



# **Course Companion for GCSE AQA A Component 2**

Religion and Life

Full Course: Theme B

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# Contents

Thank You for Choosing ZigZag Education.....	ii
Teacher Feedback Opportunity.....	iii
Terms and Conditions of Use .....	iv
Teacher's Introduction.....	1
Introduction to the Course and How to Answer Exam Questions .....	2
<b>The Origins and Value of the Universe.....</b>	<b>3</b>
The Origins of the Universe .....	3
The Value of the World and the Duty of Human Beings to Protect It .....	5
Use and Abuse of the Environment .....	7
Use and Abuse of Animals .....	9
Summary for the Origins and Value of the Universe.....	14
<b>The Origins and Value of Human Life.....</b>	<b>15</b>
The Origins of Life .....	15
Sanctity of Life and Quality of Life .....	17
Abortion .....	19
Ethical Arguments Related to Abortion .....	21
Euthanasia.....	24
Death and an Afterlife .....	28
Summary for the Origins and Value of Human Life.....	31
<b>Answers .....</b>	<b>32</b>
The Origins and Value of the Universe.....	32
The Origins and Value of Human Life.....	34

# Teacher's Introduction

This resource has been designed to support the learning and teaching of AQA A GCSE Religious Studies Component 2: Thematic Studies, Theme B: Religion and Life. All areas of the specification are covered, and questions and activities are included to test knowledge and ability, and to help students to engage with the topics.

## Remember!

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

The information is comprehensive, and images help to illustrate concepts. Key words and Bible and Qur'an quotes are included to help students to understand the material and to further their grasp of the subjects. A brief introduction to the course and answering exam questions is provided for students at the start, and answers/a mark scheme are included at the end.

This course companion can be used in full as an alternative or complement to a textbook, as a class text or for independent learning or revision. Alternatively, teachers might use a section for a specific classroom activity or homework.

This topic involves studying a number of different arguments, ideas and opinions, from different religious and non-religious perspectives. This should both inform students, and develop their thinking, enabling them to approach issues from different points of view.

This resource focuses primarily on Christianity in line with the specification's focus on Christianity as the main religious tradition in Britain today. Where students need to know contrasting religious views on specific topics, examples are provided from Islam, which we expect to be a common choice, along with other religious and non-religious views where appropriate.

We have sought a balance between explaining relevant concepts in sufficient detail without oversimplification, while not going beyond GCSE level and becoming too complicated. Throughout, we have tried to present all views in a neutral and informative way.

Hopefully this resource will encourage students in their learning and help to prepare them for their exams. It should take the pressure away from teachers by providing the bulk of the content which they want to teach to their class.

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**Note:** This theme covers several controversial and potentially upsetting issues such as abortion, animal testing, euthanasia and death. It is advised that teachers review these sections before sharing them with their classes, and warn students about any content which may distress or offend.

## Free Updates!

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\* resulting from minor specification changes, suggestions from teachers and peer reviews, or occasional errors reported by customers

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# Introduction to the Course and How to Answer Exam Questions

This course aims to cover religious and non-religious beliefs, teachings and arguments about life; about how life began, and about how life should be viewed and treated – and to assess your understanding of these ideas and their place in the world today. The course companion focuses on Christianity in particular, to cover the specification's focus on Christianity as the main religious tradition in Britain today, as well as focusing on some other religions in certain sections. Quick questions also focus on Christianity, but please note that in the exam no specific religion will be referred to (except in 4-mark questions) and you may write about any religion(s) you have studied.

This course companion is designed to equip you with the information you need, and help you to test your knowledge and ability to answer related questions. Not all the questions and activities included here are exam-style, but those which are should be answered in particular ways.

The exam board will give you multiple choice questions and ask you to give brief examples, as well as asking you to 'explain' and 'evaluate' beliefs and opinions. When answering all questions it is important to try to use technical terms where possible, to write well; both using a style that is easy to follow and using correct spellings and grammar. More or less writing will be required, depending on the number of marks. Try to spend as little time on the shorter questions, to allow yourself more time for longer ones.

For this theme you will get a 1-mark, 2-mark, 4-mark, 5-mark and 12-mark question in the exam – a few extra marks are given for spelling, punctuation and grammar based on the 12 mark question.

Hopefully this resource will be interesting, informative, and help you to achieve good results.

## At the end of the course:

- ☐ Make sure that you understand all the material, the content and themes
- ☐ Check that you are confident with answering exam questions
- ☐ If you are unsure about anything, revisit topics, or practise answering questions

If you are ever **unsure** about a particular topic, or how to answer a question, always **ask your teacher** for further explanation and help – that's what they're there for!

For the **1-mark question**, you will be given a multiple-choice question and you need to choose the right answer. Make sure not to fall for trick-answers!

For the **2-mark question** you need to give two examples or facts. You do not need to elaborate on these, and do not waste time giving extra examples, as you can only get 2 marks.

For the **4-mark question**, you will be asked to 'explain'. You need to give two points, and to get full marks you must develop or justify both. So you can think of it as being a mark per point and a mark for developing each point. This should show that you understand information as well as being able to recall it. The question may ask for two *contrasting* beliefs – in this case make sure that the beliefs you use are different, and not just the same argument given by two different religions. You must refer to Christianity as one of the chosen religions.

The **5-mark question** is very similar to the 4-mark question, but the beliefs do not need to be contrasting, and you may refer to any religious beliefs, which do not need to include Christianity. Also, as well as making two points and developing/justifying both, you should refer to at least one piece of scripture / religious writing (as well as your development/justification). Again, try to make sure your points are as different as possible so that the person marking gives you credit for every point/development you make.

The **12-mark question** is the longest, and there is a little more to remember. You will need to evaluate a statement. This means giving arguments and justifications **for** and **against** the statement (so agreeing with it, and also suggesting an alternative point of view). Make sure you have good reasons for all the points you make and link them together well. To get top marks you need to come to a conclusion; picking the most convincing side of the argument (based on the arguments you have given!) and saying why you think this is the case. You need to refer to religious views, and unless you have a lot of different religious arguments, it is a good idea to refer to non-religious views as well.

# The Origins and Value of the Universe

There are different beliefs about the origins of the universe, religious and non-religious. These beliefs influence what humans believe about their rights over the world and/or their duty to the world. These rights and duties incorporate different views about the environment.

## The Origins of the Universe

There are different beliefs about the origins of the universe. These include religious and non-religious beliefs.

### Keywords:

- ♦ **creation** – a religious account of how the world and universe were made
- ♦ **literal** – something exact and factual
- ♦ **symbolic** – something which represents something else
- ♦ **Big Bang** – a rapid expansion of matter from a tiny central point, which scientists believe was the beginning of the universe
- ♦ **atheist** – someone who does not believe in God or gods

### Religious Teachings about the Origins of the Universe

Christianity, like many religions, has a **creation** story. Christians believe that God created the world and entrusted it to humans.

The creation story given in the biblical book of Genesis (at the beginning of the Bible) states that before creation there was nothing but God. On the first day, God created everything – the universe and the world and the creatures (including humans). Then, on the seventh day, God rested.

God also commanded the first man and woman not to eat the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. However, a serpent tempted woman to eat it, she shared it with Adam, and they lost their sense of innocence. God discovered their disobedience and cast them out of the Garden of Eden. They were living in a state of sin.

‘And God said, “Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.” And it was so. God called the dry land Earth, and the waters gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good.’ (Genesis 1:9-10)

**Note:** Christianity shares the creation account given in Genesis with Judaism and Islam. All three religions believe that God created everything in the same way as Christianity.

### Different Interpretations

Christians have different interpretations of the creation story in different ways.

- ♦ Some Christians believe that the biblical account is **literally** true; that God created the world within seven days.
- ♦ Some Christians believe that the creation story is **symbolic**; that God created the world through the **Big Bang**, and that the Bible is not necessarily scientifically accurate. Note that they do not see the Bible as untrue, but rather that it holds **symbolic** truth.

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## The Relationship between Scientific Views and Religious Views

Christians who believe that the biblical account of **creation** is **literally** true the origins of the universe. They believe that the **Big Bang** did not happen, created the universe, and he did it as it is described in the Bible and not the rapid expansion of matter. This can create conflict between Christians who scientific community.



Photo of the world

However, many Christians believe that creation are not meant to explain the universe. They have no problem believing that God created the universe through starting with the Big Bang, or using the scientific method. They may see the six creating days as stages in the development of life on Earth. Therefore, the relationship between such religious and scientific views can be both Christians and scientists; they can be both.

However, **atheists** who believe scientific views of the universe will believe that there was no God, and therefore reject religion.

### Quick Questions

- Which **one** of these terms describes how the world began from a Christian point of view?
  - Evolution
  - Creation
  - Genesis
  - Religion
- Give **two** ways in which the Bible may be interpreted.
- How many days does the Bible say God made the world in (including rest days)?
  - Five
  - Six
  - Seven
  - Eight



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## The Value of the World and the Duty of Human Beings

Different religious and non-religious people may have different views about responsibilities to the world.

### Keywords:

- ♦ **dominion** – control over something
- ♦ **stewardship** – a state of managing resources in a responsible way
- ♦ **judge** – [by God] evaluate someone's actions and reward or punish appropriately
- ♦ **humanist** – someone who aims to live a good life, without belief in God or gods

### The Value of the World

Many Christians believe that the world is important because it was created by God for humans. Not only does the world provide places in which humans can live, it allows a high quality of life for many, and many people believe it is beautiful.

Some religions  
can experience

Some Christians also feel awe and wonder when looking at the natural world throughout the Bible, including in the Psalms. They may feel that God's glory is in his **creation**, and that the extent of creation shows his power, and that the world is beautiful.

Non-religious people will also value the world because it supports their life and well-being, not because they believe God (or gods) created it.

### The Duty of Human Beings to Protect the World

Christians believe that God gave the world to humans; they rule it, or have dominion over it.

'God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves upon the earth." God said, "See, I have given you every plant yielding seed upon the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food."

Some Christians believe this means that the world is theirs, to exploit for their own benefit, whatever they want, and control animals.

However, many Christians believe that dominion also comes with great responsibility. God has made them **stewards** of his creation; people who manage it and protect it.

'Think of us in this way, as servants of Christ and stewards of God's mysteries (1 Corinthians 4:1 NRSV)

Therefore, Christians may believe it is important to take care of the world; not to over-exploit, or pollute; because it is humankind's responsibility to ensure the world becomes uninhabitable (if it can no longer support life). Some Christians believe that God will **judge** humankind on how well they have cared for his **creation**.

Some non-religious people will feel that humans are entitled to rule over the world and its creatures because humans are intelligent and/or powerful. However, others may feel that humans have no more rights over the world than animals, as if there is no God (or gods) to give humans special rights then humans are equal to other animals.

The AQA  
wonder  
people

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Many humans will feel that it is important to protect the world so that there are future generations. **Humanists** may stress that looking after the world is important for the good which benefits everyone.

Whether or not people feel it is important to look after the world will impact on whether it is treated appropriately, and whether species of plants and animals survive; the level of pollution; and whether global warming damages the world.

## Quick Questions

4. Which word describes the Christian belief that God gave the world to humans so they own it?
  - a) Dominion
  - b) Awe
  - c) Creation
  - d) Stewardship
5. Give **two** reasons why Christians may believe the world is important.
6. Which word describes the Christian belief that humans should look after the world because it was given by God?
  - a) Dominion
  - b) Stewardship
  - c) Power
  - d) Creation

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## Use and Abuse of the Environment

Humans have used the environment, but many feel humankind has also abused it for personal gain.

### Natural resources

Humans have used many natural resources; they grow crops for food; use other natural materials to create things (e.g. cotton is used for clothing and wood to make paper); as well as using resources such as coal and oil for fuel.

Some Christians and non-religious people feel that it is acceptable to use the environment in this way, either because God gave them the world, or because resources are there and should be used.

Why do people have abused and damaged people's resources personally or as possible making sure

However, many people believe that the natural resources have been abused

#### 1. Use of fossil fuels

Many resources which humans use for fuel are 'fossil fuels', fuels which come from decomposed matter. Coal and oil are examples of these. Using fossil fuels for a number of reasons. Because these fuels formed over many years, up, they will be gone – humans are using them much faster than new resources. Furthermore, fossil fuels contain much carbon, and some contain other chemicals, and releasing these into the atmosphere can contribute to pollution.

#### 2. Overuse of land and animal resources

Much land has also been over-farmed, and creatures have been over-farmed. Land has been over-farmed this can mean that it is no longer usable to grow crops, resulting in bad economic situations for farmers and large areas of waste. Over-farmed this can badly affect the environment. Forests may be cut down for farming, and the large amount of cows farmed has contributed to high levels of greenhouse gases (produced by cows), which contributes to global warming. Where too many animals are hunted/caught from the natural environment, like fish, this can lead to a decline in certain species, and in some cases can lead to species being endangered.

Some Christians and people from other religions feel that using natural resources is a misuse of God's **creation**. Many other religions also teach that the world is protected and cared for, including Islam and Judaism. Some Christians and non-religious people feel that this is very bad **stewardship**/management. Damaging the environment may mean that there will be less resources for humans in the future.

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## Pollution

Pollution, causing an undesirable change in the environment, is also a problem.

### 1. A rise in greenhouse gases (such as carbon dioxide/CO<sub>2</sub> and methane) has led to climate change (global warming).

Human activity, including burning fossil fuels for energy/power (including cars and factories); deforestation (removing trees, which absorb CO<sub>2</sub>); and land use changes have contributed to a build-up of gases in the Earth's atmosphere which affect the climate. The gases can be thought to provide a kind of blanket around the Earth, increasing the average temperature (though some areas will experience a drop in temperature). This is generally upsetting the balance of conditions on Earth, which can have various effects on various areas of the ecosystem, and can lead to polar ice melting, mean sea level rising, flooding. This can mean danger and suffering for humans and animals, and the loss of certain species of plants and animals.



Air pollution from a power station

### 2. Chemicals have infected air, water and land, damaged the ozone layer, kills animals, and reduces the health of humans who come into contact with pollution.

Pollution, including emissions from factories and cars, has caused contamination in the world, which can harm animals and humans and destroy plant-life. The chemicals and emissions have created in the ozone layer a hole, which is an increased risk of skin cancer and other health problems. This is a balance of conditions on Earth.

### 3. Littering and rubbish create hazards for animals.

Some Christians and humanists believe it is their responsibility to try to improve the world. They believe humans and animals will have a better world to live in now, and so that they can live in a better world in the future.

Many people, including politicians, are concerned about pollution levels and have introduced initiatives which aim to cut pollution. Possible solutions include:

- ◆ Finding ways to use fewer resources which damage the environment
- ◆ Using renewable energy sources, and safer chemicals, which do not pollute and are less harmful to the environment
- ◆ Planting more trees to absorb carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>)

Not everyone believes that humans have damaged the environment as much as we think. Some people believe that producing high levels of pollution is a necessary evil. Some people see pollution as a 'necessary evil'. Some people believe that pollution is caused by deforestation and transport; and the meat market is a means to an end. Many people believe that convenient transport, technology, cheap products and steak, among other things, are necessary for a better life.

### Quick Questions

7. Which of these is **not** a form of pollution?
  - a) Water
  - b) Air
  - c) Littering
8. Give **two** reasons why people might believe pollution needs to be reduced.
9. Which of these is a natural resource?
  - a) Technology
  - b) Steak
  - c) Deforestation

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## Use and Abuse of Animals

As well as other natural resources, humans have also made use of animals in different ways, including **animal experimentation**, as a food source, and for

### Keywords:

- ♦ **animal experimentation** – using animals to test chemicals or medicines to see if they are safe before using them on humans, or using animals in other research to learn things about humans
- ♦ **cloning** – creating identical copies of existing animals (or other things like plants)
- ♦ **genetic modification** – changing an animal's genes to produce a difference
- ♦ **Qur'an** – the Muslim holy book, which the majority of Muslims believe to be revealed through the Prophet Muhammad
- ♦ **reincarnation** – (in Hinduism) the belief that one's soul is reborn again in another body
- ♦ **ahimsa** – not injuring, compassion, nonviolence (the term is used in several religions)
- ♦ **secular** – non-religious

### Animal Experimentation

**Animal experimentation** can take many forms of testing or research. Test products on animals before testing them on humans in order to spot harmful effects.

Scientists have also **cloned** animals, and used them for **genetic modification**. Creating copies of existing cells/organisms, has been used, for example, for medical research. To replicate stem cells (unspecialised cells) or other cells, they may be able to grow new cells on, or use healthy cells to replace diseased ones. Scientists might genetically modify animals to study the effects of changing or adding genes to an organism.

There are a variety of responses to animal experimentation:

1

No animal experimentation is fair; animals have a right not to be experimented on by humans. Humans should do research in other ways, including using voluntary humans. Furthermore, animal research is not always helpful, as animals may respond in different ways to humans biologically or psychologically.

2

Animal experimentation is fully acceptable (if it has a purpose and is not unnecessarily cruel); humans are more important than animals, and if we can help humans by using animals then this should be done.

Animal experimentation for important medicines or anything which is likely to save lives to improve human lives is acceptable, but cosmetics testing is not, because cosmetics are not essential.

Animal experimentation which has a low risk of harming animals is acceptable, as long as it aims to minimise pain to animals involved.

Animal experimentation is acceptable if it is kept to a minimum; as few animals as possible should be used to get desired results and humans are used where possible.

### Activity

Make a note of your personal response to animal experimentation, bearing in mind the different points and the religious views overleaf.

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## Religious Views

**Important!** You need to be able to contrast beliefs about animal experimentation with at least one more religious tradition.

### Christianity

Some Christians do not view animal experimentation negatively. They may hold the view that it is acceptable in some circumstances (see the list above). It is better to test on animals, if they believe that humans are more important than animals, as they have been created in God's image.

'So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them, male and female he created them.' (Genesis 1:27 NRSV)

However, some Christians believe that animal experimentation is not acceptable, or at least to a bare minimum. They may believe that it is unfair and unloving to treat animals in this way, as they are taught that people should treat others as they themselves would want to be treated, and apply this to animals as well.

'In everything do to others as you would have them do to you...' (Matthew 22:39)

### Islam

Muslims may or may not approve of animal experimentation. They are unlikely to approve of it for cosmetic purposes, or reasons which they deem as unnecessary, because the **Qur'an** tells Muslims not to abuse animals, and Muhammad

The Qur'an is the Muslim holy book, which the majority of Muslims believe to be the literal word of God (Allah) revealed through the Prophet Muhammad. Muslims usually add 'peace be upon him (pbuh)' after the name of the Prophet in writing or speech to show respect.

was reported as being kind to animals. The Qur'an places importance on animals as being valuable to Allah. This does not mean that Muslims are vegetarians, but there are guidelines about how to treat animals which are killed for food (covered in the next section).

'There is not an animal (that lives) without life, nor a being that flies or crawls or anything of the sort, but in communities like you, We have omitted from the Qur'an their names, so that they may be remembered by their Lord in the end.' (Qur'an 6:38)

However, some Muslims approve of some animal testing if they believe that the benefits to humans outweigh the suffering. They are likely to want the least suffering for such animals.

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## Hinduism

Hindus may disapprove of animal experimentation for various reasons. Hinduism is a religion where the soul is reborn after death, which could take place as an animal or a human. This can be seen as a sharp divide between humans and animals.

Furthermore, Hindus believe in non-violence, **ahimsa**, and this can be applied to all living beings, including humans. If animal experimentation causes animals pain, then Hindus are likely to disapprove. Indeed, India, where many Hindus live, has strict animal experimentation laws.

However, many Hindus also offer animal sacrifices, so they do not always protect animal life. If they believe that a form of animal experimentation has an important purpose, then some Hindus accept it.

India is the largest country in the world. It is home to a large percentage of the world's population. Many Indian people are Hindu.

## Non-religious

People of no religion may be for or against animal experimentation. They do not believe in God or that animals will be judged by God. Some non-religious people, including some humanists, believe that animals are sentient beings and that animal experimentation is cruel – they do not believe that humans were specially created or have special rights.

## Impact and Influence

Negative views on animal testing, the availability of alternatives, and situations where animal testing has produced misleading results, have led to regulations on animal testing to limit its use and the harm caused to animals. Cosmetic testing on animals is currently banned in many countries.

However, cases in which chemicals have harmed humans where they have been tested on animals have led to legislation to make sure that products are tested properly, which often involves animal testing.

Some of those who object to animal testing have clashed with those who support it. In some cases, this has led to animal testing, sometimes resulting in threats, or actual violence.

## The Use of Animals for Food

All countries in the world use animals in food, though there are some countries where meat-eating is less favourable than others. There are many vegetarians (people who do not eat meat) and also vegans (people who do not eat meat, or animal produce; which primarily includes honey, or any other forms of animal products). Some religions, such as Buddhism and Sikhism, may have higher levels of vegetarianism, and infrequent meat-eating. In many countries, the average person eats meat regularly.

## Reasons for and Against Using Animals for Food

Many Christians and Jews believe that it is acceptable to eat meat and other animal produce. Most believe that humans are different from animals, and many believe that they are more important than animals, because Genesis says that, unlike animals, humans were created in God's image.

Some people believe that animals are 'God's creatures' and that it is disrespectful to God to eat them. Some people believe that animals have a right to life.

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Furthermore, many people in the Old Testament of the Bible were farmers and gave the Jewish people commandments about animals which they could eat. Some animals and combinations of animal produce which Jews do not eat (if they eat them) which are often for reasons of religious cleanliness.

‘...From among all the land animals, these are the creatures that you may eat: any animal that has divided hoofs and is cleft-footed and chews the cud – such you may eat.’

Most Christians do not follow rules which forbid them from eating certain types of combinations of animal produce. This is for a range of (unconnected) reasons:

- ◆ Peter had a vision in which God told him to eat ‘unclean’ animals in Acts 10, taken as **symbolism** that gentiles (non-Jews) were no longer unclean, and as a permission from God to eat those animals.
- ◆ Christians believe that Jesus’ death has made them clean, and so many do not follow Jewish dietary laws for cleanliness.
- ◆ Many Jews (non-Jews) became Christians in the early Church, and therefore thought that they need not follow Jewish dietary laws, but should not eat animals that were forbidden to Jews.

However, many modern Christians and people from other religions, as well as non-religious people like humanists, believe that they should be responsible about the amount of meat they eat:

- ◆ because they should not be greedy; people should only eat the portion sizes that they need
- ◆ because cows (and other animals) contribute to greenhouse gases, and if fewer animals were reared for meat (in response to people eating less and therefore there being less demand) this would help reduce global warming
- ◆ because it takes more energy and land to raise livestock for meat than to grow crops to feed humans, and so if people ate less meat there would be potential for more food in the world
- ◆ reducing meat intake can be beneficial for health reasons

Many religious people – for example, Orthodox Christians – do not eat meat because they focus on God and to maintain control over their bodies. Non-religious people may observe meat-free days, such as meat-free Monday for reasons in the past.

Some people also object to animals which are farmed or caught for food because of the way they are treated. For instance, they may object to battery-farming chickens, or killing animals inhumanely. Many people who believe that it is acceptable to eat animals do not believe that it is acceptable to be cruel to them.

On the other hand, some people see no problem with eating as much meat as they want because the animals are just going to be eaten; they do not believe they need to be treated well. Some people believe that animals deserve rights.

In addition to those who eat meat, responsibly or not, some Christians are vegetarians because it is more loving not to kill animals, either because they do not think that it is right to kill animals, or because they believe that vegetarianism benefits humanity by promoting health and combatting poverty (see the reasons listed above).

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Some humanists are vegetarians for similar reasons, and may also think that animals have the same rights as humans, because they do not believe that humans are created in the image of God. They may believe (for any of the reasons given for eating less or no meat) that if humans eat meat, it is better to do so.

Reasons for vegetarianism also extend to reasons for veganism in some cases. Some people believe that milk cows are harming the environment with greenhouse gases, or that they should keep animals captive to produce milk or eggs, etc. However, veganism is more about not eating any animal products.

### Impact and Influence

If more people eat less meat, this will result over time in lower levels of meat production in response. Campaigning for better rights for animals farmed for food has led to more humane methods of farming (in some cases) and the labelling of food so that people can see how the animals have been treated. This allows people to choose if they wish to buy animals which have not been battery farmed, for example.

Consumption of meat is a significant part of the diet in many cultures. The amount of meat eaten varies between countries and cultures.

There are also laws about how animals must be killed, so that they are killed humanely. In Judaism and Islam have special religious procedures for how animals must be killed. In many countries, the way animals are killed is regulated by the government as secular methods of animal slaughter (the animal is stunned). For meat to be halal, or allowed, within Islam, it must come from certain animals (pigs and swine are forbidden to eat pigs, for instance) and be killed in a certain way. This includes the animal being killed quickly, in one motion, while a prayer is said, and that the animal does not see or hear anything before being killed.

Some people argue that religious methods are inhumane, as in some cases the animal is killed by a sharp knife before being killed. Conversely, many Jews and Muslims would argue that religious methods are just as humane as **secular** methods, and that many animals killed in religious methods are killed more humanely than other animals – some argue that religious methods are more humane than secular methods. There are campaigns for there to be regulation of religious methods of killing animals, so that they are killed humanely.

### Also...

Further to food, there are different attitudes about using the bodies of animals for other purposes, such as to make leather. Some people will feel that this is acceptable, because animals are killed for food, and the leather is a by-product. Others may feel that this is not acceptable, because there are other materials which can be used for leather, and unlike food, is not a necessity, and so does not justify the killing of an animal. Some people may feel that it is acceptable to use animal parts for other uses, such as in traditional Chinese medicine, if the animal has been killed humanely and is getting the most use out of an animal.

### Quick Questions

10. Which of the following is **not** a type of experimentation animals can be used in?
  - a) Cloning
  - b) Medical Testing
  - c) The Ivory Trade
11. Give **two** reasons why Christians may not eat meat, or may eat less meat.

### Now Try This...

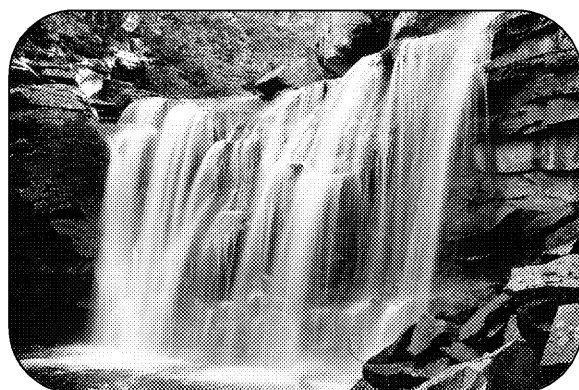
12. Explain **two** contrasting beliefs about animal experimentation, referring to Christianity and another religion.

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## Summary for the Origins and Value of the Universe

- ♦ Christians believe that God **created** the world and the universe. Some creation in Genesis is **literally** true, and dispute scientific accounts. Other story is **symbolic** and that religious accounts are compatible with science. The **Big Bang**. **Atheists** disagree with the belief that there is a God (or gods) and think that only scientific accounts of the origins of the universe are valid.
- ♦ Many Christians feel awe and wonder at creation, believing that it shows God's power. Christians believe that God has given them **dominion** over the world; that God has made them **stewards** of **creation** and that they have a responsibility to use resources well. Non-religious people may also believe that humans have been given the world, though they do not believe that the world was given to humans by God.
- ♦ Many humans believe that humans have abused the environment. Religious people believe that humans are created to act so that pollution does not occur.
- ♦ Humans have used animals in different ways, including for **experimentation**. Religious and non-religious people have a variety of opinions about whether this is right or wrong.
  - ↳ People may believe that animal experimentation is wrong, right, or acceptable in certain circumstances.
  - ↳ People may believe that using animals for food is wrong, right, or acceptable if food in moderation and/or if they are treated well.
- ♦ Different attitudes to the world, its resources, and animals may lead to different actions towards nature and animals, and campaigns for this to be the case. However, humans still use natural resources and animals for gain.



A waterfall might be a wonder of creation in some instances, reminding us of the world as it is.

### Now Try This...

13. 'Animal Testing is always wrong.' Evaluate this statement.

Argue for **and** against this statement. You must give religious arguments and non-religious arguments, reaching a conclusion which follows from your arguments.



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# The Origins and Value of Human Life

There are different beliefs about the origins of human life; whether it was created naturally. These views can influence positions on **abortion** and **euthanasia** that **sanctity of life** is more important than **quality of life**, or not.

## Keywords:

- ♦ **abortion** – terminating a pregnancy and ending the life of a foetus
- ♦ **euthanasia** – sometimes called mercy killing. Generally helping someone die the life of someone who is unable to make such a decision for themselves, for where it is believed they would wish this
- ♦ **sanctity of life** – a belief that life is sacred and, for special, implying that life is
- ♦ **quality of life** – how good one's life is. Some argue that if life is 'not worth living' then it is not preserving it

## The Origins of Human Life

There are different beliefs about the origins of human life held by the religions.

## Keywords:

- ♦ **evolution** – the widely accepted scientific theory that organisms such as humans have adapted over time

## Religious Teachings about the Origins of Human Life

As seen in the section on *The Origins of the Universe*, Christianity has a **creation** story. Indeed, there are actually two different accounts in the book of Genesis about how God created humans.

Genesis 1 states that God created humans after he had created the universe and everything else. It says that he created them in his image.

One possible explanation for the two creation accounts in the books of Genesis is that they were created by different authors. The accounts are different even in the order of creation, the names of the gods, and the way the world was created.

Genesis 2 states that God made man, out of dust, and before he made animals and then God made woman, out of one of man's ribs.

'...then the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into him the breath of life; and the man became a living being.' (Genesis 2:7)

## Different Interpretations

Christians interpret the creation story in different ways:

- ♦ Some Christians believe that the biblical account is **literally** true; that God created the world, animals, and in his image.
- ♦ Some Christians believe that the creation story is **symbolic**; that God is the creator of the universe, but that he may have set the process of **evolution** in motion. The Bible is not necessarily scientifically accurate. Note: this does *not* mean the Bible is untrue, but rather that it holds **symbolic** truth.

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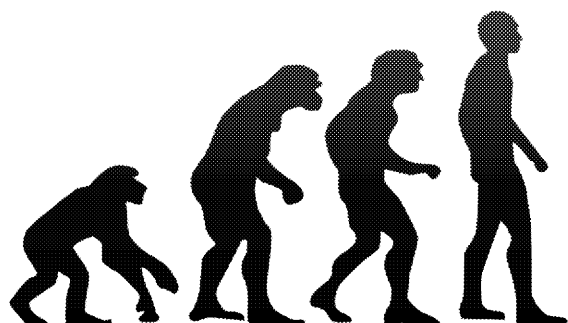


## The Relationship between Scientific Views and Religious Views

Christians who believe that the biblical account of **creation** is **literally** true believe in the origins of human life. They believe that the theory of **evolution** is incorrect because it shows humans as they are, and that humans did not develop from animals.

The theory of evolution by natural selection, formulated by Charles Darwin, states that genes are passed on (because the fittest members of species survive to reproduce) and species develop and become better adapted to their environments. The theory states that humans evolved from apes, and were not created as they are now. This is a view that Christians who take the Bible literally and people who believe that science can explain the origins of human life do not accept.

However, many Christians believe that the biblical accounts of creation are not literal but describe exactly as it took place. They have no problem believing that God may have used evolution, and could equate the six creating days as stages in the universe's development, including animal/human evolution. Christians may even believe that evolution is more creative and powerful – if God could engineer a process which would lead to humans in his image. Such Christians may have a better relationship with the theory of evolution.



Picture portraying the evolution of humans

However, **atheists** who believe in evolution do not believe in a creator who started this, and so they do not accept religious views.

Some Christians also see evolution as a problem because they were created in the image of God. Modern Christians do not see evolution as a problem as atheists who believe in evolution do not accept the principle as they would have evolved at the same time as **humanists**, who promote the theory of evolution.

### Quick Questions

14. Which of these did God create man out of in Genesis 2?
  - a) Nothing
  - b) Woman
  - c) Animals
15. How do many atheists believe human life came about?
  - a) Created by God
  - b) Through evolution
  - c) Magic
16. Give **two** ways that the beliefs about the origins of human life may differ between Christians who believe a literal account of creation and those who believe in evolution.

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## Sanctity of Life and Quality of Life

There are different views about whether life is sacred, or particularly special, and the importance of **quality of life**; whether life is 'worth living'.

### Keywords:

- ◆ **sanctity of life** – a belief that life is sacred and/or special, implying that life should be protected
- ◆ **quality of life** – how good one's life is; some argue that if life is 'not worth living', it is not preserving it
- ◆ **sin** – a thought or action against God, which he may choose to punish

### Sanctity of Life

Some people believe in the **sanctity of life** – that life is sacred, or very special, and that life should be protected. This is often specifically applied to human life, meaning that humans should never cause the deaths of other humans. The sanctity of life is often associated with religious perspectives, but non-religious people may use the phrase to describe a belief that life is very important.

An argument for the sanctity of human life (based on Christian belief) might be:

- ◆ God created life and gave it to humans
- ◆ Humans are created in the image of God
  - ↳ Human life is sacred because it is given by God and created in his image
- ◆ It is wrong to destroy what is sacred
  - ↳ Humans should not destroy human life (for any reason) – supported by the commandment against murder in the Ten Commandments

'So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.' (Genesis 1:27 NRSV)

'You shall not murder.' (Exodus 20:13 NRSV)

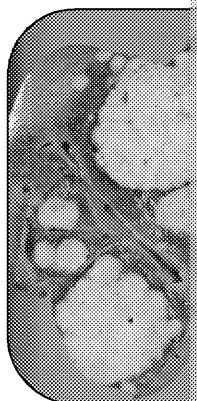
Therefore, religious people who believe in the sanctity of life may believe that it is wrong to take human life, and humans who take human life **sin** against God.

### Quality of Life

The **quality of life** refers to how good it is to live a particular life – for the person experiencing it. Many people in the modern, developed world have a good quality of life, but there are reasons why people may not have good lives:

- ◆ Poverty or other circumstances may deprive the person of necessities such as water, food and shelter, meaning that life is very difficult.
- ◆ Illness or injury may reduce the quality of life:
  - ↳ Mental illness or some injuries, may make people struggle to cope and feel depressed.
  - ↳ Mental illness, or some injuries, may mean that people no longer have normal cognitive function.
  - ↳ Some illnesses or injuries leave people in a lot of pain, meaning they find it harder to enjoy other things in life.
  - ↳ Illness or injury may leave people incapacitated meaning they cannot move around or do other things for themselves.
  - ↳ Being in some types of coma may mean little or no quality of life.

Consider the following reasons why people may not have a good quality of life.



Cancerous tumours can mean a poor quality of life.

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## Abortion

**Abortion** involves ending a pregnancy and the life of a foetus. There are different reasons for abortion and different attitudes to abortion.

### Reasons for Having an Abortion

There are different reasons why someone might want to have an abortion. In some countries, an abortion may be allowed in the UK:

Reason	Examples	
The mother's life is in danger, or her health is at risk 	Some pregnancies make a woman very ill, such as ectopic pregnancies where the foetus grows in the wrong place Alternatively, someone may have a medical condition which needs treating, and the foetus would be killed by, or needs to be removed for, the treatment, e.g. chemotherapy for cancer	For people who are against abortion, this is probably not a situation where people would want an abortion, as their health is in danger Some may consider this a serious and
The pregnancy or raising a child would be too difficult for the woman to cope with mentally or physically (or might endanger the wellbeing of existing children)	If the pregnancy is the result of rape, the woman might find it very hard to carry her rapist's child Someone might have a mental illness, and would be placed under great strain to go through with a pregnancy Someone may have several children already and be unable to afford to raise another In the case of a teenage pregnancy it might be seen that the woman could not cope with pregnancy or raising a child	Many people would consider these circumstances unfair to put a woman through rape, or to put a woman through a pregnancy or financial strain Others feel that a woman should be able to decide if she should be seen to have a pregnancy, or adoption
The foetus would be born with a serious disability 	This could be that they will be born with a particular organ functioning properly The foetus might have a genetic disease, such as Down's Syndrome	Some people believe that they will bring children into the world who have a low life expectancy, or live in a place such as a war zone Some people might not make the decision that many do, and often look at the long-term consequences They might consider the child valuable and not want to destroy life, or put a burden on the family

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The UK Abortion Act 1967 allows for abortions in such circumstances if two doctors agree that the conditions are met and the abortion is carried in an approved medical facility. In the case of mental or physical danger to the woman (or her children), it is evaluated whether continuing the pregnancy or having an abortion would be better or worse for the woman's (or her children's) health.

Normally abortions are *not* allowed after 24 weeks into pregnancy, though they are allowed later in extreme circumstances (great risk to woman or great chance of severe disability for the foetus).

Some countries do not allow abortion for any reason. In the Republic of Ireland, it is a risk to the mother's life. Other countries allow abortion for different conditions.

Other reasons some people may want an abortion include:

- ◆ They do not want children, or do not want children now.
  - ↳ Some people view abortion as an acceptable method of birth control and that such pregnancies should continue and the child should be born.
- ◆ Some people wish to get abortions because they desire a baby of a different gender.
  - ↳ Many people feel that this is a bad reason to have an abortion and that people should be able to choose to have children on the basis of their gender, or other reasons.
    - Gender-motivated abortion may happen in any country, but more so in countries with laws limiting the number of children people can have, which has been the case in many years. It is also more likely to happen in areas where there is a strong preference for male children. Some people are motivated to have children for cultural or financial reasons (e.g. some people feel it is more likely for male children to help to earn the family income), which has caused problems in the past.

Abortion is not permitted for either of these reasons under UK law.

## Quick Questions

19. Which of these reasons can you **not** get an abortion for under UK law?
 

a) Risk to mother's life	b) Danger to health
c) Gender of foetus	d) Disability of foetus
20. Give **two** examples of when a woman's mental health might be damaged by continuing with a pregnancy?
21. Which of these is **not** a condition which must *usually* be met to get an abortion in the UK?
 

a) It is less than 24 weeks into pregnancy	b) The woman must be of legal age
c) Two doctors must agree	d) There must be a risk to mother's life

## Ethical Arguments Related to Abortion

There are many different ethical and religious arguments relating to **abortion**.

### Keywords:

- ♦ **person** – in philosophy, a being with certain qualities, not always the same as a human

### Sanctity of Life

Many people (generally religious) who believe in **sanctity of life** also believe that human life is sacred. This is because if human life is sacred and no humans should destroy human life, then embryos and foetuses, because these are still believed to be created in the life by God. Such arguments are also likely to oppose forms of emergency extremely early termination of pregnancy, e.g. the morning after pill.

However, the sanctity of life could also be used to argue for abortion in the case of a woman at risk; because if the woman's life is sacred and should be protected. This argument is strong in the case that allowing a pregnancy to continue would likely result in the death of the woman *and* the foetus, because in this case abortion would be preserving more life than not aborting.

### Quality of Life

Many people have used the concept of **quality of life** to argue for **abortion**. Some people might use quality of life to argue for abortion in different scenarios:

- ♦ If a foetus is severely disabled and will not have a good quality of life, it will suffer.
  - ↳ People might also argue that caring for a severely disabled child is a burden on the family of the child, reducing their quality of life.
- ♦ A pregnancy due to rape, or one which places extreme mental strain, may reduce a woman's quality of life, that abortion is kinder for her.
- ♦ If a woman does not have sufficient financial and other resources to care for another child, bringing another child into the world might severely diminish the quality of life for the whole family (parents, existing children and new child).
  - ↳ Some people also argue that a woman has a choice about what to do with her life and if having a child at that moment is not going to damage her quality of life. However, the argument that a woman's right to choose what to do with her body is usually kept separate from arguments about quality of life.

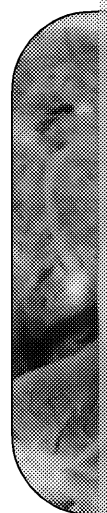
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## Other Arguments Related to Abortion

Some people have argued that **abortion** is acceptable because a foetus is not a **person**. They do not see being a person as the same as being a human. They may believe that a foetus becomes a person at the moment of birth, for example.

Some may believe that you need to have other characteristics in order to qualify as a person with a right to life and a right not to be killed. For example: being self-aware; having language skills; having a sense of past and future. Foetuses, especially at early stages of development, do not have such characteristics. Philosophically, however, this argument could lead to a position that most people would not support: newborn babies do not have many of these 'personhood' characteristics either, and most people who wish to argue for abortion to be allowed do not wish to argue that it is acceptable to kill newborn babies. So where we draw the line regarding 'who is a person?' is important.



An embryo

### Pause for thought:

What makes a person? A set of characteristics? Having human DNA? Having a soul? Is someone a person from the moment of birth? Or from when they could survive on their own outside the womb?



Some people, religious and non-religious, believe in a special part of someone which is often classed as the 'person' within them. Some people believe only humans have souls, others believe humans and animals. People believe souls come from birth, or from somewhere else from conception. Those who believe in souls for foetuses have souls may be more likely to oppose abortion.

Some people argue against abortion on the grounds that there are still small countries; there may be larger risks in less economically developed countries and abortion could endanger the life of a woman. Furthermore, some studies suggest that people regret having abortions, and may experience mental pain and stress. In such cases, abortion may not seem a sensible decision for a woman's health.

However, it can be argued that physical risks from abortion in countries like the UK are small. Many disagree that evidence proves that abortion damages women's mental health.

## Religious Views

**Important!** You need to be able to contrast beliefs about abortion from Christian and other religious traditions.

### Christianity

Christians usually disapprove of **abortion** for reasons including belief in the sanctity of life. The Bible tells Christians not to murder, and many consider abortion to be murder. Some believe a soul is present in a foetus from the moment of conception, which would make it a person, not just a spiritually equivalent to a growing adult. The Catholic Church does not permit abortion under any circumstances, rather than where an abortion occurs as a medical treatment (in any circumstances).

'You shall not murder.' (Exodus 20:13 NRSV)

However, some Christians, including more liberal Protestants, will accept abortion in certain circumstances, such as if the mother's life is in danger or the pregnancy is a result of rape. They believe that the woman should also be protected and treated with love and respect.

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## Islam

Islam permits abortion in the case of risk to the life of the mother because of the risk to her over the foetus.

Some Muslim scholars allow abortion up to four months into pregnancy, before the foetus is believed to have a soul until this stage. However, there is disagreement about whether abortion is permissible.

Some Muslims oppose abortion if it is due to financial need – the parents do not want to look after a/another child – as the Qur'an teaches not to worry about poverty.

'Kill not your children for fear of want: We shall provide sustenance for them. Verily the killing of them is a great sin.' (Qur'an 17:31)

## Judaism

Judaism allows for abortion to save the mother's life. Abortion is allowed to be performed at any stage of the pregnancy if the mother's life is at risk. However, if the majority of the foetus has left the woman's body and complications arise, many Jews would not permit hurting it, even to save the mother, because it is now seen more as a baby, with the equivalent human rights of the mother. This is based on the teachings of Jewish rabbis (teachers), which are based on their interpretations of Jewish scriptures.

Concepts relating to abortion, including arguments against genetic screening, are included in the curriculum.

Some Jews have argued for abortion to be permitted in some cases of extreme risk to the mother, or in cases of severe disability of the foetus, which would mean it would have a very short lifespan. Others do not believe that this should take priority over the life of the mother.

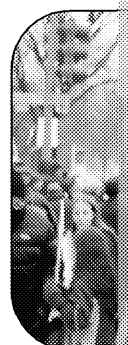
## Non-religious

Non-religious people are likely to have varied personal opinions about abortion. Some will *not* see abortion as comparable to killing a human being. Others believe that abortion is acceptable in any circumstance, where the woman chooses to abort. Many will disapprove of abortion as a form of birth control but will accept it as a necessary mental burden for the woman, or disability of the foetus, as acceptable grounds for abortion.

## Impact and Influence

Different attitudes to **abortion** have led to campaigns supporting and opposing abortion, and changes to abortion laws are often debated – such as whether to reduce how far into a pregnancy a woman can have an abortion.

People campaigning about abortion – some people campaign for and some against.



Abortion carries less social stigma (negative public feeling) in the UK than it used to, however, many people still wish to be private about abortions if they believe they will be judged negatively for their actions.

## Quick Questions

22. Which of the below is a foetus **not** classed as by some arguing for personhood?
- a) A human      b) Alive      c) A person      d) A foetus
23. Give **two** concepts which may be used to argue for and/or against abortion.

## Now Try This...

24. Explain **two** religious beliefs about abortion. Refer to Scripture.

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## Euthanasia

**Euthanasia**, also known as mercy killing, is helping someone to die, or ending their life, if they wish this to be the case, or because it is believed that they would wish this.

Some people believe that there are some situations in which allowing someone to die is a more compassionate thing to do. This may be because they are in great pain, or because they are unable to do anything for themselves; for instance, if they are paralysed, or for other reasons.

The issue of euthanasia arises when someone is unable to end their own life and therefore, needs help in order to die. Normally, killing someone is classed as murder, but some people believe that euthanasia is different because it is in the best interests of the person.

*Killing* anyone for any reason, including euthanasia, is currently illegal in the UK. However, in some countries such as Switzerland allow it in some circumstances. Some people from the UK have travelled there for this purpose.

### Types of Euthanasia and Associated Concepts (When they may be carried out)

#### Assisted suicide

This is where someone wants to die but is unable to do so on their own. They might get a friend to help them, or a doctor might give them a drug so that they can take an overdose. This is called **voluntary euthanasia**.

#### Voluntary euthanasia

This is where someone asks to die, but is unable to do so themselves, possibly because they are paralysed. In some cases, someone might ask a friend or medical professional to help them.

#### Non-voluntary euthanasia

This is where someone is unable to ask to die, but it is felt that they are better off dead. For example, someone in a coma, but it is felt that they are not likely to ever wake up. Friends and family might decide to prolong this person's life, and ask medical professionals to help them.

#### Involuntary euthanasia

This is where people are killed against their will. For example, the Nazis believed it would be better if they were killed. Most people view this as murder.

### (How they may be carried out)

#### Active euthanasia

This is where someone actually kills the person, usually by administering a poison. This is illegal in many countries.

#### Passive euthanasia

This is where life support is removed; for example, if someone is in a normal state, or if someone is giving a poison. However, breathing equipment may be removed, medicine and water may be withheld. This is legal in the UK, though there may be legal grey areas. It is generally acceptable to withhold food and treatment.

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**Double-effect**

This is sometimes associated with euthanasia for a doctor to prescribe a high dosage of painkillers to a patient. These may ease pain but may also have the *additional effect* of ending life. So medicines which are used to treat pain are responsible for killing them.

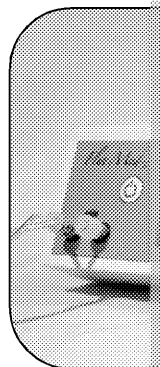
**Do Not Resuscitate orders (DNR)** This is where someone who is seriously ill asks doctors not to save their life; for example after a heart attack or stroke.

**Arguments for and against Euthanasia**

Arguments sometimes given in favour of euthanasia:

(Not all are relevant to both **voluntary** and **non-voluntary**)

- ◆ People deserve *dignity*, if their life is not dignified, they should be allowed to end it, or others should be allowed to end it on their behalf.
- ◆ People deserve **quality of life**, if they do not believe that their life is worth living, they should not be made to endure life because they are told they have to.
- ◆ People have a *right to die*, people should be able to make their own decisions, including if they wish to end their life.
- ◆ Keeping euthanasia illegal is *discriminatory* (in the UK – not necessarily true) as people who are able to commit suicide are legally able to do so. However, it is not always the case that people who have the most pain, and the people who have the most reason to end their lives, are the ones who can commit suicide.



A person in a hospital bed.

Arguments sometimes given in opposition to euthanasia:

- ◆ **Sanctity of life** – all life is sacred and humans do not have a right to take the life of another for any reason.
- ◆ Euthanasia is *murder* – it is wrong to kill someone.
- ◆ There is a problem with *conscience* – it is wrong to expect someone to end another's life, especially medical professionals who have sworn to protect life.
- ◆ It is a *slippery slope* – if euthanasia becomes legal this will make it easier to justify the killing of other people, such as disabled people, who are a burden.
- ◆ Some people might *recover* – it is possible that someone might recover from an illness that doctors thought was terminal, or that a treatment or cure might be found for a person who wants to die.



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## Religious Views

**Important!** You need to be able to contrast beliefs about euthanasia from Christian and more religious tradition.

### Christianity

Many Christians oppose **euthanasia**, because they believe in **sanctity of life**. Murder is wrong, and that euthanasia is murder. Some also believe that suffering is part of being human, including those who suffer physically and those who suffer mentally. Some believe that they are called by God to protect those who are suffering, rather than harm them. The Catholic Church is opposed to euthanasia. **Note:** many of these objections to euthanasia are based on the sanctity of life. Some forms of **passive euthanasia** - such as where the life-support machine of a declared brain-dead is switched off - or **DNRs** may be viewed as acceptable.

 You hold back from rescuing those taken away to death, those who are slaughtered... Does not he who keeps watch over your soul know it? And will he not punish to their deeds?' (Proverbs 24:11-12 NRSV)

However, some other Christians believe that euthanasia should be allowed because it is cruel to let people suffer unnecessarily. They believe that Jesus died for us and that in some situations, the most loving thing to do is to allow someone to die.

'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.' (Matthew 22:39)

### Islam

Islam does not allow active euthanasia, or the intentional use of **double-effect** drugs. Doctors should always try to save someone's life when there is hope. Passive euthanasia is allowed in most cases, except when a person is only being kept alive by artificial means and there is no chance of recovery.

This is because Muslims believe that human life is sacred; people should not take their own lives, even if they are suffering. Also, they believe that Allah is responsible for the life and death of someone who dies.

'Nor take life - which Allah has made sacred - except for just cause.'

Some liberal Muslims may accept arguments in favour of euthanasia, but this is not the majority view.



#### Pause for thought:

What do you think about euthanasia?  
Should it ever be allowed? If so, why, and in which circumstances?

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## Judaism

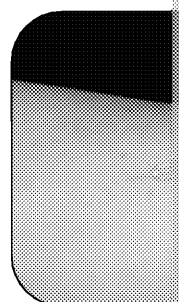
Against Euthanasia	For Euthanasia
Many Orthodox Jews oppose active euthanasia for similar reasons to Christians who do so.	Some more liberal Jews are open to the idea in some circumstances.
If there is a chance of saving or prolonging life, Judaism teaches that this should be taken.	Jews aim not to treat life as a commodity.
As even depriving someone of support is seen as a form of killing, many Jews, decisions about using life-support machines are not seen as types of passive euthanasia become categorised.	Some Jews have suggested that euthanasia should be timed – the person is beyond recovery, but they can be saved, Jews should use life support to try to save them. However, other Jews believe that Jewish teaching allows Jews to stop someone from using life-support machines at these points of view on passive euthanasia in Judaism.
Some Jews may pray for God to aid the death of someone who is dying, if they believe that God should end the person's suffering, but do not want to break laws against killing the person.	Judaism <i>does</i> allow for the principle of double-effect, where the person also contributes to their own death.

## Non-religious

Non-religious people may have different views about euthanasia. Some may believe that it is a right to die, or worry that allowing euthanasia is a slippery slope, etc. Others, especially those who believe in the sanctity of life, believe that allowing people to die treats them with respect and allows them dignity, and that euthanasia is a form of killing.

## Impact and Influence

Changing views on **euthanasia** are influencing legal decisions. Many people have brought cases to court where they wish to die, but do not wish to see friends or relatives imprisoned for committing euthanasia. It is quite possible that laws regarding euthanasia will continue to change – regulations on **passive euthanasia** could be tightened, or **active euthanasia** could become legal.



Active euthanasia

## Quick Quiz

25. Which of these is **not** a type of euthanasia?

- a) Passive      b) Aggressive      c) Active      d) Indirect

26. Give **two** examples of when someone might argue that euthanasia is justified.

## Now Try This...

27. Explain **two** contrasting beliefs about passive euthanasia, referring to Christianity and another religion.

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## Death and an Afterlife

Because different people have different beliefs about what happens when they die, there are different views about death, and different views about the value of life.

### Keywords:

- ◆ **heaven** – a realm where people may go after death and reside with God
- ◆ **hell** – a realm where people may go after death, away from God
- ◆ **purgatory** – a realm where people must make amends for their sins after death
- ◆ **resurrection of the body** – the belief that God will raise people's bodies after death
- ◆ **immortality of the soul** – the belief that a spiritual part of a person lives on after death
- ◆ **Judgement** – in Christianity, when God will separate good and bad people after death
- ◆ **karma** – literally, action. Hindus believe that there are good actions and bad actions, and karma mean that good actions will result in good consequences and bad actions will result in bad consequences
- ◆ **samsara** – the cycle of death and rebirth
- ◆ **dukkha** – suffering
- ◆ **moksha** – liberation – becoming liberated
- ◆ **nirvana** – being extinguished – the state reached when liberated

### Beliefs about Death and an Afterlife

Non-religious people who do not believe in God/gods often do not believe in an afterlife. They do not believe that there is anything other than the physical world. However, some people have personal beliefs about there being something after death, for example, some people believe in ghosts.

In some religions, such as Hinduism and Buddhism, it is believed that death is followed by **reincarnation**, or rebirth, where a person is reborn again (often on Earth).

There is not one fixed concept of the afterlife in Judaism, though many Jews believe in an afterlife.

Some religions like Christianity and Islam hold that there is an afterlife; good people will go to **heaven**, or paradise; and bad people/non-believers will go to **hell**.

Within Christianity, heaven is believed to be a realm where people will reside with God. Hell is believed to be a realm away from God, possibly involving pain and torture. **Purgatory**, a realm between heaven and hell where many people go to make amends before entering heaven. Heaven and hell are spoken about in the Bible and many other religious texts, and that there is purgatory.

Some Christians believe that only Christians can go to heaven, because Jesus is the only way to God, though others just believe that people can only know God as 'Father' and not as 'him' in other ways. Some Christians believe in a second chance or a way to gain entry to heaven.

'Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."' (John 14:6 NRSV)

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Not all Christians agree on how life after death works. Some believe that God will raise the dead in new bodies at the end of time (**resurrection of the body**). Others believe that the soul, lives on after death and goes straight to heaven/hell/purgatory. Some Christians believe in both; that the soul will enter the afterlife straight away and there will be a bodily resurrection for everyone at **Judgement** at the end of time. There are different interpretations of different Bible verses.

‘Do not be astonished at this; for the hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and will come out – those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.’ (John 5:28-29)

‘[Jesus] replied, “Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise.”’ (Luke 23:43)

### Impact on Beliefs about the Value of Human Life

Most religious people believe that human life is valuable in the sense that it is not easily destroyed. Destroying human life is usually seen as a bad action which will have bad spiritual consequences, either in this life or the next. (Most atheists also believe that human life is valuable, but do not believe in spiritual consequences.)

### Non-religious – no afterlife

Non-religious people who do not believe in an afterlife may place much value on life on Earth, if they feel that this is the only life they will have. Indeed a slogan of the British Humanist Association is: ‘for the one life we have’. However, this value primarily reflects the **quality of life**, as non-religious people believe life has value based on what it gives them, and possibly how their lives help others. They do not believe their lives have any value to a God (or gods), or in achieving a good afterlife. (Note: some non-religious people are spiritual and believe there is something after death. Views may vary.)

### Religious – unsure about afterlife

Because Judaism does not have a fixed concept of an afterlife, it can be argued that this makes Jews more focussed on life on Earth, placing a special value on it, because they do not know what will happen when they die.

### Religious – another life after this life, or a final afterlife

For religions which believe in **reincarnation**, the value of life can be assessed in different ways. In some religions, life is valuable because good and bad actions in this life are believed to result in a good or bad rebirth (some people would have a fortunate human rebirth; as an insect, for example). The process through which good actions and bad actions result in specific consequences is known as **karma**.

However, many Hindus and Buddhists wish to break out of the cycle of rebirth because they believe that life is suffering (**dukkha**). Therefore life has value in being a means to a better life. Buddhists place a greater value in achieving liberation from life. Hindus believe that the goal is achieving union with God (Brahman). Buddhists aim for **nirvana**, where the person is extinguished, or ceases to exist – at least in the sense we understand it.

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## Religious – looking forward to afterlife

Christians and Muslims believe that human life is important because it can influence whether they go to heaven, or paradise, in the afterlife. Their actions on Earth will influence whether they go to heaven, or paradise, in the afterlife.

Christians believe that Jesus died to save them, and to bring them eternal life. They should live life to the full, because they do not need to worry about what happens after death because of Jesus' sacrifice for them.

However, some people – for instance, some groups of Christian monks – have withdrawn from normal human life, and try to avoid human desires – they value the afterlife more than human life, and want to focus on this.

## Quick Questions

28. Which of these is **not** a belief in which Christians believe people may go to afterlife?
- a) Nirvana      b) Heaven      c) Hell      d) Paradise
29. Give **two** examples of how a belief in an afterlife may affect someone's life.

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## Summary for the Origins and Value of Human Life

- ♦ Christians believe that God **created** human life. Some believe that the Bible is **literally** true, and others believe that this is **symbolic** and God created life through **evolution**. **Atheists** do not believe that God (or gods) had any part in the creation of life.
- ♦ **Sanctity of life** is the concept that human life is sacred and should not be taken for religious reasons that life is given by God; it is created in his image; and it is a **sin** against God. **Quality of life** refers to how good it is to live life.
- ♦ **Abortion** is the termination of a pregnancy, ending the life of a foetus. There are different circumstances, for example if the mother's life is at risk; if there is mental health issues for the woman or her existing children; or if the foetus is likely to be born with a serious condition.
- ♦ Some people argue against abortion because of the **sanctity of life**, or argue for it based on **quality of life**. There are other arguments for and against abortion, such as about who qualifies as a **person**, and about bad effects to the health of the mother. There are different religious opinions to abortion, which are not usually that favourable. Some people support abortion in case of risk to the mother's life, and some religious groups support it in all cases. Non-religious people may be more relaxed about abortion in all cases. Opinions about abortion may influence laws and lead to different policies.
- ♦ **Euthanasia** is mercy killing. There are different types, for example **voluntary** and **active** and **passive**. There are also important related concepts such as **DNRs**. Arguments in favour of euthanasia include arguments based on the idea that people have a right to be allowed to die. Arguments against euthanasia include the **sanctity of life** and the worry that legalising euthanasia is a slippery slope. There are different views on euthanasia. Many religious bodies teach against active euthanasia. Some religious believers are sympathetic to it. There is more acceptance of passive euthanasia, though not in all cases, and not by all believers. **Humanists** have campaigned for euthanasia to be legalised. Opinions about euthanasia may influence laws and several people who are wishing to die have gone to court about the issue.
- ♦ People of different religious beliefs have different beliefs about an afterlife and these have an impact on how they value human life. **Atheists** may value human life highly as they believe in no afterlife. Jews may also strongly value human life because they have no fixed concept of an afterlife. In other religions, human life often has value in helping to achieve the afterlife that believers desire, though many also value human life for the here and now.

### Now Try This...

30. 'There are some situations where euthanasia is the best thing to do.'  
Evaluate this statement.

Argue for **and** against this statement. You must give religious arguments and non-religious arguments. Reach a conclusion which follows from your arguments.

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# Answers

## The Origins and Value of the Universe

Question No.	Answer/Mark Scheme
1	b) Creation
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Literally</li> <li>♦ Symbolically</li> </ul> Accept any correct word, 1 mark per point (maximum 2)
3	c) Seven
4	a) Dominion
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ It was made by God for humans</li> <li>♦ It supports human life</li> <li>♦ It is beautiful</li> </ul> Accept any relevant point, 1 mark per point (maximum 2)
6	b) Stewardship
7	d) Ozone Layer
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ To create a better world to live in</li> <li>♦ To leave a good world for children and future humans</li> </ul> Accept any relevant point, 1 mark per point (maximum 2)
9	d) Coal
10	c) The Ivory Trade
11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Because Jesus taught people not to be greedy</li> <li>♦ Because they want to be good stewards and eating less meat means fewer animals raised for meat, so less greenhouse gases help the planet</li> <li>♦ Some Christians fast, which may involve giving up meat, to help the planet</li> </ul> Accept any relevant point, 1 mark per point (maximum 2)

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Question No.	Answer/Mark Scheme		
12	<p>Christianity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Animal experimentation is better than testing on humans</li> <li>humans are made in God's image and animals are not.</li> </ul> <p>Islam:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Animal testing should be avoided where possible because it teaches that all animals are valuable to Allah.</li> </ul> <p>Hinduism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Animal experimentation is wrong and no better than testing on humans because animal testing is against the principle of non-violence.</li> </ul> <p>Any additional religions should also be accepted.</p> <p>Accept any relevant point.</p> <p>1 mark per simple point, 2 marks per developed point (maximum 4 marks).</p> <p>If only Christianity OR <i>only</i> another religion is mentioned OR if not <i>contrasting</i>, maximum 2 marks</p>		
13	<p>One argument with justification</p> <p>Different arguments for and against, with justification</p> <p>OR Several linked, justified arguments for one position</p> <p>Good, well-justified arguments for and against, linked together</p> <p>Very well argued. Well-justified arguments for and against, linked together and leading to a reasonable conclusion</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td> <p>Points and Justification For:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Animal testing is cruel as it causes animals pain <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>it is also against the principle of ahimsa/non-violence</li> </ul> </li> <li>The Qur'an teaches that all animals are valuable to Allah, so they should not be exploited</li> <li>Animal testing may not produce reliable results because animals are different to humans</li> <li>It is unloving to treat animals in a way you would not want to be treated yourself</li> <li>Animals should have rights like humans; if there is no God there is no reason for a duty to them</li> </ul> </td><td> <p>Points and Justification Against:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Humans are made in God's image and animals are not, so it is better to test on animals and harm them than humans</li> <li>It is more loving to test things on animals than on humans</li> <li>Many people who are suffering from some animals suffering means that they could be cured from disease</li> </ul> </td></tr> </table> <p>Accept any relevant point or justification – other religions should also be accepted.</p>	<p>Points and Justification For:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Animal testing is cruel as it causes animals pain <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>it is also against the principle of ahimsa/non-violence</li> </ul> </li> <li>The Qur'an teaches that all animals are valuable to Allah, so they should not be exploited</li> <li>Animal testing may not produce reliable results because animals are different to humans</li> <li>It is unloving to treat animals in a way you would not want to be treated yourself</li> <li>Animals should have rights like humans; if there is no God there is no reason for a duty to them</li> </ul>	<p>Points and Justification Against:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Humans are made in God's image and animals are not, so it is better to test on animals and harm them than humans</li> <li>It is more loving to test things on animals than on humans</li> <li>Many people who are suffering from some animals suffering means that they could be cured from disease</li> </ul>
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## The Origins and Value of Human Life

Question No.	Answer/Mark Scheme
14	d) Dust
15	b) Through Evolution
16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ They will disagree that God created life</li> <li>◆ They will generally disagree that humans were created as they probably think human life came about through evolution</li> </ul> <p>Accept any relevant point, 1 mark per point (maximum 2)</p>
17	a) Life is enjoyable
18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Poverty might deprive them of things</li> <li>◆ Mental illness might depress them</li> <li>◆ They might be in pain</li> </ul> <p>They might be unable to do certain things, mentally or physically. If they are in a coma, they will be unable to do things, and be unconscious</p> <p>Accept any relevant point, 1 mark per point (maximum 2)</p>
19	c) Gender of Foetus
20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ The pregnancy is a result of rape</li> <li>◆ They may have a mental illness which is badly affected by it</li> <li>◆ They may worry that they will be unable to provide for a child</li> </ul> <p>Accept any relevant point, 1 mark per point (maximum 2)</p>
21	b) The woman must pay a fine
22	c) A person
23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Sanctity of life</li> <li>◆ Quality of life</li> </ul> <p>Accept any relevant point, 1 mark per point (maximum 2)</p>

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Question No.	Answer/Mark Scheme
24	<p>Christianity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Some Christians believe abortion is wrong because it vic life/it is murder</li> <li>◆ Some Christians feel that abortion is permissible in some because they may believe this is the most loving thing fo</li> <li>◆ 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.' (Matthew 22</li> </ul> <p>Islam:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Some Muslims accept early abortions if they do not bel has a soul from conception</li> <li>◆ Muslims may not accept a'or fo if it is because the wo look after the child</li> <li>◆ 'Kill not your children for fear of want: We shall provide them as well as for you. Verily the killing of them is a gr (17:31)</li> </ul> <p>Judaism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Jews may allow abortion to save a mother's life because that the life of a mother takes priority over that of a foet believe abortion should be carried out if it is not necess</li> <li>◆ 'You shall not murder' (Exodus 20:13 NRSV)</li> </ul> <p>Any additional religions should be accepted.</p> <p>Accept any relevant points and reference to scripture 1 mark per simple point, 2 marks per developed point (max relevant reference to scripture. If <i>only</i> one religious belief is mentioned, maximum 2 marks scriptural reference</p>
25	b) Aggressive
26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Someone is only being kept alive by artificial means</li> <li>◆ Someone is in great pain</li> <li>◆ Someone is in a coma</li> <li>◆ Someone is unable to do anything for themselves</li> </ul> <p>Accept any relevant point, 1 mark per point (maximum 2)</p>

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Question No.	Answer/Mark Scheme		
27	<p>Christianity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Christians may accept passive euthanasia if someone is in pain and they feel that this is the most loving thing to do, and Jesus taught that.</li> </ul> <p>Muslims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many Muslims oppose the majority of passive euthanasia. Muslims believe it is up to Allah to decide when someone should die.</li> </ul> <p>Judaism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some Jews may accept passive euthanasia if they do not believe anything which aiding life.</li> <li>Some Jews believe it is wrong to remove something kept alive, but many Jewish doctors not to administer extra medical treatment if someone will die very soon.</li> </ul> <p>Accept any relevant point</p> <p>1 mark per simple point, 2 marks per developed point (maximum 2)</p> <p>If <i>only</i> Christianity OR <i>only</i> another religion is mentioned OR are not <i>contrasting</i>, maximum 2 marks</p>		
28	<p>a) Nirvana</p> <p>This is a Buddhist concept</p>		
29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May wish to convert others so they can go to heaven too</li> <li>May try to live a good life to have a favourable afterlife</li> <li>May live life to the full, not worried about what will happen because they believe they will go to heaven</li> <li>May focus on afterlife rather than human life</li> </ul> <p>Accept any relevant point, 1 mark per point (maximum 2)</p>		
30	<p>One argument with justification</p> <p>Different arguments for and against, with justification</p> <p>OR Several linked, justified arguments for one position</p> <p>Good, well-justified arguments for and against, linked together</p> <p>Very well argued. Well-justified arguments for and against, linked together and leading to a reasonable conclusion.</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td> <p>Points and Justification For</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some people are brain-dead and will never recover; there is no point prolonging the suffering of relatives</li> <li>People have a right to dignity; people may prefer to die than be unable to do anything</li> <li>People may feel they have no quality of life and prefer not to live in pain</li> <li>It may be more loving to kill someone / let someone die, than to let them suffer</li> </ul> </td><td> <p>Points and Justification Against</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It violates the sanctity of life (a gift from God, humans are made in God's image)</li> <li>The Ten Commandments forbid killing</li> <li>It may be up to God to decide the hour of death</li> <li>If you allow euthanasia in certain circumstances, this could lead to a slippery slope</li> <li>Unless someone is suffering, there is a possibility they will recover</li> </ul> </td></tr> </table> <p>Accept any relevant point or justification – other religions should be considered</p>	<p>Points and Justification For</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some people are brain-dead and will never recover; there is no point prolonging the suffering of relatives</li> <li>People have a right to dignity; people may prefer to die than be unable to do anything</li> <li>People may feel they have no quality of life and prefer not to live in pain</li> <li>It may be more loving to kill someone / let someone die, than to let them suffer</li> </ul>	<p>Points and Justification Against</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It violates the sanctity of life (a gift from God, humans are made in God's image)</li> <li>The Ten Commandments forbid killing</li> <li>It may be up to God to decide the hour of death</li> <li>If you allow euthanasia in certain circumstances, this could lead to a slippery slope</li> <li>Unless someone is suffering, there is a possibility they will recover</li> </ul>
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