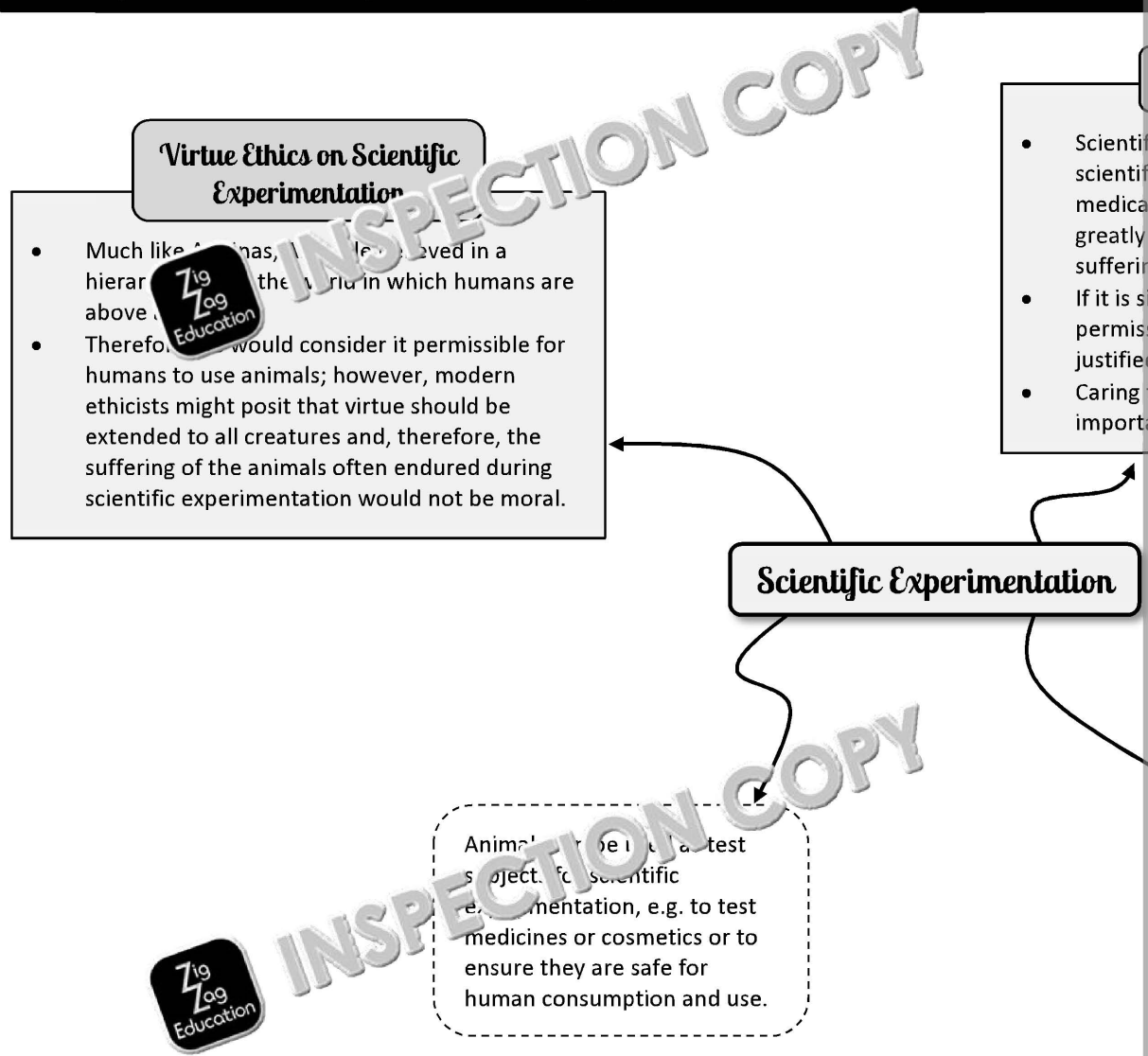


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The Application of Natural Moral Law, Situation Ethics and Virtue Ethics to Issues of Non-human Life and Death (2)



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The Application of Natural Moral Law, Situation Ethics and Virtue Ethics to Issues of Non-human Life and Death (3)

Virtue Ethics on the Use of Animals for Food and Intensive Farming

- Aristotle believed in a hierarchy in the world, and placed human beings at the height of the hierarchy. For this reason, he believed that it is natural for humans to eat meat. The virtues required for humans are only extended to other human beings. However, the attitude required in order to cause unnecessary suffering to an animal through intensive farming may be considered to be a violation of a virtue in virtue ethics and is, therefore, immoral.
- Modern virtue ethicists might consider all creatures to be entitled to virtuous treatment – extending this treatment to animals as well as humans. Therefore, they would not eat meat or practise intensive farming.
- They may also consider the harmful effect intensive farming has on the environment in terms of examining the impact this will have on future generations of humans. They have a responsibility to treat future generations with virtue, and, therefore, this might impact how they navigate this issue.

The eating of animal products is natural, however, recent developments in technology can be produced (via intensive farming) without animals being farmed, which is more virtuous. Furthermore, there are ethical concerns about the impact of intensive farming on the environment.

The Use of Animals as Pets and Intensive Farming

Situation Ethics on the Use of Animals for Food and Intensive Farming

- Situation ethics are governed by the principle of agape.
- The concern here is whether human beings have a duty to treat all beings with agape love – or whether agape love is extended only to human beings, and not animals.
- Many situation ethicists believe that the most loving thing to do is not to eat meat, and, therefore, they do not eat meat. There are some who may eat meat, but choose to only eat free range meat (meat produced through ethical farming) as they believe this to be the most loving way to approach the issue of eating meat – the idea that eating the meat is fine, but that intensive farming is wrong.
- Largely situation ethicists would also consider the impact on human beings created by intensive farming; this can often put undue strain on environments as well as disproportionately affecting the less fortunate.

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The Application of Natural Moral Law, Situation Ethics and Virtue Ethics to Issues of Non-human Life and Death (4)

Natural Law on Blood Sports

- Aquinas viewed animals as only having instrumental value – this meant that they were seen as having their only value to derive from the way in which they can be used by humans.
- For this reason, Aquinas would have an issue with the practice of blood sports.
- However, one issue in which blood sports might be considered to be wrong in natural law is the potential that the kind of violence which can be fostered in individuals and communities which practise or engage in blood sports might spill over into their treatment of human beings.
- This has the potential to lead to behaviour which might harm humans, which would be an issue for Aquinas.
- Furthermore, allowing violent tendencies to be encouraged could potentially threaten the harmonious nature of society. To violate this would be an issue for natural law as it would violate the primary precept of the upholding of the order of society.



Blood Sports

Blood sports are a form of sport in which humans observe or interact with animals in such a way that causes harm to the animal. Forms of blood sports include dog fighting, cock fighting and bull fighting. These activities are undertaken for human entertainment and not for any other benefit, such as the killing of animals for food.

- Virtue ethics are centred around the teachings of the Greek philosopher Aristotle.
- Blood sports were highly condemned by Aristotle, which indicates that he believed that such activities were not virtuous.
- Virtue ethics traditionally focus on the character of the individual and the necessity to treat animals with respect.
- However, many modern ethicists have extended the principles of virtue ethics to animals also, not just in the context of entertainment.
- For this reason, they would have an issue with blood sports.

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The Application of Natural Moral Law, Situation Ethics and Virtue Ethics to Issues of Non-human Life and Death (5)

Situation Ethics on Sourcing Organs from Animals

- The principle of situation ethics will always be situationally, and will always serve the interests of agape love.
- If it is possible and the moral imperative is to do is to transplant an organ from an animal, this is permissible for this to happen.
- The saving of a human life is considered to be a good end in terms of agape – the love and compassion motivated by alleviated suffering and allowing loved ones to live long and happy lives rather than dying of an organ-related issue undoubtedly serves the interests of agape.
- However, this must be balanced by the potential harm caused to the animals – if raising an animal and removing organs severely damages the happiness and quality of life of the animal, this might be considered to not be serving the interests of agape and, therefore, would not be considered to be permissible within situation ethics.

Virtue Ethics on Sourcing Organs from Animals

- Traditionally it is thought that the founder of virtue ethics, Aristotle, would have been in favour of organ transplanting from animals.
- This is for a number of reasons, not least because it is the virtue of using human reason to solve problems, proposed by issues with human organs. There are more people in need of organs than are willing to donate, so transplanting them from animals is a solution.
- Furthermore, it displays the virtues of compassion and mercy towards the person receiving the transplant, which would be considered to be a positive.
- However, virtue ethicists who extend virtues to animals may think it immoral to use them as a source of organs.

Source

- The practice of sourcing organs from animals is a controversial issue. Aquinas' thought is that it is possible to apply natural moral law to this issue.
- As before, the hierarchy of values is central to the understanding of this issue.
- This hierarchy means that the interests of the human are central to the understanding of this issue.
- This could be used to justify the extension, their organs are permissible.
- This is not only morally acceptable but also a precept of preserving life, so this is fine.
- However, natural moral law would consider it to be a violation of the hierarchy of values.

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Mark Schemes

Levels of Response (AS)

Level	Levels of Response (A01)
Level 5 (13–15 marks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Answer should demonstrate a good level of knowledge and understanding of the content which is requested in the question. The answer should also make use of and reference to specific views or specific theories which demonstrate very good knowledge and understanding. Use of specific or specialist language should be employed accurately.
Level 4 (10–12 marks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Answer should demonstrate fair knowledge and understanding. Answer should address the subject raised in the question. The answer should also make use of and reference to specific views or specific theories which are sufficient to demonstrate good knowledge and understanding. Use of specific or specialist language should be generally employed accurately.
Level 3 (7–9 marks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Answer should demonstrate sufficient knowledge and understanding of the subject raised in the question. The answer should also make use of and reference to specific views or specific theories which are sufficient to demonstrate knowledge and understanding. Use of specific or specialist language should be generally employed.
Level 2 (4–6 marks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Answer should demonstrate limited knowledge and understanding of the subject raised in the question. The answer should also make use of and reference to specific views or specific theories to demonstrate limited knowledge and understanding. Use of specific or specialist language should be generally employed, accurately.
Level 1 (1–3 marks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Answer will demonstrate poor, or lack, knowledge and understanding and will not directly address the subject raised in the question. The answer should also make use of and reference to specific views or specific theories which are sufficient to demonstrate poor knowledge and understanding. Use of specific or specialist language may be employed inaccurately.

Level	Levels of Response (A02)
Level 5 (13–15 marks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Answer should contain a high level of analysis and evaluation of the content. Strong argumentation should have been employed throughout the answer in a logical manner, and the answer should lead to a justified conclusion based on content analysed throughout the answer. Use of specific or specialist language should be employed accurately.
Level 4 (10–12 marks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Answer should contain a good level of analysis and evaluation of the content. Good argumentation should have been employed throughout the answer and the answer should lead to a justified conclusion based on content analysed throughout the answer. Use of specific or specialist language should be employed mostly accurately.
Level 3 (7–9 marks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Answer should contain a sufficient level of analysis and evaluation of the content of the question. Some argumentation should have been employed throughout the answer and the answer should lead to a conclusion based on content analysed throughout the answer. Use of specific or specialist language should be employed.
Level 2 (4–6 marks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Answer should contain limited analysis and evaluation of the content. Limited argumentation should have been employed throughout the answer and the answer should lead to a conclusion based on content analysed throughout the answer. Use of specific or specialist language should be employed although limited.
Level 1 (1–3 marks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Answer will have given a poor standard of analysis and evaluation of the content of the question. Poor use of argumentation, or complete lack of argumentation, will be evident in the answer. Answer will lack justification for the arguments or views presented and will be completely irrelevant to the desired topic. Use of specific or specialist language will have been poorly employed.

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Levels of Response (A Level)

Level	Levels of Response (A01)
5 (9–10 marks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Answer will communicate a strong knowledge base showing nuance with fully relevant information included. Reference to the scholars, views and sources of wisdom and authority and correct. Use of specific language will be applied accurately, demonstrating exact context and meaning of these phrases.
4 (7–8 marks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Answer will communicate a good knowledge base showing nuanced with mostly relevant information included. Reference to the scholars, views and sources of wisdom and authority correct. Use of specific language will be applied accurately, demonstrating at the context and meaning of these phrases.
3 (5–6 marks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Answer will communicate an adequate knowledge base showing some relevant information included. Reference to the scholars, views and sources of wisdom and authority and correct. Use of specific language will be applied, demonstrating satisfactory to the context and meaning of these phrases.
2 (3–4 marks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Answer will communicate a limited knowledge base showing under information included. Reference to the scholars, views and sources of wisdom and authority and correct. Use of specific language will be applied, demonstrating satisfactory to the context and meaning of these phrases.
1 (1–2 marks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Answer will communicate a poor knowledge base showing very limited understanding with little relevant information included. Reference to the scholars, views and sources of wisdom and authority and/or incorrect. Use of specific language will not be applied, or if it is it will be applied incorrectly.

Level	Levels of Response (A02)
6 (13–15 marks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Answer will display outstanding analysis and evaluation of the content. Reference to the scholars, views and sources of wisdom and authority and correct. A strong argument will be displayed showing nuanced and balanced understanding. Use of specific language will be applied accurately, demonstrating exact context and meaning of these phrases.
4 (10–12 marks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Answer will display above average analysis and evaluation of the content. Reference to the scholars, views and sources of wisdom and authority and correct. An above average argument will be displayed showing balanced understanding. Use of specific language will be applied accurately, demonstrating at the context and meaning of these phrases.
3 (7–9 marks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Answer will display sufficient analysis and evaluation of the content. Reference to the scholars, views and sources of wisdom and authority and correct. A sufficient argument will be displayed showing some balanced understanding. Use of specific language will be applied sufficiently, demonstrating satisfactory to the context and meaning of these phrases.
2 (4–6 marks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Answer will display fairly basic analysis and evaluation of the content. Reference to the scholars, views and sources of wisdom and authority and correct. A basic argument will be displayed showing some understanding. Use of specific language will be applied, demonstrating satisfactory to the context and meaning of these phrases.
1 (1–3 marks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Answer will display poor, or lack, evaluation of the content raised by the question. Reference to the scholars, views and sources of wisdom and authority and/or incorrect. A poor argument will be displayed showing limited understanding. Use of specific language will not be applied, or if it is it will be applied incorrectly.

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Answers

1 Normative Ethical Theories

1. Deontological Ethics

1. A) telos E) precepts
B) eudaimonia F) Hoose
C) Aquinas G) reason
D) two H) proportionalism
2.
 - Primary precepts – fundamental rules which cannot be broken and which form the basis of the moral system
 - Secondary precepts – rules which were developed from the primary precepts
 - Key precepts – the moral principle from which all else is derived: we should do good and avoid evil
3.
 - Bernard Hoose was the first to formally introduce the idea of proportionalism. He had historically recognised that absolutism had its limitations.
 - While Aquinas held that the primary precepts were **absolute** – they are rule-tied and inflexible – he also recognised that sometimes life throws up situations where one must choose between two evils and do the lesser of two evils without also doing bad.
4. A) This Bible verse condemns lying. It impacts natural law theory as, due to this commandment of God, it establishes the idea that to lie is to violate the primary precept. Therefore, it is always considered to be wrong.
B) This Bible verse condemns stealing. It impacts natural law theory as, due to this commandment of God, it establishes the idea that to steal is to violate the primary precept. Therefore, it is always considered to be wrong.
5.
 - The doctrine of double effect holds that a bad consequence does not make an action wrong if that bad consequence is not intended.
 - A classic example is the case of killing an attacker in self-defence. Aquinas has reasoned that it is morally acceptable for an individual to kill in self-defence if the *intention* was to preserve their own life rather than take away another's.
6. Answers to the AS question should be marked against the AS AO1 mark scheme. Answers to the A Level question should be marked against the A Level AO1 mark scheme.

Answer could include, but are not limited to, the following content:

- Natural law is the ethical theory of the Catholic Church; it posits that there is a moral law, the Word of God which needs to be followed. This theory was developed by Thomas Aquinas, who based his theory on the Bible and on reason. He formulated a series of precepts – the key precept (that all else is derived – that we should aim to do good and avoid evil), the primary precepts (reproduce, educate children, worship God, create an orderly society) and the secondary precepts (developed on the basis of primary precepts).
- One of the main strengths of natural law theory is that it is objective – there are no subjective opinions; the rules are set and do not change depending on viewpoints. Actions are either right or wrong; there is emphatic clarity.
- The rules are taken from one common source and, therefore, will not differ between cultures. All law theorists believe that natural law applies to everyone and is, therefore, universal.
- There is a degree of flexibility to natural law, through modern developments. Bernard Hoose introduced proportionalism.
- Furthermore, some modern neuroscientists, such as Pinker, have argued that behaviour is determined genetically, which fits well with Aquinas' ideas about natural law.
- However, we can observe that nature is not always necessarily good and, therefore, the assumption that instinctive goodness is natural.
- It cannot be considered to apply to everyone as it necessitates belief in God. Not everyone has faith! This challenges the idea that natural law can be considered to be universal.
- Furthermore, some of the primary precepts are not possible for certain groups of people by nature – for example, the primary precept of reproduction cannot be upheld by those who are infertile.
- The theory also commits the naturalistic fallacy – just because something is, does not mean it ought to be. For example, just because human beings are able to reproduce, does not mean it has moral value to the act of reproduction.

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2. Situation Ethics

1. d) Agape
2. Agape is at the centre of Fletcher's situation ethics. It is the Christian principle of love. Fletcher argued that agape was at the crux of Christian ethics and that as long as a moral action was based on agape, then it was moral – even if it violated traditional biblical laws.
3. **Strengths:**
It responds to social and moral **A) change**.
It is in keeping with Jesus' biblical rejection of **B) legalism**.
It provides **C) flexibility** and responsibility.
D) Agape is widely considered to be desirable.

Weaknesses:

Pope **E) Pius XII** criticised it as a relativist moral law.
Jesus condemned some actions as always wrong. Peter **F) Singer** (1) argues that it gives no guidance. It could also be argued that it could be easily abused by individuals rather than what is moral. Barclay argues that it creates danger

4. "Thou Shalt love thy neighbour as Thyself" Matthew 22:38

5.

Fundamental Principles	
'Only one thing is intrinsically good; namely love: nothing else at all'	
'The ruling norm of Christian decision is love: nothing else'	
'Love and justice are the same, for justice is love distributed, nothing else'	
'Love wills the neighbour's good, whether we like him or not'	
'Only the end justifies the means, nothing else'	
'Love's decisions are made situationally, not prescriptively'	

6.

	Fletcher's four presuppositions	Explanation
1.	Pragmatism	Moral demands should be practical and achieve the good which is love.
2.	Relativism	All situations should be assessed on how best to decide through following moral laws which use the words
3.	Positivism	Being able to say that 'God is love' on the basis of faith and experience. The moral agent has to decide, through the most important thing of all. ¹
4.	Personalism	Demands that the needs and importance of people are considered in the demands of moral laws.

7. Students should give an example which fits the appropriate ideas of situation ethics. Jean Valjean in the novel *Les Misérables* who steals his sister's child to save him from starving. Here, he was serving the interest of love of his family, and according to situation ethics, his actions were moral.
8. Students should give an example which fits the appropriate ideas of situation ethics. The page uses the example of when you may be required to lie in order to save the life of a person. This is considered to serve the interests of agape as it is ensuring the safety and continuity of the love they share with their loved ones. Therefore, despite being something which is not considered moral because it serves the interests of agape.

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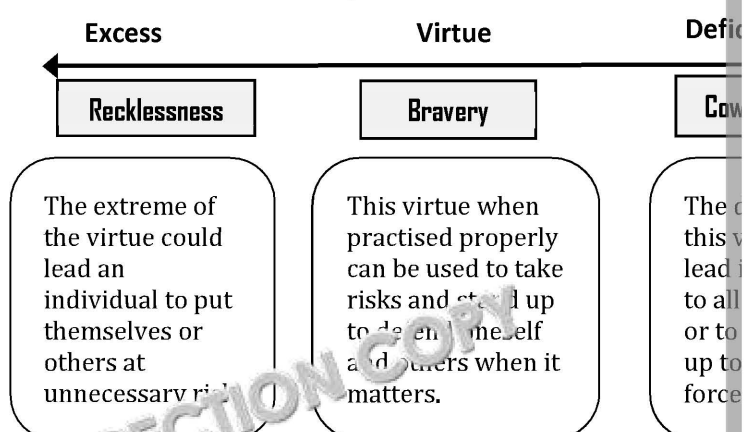


¹ 1966 *Situation Ethics: The New Morality*, Philadelphia: Westminster Press

9. Answers to the AS question should be marked against the AS AO1 mark scheme. Answers to the A Level question should be marked against the A Level AO1 mark scheme.
- Situation ethics is a form of Christian ethics developed by Joseph Fletcher with the aim of serving the Christian principle of agape – unconditional love as demonstrated in the Bible.
 - Theft is the deliberate taking of an item or asset which does not belong to you or omission of a fact or falsehood.
 - Situation ethics is a Christian form of ethics, and, as stealing is discouraged by the Bible (Exodus 20:15), most situation ethicists will view stealing as being immoral. However, if it serves the purpose and end of agape in a contextual basis, meaning that theft is the loving thing to do in certain situations.
 - This is well explained through the use of an example: Jean Valjean in the novel 'Les Misérables' for stealing – specifically stealing a loaf of bread in order for his niece to eat. A situation ethicist would consider this to be a moral action – as it is a loving choice.
 - However, if an individual chose to steal a loaf of bread because they felt entitled to it and did not feel like paying for it, then this would be considered to be immoral. Here, the act is not loving.
 - As with any application of situational ethics, the only blanket rule to be applied is the principle of agape. Greater value is placed on the value of love than on the value of truth. As with the traditional Christian approach which had a heavy emphasis on Christian principles, in situation ethics, this should be considered.
 - The question in which a situation ethicist might approach this question is not asking whether or not lying would serve agape. For example, if lying would benefit a human being, then it is the correct moral choice in that situation – it is made on the basis of love. However, if a lie is told in order to avoid punishment, for example, then agape is not served, therefore, this is considered to be immoral.

3. Virtue Ethics

1. Aristotle
2. Our ultimate good is to exercise our rational capacities in the pursuit of eudaimonia, meaning 'the highest good' and is often referred to as 'happiness', but Aristotle uses the term 'human flourishing'. It is an individual state, but also involves social interaction – cooperation with others.
3. Students could give any example with an accurate explanation. The example and summary page are included below as an example.



4. A virtue ethics approach can be useful in demonstrating practical virtuous behaviour. This is because by observing virtuous people and spending time with them, we can imitate their actions and subsequently become virtuous ourselves.
5. Students could give any three of the following strengths:
 - Virtue ethics are centred on the individual and emphasise the role of the person making the choice. This emphasises personal moral responsibility, which many see as a strength.
 - The multifaceted nature of virtue ethics marries well with human experience. It allows for consideration when a moral choice is being approached. This mirrors reality where in making a choice there are many different factors to consider.
 - Things such as emotions are also considered, taking undue emphasis away from a purely rational approach.
 - It also gives us a way to gauge morality in others (i.e. through the example of their actions).

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6. Students could give any three of the following weaknesses:
- Some virtues are considered to be more important in different cultures. If virtues are considered to be more important in different cultures, this causes issues with the application of virtue ethics worldwide.
 - It can be used as a general guideline, but it falters when faced with extreme situations. A virtue ethics approach in depth does little to assuage the suffering of those in extreme poverty.
 - Virtues can also be difficult to practically apply due to their nature of being specific. For example, the development of medical technology has thrown up huge medical issues. How can virtue ethics be applied to these issues in different ways so different conclusions can be made using virtue ethics?
7. Answers to the AS question should be marked against the AS AO2 mark scheme. Answers to the A Level question should be marked against the A Level AO2 mark scheme.
- Virtue ethics is a form of character-based ethics which was developed by Aristotle. It is based on the idea of the Golden Mean to find the ideal virtue as a midpoint between deficiency and excess.
 - Theft is the deliberate taking of an item or asset which does not belong to you. It is a moral issue because it involves the omission of a fact or falsehood.

Arguments for:

- The founder of virtue ethics, Aristotle, had a very strong view of theft. As he was a philosopher, it can be considered that Aristotle's view is the view of virtue ethics which is known as a 'base action' – an action which is performed in a way which is not moral in any way.
- Just as one cannot cheat on one's spouse in a way which is considered to be a moral way or towards a moral purpose. In this way, virtue ethics sees theft as a moral issue.
- For Aristotle (and, by extension, virtue ethicists), lies and truth are two very different things. Lying is not simply a social action, which provides a social function. Lying is not simply a moral issue, it might be the omission of a truth or the giving of a false impression – all forms of lying.
- If we consider truthfulness to be a virtue, then virtue ethics dictates that we must always tell the truth with this virtue. Therefore, we must always tell the truth and lying would be a moral issue.

Arguments against:

- Regarding the way in which Aristotle approached theft in particular, it is important for virtue ethicists to consider that the way in which he approached moral issues is with a focus on the individual. He and his contemporaries were largely wealthy men of status, for whom stealing was a moral issue. This would obviously be wrong. One of the most important virtues is justice, which stealing upholds the virtue of justice then this might be considered to be a moral issue.
- When applied to more vulnerable situations, such as stealing due to necessity (e.g. to order to survive) then a modern virtue ethicist might argue that it is moral to steal. This would win out.
- The tension with the issue of lying stems from the point at which the virtue of truthfulness comes into conflict with other virtues. In this instance, it would be difficult to uphold both virtues. A virtue ethicist would be in a situation where they would need to make a choice between the need to hold up the virtue of truthfulness and the need to hold up the virtue of truthfulness.
- For example, if you have to lie to someone in order to bravely save another's life, then the virtue of bravery and the virtue of truthfulness are coming into conflict.

4. Issues of Human Life and Death

1. A) Designer B) characteristics C) Cloning D) Termination E) Personhood F) Sanctity G) quality H) Embryos I) embryonic cells J) illnesses K) personhood
2. Natural Law:
- Within the dialogue of natural law, due to the roots of the Bible in Aquinas' teachings, it is considered that life begins at conception (i.e. when sperm meets egg).
 - This would mean that an embryo, a collection of cells, is considered to be equal to a human life and must be respected and given the same dignity.
 - Therefore, the primary precept of preservation of life would apply to the embryo. If the embryo is destroyed by experimentation, it cannot ever be moral, because it is a human life.
 - In a similar vein, embryo experimentation also comes into conflict with the virtue of truthfulness. This is because it destroys an embryo during the gestation process, prohibiting the birth of a human baby.

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- If one views an embryo as being a human life, then the process of embryo experimentation is the destruction of human life – which violates the primary precept of worshipping God. The Bible teaches that God is the creator of all life, and in Exodus 20:13 it states that 'You shall not murder'.
- A natural law theorist would view the destruction of the embryo which takes place in the process of IVF experimentation as murder, and, therefore, it would be in direct violation of the primary precept of worshipping God, as to worship God is to do no murder.

Situation Ethics:

- A situation ethicist will always seek to take the action which best serves the greatest number of people.
- One of the four working principles of situation ethics is important to consider: it is the idea of emphasising the importance of the individual person. When approaching embryo experimentation the question is posed: when approaching embryo experimentation, should we consider an embryo a person?
- If an embryo is considered a person, then it would not be considered to be the means to an end, but the person to live (i.e. not to conduct the experimentation and destroy the embryo). If the approach that the embryo is not a person, then it could be considered the means to an end. Conducting the experimentation might have immeasurable positive benefits for the experience the mother can have.

Virtue

- If eudaimonia is the end goal, then the benefit must be weighed up between the good and bad.
- If stem cells are used to treat and cure diseases which cause serious harm at their daily lives, eudaimonia would be achieved. An example of this would be a cure for paralysis. Giving back the use of limbs to a paralysed person would be eudaimonia, and, therefore, fulfil the purpose of virtue ethics.
- Furthermore, virtue ethics stipulates that the virtue that one must show to others is to be good to all human beings. This includes the disabled. Therefore, this applies to this group – humans. Therefore, there can be a debate had regarding whether embryos to be part of this group. If they are not, then virtuous behaviour, should not need to be extended towards this group, meaning that embryo experimentation would not be immoral.
- However, if we do consider embryos to be human beings then virtuous behaviour must be extended towards this group. Therefore, embryo experimentation could be considered to be immoral.

3. Students should correct the sentences as follows:

A) <i>Abortion only violates one primary precept.</i>	Abortion can be considered to violate one primary precept, including the upholding of reproductive ordering of society.
B) <i>The reason behind wanting an abortion is not important to virtue ethics.</i>	The reason behind wanting an abortion is important to virtue ethics, as it is the deciding factor as to whether it can be considered moral.
C) <i>Joseph Fletcher believes abortion is wrong in every circumstance, even rape.</i>	Joseph Fletcher believes that abortion is the correct and most loving thing to do in some circumstances.
D) <i>The doctrine of triple effect can sometimes be used to justify abortions in natural law.</i>	The doctrine of double effect can sometimes be used to justify abortions in natural law.
E) <i>Virtue ethics does not differentiate depending on the stage of foetus' development.</i>	Virtue ethics differentiates its stance on abortion depending on the developmental stage of the foetus – a foetus that is feeling pain is considered to be of greater value.

4. Answer to the AS question should be marked against the AS AO1 mark scheme.
Answer to the A Level question should be marked against the A Level AO1 mark scheme.

- 'Designer Babies' is the term for genetically engineered foetuses designed to have specific characteristics. This could either be in the efforts of avoidance of genetic conditions or due to specific characteristics (e.g. gender). Cloning is artificially creating an exact genetic copy of an existing individual through artificial fertilisation and gestation.
- Joseph Fletcher, the founder of situation ethics, argued that the use of genetic engineering to improve the human race should not be totally rejected, as long as love is the reason behind it. He argued that if we can lovingly improve the health of the human race (as opposed to, for example, to prevent specific genetic disabilities) then it could be considered to be okay. By eliminating genetic conditions through genetic engineering, Fletcher argues agape could be served by improving quality of life for those who have otherwise struggled with genetic conditions.

- He stipulated, however, that there would need to be considerable regulation to ensure that the practice is not abused.
- However, considering that situation ethics is a Christian form of ethical thought, it is countered by biblical teachings. Such practices as genetic engineering could be seen as an action taken in discrimination against the most vulnerable in society. It might be considered unloving to intentionally genetically engineer away from a condition that might disproportionately affect those who are considered to be 'lowly' in society. It might be seen as taking away the right to life of those who do have that condition.
- Virtue ethics might oppose designer babies for a number of reasons. The first reason is that, through DNA editing, these might eventually change or become unrecognisable as human beings. A virtue might not apply in the same way. Another reason might be that beyond the creation of designer babies cannot be said to express or demonstrate an attempt to improve future human beings, it can be seen as a focus on the virtues of the present, and demonstrating virtue to, those immediately around them.
- Natural law might oppose designer babies in a number of ways. One way is that it might prevent the ordering of society, especially if it heightens and influences inequalities between those who are rich and those who are poor. However, another might simply be from the perspective of the natural law which emphasises human beings as made in the image of God and as such, not to interfere with nature, and as such designer babies are going against the natural order.

5. Issues of Human Life and Death (b)

1. A) intentional E) die I) capital
B) Assisted suicide F) illegal J) lethal injection
C) doctor G) Capital K) USA
D) individual H) crime

2. a) The case of Tony Bland.

Natural Law: A natural law ethicist would disagree with the choice to remove Tony Bland. Euthanasia is the practice of ending a life, which is the intentional violation of the natural law – the preservation of life. Therefore, generally speaking, euthanasia is immoral within natural law. It is considered to subvert the order of society (as it subverts the natural role of a doctor (to save life rather than take it) as well as the position of choosing who lives and dies. The doctrine of double effect could be used here if there was another medical reason to remove his nutrition.

Situation Ethics: Agape love is at the heart of situation ethics and, therefore, in the case of euthanasia and assisted suicide, the morality of such choices is situational. In the case of Tony Bland, his family might have been considered to be so great that it would be considered reasonable to approach this issue. Therefore, it could be considered to be justified under situation ethics.

Virtue Ethics: The idea of eudaimonia is central to the debate about the morality of euthanasia (human happiness/flourishing) is considered to be the purpose of human life. If Tony Bland is unable to achieve this end, due to being in a medical condition such as PVS (permanent vegetative state), euthanasia would be considered permissible. This line of argument marries the idea of quality of life. Therefore, since Tony Bland was in a persistent vegetative state and therefore unable to experience eudaimonia, therefore, this would be permissible.

- Natural Law:** The first part of natural law (St Thomas Aquinas) believed that for certain crimes, such as homicide, as this is laid out as a punishment in the Bible. If a murderer killed 168 people in his act of terrorism, this would be a clear punishment according to natural law. While the preservation of life is a primary principle, it is also a primary precept. Upholding justice (administered via punishment for crime) is also important in maintain order in society and, therefore, a natural law theorist would support the execution of the murderer.

Situation Ethics: Agape must always be upheld in situation ethics – however, in the case of the murderer, there are ways to this situation. Firstly, it could be argued that it can never be in the service of love – even if they have committed a heinous crime. Instead, forgiveness and rehabilitation is in keeping with the emphasis on forgiveness within the teachings of Jesus. However, to execute an individual who shows no remorse for serial killings and will defame the name of God, might be the most loving thing to do for the majority of people. While unloving towards the murderer, the amount of agape shown to the remainder of society is increased.

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outweigh this. In the case of McVeigh this could be applied directly – as he killed a large number of people, then it might be loving to protect the rest of society from further harm.

Virtue Ethics: One important part of capital punishment is the idea that it is a just punishment for a crime being equally weighed against the harm caused by the crime. Virtue ethics, is one of the virtues for which no excess can be experienced. Specifically, this is such as colossal crime (with so many impacted) that it could be argued that capital punishment is a just conclusion.

3. Answers to the AS question should be marked against the AS AO1 mark scheme. Answers to the A Level question should be marked against the A Level AO1 mark scheme. *(The example answer here is of situation ethics; however, students' answers could refer to any of the ethical theories covered in this course. Correct and relevant content should be awarded marks.)*

- There are two main issues which should be addressed concerning the ending of a life – those of capital punishment and voluntary euthanasia (and assisted suicide).
- Capital punishment is the state-sanctioned ending of the life of an individual convicted of a serious crime (such as murder). This was a practice in the UK until 1998. Different forms of capital punishment include hanging, firing squad and the electric chair.
- Voluntary euthanasia is the ending of a life of someone at their request via a medical intervention (i.e. medication). Assisted suicide is the act of enabling an individual to end their life in a medical manner, such as by providing them with life-ending drugs. The difference is in who administers the drugs – in the case of voluntary euthanasia, the life-ending drug is administered by a doctor or professional, whereas within assisted suicide, the life-ending drug is administered by the individual wishing to die.
- In situation ethics, the way in which a life can be ended morally must be appropriate to the situation and always serving the interests of agape.
- The founder of situation ethics was a proponent of voluntary euthanasia for the terminally ill.
- He argued that it is the most loving thing to do for an individual who is expected to die to allow them to die in the way they wish to and to end their suffering.
- In terms of whether or not it is moral to take the life of a prisoner in recompense for a crime (capital punishment), the issue must be considered in light of what end would be served by the action.
- Firstly, it could be argued that it can never be in the service of agape to take the life of someone who has committed a heinous crime. Instead, forgiveness and rehabilitation should be the emphasis on forgiveness within the teachings of Jesus.
- However, it could also be argued that to execute an individual who shows no remorse and will definitely continue to kill innocent people, might be the most loving thing to do. While it might be considered to be unloving towards the murderer, the amount of suffering the remainder of society could be argued to outweigh this.

6. Issues of Non-human Life and Death (a)

1. A) intensive E) situation
B) quality F) hierarchy
C) hierarchy G) humans
D) permissible
2. **Situation Ethics:** If cloning could be used towards a loving outcome (such as having a child with a genetic condition, developing new environmental solutions, etc.) then this would be considered to be moral. If artificial cloning were to cause pain to an animal (i.e. due to genetic issues as a result of the cloning process) then this would not be considered to be moral.

Natural Law: The main issue Aquinas would have with the process of cloning is that it disturbs the natural order. Natural law holds very strongly that the order in which things are created should not be disturbed; as all cloning takes place artificially this would violate this natural order. If humans being created could place themselves in the place of God by creating life.

Virtue Ethics: Aristotle gave no direct guidance on cloning, as it was not possible for him to foresee such technology. However, he did not see animals as creatures to whom humans are required to show special consideration. If it is shown that benefit could be achieved through cloning, a virtue ethicist would probably consider it to be a justifiable action.

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3. Modern demand for increased meat production has led to the development of intensive farming. This results in a decreased quality of life for the animals being reared. In objection many have made against this practice. Furthermore, there are ethical objections as animals can be killed and eaten.
4. Answers to the AS question should be marked against the AS AO2 mark scheme. Answers to the A Level question should be marked against the A Level AO2 mark scheme.
 - As modern science has developed, there has also emerged the necessity for scientific experimentation to develop products such as cosmetics and medicines.
 - Animals can be used as test subjects for scientific experimentation, e.g. to test drugs to ensure they are safe for human consumption and use.

Arguments against:

- Some situation ethicists would argue that scientific experimentation has great benefits. Scientific experimentation on animals creates new drugs or treatments for medicine, which greatly serve agape.
- This would be the most loving thing to do for those suffering in pain as a result of illness. They would consider the service of agape as being sufficient justification for the experience of the animals.
- A natural law ethicist would consider scientific experimentation on animals to be a violation of the hierarchy of life.
- Aquinas believed in the hierarchy of creation, with human beings at the top.
- For Aquinas, animals have an instrumental value rather than a moral value – human beings and their value does not go much beyond this.
- Aquinas also puts a huge emphasis on reason, something which could be seen as a justification for experimentation.
- If human reason and knowledge are served by the use of animals for experimentation, then consider this to be a moral choice.
- The same hierarchy is observed within Aristotle's virtue ethics – and in a similar way, a reason why animals should not be experimented upon. Virtues should only be extended to human beings, and do not need to be extended to animals.

Arguments for:

- In situation ethics, while many view it as permissible to experiment on animals, the use of animals for cosmetic motivation would not be considered permissible.
- Caring for the welfare of animals might be considered to be more important than the use of animals for experimentation.
- While Aristotle's view of the place of animals can influence the way in which situation ethicists traditionally, modern ethicists have argued that this practice might be justified.
- Such virtue ethicists might posit that virtue should be extended to all creatures. The animals often endured during scientific experimentation would not be seen as having a moral status.

7. Issues of Non-human Life and Death (b)

1. C) Instrumental value
2. A) Blood source
B) entertainment D) outweighs
3. A) Natural law C) Virtue ethics
B) Situation ethics
4. Natural law
Aquinas viewed animals as only having instrumental value – this meant that he believed that animals derive from the way in which they can be used by humans. For this reason, Aquinas would support the practice of blood sports. However, one way in which blood sports might be considered to be justified is the potential that the kind of violence which can be fostered in individuals and animals who engage in blood sports might spill over into their treatment of human beings. This behaviour which might harm humans, which would be an issue for Aquinas. Furthermore, the tendencies to be encouraged, this could potentially threaten the harmonious nature of the world. This would be an issue for natural law as it would violate the primary precept of the use of animals.

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Situation Ethics:

Situation ethics would largely oppose blood sports. In the interest of agape, there is no benefit toward this end by blood sports. The only benefit that blood sports can garner for humans is entertainment, and, at that, entertainment derived from fulfilment of negative, bloodthirsty motives. The value of lower importance to situation ethics, coming far further down the list than agape. Furthermore, humans can entertain themselves through means which do not cause harm. It is important to remember that this will always be depending on the situation, as it is situation ethics.

Virtue Ethics:

Virtue ethics are centred around the thoughts of Greek philosopher Aristotle – and he was not against blood sports when discussing blood sports. Blood sports were highly common during the time of Aristotle, and he does not condemn them indicates that he had no issue with them. Virtue ethics treat all human beings, and, therefore, it is not necessary to treat animals with respect. However, some have countered that ethical virtue treatment should be extended to animals also; there is no benefit to human life apart from entertainment. For this reason, they would oppose blood sports.

5. Answers to the AS question should be marked against the AS A02 mark scheme. Answers to the A Level question should be marked against the A Level A02 mark scheme.
- One of the ways of healing particular illnesses is to transplant an unhealthy organ from a human donor.
 - The need for human organ donors far outweighs the number of willing donors. Therefore, the proposed use of animals as an alternative.
 - This throws up ethical considerations.

Arguments for:

- Natural law does generally support the instrumental use of animals; however, the practice as by transplanting animal organs into a human, the biological order is violated, which would be considered to be a violation of the primary precept of uphold natural law.
- Modern virtue ethicists might consider this to be an unethical practice as they would extend virtuous treatment to animals as well as humans. Therefore, to use them for human benefit is considered to be unethical.
- A situation ethicist would generally see sourcing organs as a positive thing as it saves lives by receiving them due to the large amount of benefit and agape generated by saving lives. The harm caused to the animal against its consent, meaning that this might be considered to be against the interests of agape and, therefore, would not be considered to be permissible.

Arguments against:

- The principle of situation ethics will always differ situationally, and will always be based on the greatest love.
- Therefore, if it is possible and the most loving thing to do is to transplant an organ from an animal, it is permissible for this to happen.
- The saving of a human life is considered to be a good end in terms of agape – alleviated suffering and allowing loved ones to live long and happier lives rather than a related issue undoubtedly serves the interests of agape.
- Traditionally it is thought that the founder of virtue ethics, Aristotle, would not be against transplanting from animals.
- This is for a number of reasons, not least because it serves the virtue of using resources wisely to solve the problem posed by issues with human organs. There are more people in need of organs to donate them, and by transplanting them from animals this issue is solved.
- Furthermore, this displays the virtues of compassion and mercy towards the animals, which would be considered to be a positive.
- According to the natural law view about the hierarchy within the world which places human beings at the top, and, therefore, central to the way in which organs should be interpreted in natural law.
- This hierarchy means that human interests are placed above animal interests.
- This could be used to argue that it is possible for humans to use animals (and their own purposes) and for this use to be completely permissible.
- This is not only made permissible but is potentially encouraged when one considers the preservation of life – if this is furthered with the use of animal organs, then it is a good thing.

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