

Year 9 Knowledge Organizer 1—Introduction to Ethics

KEY TERMS

MORALITY is the name given to people's views on what is right and wrong. Morality can be influenced by religion, family friends, and the society that a person lives in.

ETHICS is the area of philosophy which explores the nature of morality and how moral decisions should be made

ALTRUISM is the selfless concern for the good of others.

UTILITARIANISM is the theory that the best action is the one that results in the greatest good for the greatest number of people.

ABSOLUTE MORALITY is when an action is right in all circumstances.

RELATIVE MORALITY is when the rightness of an action may depend on the circumstance.

NATURAL EVIL is when something evil happens that is not brought about by the actions of humans. **MORAL EVIL** is when evil occurs because of human actions.

FREE WILL is what Christians believe is the God given ability for us to choose our actions which may result in us choosing good or bad actions.

ETHICS AND THE LAW

The rules set by the Government to keep order in a country, which is intended to keep the peace, keep people safe and ensure people can go about their ordinary lives without fear. Are called the **LAW**.

Religions have their own set of rules or laws guiding principles and these are followed to show their religious identity and to show obedience to God. For the most part these laws do not conflict with the law of the land. In fact our legal system was based on the 10 Commandments from the Bible.

Other important religious laws are the 613 Mitzvah in the Torah, and the 5 Pillars of Islam.

[KS3 Religious Studies: L is for laws and rules - BBC Teach](#)

THE TROLLEY PROBLEM

Imagine you are standing on a railway bridge. Beneath you are five workers repairing the railway track. Either side of the track are slopes that are too steep and high to climb.

Coming around the corner is a runaway train without a driver. It is hurtling towards the workers, and they are certain to die.

Next to you is a lever. If you pull the lever, it will cause the train to divert onto a separate track and the five people will be saved.

However, there is one worker on the separate track who will be killed if you divert the train. You have two options and seconds to decide. Should you pull the lever?

NATURAL EVIL



MORAL EVIL



RELIGIOUS LAWS COMING INTO CONFLICT WITH THE LAWS OF THE LAND

Examples of religious laws into conflict with the laws of a country might be :-

Martin Luther King and the Montgomery bus boycott to break the unjust law of segregation. Christians believe humans were created by God and equal, so a law which discriminates against a group of people based on colour of skin was unjust.

Gandhi found the same situation in Apartheid South Africa at the turn of the 20th century breaking the unjust pass laws and through civil but peaceful unrest he got it changed.

Some Christians go out and preach about Jesus and giving out Bibles where such behaviour is banned such as China. Many are arrested, tortured and deported because of it.



In Iran at the moment girls and women are refusing to wear a head scarf and coming into conflict with the authorities and some have died for their belief.