

Component 1 Themes – Issues of Good and evil


Key words

- Good** – That which is morally right, beneficial and to our advantage.
- Evil** – That which is extremely immoral, wicked and wrong.
- Forgiveness** – To grant pardon for a wrongdoing; to give up resentment and the desire to seek revenge against a wrongdoer.
- Free will** – The ability to make choices voluntarily and independently. The belief that nothing is pre-determined.
- Justice** – Fairness; where everyone has equal provisions and opportunity.
- Morality** – Principles and standards determining which actions are right or wrong.
- Punishment** – A penalty given to someone for a crime or wrong they have done.
- Sin** – Deliberate immoral action, breaking a religious or moral law.
- Suffering** – Pain caused by injury, illness or loss. Can be physical, emotional/psychological or spiritual.
- Morality** – Principles and standards determining which actions are right or wrong.
- Conscience** – An inner voice which keeps a person on the right track; a sense of right and wrong; an instinct (maybe from G-d).
- Shari’ah law** – Muslim law based upon the Qur’an.
- Utilitarianism** – The belief that a good act is one that brings the greatest good for the greatest number. The principle of the greatest happiness.
- Reformer** – Someone who lobbies or pressurises for change.
- Quaker** – A Christian denomination whose central belief is that every human contains a reflection of the image of G-d.
- Parole Officer** – A person who supports a prisoner on their release from prison and their return to the community.
- Exoneration** – When a conviction for a crime is reversed, either because the prisoner is innocent or there was an error with the trial.
- Beatitudes** - The blessings listed by Jesus on the Sermon on the Mount.
- Sadaqah** – Voluntary charity given out of kindness. The Prophet Muhammad said it was every act done to please Allah or make life pleasant.
- Original sin** – The first sin committed when Eve ate the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden. This brought sin and evil into the world.


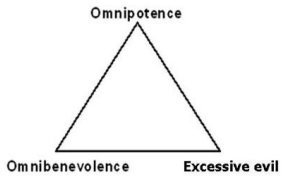


Moral decision-making	Types of morality	Crime
<p>A conscience may help us make moral decisions, it can give us a sense of guilt when we have done something wrong. It can warn us before a decision as to whether it will be right or wrong. The choice we make is enabled by our free will.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The law gives us guidance • Religious leaders give guidance through wisdom. • Sacred texts like the Bible and Qur’an/Hadith bring guidance. • Role models and examples of moral living; Martin Luther King, Prophet Muhammad, Jesus. • Situation ethics – based on the unique circumstances and what is the most loving thing to do. • Utilitarian ethics – the greater amount of happiness is considered; pleasure minus pain. • Logic and reason to decide. 	<p>Absolute morality A ruling principle like ‘it is wrong to kill’. No matter what the situation is, they would never kill. Therefore all killing is wrong, including in war. Catholics are usually absolutists.</p> <p>Relative morality A moral principle is held but someone is prepared to bend the rules depending on the situation. If a war might bring about less suffering in the future, then they might believe killing is acceptable in just this circumstance. The Church of England is often seen to contain relativists.</p>	<p>Crime is any offense punishable by law. The law determines what a crime is. Some religious sin is a crime but others are not in modern society. (Adultery in the 10 Commandments is not a crime). Christian sin leads to personal suffering and sometimes being cut off from the Church. Muslims have Shari’ah Law and can receive specific punishments.</p> <p>Causes of crime:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor education (exclusion) • Poor parenting (abusive) • Poverty (location) • Mental health issues • Drug/alcohol addiction • Unemployment • Peer pressure • Media (violent TV/film/games)

Aims of punishment	Justice	Prison reformers
<p>Protection Prison sentence removes criminal from society. Innocent are protected.</p> <p>Retribution Revenge by wanting the criminal to suffer. Victims feel justice has been served.</p> <p>Deterrence To put others off committing crime. Used to be the main purpose in the UK with a death penalty. Makes an example of the criminal.</p> <p>Reformation Addresses the causes behind the crime. Punishment isn’t enough. Modern idea to rehabilitate/reform the criminal.</p> <p>Vindication Government can show the law is effective and works. Creates confidence in the justice system.</p> <p>Reparation Repairing the damage done through crime. Restorative justice; community service.</p> <p>Utilitarianism and deterrence punishment are linked. Laws and prisons are to maximise the happiness of society. A small number of criminals are punished to deter the majority from committing crime.</p>	<p>This is about fairness. Religion and governments maintain justice for a moral society. Justice cannot be achieved without punishment, but the punishment must address the cause of the crime. It has to fit the crime. A murderer should not be given community service and a petty thief should not be given a life-sentence.</p> <p>Christians believe in forgiveness and don’t believe in retribution. Yet, forgiveness and punishment should go together. Jesus forgave those who betrayed him like Judas. Christians usually support reparation. Jesus taught compassion, so many Christians believe in prison reform and look to understand the cause of the crime. Some Christians become prison chaplains to do this.</p> <p>Muslims also believe in forgiveness but also protection of the Ummah. Punishment is central to justice. Shari’ah law is used to deter and protect.</p>	<p>In the 1700s British reformer John Howard (Protestant Christian) inspected prisons and went to government with recommendations for improvement over clean water, access to medicine and safety.</p> <p>Elizabeth Fry in the 1800s was a Quaker Christian who improved British prisons. She emphasised education to reform prisoners and help them read and write. She held Bible readings for female prisoners.</p>

Care for prisoners	The death penalty																											
<p>All prisons have chaplains who are religious leaders such as priests and imams. They provide pastoral care for prisoners. They provide counselling, spiritual guidance and sometimes support families of prisoners.</p> <p>Parole officers support prisoners who are getting released and prepare them to return to the community.</p> 	<p>A method of deterrence used over thousands of years. It is still legal in over 80 countries. African or Asian-Pacific nations like China, Afghanistan and Iran. 31 states in the United States of America also have the death penalty. In America people can receive lethal injection (<i>most preferred</i>), electric chair, gas chamber, firing squad or hanging. Less humane methods are decapitation (North Korea/Saudi Arabia) and stoning (Sudan).</p>																											
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<p>Muslims accept capital punishment for severe crimes. Forgiveness is important and preferred but protection of the Ummah is also important. Punishment is part of justice. It is reserved usually for murder and openly attacked Islam. Very strict Shari'ah law uses capital punishment for adultery, homosexuality, terrorism and treason. Some Muslims disagree with this and want it abolished as it has been abused by some governments.</p>																												

Forgiveness	Good	Evil
<p>Forgiveness is not about forgetting but about reconciliation. Gee Walker forgave her son Anthony Walker's racist killers and chooses not to be bitter. Christians believe that because G-d forgave them, they must forgive others. The Lord's Prayer emphasises forgiveness. In the Beatitudes, Jesus taught to show mercy to receive mercy. Jesus forgave the adulterous woman and taught forgiveness in the Parable of the Prodigal Son highlighting the father who forgave his son for sinning. Catholics seek forgiveness at confession praying with a priest. Muslims believe the Qur'an says forgiveness is rewarded with peace. They need G-d's forgiveness and the forgiveness of others. There is no limit to Allah's forgiveness.</p>	<p>Good is relative and means different things to people. St Augustine argued goodness is the absence of evil. It's what is morally right. Many say to be good is not intrinsic (good by nature) but by actions. Good actions come from our conscience because of free will. Good can be developed by social factors like upbringing.</p> <p>Christians say G-d made the Earth good. The story of Adam of Eve describes the Fall and how free will can lead us away from doing good. The Bible gives moral guidelines, it is down to the Christian whether to follow them or not. They are to model the goodness of Jesus' compassion and love.</p> <p>Muslims believe everyone has a natural goodness they are born with. Free will means they must choose G-d or temptations by Shaytan. They must follow Muhammad's example of patience, humility and kindness to others by doing sadaqah. Allah will judge all good actions.</p>	<p>Evil is relative and means different things to different people. Two types of evil:</p> <p>Moral evil – human actions like murder and stealing.</p> <p>Natural evil – events without human action like earthquakes and illness.</p> <p>St Irenaeus (early Church Father) believed humans were created imperfect with capacity to grow. G-d doesn't interfere with evil as we have free will. John Hick called this process 'soul-making' and said we don't have enough knowledge of G-d to understand everything. Catholics argue evil comes from original sin since Adam and Eve. Some say life is a test using the story of Job as an example. Jesus' death helps us use suffering to get closer to Him. St Augustine argued evil is the absence of good.</p> <p>Muslims use al-Qadr (predestination) to argue everything happens for a reason. Life is a test. Good and evil acts are recorded by angels. Good can come from evil. Greater jihad is overcoming temptation. Many say evil comes from Shaytan.</p>

Suffering	
<p>Suffering is a part of life. Causes of suffering are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • War and conflict • Human greed • Natural disasters • Terrorism • Poverty • Inequality • Disease  <p>Christians argue the purpose of suffering is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A test; As punishment • G-d's plan that we cannot understand (mystery) • To appreciate what is good and get closer to Jesus • To strengthen faith in G-d like in the story of Job. <p>Muslims argue the purpose of suffering is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part of G-ds predestined plan (al-Qadr) • A test • A way to prove someone's faith by resisting temptation • To lead to spiritual development as good can come from it • An opportunity to follow the Prophet Muhammad 	<p>The Holocaust happened during Nazi Germany when Hitler carried out a programme of discrimination against the Jews. They were banned from having rights and were rounded up and placed in ghettos. They were executed horrifically in concentration camps. This genocide killed over 6 million Jews and many were left at the end of WWII without a home. Many questioned where G-d was during this time and lost their faith, others were strengthened in their faith through suffering.</p> <p>Ways of alleviating suffering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prayer • Fund-raising and disaster relief • Counselling • Rehabilitation programmes • Medical Care • Education  <p>Epicurus first raised the logical problem of evil. If G-d is willing but not able to end evil, He isn't omnipotent. If He is able but not willing, then He isn't omnibenevolent. If he is able and willing, then why is there evil? If he is unable and unwilling, then why call Him G-d?</p> <p>If we have free-will, are we truly free to make our own choices?</p>

