



ADDITIONAL RESOURCE PACK

Euthanasia

Philosophy of Medical Ethics series

Program Support Notes by:

Laura Beilby

Teacher of Philosophy and Religion

© Classroom Video Ltd 2011

Produced by:

Classroom Video Ltd

Commissioning Editor:

Dee Powell

Reproducing these support notes

You may download and copy this resource pack for use with your classes in an educational setting only. All copyright remains the property of Classroom Video Ltd.

Producer:

Thomasina Gibson

Executive Producer:

Simon Garner B.Ed, Dip Management

To order or inquire please contact VEA:

VEA (Video Education America)

6902 Hawthorn Park Dr

Indianapolis, IN 46220

Phone: 1.866.727.0840

Fax: 1.866.727.0820

E-mail

orders@veavideo.com

Website

www.veavideo.com

For Teachers

Brief Summary of Program

This film investigates the various religious, moral and philosophical arguments surrounding Euthanasia and considers whether current UK law should be changed to make Euthanasia legal. At the heart of the ethical and religious arguments over euthanasia are the different ideas that people have of the meaning and value of human existence, and of whether human beings have the right to decide issues of life and death for themselves.

Other Background Information for Teachers

Euthanasia is the deliberate killing of a person for the benefit of that person.

In most cases euthanasia is carried out because the person who dies asks for it. A person who undergoes euthanasia is usually terminally ill, but there are other situations in which some people want euthanasia.

Euthanasia raises agonizing moral questions:

- Is it ever right for another person to end the life of a terminally ill patient who is in severe pain or enduring other suffering?
- If euthanasia is sometimes right, under what circumstances is it right?
- Is there any moral difference between killing someone and letting them die?

Curriculum Links

NQ Intermediate 1, Intermediate 2, Higher RMPS (SQA)

- Morality in the Modern World – Medical Ethics
 - Euthanasia: 'Can voluntary euthanasia be morally justified?'

NQ Advanced Higher RMPS (SQA)

- Bioethics
 - The Ending of Life- Life-support machines, Euthanasia

OCR - G572: AS Religious Ethics Applied Ethics - topics on Euthanasia, Genetic Engineering, Embryo Research, The Right to a Child.

AQA AS Unit A Religion and Ethics 1(RSS01) 4. Abortion and euthanasia

EDEXCEL - AS Unit 2: Religious Studies — Investigations Area C: The Study of Ethics Medical Ethics

AQA GCSE RELIGIOUS STUDIES Unit 3 Religion and Morality Topic 2 Religious Attitudes to the Elderly and Death

AQA GCSE RELIGIOUS STUDIES Topic 1 Religious Attitudes to Matters of Life (Medical Ethics)

OCR – GCSE - 3.22 Unit B603: Ethics (Relationships, Medical Ethics, Poverty and Wealth)

Other Useful Resources

Books

An Introduction to Philosophy and Ethics, Mel Thompson

Hodder and Stoughton, ISBN 0 340 87642 5

Beliefs, Values and Traditions, Ann Lovelace and Joy White

Heinemann, ISBN 0 435 30261 2

Contemporary Moral Issues, Joe Jenkins

Heinemann, ISBN 0 435 30309 0

Ethical Studies, Robert A Bowie

Nelson Thornes, ISBN 0 7487 5798 8

Issues of Life and Death, Michael Wilcockson

Hodder & Stoughton, ISBN 0 340 72488 9

Websites

Websites

www.bbc.co.uk/religion

www.humanism.org

www.srtp.org.uk

www.hfea.gov.uk

www.bma.org.uk

www.linacre.org/bma.html

www.bbc.co.uk/ethics/euthanasia/

For Students

Initiate Prior Learning

1) Put the word 'Euthanasia' on the board – brainstorm what pupils know about it. Try to get a definition that the class are happy with.

2) Walking Discussion Activity:

Every pupil gets a copy of the table below or copies it into their jotters. Pupils should note down their initials in the boxes according to their own opinions. Then they find another pupil in the class and talk briefly to them about number 1, get their initials in the box that shows their view, and move on. Talk to someone else about number 2. Go at least twice through the sheet; trying to get a different person for each question. After this activity class feedback on what they found out about different views in their class.

Strongly Agree \longrightarrow Strongly Disagree

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Everyone is entitled to a dignified death										
Euthanasia should be legalized										
All life is sacred because it has been created by God										
Religious people should not support Euthanasia										
We put cats and dogs down when they are suffering/dying, we should grant the same courtesy to human life										
Life is valuable only in so far as it is worth living										
How I choose to die is nobody's decision but my own										
Making Euthanasia legal would be a slippery slope to forcing old and sick people to die										
Legalizing Euthanasia would be unfair to doctors whose jobs it is to save life, not take it										
There are many ways to relieve suffering and pain which are better alternatives to Euthanasia										

Active Viewing Guide

Whilst viewing *Jay's Choice*, ask the class to consider:

1. Is it Jay's right to choose when and how he dies?
2. Do you agree with Jay's Grandfather that it is God's decision when we die, not our own?
3. Why do you think Raf is angry with Jay?
4. Should Jay keep fighting his illness even if there is little hope?
5. When is it the right time to give up on life?
6. How do you think Jay's family/girlfriend feel about his decision?
7. Is it fair for Jay to ask them to be complicit in his death?

Ask the class to answer the following questions during their viewing of the main *Euthanasia* film (answers in bold):

1. What is voluntary Euthanasia?
The patient wants to end their life and has asked to be helped to die.
2. What is the maximum sentence that could be given for assisting someone in their death?
Up to 15 years in prison.
3. How many countries in the world is euthanasia legal?
6 places – Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg and Switzerland, Oregon and Michigan in the USA.
4. Where in the world can you go for assisted suicide if you are not a national of the country?
Dignitas or Ex International in Switzerland
5. What is palliative care?
Any form of medical care or treatment that concentrates on reducing the severity of disease symptoms, rather than striving to halt, delay, or reverse progression of the disease itself or provide a cure.

You may also like to ask the class to complete a table similar to the following whilst watching the program:

Arguments for Euthanasia (Religious/Secular)	Arguments against Euthanasia (Religious/Secular)

Extension Activities

1) Euthanasia Discussion

Divide students into two groups, A and B. Members of group A get a list of questions to ask members of group B, and vice versa.

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- 1) What comes to mind when you hear the word 'euthanasia'?
- 2) What is the legal status of euthanasia in your country?
- 3) Do you agree with euthanasia?
- 4) Do you understand why people choose euthanasia to end their life?
- 5) The Ancient Greek for euthanasia is 'good death'. What do you think of this meaning?
- 6) 'Passive euthanasia' is where somebody refuses medication knowing they will die without it. Do you think this is OK?
- 7) 'Non-aggressive euthanasia' is where life support systems keeping someone alive are switched off. What do you think of this?
- 8) 'Aggressive euthanasia' is where lethal substances are used to kill someone who wants to die. What do you think of this?
- 9) What do you understand by the terms 'mercy killing' and 'assisted suicide'?
- 10) Do you know any famous cases of euthanasia?

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- 1) What is the difference between euthanasia and suicide?
- 2) Is there a difference between euthanasia and murder?
- 3) Does a family member or a doctor have the right to turn off a life support machine?
- 4) How long should doctors keep someone alive who is brain dead?
- 5) What does your religion say about euthanasia?
- 6) Don't you think doctors have a duty to keep people alive?
- 7) Is euthanasia a compassionate way for the dying to die?
- 8) Do governments have the right to keep suffering people alive?
- 9) Why not allow euthanasia to save on health care costs?
- 10) Do people have a right to die?

2) Class Debate: Euthanasia should be legalized.

The class should be divided into two teams, for and against the motion. Teams work to prepare arguments for their side and appoint 3/4 speakers for their team. Non-speakers can prepare questions to ask the opposing teams speakers. The following webpage has a very useful summary of the points for and against the issue.

http://www.idebate.org/debatabase/topic_details.php?topicID=55

3) Discussion Panel

4/5 pupils are given different roles to take in a discussion panel on the topic of Euthanasia, e.g.:

Member of the Catholic Church

Member of the Humanist Society

A doctor

A nurse from a palliative care hospice

Someone suffering from a degenerative disease, such as, Parkinson's or Motor Neurone Disease

Those who are part of the discussion panel should research their position and take notes on what they might believe on Euthanasia. The rest of the class to make up a list of questions for the panel. Class asks panel members questions about euthanasia and the panel members answer according to the role they have been given.