



Environmental Ethics Knowledge Organiser

Lesson 1: Nobody stands nowhere! An Introduction to worldviews

Core Knowledge

- A worldview is a view of the world, used for living in the world. It is a mental model of reality — a comprehensive framework of ideas and attitudes about the world, ourselves, and life, a system of beliefs, a system of personally customised theories about the world and how it works — with answers for a wide range of questions.
- A worldview is shaped by many factors, including religion. Each factor could be seen as a ‘lens’ through which the world is viewed.
- Ethics refers to the set of standards that enable people to live cooperatively in groups. It’s what societies determine to be “right” and “acceptable.” Sometimes, acting in an ethical manner means individuals must sacrifice their own short-term interests to benefit society. Individuals who go against these standards may be considered unethical.
- Some scholars don’t distinguish between morals and ethics. Both have to do with “right and wrong”. But some people believe morality is personal while ethics refer to the standards of a community. For example, your community may not view sex before marriage as a problem. But on a personal level, you might consider it immoral. By this definition, your morality would contradict the ethics of your community.

Revision Questions

- What is a worldview?
- What factors might shape your worldview?
- What are ‘lenses’?
- How can we use lenses to interpret decision making and make ethical decisions?
- What are ‘ethics’?
- Give examples of ethics.
- Give an example of a way in which an individual must sacrifice their own short-term interests to benefit society.
- What are ‘morals’?
- What does immoral mean?
- How do some scholars distinguish ethics and morality?
- Give an example of someone’s morals contradicting the ethics of their community.



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Lesson 2: Wake Up Call: stewardship and dominion (1/3)

Core Knowledge

- Stewardship means a duty to protect and care for the earth. For a religious believer, it is a responsibility to God.
- In Genesis 2, Adam is given the role of stewardship over the Earth, looking after it for God. 'The Lord God took the man (Adam) and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it'.
- Psalm 24:1 'The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it.' - as the Earth belongs to God, humans must respect it and hand it back to God unspoiled:
- Dominion means having power and authority over the Earth. It means ruling over the Earth.
- Genesis 1 teaches 'Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.' A minority of Christians interpret this as meaning that humans can do whatever they like because they are in charge.
- Khalifah is a Muslim term meaning steward.
- Ahimsa is a concept from Hinduism and Buddhism that teaches respect to all living things and not causing them any harm.

Revision Questions

- What does stewardship mean?
- Why do some Christians believe they should practice stewardship?
- What does dominion mean?
- Why do some Christians believe they have dominion over the earth?
- What is a khalifah?
- What is ahimsa?



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Lesson 2: Wake Up Call: stewardship and dominion (2/3)

Core Knowledge

- People who don't eat meat or fish are called vegetarians. Vegans will not use anything from an animal including leather, milk and eggs.
- Christianity does not have any rules about whether or not Christians can eat meat.
- Some Christians believe that God gave humans animals for food and are happy to eat meat (Genesis 9:3).
- Some Christians say that there is no need to eat animals because a non-meat diet provides all the nutrition that humans need. Some Christians argue that if crops were grown on land currently used for meat production then there would be much more food to go around and this would please God.
- Christians should not judge one another for choosing to eat meat or to not eat meat. 'The one who eats everything must not treat with contempt the one who does not, and the one who does not eat everything must not judge the one who does, for God has accepted them.' (Romans 14:3)

Revision Questions

- What is the difference between a vegetarian and a vegan?
- What does Christianity teach about vegetarianism?
- Why are some Christians happy to eat meat but not others?
- Why do some Christians say that there is no need to eat meat?

- Give an example of a religious teaching that reminds Christians that they should not judge one another for choosing to eat meat or not eat meat.



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Lesson 2: Wake Up Call: stewardship and dominion (2/3)

Core Knowledge

- Muslims are taught that to provide food is a just cause for killing animals but hunting for entertainment or pleasure is not.
- 'It is God who provides livestock for you, some for riding and some for your food.' Qur'an 40:79
- Muslims have strict rules about how and which animals must be killed for food.
- No animal should be killed for food in front of other animals.
- To be permissible or halal the animal must be killed 'In the name of God' and its throat cut with a very sharp knife to prevent it from suffering. The blood is then drained out.

Revision Questions

- What does Islam teach about vegetarianism? Give a religious teaching to back up your answer.
- What does halal mean?
- How is halal meat different from non-halal meat?



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Lesson 3: Risky Business – the Parable of the Rich Fool

Core Knowledge

- A parable is a simple story used to illustrate a moral or spiritual lesson, as told by Jesus in the Gospels.
- The Parable of the Rich Fool: Jesus begins by saying, "The land of a rich man produced abundantly." The man then thinks to himself, "What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?" Then he says, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.'" "But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?"
- Jesus concludes by saying, "So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God."
- Many Christians believe that the only things that are valuable in God's kingdom are having a relationship with Him through obedience to His expectations and understanding God and having knowledge of Him and His kingdom, so that we can obey Him.
- An ethical dilemma takes place in a decision-making context where any of the available options requires the person to go against or compromise on their ethical standards.

Revision Questions

- What is a parable?
- What does the Parable of the Rich Fool teach Christians?
- What does it mean to be 'rich towards God'? Is it the same as being generous?
- Jesus had never heard of climate change and climate justice. How his parable relevant to the modern world?
- What is an ethical dilemma?
- How can a person's worldview influence their response to an ethical dilemma?



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Lesson 3: Getting personal: whose problem, whose fault? (1/2)

Core Knowledge

- An HIC is a high-income country; an LIC is a low-income country.
- HIC lifestyles consume, waste and pollute more than lifestyles in LICs but the worst effects are borne by those in LICs.
- If everyone on the planet consumed the same natural resources as the average person in Western Europe, we would need 3 planets to support us.
- ‘One Planet Living’ is a vision of a world where we can live happily within our one Earth’s resources. One of the strategies for this is zero waste.
- The Muslim community is called the ‘ummah’, a brotherhood, including those in the past and future. Everyone has a duty to their family and fellow humans to make sure they pass on to them a world fit to live in, not one damaged beyond repair because
- humans were so selfish as to think they could do what they wanted with it.

Revision Questions

- What is an HIC? What is an LIC? Give examples of these.
- Which lifestyles – LIC or HIC – tend to consume, waste and pollute more?
- Why can’t the whole world consume the same natural resources as the average person in Western Europe?
- What is One Planet Living? What strategies does it include?
- What is the ummah? How does the concept of the ummah link to people’s use of natural resources?



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Lesson 3: Getting personal: whose problem, whose fault? (2/2)

Core Knowledge

- People can choose to limit their effect on the environment, but many choose not to do so as they will not necessarily reap the benefits themselves. Actions could include following the 3Rs, planting trees, reducing global travel.
- In economics, the tragedy of the commons refers to a situation in which individuals with access to a shared resource (also called a common) act in their own interest rather than for the good of everyone and, in doing so, ultimately deplete (run out) the resource. Examples include unregulated resources such as the atmosphere, oceans, rivers, ocean fish stocks etc.

Revision Questions

- What can people do to limit their effect on the environment?
- Why do some people choose not to do this?

- What is the tragedy of the commons?
- How do religious teachings link to this economic concept?



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Lesson 4: Blind truth: should the rich feel guilty? (1/2)

Core Knowledge

- People can take action to limit their effect on the environment, but many choose not to do so as they will not necessarily reap the benefits themselves.
- The Parable of the Good Samaritan: “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he travelled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. ‘Look after him,’ he said, ‘and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.’ “Which of these three do you think was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?” The expert in the law replied, “The one who had mercy on him.” Jesus told him, “Go and do likewise.”

Revision Questions

- What can people do to limit their effect on the environment?
- Why do some people choose not to do this?
- What does the Parable of the Good Samaritan teach Christians about the way they should treat others?
- How is this linked to environmental ethics?



Environmental Ethics Knowledge Organiser

Lesson 4: Blind truth: should the rich feel guilty? (2/2)

Core Knowledge

- The Niger Delta contains Ogoniland, home to a community that fought back against Shell.
- Shell has extracted \$30billion worth of crude oil from the land of the Ogoni people since the 1950s.
- This has had consequences for the Ogoni people, many of whom live without electricity or running water, who see none of the oil profits and have to live with the poisoning of land and water from pipelines, oil spills and gas fires.
- Ken Saro-Wiwa organised the locals into the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) who used non-violent protest methods against the power of Shell.
- The protest movement were attacked, killed and mutilated and some people blamed the government for this.
- John Major (the then UK prime minister) declared it as indefensible.

Revision Questions

- Which company has extracted the majority of the oil from Ogoniland in the Niger Delta?
- What consequences does this have for the Ogoni people?
- What was the MOSOP?
- How did the MOSOP try to bring about change?
- What happened as a result of their action?
- Did the UK intervene?



Environmental Ethics Assessment

What format will your assessment take?

- You will answer 5 questions:
- Q1 is a multiple-choice question
- Q2 is a 2-mark question where you make two very short points
- Q3 is a 4-mark question where you explain two ideas, developing each of your points.
- Q4 is a 5-mark question where you explain two ideas, developing each of your points, with an additional mark available for including sacred writing or a source of religious belief and teaching.
- Q5 is a 12-mark essay question where you evaluate a statement.
- There will be some choice in the assessment.
- You will choose one 12-mark essay question to focus on. You can plan for this answer as you will know what the question is in advance of the assessment.

What are the 12-mark essay questions?

- Each question is a statement followed by the instruction: 'Evaluate this statement.'
- In your answer you:
 - ✓ should give reasoned arguments in support of this statement
 - ✓ should give reasoned arguments to support a different point of view
 - ✓ should refer to religious arguments
 - ✓ may refer to non-religious arguments
 - ✓ should reach a justified conclusion.
- The choice of statements is:
 - 'Abuse of the environment is impossible to stop.'
 - 'Religious believers should work harder to fight climate change.'
 - 'Humans have been given dominion over the world so we can do what we like with it.'
 - 'Religious believers should not eat meat.'
 - 'Eating meat is disrespectful to God's creation.'