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| **Key Terms** | | | **Key information** | |
| **Moral issue** | is a situation where you have to decide what is right or wrong | | **What is abortion?**  The abortion debate deals with the rights and wrongs of deliberately ending a pregnancy before normal childbirth, killing the foetus in the process.  Abortion is a very painful topic for women and men who find themselves facing the moral dilemma of whether or not to terminate a pregnancy. It's one of the most polarising moral issues - most people are on one side or the other, very few are undecided.  On one side are those who call themselves 'pro-life'. They say that intentionally caused abortion is always wrong (although it may on very rare occasions be the best thing to do).  On the other side are those who call themselves 'pro-choice' or 'supporters of abortion rights', and who regard intentional abortion as acceptable in some circumstances.  **Reasons for abortion**  Some societies ban abortion almost completely while others permit it in certain cases.  Such societies usually lay down a maximum age after which the foetus must not be aborted, regardless of the circumstances.  At various times some of the following have been allowed in some societies:   * abortion for the sake of the mother's health   + including her mental health * abortion where a pregnancy is the result of a crime   + such as crimes like rape, incest, or child abuse * abortion where the child of the pregnancy would have an ' unacceptable quality of life' such as cases where the child would have   + serious physical handicaps,   + serious genetic problems,   + serious mental defects * abortion for social reasons, including:   + poverty,   + mother unable to cope with a child (or another child),   + mother being too young to cope with a child * abortion as a matter of government policy   + as a way of regulating population size   + as a way of regulating groups within a population   + as a way of improving the population   Most opponents of abortion agree that abortion for the sake of the mother's health can be morally acceptable if there is a real risk of serious damage to the mother.  Abortion for social reasons is usually least acceptable to opponents.  **Church of England**  Individuals need to look at their own viewpoint on abortion, however the General Synod the governing body has passed resolutions, The Church of England combines strong opposition to abortion with a recognition that there can be - strictly limited - conditions under which it may be morally preferable to any available alternative.  However, it shares the Roman Catholic view  “In the light of our conviction that the foetus has the right to live and develop as a member of the human family, we see abortion, the termination of that life by the act of man, as a great moral evil. We do not believe that the right to life, as a right pertaining to persons, admits of no exceptions whatever; but the right of the innocent to life admits surely of few exceptions indeed.” Church of England Board of Social Responsibility, 1980  **Roman Catholic**  The Church says that human life begins when the woman's egg is fertilised by a male sperm.  From that moment a unique life begins, independent of the life of the mother and father. The features that distinguish us from our parents - the colour of our eyes, the shape of our face - are all laid down in the genetic code that comes into existence then.  Each new life that begins at this point is not a potential human being but a human being with potential.  “Frequently man lives as if God did not exist, and even puts himself in God's place... He claims for himself the Creator's right to interfere in the mystery of human life. Rejecting divine law and moral principles, he openly attacks the family.” Pope John Paul II, 2002 | |
| **Ethics** | is the study of morality | |
| **Morality** | is the study of right and wrong | |
| **Authority** | the power or right to give orders, make decisions, and enforce obedience. | |
| **Conscience** | an inner feeling or voice viewed as acting as a guide to the rightness or wrongness of one's behaviour: | |
| **Duty** | a task or action that someone is required to perform: | |
| **Secular** | | denoting attitudes, activities, or other things that have no religious or spiritual basis. |
| **Authoritative** | | able to be trusted as being accurate or true; reliable. |
| Sanctity of life | | The belief that life is sacred. |
| Abortion | | The termination of a fetus legal up to 24 weeks in the UK. |
| **Key teachings** | | | **Weblinks** | **Key information** |
|  | “Treat others as you want to be treated” | | <https://youtu.be/z9ZOzYQkO6U>  **Pope Francis forgives women who have abortion** |  |
|  | ‘Thou shalt not murder’ | |
|  | “Love thy neighbor” | | **Key Questions**  **What would a Christians response be to abortion?**  **Why is abortion problematic?**  **When does life begin?** |  |