

THEME B: KNOWLEDGE ORGANISER

KEYWORDS

Sanctity of life- Life is precious, special, sacred, a gift from God and should be protected.

Quality of life- how good or bad life is. Decided by health, wealth, friends, happiness etc

Abortion - the deliberate ending of a pregnancy

Pro Life - the moral argument that the life of the unborn child is more valuable than the mothers

Pro-Choice - the belief that the mother's right to choose what happens with her body is more important

Foetus - an unborn child at over 8 weeks gestation

Euthanasia - the deliberate ending of a life due to the belief that the life has no quality anymore e.g. due to terminal illness

Animal Rights - the belief that animals have rights

Vivisection - testing on animals

Stewardship - the belief that humans have a responsibility to take care of the planet

Dominion- the belief that humans should rule over the planet

Big Bang Theory - the scientific argument for the creation of the universe

Genesis - the first book in the bible where God creates universe.

Evolution - the belief that humans evolved from a common ancestor

MORAL ABSOLUTISM - The belief that if there is a moral rule, it should be followed at all times, regardless of the circumstances or potential outcome. E.G. "Thou shalt not kill" means that all killing is morally wrong and should ALWAYS be avoided. **MORAL RELATIVISM** - The belief that if there is a moral rule, it should be considered alongside any circumstances and potential consequences. E.G. Human life should be protected, only as long as it is a life worth living.

ORIGINS OF THE UNIVERSE

Christians argue either from a liberal standpoint where they view the Genesis story as having symbolic meaning, where the main message is that God created the universe showing his **omnipotence**. This also allows them to recognise the potential for God having a key role the Big BANG. The scientific evidence points to **how** God created the universe.

Other Christians (Fundamentalists) would argue that statements in the bible are all literally true and the creation story describes the events exactly as they happened and therefore the Earth is only around 6000 years old. Some may argue that the 7 days is a metaphor for a longer period of time.

GENESIS
IN THE BEGINNING

SANCTITY OF LIFE

Christianity teaches that human life is a gift from God. We were "made in his image" and he "*breathed into our nostrils the breath of life*". We were given responsibilities and were made to "*rule over all the living creatures on the planet*". Human life has intrinsic worth.

In the bible it says that God knows us before we are born. That he "*knitted us together in our mother's womb and he 'called our names'*". This shows that our lives were considered important before birth. God has a plan for each one of us.

"he made them in his image"
"rule over all the animals"
"go forth and multiply"
"and God breathed into Adam the breath of life"
"I knew you before I knitted you together in your mother's womb"

LIFE
IS
SACRED

EUTHANASIA There are different types of Euthanasia **active** - considered to be murder by Christians as it involves a doctor deliberately and actively taking the life of a person. It is illegal in the UK. In other parts of the world - like Switzerland, **Assisted Dying** is legal. It is where a person voluntarily chooses death due to a poor quality of life. Euthanasia is not legal in the UK despite many attempts to lobby the government; for example Diane Pretty (1958-2002) developed motor neurone disease in her 30s. This disease causes the muscles to weaken until sufferers can no longer speak, breathe or swallow. It leaves the brain unaffected. She went to the European Court of Human Rights to argue that her husband should be allowed to help her to commit suicide when she could no longer speak or move properly without fear of him being prosecuted. The court turned down her application.

Some argue that even in the case of terminal illness that life still has value and purpose - **see the story of Job** "*shall we accept good from God and not evil*" and that by allowing a person to seek early death we are not caring for them properly e.g. in Hospices. Many Christians see Euthanasia as the most **loving** option if it is regulated properly.

THE BIG BANG and EVOLUTION These are scientific theories which are supported by evidence. They argue that the universe was created around 13.9 billion years ago expanding from a singular point. Evolution- supported by Darwin states that Humans evolved from a common ancestor through natural selection and biological advancement.

Christians do not always agree with the latter theory as it removes the idea we were created by God

ABORTION

Abortion is considered to be a sin by most Christians because it directly aims to take the life of an innocent, unborn child. Some consider this to be murder. The Roman Catholic Church, for example argues that it directly violates the child's right to life and goes against the Sanctity of Life. This is the PRO LIFE argument.

Other more liberal Christians argue that it is the woman's right to choose what happens to her body. Although they may not like the idea of abortion they understand that in some circumstances e.g. Rape or illness that an abortion may be the **lesser of two evils** and the most loving option so they will seek to support the woman through this time. "Love your neighbour".

In UK law Abortion is legal up to 24 weeks, with the consent of 2 doctors. For cases such as rape, illness or risk of severe disability or illness to the mother or unborn child.

USE AND ABUSE OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND ANIMALS

Christians show their concern about the environment by taking action to help to protect the Earth against abuse - misuse of the world, and the environment. Air, land and water pollution are a major threat to life and Christians will support groups like Green Peace.

Some Christians believe it is ok to use animals for medical experimentation as it upholds the Sanctity of Human life. Others argue that animals have intrinsic worth too, like Francis of Assisi and that God expects us to take care of the planet and its inhabitants because the world was a gift to us but we must return it one day. "*the earth is the Lord's*".

Some Christians will not eat meat or they will be vegan.