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| **Strands** | Christian Ethics and Ethical Theory; Faith in Action, Actions leading to Faith | | | |
| **Stage of Development** | Primary (Years 4-6) | **Created** May 2021 | | **Review** 2025 |
| **Aim** | This unit aims to introduce students to the concept of ethics. It looks at two case studies: the environment and human rights and considers how a Christian ethic may be help us respond to both areas. There is room to add school-based service learning or social action onto the end of this unit. | | | |
| **Content Descriptions** | **Knowledge and Understanding**   * Basic ethical frameworks * Relevance of ethical thinking in our response to environmental concerns and human rights violations * A framework for a Christian ethic | | **Religious Studies Skills & Virtues**   * Concept cracking * Critical thinking | |
| **Resources** | International Justice Mission  www.ijm.org.au | | IJM works collaboratively with local partners overseas to create justice system transformation. Good case study for Human Rights. | | |
| Amnesty International  [www.amnesty.org.au](http://www.amnesty.org.au/) | | Has some great case studies for Human Rights. The UK version of this site has lesson plans for primary aged children. | | |
| Planet Earth videos | | Parts of this series may be helpful for students to grasp how amazing and important our environment is. Several clips are available on YouTube. | | |

| **Lesson** | | **Key Questions** | **Lesson Activity Ideas** | | **Resources** |
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| **1** | Ethics | What are ethics?  What is a world view?  What is the relationship between a world view and ethics? | 10min  15min  20min | Activity: Hand each student a piece of paper and ask them to write down the worst classroom behaviour they can think off. Read the answers out to the class and vote on which one the students think is the worst. Explain that ethics is a word that represents how we describe what is right and wrong. Ask the students to come up with examples of where they might make ethical decisions in their everyday lives.  Activity: make up a few different bowls of water with food dye mixed in. Ask for student volunteers to hold the corner of a piece of paper towel in the bowls. Explain that there are different ways of making ethical decisions e.g. someone may think it is okay to jaywalk and another person may think it is wrong. Explain that our ‘ethic’ is influenced by our communities, our experiences, our families, our schools, our friends etc. Just like the paper towel was ‘influenced’ by the different colours. But we can also make choices about the ethic we adopt and grow in our ability to make ethical decisions. This unit might even help students to do this!  PowerPoint: Worldviews. | Small piece of paper for every student.  Bowls, water, paper towel, food dye  Every student could have a go at this activity if you have time.  PowerPoint: Worldviews |
| **2** | The Environment | What is the environment?  Does God care about the environment? | 15min  10min  10min  10min | Watch: The Trailer for Planet Earth II or something similar <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c8aFcHFu8QM> (2min 46sec). Ask the students each to share something they found amazing in the video. Define environment (physical surroundings on earth).  Activities: As a class develop a list of different possible responses to the environment e.g. I think it is important that we do not chop down any trees. Get students to rank these responses along a line from ‘don’t care’ at one end to ‘care deeply’ at the other end. Ask students to consider where they would place themselves along the line.  Read: The creation Story from a Children’s Bible. Discuss what we learn about God’s attitude to the environment for this story? (God made the world and declared it ‘very good’).  Activity: Put an image from a Children’s Bible or something similar that shows the different things God made in the creation story. Play a game of eye spy with the picture. | Video: [Plant Earth II Trailer](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c8aFcHFu8QM)  Children’s Bible |
| 3 | Environmental Ethics | How can the Christian faith help us make ethical decisions about the environment? | 15min  30min | Activity: Use magnifying glasses to look at something from nature. Discuss how the magnifying glass changes our perspective or how we see the object. Explain that Christians believe their faith changes their perspective about important ethical issues.  PowerPoint: Understanding the Christian ethic and the environment  Worksheet: Ethical approaches to the environment | Magnifying glass, objects  PowerPoint: The Environment  Worksheet: Environmental Ethics |
| 4 | Human Rights | What are human rights?  Does God agree with human rights? | 10min  20min  15min | Brainstorm: what are rights? Brainstorm students’ existing knowledge of the concept of ‘rights’. Consider the multiple meanings for the word (e.g. ‘correct’, ‘opposite of left’ or ‘just’). Consider common expressions like ‘We’re within our rights’ or ‘You have no right to say that.’ Provide students with the Oxford Dictionary definition of a ‘right’: ‘A moral or legal entitlement to have or do something’. What are human rights? Explain that human rights are the rights granted to us by the international legal system because we are human beings. They belong to all of us, regardless of who we are or where we live, and they cannot be taken away by laws in individual countries.  Activity: Break the students into small groups and ask them to imagine the situation described and complete the task following. You have found yourself on a deserted island with an old man, a young girl, six babies under 1 years old and a teenage boy with a significant physical disability.   * What will the people on the island need? * What rights would you give to the people on the island? e.g. right to food.   Templates: Made in God’s Image. Psalm 68:5-6a and Genesis 1:27. Discuss with the students what they think these verses mean. “The people no one else thinks are important have a special place in God’s heart. He hears their cries. He fights for them. He defends them” (Sally Lloyd-Jones Thoughts to Make your Heart Sing p 70). The Christian ethic attaches value and dignity to every human because we are made in God’s image. Human Rights protect elements of this value and dignity. Students select a template each and colour it in. Class teacher places a circle of string on the ground. Each student places their template inside the circle and the class discuss how ALL humans are made in God’s image. | Template Printouts: Made in God’s Image |
| **5** | The Christian Ethic and Human Rights | What are some examples of human rights?  How could a Christian ethic shape our response to human rights violations? | 15min  30min | Read: The story of the Israelites in Egypt (Exodus 1). Discuss what it would be like to be a slave. Write a list of the rights that the students enjoy that the slaves (the Israelites) did not have in the Exodus story. Discuss what it would have felt like to be a slave in Egypt.  PowerPoint: Human Rights and a Christian Ethic.  Extension: research and learn about a Christian organisation that works to protect and uphold human rights e.g. International Justice Mission. | Bible  PowerPoint: Human Rights |