

Key Words & Definitions: Life and death

Abortion	When a pregnancy is ended so that it does not result in the birth of a child
Afterlife	Where souls go when the body dies; Another kind of 'existence' that follows bodily life.
Akhirah	Islamic term referring to the after life
Committal	The words usually ending a funeral service; 'Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust...'
Creator	Christians understand God's role as 'Father' to include creating the universe and all things in it.
Creationism	Belief that all life was made by God
Day of Judgement	Belief held by some Christians that the day will come when the dead will present themselves to God who will decide whether they should go to heaven or hell (depending upon the life they led when alive).
Death	The end of life on earth and the beginning of the life in heaven (Christianity); The state of being dead and the ceasing of all bodily functions.
Dominion	The belief that God created humans to "rule over" nature. They believe that this gives us the right to utilise the world's natural resources
Dualism	Belief that we are made of two separate parts; physical body and a spiritual soul
Duty	What a person is expected to do - something entrusted to you by God or someone in authority
Ensoulement	The moment when the human soul is said to enter the baby's body
Environment	The plants, trees, water and all things which make up the world we live in.
Environmental Sustainability	Ensuring that the demands placed on natural resources can be met without reducing capacity to allow all people and other species of animals, as well as plant life; to live well, now in and the future
Eulogy	Speech given at a funeral in memory of the person that has died.
Euthanasia	From Greek, eu "good" and "thanatos" death. Sometimes referred to as "mercy killing" or permitting the death of a person who is suffering from a serious illness
Evolution	The process by which different living creatures are believed to have developed from earlier less complex life forms during the history of the earth
Exploitation	To abuse your dominion and take advantage of your position and power.
Faith	Belief in God and religious teachings without proof.
Genesis	Where the creation story is found in the Bible.
Global Citizenship	The idea that we should see ourselves as part of a world community. We should view the whole world as our home, not just the town we live or our country of birth.
Humanity	Compassion for others; benevolence; caring about other human beings; kind-heartedness to others.
Khalifah	Agent, guardian of the earth.
Heaven	Christian idea of a perfect afterlife with God.
Hell	Christian idea of the worst afterlife without God.
Hospice	A place where people can go to die with dignity. A hospice focuses on relieving the symptoms and pain of a terminal illness.
Intelligent design	The idea that certain features of life are best explained by an intelligent cause, rather than an undirected process, such as natural selection
Liberal	Free thinking
Literal	Understanding something as it is written
Materialism	View that nothing else exists apart from matter, All we have is a human body, there is no soul
Palliative care	Care that focuses on relieving suffering and pain
Purgatory	Roman Catholic idea about where the soul goes until it has been purified and can go to heaven.
Quality of life	The extent to which life is meaningful and pleasurable
Sanctity of life	The belief that life is precious, or sacred. For many religious believers, only human life holds this special status.
Situation ethics	Judging the rightfulness or wrongness of an act on a case by case basis
Salvation	Christian idea - if you believe in Jesus he will forgive your sins and you will be saved from hell.
Soul	A spiritual aspect of a being; that which connects someone to God. The soul is often regarded as non-physical and as living on after physical death, in an afterlife.
Stewardship	To look after and care for the world; to guard over something for the real owner; carefully looking after something that is not your own; a God given responsibility to manage or control the earth.

