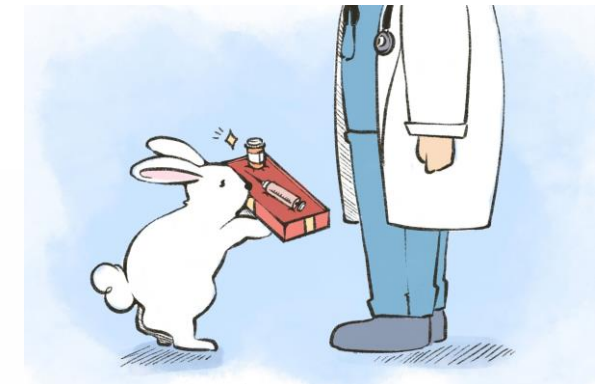
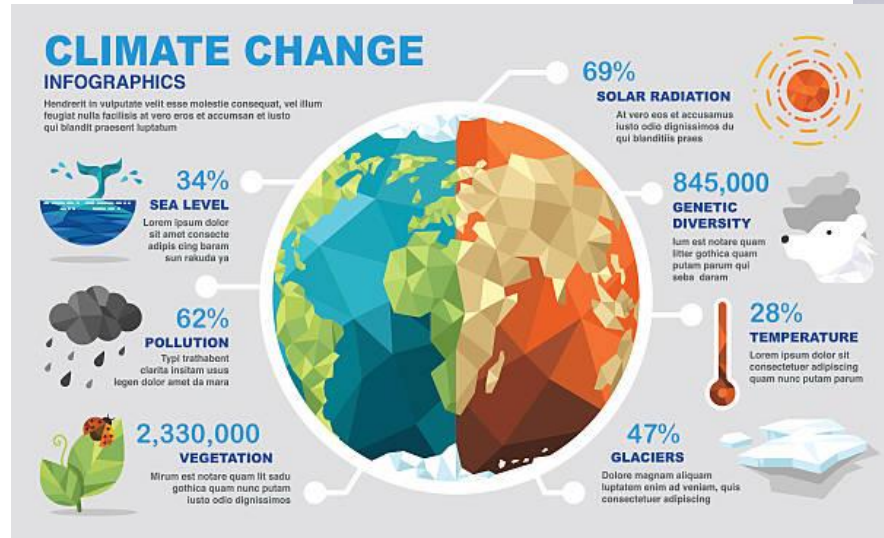


Religion and Life

Knowledge and revision checklist

- ❑ Be able to describe the different types of truth - religious and scientific
- ❑ Explain the scientific arguments about the creation of the world including the Big Bang and Darwin's theory of evolution
- ❑ Compare the scientific arguments to the Christian creation theory
- ❑ Explain the Christian view of stewardships and relate to issues of pollution, climate change, destruction of natural habitats, use of natural resources and conservation
- ❑ Explain Buddhism beliefs on the above environmental issues.
- ❑ Explain ethical arguments about animal rights including, animal testing, animals for food and link to religious teachings.
- ❑ Explain the sanctity and quality of life, explain the ethical issues about abortion including when life begins and the law, with reference to pro-choice and pro-life
- ❑ Explain ethical arguments about euthanasia, with reference to the law, hospices and religious arguments.



Life, creation and the environment

The value of the world

Christianity

- ❑ Christians view the earth as a priceless gift from God, loaned to humans as a result of his love
- ❑ The beauty and wonder of the world can give a sense of **awe** and **wonder**, a devout respect for God's power of creation.

Buddhism

- ❑ Buddhists value the world because it provides and sustains life. It also provides the conditions needed to achieve enlightenment.
- ❑ Buddhism teaches that although the world belongs to nobody, it is everyone's responsibility to look after it.

Duty to protect the world

Christianity

- ❑ Christian beliefs about how people should interact with the world stem from the ideas of stewardship and dominion.
- ❑ **Stewardship**: means Christians have a duty to take care of the environment on behalf of God. **The Parable of the Talents in Matthew 25** teaches that God will be the final judge in how well we have taken care of the earth.
- ❑ **Dominion**: having power and authority. **Genesis 1:28** teaches that God have humans dominion over the world.

Buddhism

- ❑ Most Buddhists are aware of the importance of avoiding damage to the environment and of looking after the world for future generations.
- ❑ Reasons for this include:
 - 1) **Dependent arising**: teaches all life is interconnected. All creatures depend on a healthy planet to survive.
 - 2) Misuse of the environment causes suffering and contradicts Buddhist aspiration to reduce suffering and strive for **loving kindness (metta)** and **compassion (karuna)**
 - 3) **First moral precept**: encourages Buddhists to avoid causing harm to living beings. This means looking after the world.

Buddhism

Buddhism tells us:

- Life is special and must be protected.
- The First Precept is to help not harm others.
- A primary guiding principle of Buddhism is to reduce suffering.
- The Dalai Lama has said: 'Where a person is definitely going to die, and keeping them alive leads to more suffering, then termination of life is permitted under Mahayana Buddhism.'
- Buddhists must show compassion (loving kindness) and practise ahimsa (non-violence).

The first and most important precept is not to take life; abortion and euthanasia both do this. So a first reaction might be that neither would be supported by Buddhism. However, the key element is the intention behind any action, and this may lead to the conclusion that either abortion or euthanasia is more of a right action than a wrong one. Every situation has to be judged separately.

Many Buddhists would point to the belief that suffering has come as a karmic consequence and so a person suffering may need to work through that so as not to face the same in a future life. It is important to make death as comfortable as possible, as our state of mind when we die is the key to shaping our next life. If we face death with anxiety, anger and upset, our next rebirth is negatively set. Facing death with acceptance is better. Hence, hospices which help people to face their death with calm are supported by Buddhism.

Christianity

Christianity tells us:

- God created life in his own image. (Genesis)
- Do not kill. (Ten Commandments)
- I, your God, give life, and I take it away. (Old Testament)
- The Catholic Church teaches that life must be respected from conception until natural death.
- Doctors do not have an overriding obligation to prolong life by all means possible. (Church of England)

It is clear that on most occasions, Christians will not agree with either abortion or euthanasia. All life is believed to be sacred as it was created, and belongs to, God. Whilst death might mean going to heaven to be with God, it should not be hastened. Life should always be protected. For most Christians, abortion is always morally wrong. Some accept it rarely as a *necessary evil*.

In the case of abortion, where the mother's life is at risk, it is difficult because her life is also sacred. Most Christians would accept procedures which save her life, even if they lead to the ending of the pregnancy. Many would also point to the fact that in many cases there are options other than abortion, for example, adoption.

In the case of euthanasia, few support active euthanasia, regardless of what a person might themselves wish for. This is seen as killing, so wrong. However, in countries where euthanasia is legal, there are Christian groups who also agree with it, for example, the Dutch Protestant Church in the Netherlands, who see it as an act of love and compassion and a good use of the medical knowledge God has granted us.

Creation and the environment



Use of natural resources

- ❑ **Natural resources:** refers to materials found in nature such as and trees that can be use by people to make more complex products such as paper.
- ❑ Some natural resources are non renewable and will eventually run out such as oil and gas.
- ❑ Reducing the use of natural resources, recycling more and using renewable energy and helping to protect the environment are all ways people can help preserve the world for future generations.

Pollution type	Cause	Possible problems caused
Air	Fumes from factories and transport	Asthma, diseases such as lung cancer, global warming, climate change and acid rain
Land	Poor disposal of waste	Chemicals pollute the earth causing poisoned wildlife, inefficient farming and poisoned food
Water	Dumping waste into rivers and seas	Oil spills and plastic waste kill birds and marine life

❑ **Pollution:** means to contaminate something, especially the environment. **Luke 10** teaches Christians to love your neighbour. Pollution is not loving towards others.

❑ **Stewardship:** means Christians have a duty to take care of the environment on behalf of God. **The Parable of the Talents in Matthew 25** teaches that God will be the final judge in how well we have taken care of the earth.

❑ **Dominion:** having power and authority. **Genesis 1:28** teaches that God have humans dominion over the world.

❑ **Parable of the Talents (Mathew 25):** warns that God will be the final judge about how responsible humans have been with the earth.

Examples of action that has been taken by Christians or Buddhists to help tackle pollution include the following:

- **Pope Francis has called on everyone to take action** to help protect the environment.
- In his open letter, 'On the Care of Our Common Home', he stressed the need to reduce pollution, use renewable energy and recycle more.

- **Some Christian groups work in their local communities** to clean up the environment, for example by litter-picking.
- Religious believers might also **join secular environmental organisations** such as Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth, which aim to tackle pollution on a wider scale.

- **The Holy Isle Project** is an example of a Buddhist project that aims to protect the local environment and reduce waste.
- Tibetan Buddhists who live on Holy Isle take care of the island's environment.
- E.g. they have planted 35,000 trees, reduced the amount of sewage entering the sea, and created a nature sanctuary for wildlife.

Origins of life

Christian views

- ❑ **Genesis 1:** God Created all life- humans were created last. God created world in 7 days.
- ❑ **Genesis 1:27:** man is created in the image of God.
- ❑ **Genesis 1:28:** god gives humans **dominion** over creation.
- ❑ **Genesis 2:** God created man from the dust on the ground and breathed life into Adam- Christians believe this is human soul, something animals do not have.

Interpretations of Genesis

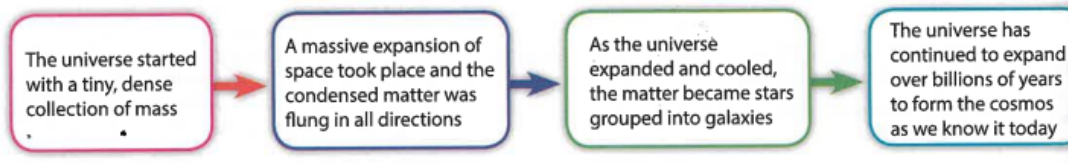
Fundamentalist/ Literalist: believes the Bible is the exact word of God and should be followed and accepted literally.
 Creation as a myth:
 Non literalists:

Buddhist views

- ❑ In the **Dhammapada** Buddha taught that anything (including life)_ came into existence when all necessary conditions were present.
- ❑ **Dependent arising:** things come into existence and events occur when conditions are right. An apple tree exists in dependence on apple seeds. If there is an apple seed, an apple tree can come into existence. If an apple seed comes into being, the tree can come into being.
- ❑ Buddhists do not believe in God and their beliefs does not conflict with **Darwin's** theory of **evolution** and **natural selection**.

Origins of life: big bang theory

The Big Bang theory is currently the leading scientific explanation for how the universe began. It suggests the following events happened to form the universe as we know it today:



Attitudes towards animals

- ❑ **Christians** believe animals were created by God for humans to use and care for. Many believe humans are more important than animals as they were created in the image of God, however animals should still be treated kindly.
- ❑ Most **Buddhists** believe animals should be treated with loving kindness (**metta**) and compassion (**karuna**).
- ❑ **Kamma** teaches that causing harm to animals is unskilful and will lead to suffering. It goes against the first moral precept of do not harm any living thing,
- ❑ The **Eightfold Path** teaches the Buddhists should not make a living from activities that cause harm to others, including animals.

Christian views	Buddhist views
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christianity has no rules about eating meat. • Romans 14:3 says Christians should be sensitive to the beliefs of others about what they wish to eat. • Most Christians eat meat. They believe God gave humans animals to use for food. <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p>“Everything that lives and moves about will be food for you.” Genesis 9:3 [NIV]</p> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some vegetarians and vegans point out that if crops were grown on land currently used to raise animals for meat, there would be much more food to go round, and this would please God. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many Buddhists are vegetarian or vegan because they believe this reduces the harm caused to animals. • Some Mahayana scriptures state the Buddha insisted his followers should not eat meat or fish. • This is because it does not show compassion, and creates an atmosphere of fear among all living beings. <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p>“All tremble at violence; all fear death. Comparing [others] with oneself, one should not kill or cause to kill.”</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>The Buddha in the Dhammapada, verse 129</i></p> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other scriptures include references to the Buddha and his monks eating meat.

❑ **Vegetarians:** do not eat meat or fish.

❑ **Vegans:** do not eat animals or foods produced by animals such as eggs.

Christian views	Buddhist views
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most Christians believe that if testing is proved to be necessary, and the welfare of the animals is considered, it is justified to ensure human safety. • Many believe animals can be used to help save human lives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some Buddhists are against animal experimentation because they believe animals should not be harmed (see above). • Others believe it is acceptable if it is the only way to save many human lives.

Abortion

Abortion in the UK

- ❑ **Miscarriage:** the natural ending of a pregnancy.
- ❑ **Abortion:** is the deliberate removal of a foetus from the womb to end the pregnancy.

Abortion Act 1967 legalised about up to 28 weeks.

- ❑ In UK an abortion can take place in a licenced clinic if two doctors agree that there is a risk to the physical or mental health of the mother, baby or existing children in the family.

Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act (1990) reduced limit for about to 24 weeks.

- ❑ Abortion can only happen in the first 24 weeks if pregnancy unless the mother's life is in danger or the foetus is severely deformed. In these cases there is no limit.

Christian	Buddhist
<p>Christians believe in the sanctity of life- Life is a special gift from God. God gives life and only God should take life.</p> <p>Catholics believe life begins at conception and from that point the baby has the right to life. (Jeremiah 1:5).</p> <p>'Love thy neighbour' (Luke 10)- acceptable to have an abortion in serious circumstances according to some protestants.</p>	<p>Moral Precepts: do not harm any living thing.</p> <p>Dhammapada 129: all living things fear pain and death. Therefore, it could be argued that abortion should not be allowed should you accept the foetus is a living thing.</p> <p>Karuna (compassion)- could be argued allowing for abortion is compassionate to the mother who may have been raped or the baby having a poor quality of life.</p>



Pro Choice
Pressure group campaigning for women's right to choose abortion.

For	Against
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pro-choice groups believe the mother's life is more important. • The mother has to carry the baby, give birth to it and bring it up, so she should have the right to choose whether to continue with the pregnancy. • Life doesn't start until birth (or from the point when the foetus can survive outside the womb), so abortion does not involve killing. • It is cruel to allow a severely disabled child to be born. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pro-life groups argue that as life begins at conception, abortion is a form of murder. • It is possible for disabled children to enjoy a good quality of life, so they should be allowed to live. • Unwanted children can be adopted into families that will care for them. • Those who choose abortion can suffer from depression and guilt afterwards.

Pro Life
Pressure group campaigning for the right to life of the baby and are against abortion.

Euthanasia

- ❑ **Euthanasia:** is the painless killing of a patient who is suffering from and incurable and painful illness or who is in an irreversible coma.
- ❑ **Active euthanasia:** involves active, deliberate steps to end a person's life. This is illegal in UK.
- **Voluntary euthanasia:** the ill person asks for their life to be ended because they don't want to live anymore.
- **Involuntary:** the person is capable of expressing a choice but is not given the opportunity to do so.
- **Non voluntary:** the person is too ill to ask to die, possible in a coma, but the doctor ends their life as it is thought to be in their best interests.
- ❑ **Passive euthanasia:** involves the withdrawal of medical treatment that is keeping someone alive.



Diane Pretty

had motor neurone disease (MND). She wanted to control the time and manner of her death. Fought for the right to choose to die all the way to the Supreme Court but her case failed.

Dame Cicely Saunders

Christian who founded the first modern hospice and, more than anybody else, was responsible for establishing the discipline and the culture of palliative care to protect from the need for euthanasia. Her hospice was call St Christophers.



Christian views	Buddhist views
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Many Christians believe euthanasia is a form of murder and interferes with God's plan for a person's life.• They believe that euthanasia is against the sanctity of life, and only God has the right to take away life.• They might argue that if euthanasia were legal, the very old could feel pressure to end their lives in order not to burden their family.• They might argue that suffering brings people closer to God and helps them to understand Jesus' suffering.• The Salvation Army has said that euthanasia and assisted suicide 'undermine human dignity and are morally wrong'.• Some Christians support euthanasia when it seems the most loving thing to do.• They may argue that as God gave people free will they should be able to choose when to end their lives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Many Buddhists oppose euthanasia because it goes against the first moral precept.• At the same time, many Buddhists would respect the right of the individual to do what they wish with their own life.• Some Buddhists would argue it could be compassionate to help someone end their life if they are suffering a lot.• The state of mind of the person at death is important, as it influences their rebirth (see page 75). If a person is helped to die quickly and peacefully, this could benefit their future consciousness.• At other times, a natural death (eased by meditation and painkillers) might be better for a person's kamma.• The Dalai Lama has commented that euthanasia should be avoided except in exceptional circumstances.

Religious beliefs about the afterlife

Christian	Buddhist
<p>Christians believe Jesus' resurrection is evidence of an afterlife. Many Christians believe that after death they will be judged by God and will either be eternally with God (heaven) or eternally without God (hell). The desire to be close to God motivates them to have faith in Jesus and to follow his teachings.</p> <p>Further beliefs about the afterlife include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Some Catholics believe in the middle stage called purgatory. This is where souls are purified to allow them into heaven.❑ Some Christians believe that judgement happens as soon as someone dies, others believe it will happen later- Parable of the Sheep and the Goats.❑ Others believe that Jesus will return on a future day of Judgement when all souls will be judged.❑ Some believe people will be in heaven in their physical bodies (Bodily resurrection) while others believe it is just their souls (spiritual resurrection) that are in heaven.❑ Some believe that God, who is the source of all good and would not condemn people to hell and that all people go to heaven. Others believe that all who go to hell deserve their fate. <p>'For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life' John 3:16</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Many Buddhists believe death is a process rather than a single moment. The consciousness passes on from the physical body over a period of hours or days.❑ Buddhists do not believe in a soul- three marks of existence anatta.❑ Most Buddhist traditions teach that people are reborn after they die. This means that at some point after death, the person's consciousness enters another life at the point of its conception. Everything is constantly changing and impermanent (anicca).❑ The quality of the rebirth is dependent upon the ethical quality of a person's actions in their previous life (their Kamma). Skilful behaviour builds merit which leads to a favourable rebirth. This relates to the teaching of dependent arising.❑ Many Buddhists believe that what happens after death depends on their state of mind when they die.❑ Someone who becomes enlightened is freed from future rebirths. They may choose to return to earth to help others and they are known as Arhats or Bodhisattvas. <p>'Having reached perfection, fearless, without craving, without blemish, he has cut off the darts of existence. This body is his life'. Dhammapada 351.</p>