

Key Terms – Themes

Theme B: Religion and life

Abortion

Deliberate ending of a pregnancy, intended to prevent new life.

Afterlife

Beliefs about what happens to 'us' after our body has died.

Animal rights

Belief that animals should be treated with respect, so have rights to adequate food/water/shelter/rest/freedom.

Awe

Awesome. A sense of wonderment, sometimes linked to the feeling that God is involved/revealed.

Big Bang Theory

Scientific theory about the origins of the universe – that the universe was created in a huge explosion.

Charles Darwin

The man who proposed the theory of evolution (19th century).

Creation

Belief that God created the world/universe from nothing, eg Genesis creation story.

Conception

Point at which sperm fertilises an egg to begin pregnancy.

Conservation

The practice of repairing/protecting the natural environment and/or animal species.

Dominion

Belief that humans have been given control/charge of the world.

Environment

The world around us, can be natural or artificial.

Euthanasia

Mercy killing; ending the life of a person who is terminally ill or has degenerative illness. Can be voluntary (person seeks this), or non-voluntary (person is on life support so family makes decision). Can be active (what is done kills directly), or passive (medical support removed to allow natural death).

Evolution

Scientific theory of the development of species, which comprises natural selection and survival of the fittest.

Fossil fuels

Coal, oil, gas – fuels that developed over millions of years beneath the earth's surface.

Hospice

Place of medical care for the dying, but which also gives emotional support to the dying and their families.

Natural resources

Resources which are found in nature – fossil fuels, plants etc.

Pesticide

Chemicals used to kill pests, especially on farmed crops.

Pro-life

Stance of being anti-abortion and/or anti-euthanasia; many pressure groups exist with this view, eg SPUC.

Pro-choice

Stance of being for a woman's right to decide what happens to her own body, which extends to the right to have an abortion.

Quality of life

How good or comfortable a person's life is.

Right to die

Belief that a human has the right to end their life, or seek it to be ended if they want that.

Sanctity of life

Belief that life is sacred/special, because it was created by God, or because we are each unique individuals.

Science

Knowledge that comes from observed regularity in nature and experimentation.

Stewardship

Duty given by God to mankind to look after the created world, and all life within it.

Sustainable energy

Resources that are renewable and will not run out, eg solar, wind, etc.

Theme D: Religion, peace and conflict

Anti-war

Attitude that (a) war is wrong and should be protested/worked against.

Civil war

Armed conflict between factions within the same country.

Conflict

Dispute between sides, can be between individuals, groups or nations.

Conventional warfare

War fought using 'ordinary' weapons, ie those covered/sanctioned by the Geneva Conventions - guns etc...

Forgiveness

Letting go of blame against a person for wrongs they have done; moving on.

Genocide

The killing of groups of/many people from a specific ethnic group, having targeted them for their ethnicity.

Guerrilla warfare

Form of warfare in which a small group fights in a non-regular manner against a Government and its forces.

Holy War

War sanctioned by God, used in Islam and Judaism; rules for such a war.

Humanitarian organisation

For example, Red Cross/Crescent; organisation which works to alleviate the suffering of those made victims by war (or natural disaster).

Justice

Bringing fairness back to a situation.

Just War

Set of rules for fighting a war in a way acceptable to God, used in Christianity and Sikhism.

Nuclear weapons/war

A weapon of mass destruction; war fought using such a weapon (none so far in world history).

Pacifism

Belief that all violence is wrong, which then affects all behaviours.

Peace

The opposite of war; harmony between all in society.

Protest

Making known one's disagreement over something.

Reconciliation

Making up between two groups/sides after disagreement.

Retaliation

To pay someone back for their actions that have caused harm.

Terrorism

Use of violence and threats to intimidate others, usually Government; used for political purposes to build fear in the ordinary population and so secure demands from Government.

War

Armed conflict between two or more sides.

Weapons of mass destruction

Weapons which are uncontrollable and cause indiscriminate damage, eg nuclear, chemical, biological.

Theme E: Religion, crime and punishment

Capital punishment

Death penalty; state sanctioned execution for a capital offence; not legal in UK.

Community service order

UK punishment involving the criminal doing a set number of hours of physical labour.

Conscience

Sense of right and wrong; guilty voice in our head; seen as the voice of God by many religious believers.

Corporal punishment

Punishment in which physical pain is inflicted on the criminal; not legal in the UK.

Crime

Action which breaks the law; can be against the person (eg murder), against property (eg vandalism), or against the state (eg treason).

Deterrence

Aim of punishment to put a person off committing a crime by the level of punishment.

Duty

What we have a responsibility to do.

Evil

Something or someone considered morally very wrong or wicked; often linked to the idea of a devil or other malevolent being.

Forgiveness

Letting go of blame against a person for wrongs they have done; moving on.

Greed

Reason for committing crime – wanting or desiring something or more of something.

Hate crime

A crime committed because of prejudice, eg assaulting a person because they are gay or Asian.

Imprisonment

Locking someone up and taking away of civil liberties of a criminal.

Law

The rules a country demands its citizens follow, the breaking of which leads to punishment.

Murder

Unlawfully killing another person.

Order

The enforcement of rules, eg by a police force.

Parole

Release of a criminal from prison under the condition they will meet with a parole officer who can monitor their behaviour.

Protection

Additional aim of punishment; to keep people safe.

Reformation

Aim of punishment; helping the criminal see how and why their behaviour was wrong, so that their mindset changes for the better.

Reparation

Additional aim of punishment; where the criminal makes up for, or pays back for, their crimes.

Retribution

Aim of punishment; getting the criminal back for their crimes.

Theft

Taking something without the owner's consent.

Victim

Those who are directly affected by a crime, eg the person assaulted.

Vindication

Additional aim of punishment; the punishment exists to justify the law.

Young offenders

Criminals under the age of 18.

Theme F: Religion, human rights and social justice

Ageism

Discrimination against someone because of their age.

Community

A group of people who share a characteristic, eg the place they live.

Compassion

Loving kindness; attitude to help others simply because it is right to help.

Discrimination

Actions that come from prejudice.

Equality

Belief that everyone is equal in value and worth.

Fair pay

Payment that is appropriate for the work done.

Gender

Being male or female.

Harmony

Living together in society without argument/conflict.

Human rights

The rights a person should be entitled to simply by being a human being, eg education, fair treatment etc.

Human Rights Act

UK law which protects the rights of individuals and allows a challenge when these are breached.

Interest

Money paid back on loans aside from the original amount loaned.

Justice

Getting fairness; getting redress for unfairness.

Loan

Amount of money borrowed from a lender, usually paid back in instalments with interest. Where excessive, the interest charged on the loan is extremely high (even unfairly so).

People trafficking

Illegal trade of humans for slavery, eg for sex and/or work.

Poverty

Having less than the basic needs of life, so that day-to-day living is a struggle.

Prejudice

Prejudging someone based on a characteristic they have, eg their ethnicity.

Racism

Prejudice against someone because of their ethnicity/skin colour.

Responsibility

Duty, eg the responsibility to work; to earn money for oneself.

Rights

What a person is entitled to, eg the right to education.

Sexuality

A person's sexual orientation, ie whether they are straight, gay, bisexual.

Social justice

Bringing justice to society so that all within a society have the same opportunities, and can take advantage of them; includes projects to improve the life situation of those at the poorest end of society, eg by educational support.

Stewardship

Duty to look after the world given by God to humans, which extends to looking after all life, including other humans.

Tolerance

Acceptance of difference rather than seeing it as a problem.

UN Declaration of Human Rights

A statement adopted by the United Nations (and all their signatories, including the UK) to protect human beings in specific regards.

Wealth

Money and possessions a person has, usually in such quantities as to give a very comfortable lifestyle.