

**Sample Material : Cover with summary of aims:
Contents pages and lesson One.**

Return to the Island.
***A role play, set on the Island, for
teaching moral Issues***

For key stages three, four or five

In this story, which begins ten years after the shipwreck, members of Lesley's family are facing problems. In this story told over eight episodes, pupils in role as the Island council, hear each character speak about the issues and dilemmas they face. The council debates through a series of structured question and discussion activities to reach their conclusions about what they should do.

This course designed to motivate, engage and challenge pupils preparing for GCSE moral issues papers, also invites pupils to consider the answers from the point of view of the absolutist theist, the situationist theist and the rationalist atheist.

A summary of Christian teaching on each moral issue is provided together with a structured essay to support GCSE. Although this unit of work is designed to be used as a stimulus and preparation for the detailed and specific work taught for the examination, It can be adapted to support the teaching of any religious tradition and for any secondary age range or ability.

Contents

Introduction - what this unit is about, how it helps pupils develop values while preparing for an examination. Using active experiential and critical thinking Teaching methods . A summary of the three main moral viewpoints needed to answer a GCSE religious studies paper on moral issues, Absolutist (Theist) Situationist (Theist) Rationalist (Atheist)

Episode One: The Story Begins

- Matters of life and Death. Lesley's fathers' story. Lesley's father speaks.
- The class in role as the Island council :Discussion activities.
- Introducing the wild card – does this piece of information make a difference ?
- A summary of Christian teaching on Matters of life and death
- An essay on Matters of life and death to support GCSE

Episode Two: Marriage and Divorce

1. Lesley's mother's story. Lesley's mother speaks.
 2. The class in role as the Island council: Discussion activities
 3. Introducing the wild card – does this piece of information change our minds?
 4. The class in role as the council : What conclusion do they reach?
- A summary of Christian teaching on Marriage and divorce
 - An essay on Marriage and divorce to support GCSE

Episode Three and Four : Euthanasia and Abortion

1. Lesley's mothers dilemma
- The class in role as the council: Discussion activities
 - Introducing the wild card - does this piece of information change our minds?
 - Suggestions for further activities on Abortion and Euthanasia
 - The class in role as the council: What do they conclude?
 - An essay on Abortion and Euthanasia to support GCSE

Episode Five : Wealth poverty and inequality

1. Christopher's story
- Activities and statistics for exploring poverty (see appendix)

- Suggestions for further work on wealth and poverty
- The class in role as the Island council: Discussion activities
- A summary of Christian teaching on wealth and poverty
- An essay on wealth and poverty to support GCSE

Episode Six : Prejudice and Discrimination

1. Tim's story. Tim speaks
 2. Key word activity
 3. The class in role as the Island council .Discussion activities
- A summary of Christian teaching on Prejudice and discrimination
 - An essay on prejudice and discrimination to support GCSE

Episode Seven: The Environment.

- Christopher's story continues. Christopher speaks.
- The class in role as the Island council: discussion activities
- A summary of Christian teaching on the Environment
- An essay on the environment to support GCSE

Episode Eight : Equality , Sexism and Women Priests

- Sarah's story. Sarah speaks
- The class in role as the Island council. Discussion activities
- A summary of Christian teaching on women priests

Appendices

- How to use Reading Rabbits
- How to Create Caterpillar Essays
- How to hold traffic light discussions
- Facts and statistics about world poverty.

Lesson One: Matters of life and Death

Setting the scene and the first situation

- **The class enter the circle to ocean music with a display of the Island.**
- **On the board or washing line will be the keywords.**
- **Also on the board or washing line printed on an A3 poster should be the religious text that will be under discussion. (These appear, with the keywords, at the end of the chapter for you to copy and enlarge)**

Fade the music and begin the story

Setting the scene

Today we are going right back in time to the very early days on the Island. We are going to meet some of the characters and explore some of the difficult issues that faced them in the early days. As we hear their stories we will imagine that we are the council round the fire deciding what must be done.

Soon after the community settled on the Island they discovered that there was a need for moral rules . A necklace given to baby Lesley at his welcoming ceremony disappeared and one of the community was suspected of stealing it .

Ten years on the rules they make are still very much influenced by the society they came from

Some members of their society believed that moral rules came from God. This gave them a very special authority. To break them was to disobey God who was omnipotent which means all powerful . he is also omniscient. Which means all knowing These people are **religious absolutists**.

Absolutists believe the rules were revealed to special humans by God at different times all over the world and passed on to the people through special teachers and priests.

Some people in those communities believed that the laws meant exactly what they said and could not be changed. Sometimes it was tough to obey God's will but doing the right thing was the only way the society could thrive and live in peace.

Many of these people believed that at the end of their period of time on earth that they would become spiritual beings and live in the next world, but first they would be judged and need to account for the way they behaved on earth. God had made the way clear through the scriptures given to humans through special people. It was not up to individuals to decide what to do. Their task was to obey God, the creator who is omniscient, however hard it might seem at times.

Others of them believed something different. They believed that humans *interpreted* the signs that God left them in the world. They interpreted the signs gradually as they advanced in knowledge and became ready to understand.

This interpretation was often made by human beings but they were not perfect. They believed that humans therefore had to interpret the message for themselves using the principles of the scriptures, the spirit of the message, not the letter. They are **situationists** .

They believe that they should use their God given intelligence for this .This meant that they felt able to move with the times in deciding what was right and wrong. This also was not easy and presented big problems and much heartache in deciding what to do.

Others did not believe in God at all. They believed that knowing the right way to live was based on human intelligence and reason. They are **atheist rationalists**. They had a variety of principles they lived by . They believed in human rights , principles that could be appealed to when they felt an injustice had been done. They balanced this between the principle of utilitarianism or usefulness, the greatest good for the greatest number and the needs of the individual. For example ,they valued tolerance, respecting the right of humans to freedom of speech and belief , but they also used the harm principle to decide when that freedom needed to be stopped to protect others.

Everyone on the Island is likely to belong to one of these groups. Where do you think you will stand ? Let's see ..

The community have been on the Island for ten years. We are going to look back on the life of our honeymoon couple. Lesley's parents. We left them relieved and happy welcoming Lesley with the whole community to the Island .Ten years on there are problems.

The Story begins : Lesley's father

Lesley's father has not adapted to life on the Island unlike his lively sociable wife. He was a computer scientist in England. He was just about to take up a post at Oxford university to research artificial intelligence . On the Island, with no technology and few books he feels useless. He has become increasingly withdrawn and depressed. There are no drugs to treat him. The doctor has done his best to help him through talking, but he has made a number of attempts on his life. He does this through sailing out to sea at night and jumping overboard. Islanders take it in turns to keep watch at night and sometimes have risked their own lives to rescue him. He is a drain on the community.

Lesley's father speaks.

"Why don't you all just leave me alone ? Can you not see what it is like for me ? I am in hell, condemned to a life of useless existence. I am not a practical man . I do not enjoy making huts and fires and trying to plant crops. I am so bored , so very, very bored.

I have nothing to read, nothing to challenge or stimulate me . I have no computer, not even any electricity. There is nothing for me to think about , nothing to develop or invent .There is no paper left and few pens still work. If I were to write something who would there be to read it , what would be the point? I am going mad. I see no hope of it ever changing. I just lie here every day on my bed and sleep.

Every time I wake up the nightmare begins again. My life has gone . There is no meaningful existence left . I just want to be left alone to end it . I believe it is my right to choose to end my life when I wish. I am no use to you all, why do you try to stop me ?

1. What impact are his feelings having on the rest of you ?
2. What do you *want* to do about this ?
3. What do you *think* you should do?
4. What would the rationalist , absolutist and situationist do ?

Wild card

Would it make a difference if it was one of the elders who was asking to die ? Aged eighty, one of them is suffering from cancer .There is no pain relief on the island and he wishes to be helped to kill himself by drowning.

Plenary:

Traffic lights discussion

1. Lesley's father's situation is his own fault
2. Lesley's father is being selfish
 - Given time he will get used to his situation
 - Lesley's father deserves the islander's sympathy
 - Lesley's father should put up with the situation for the sake of his family
 - He has the right to do what he wishes with his own life
 - To help anyone to die is murder and would be wrong
 - Modern medical advances make the situation requiring Euthanasia different
 - People have the right to end their own lives
 - The Church is right to oppose Euthanasia

Caterpillar essay to support GCSE

1.What is the scriptural passage this situation is based on ?
(2 marks)

2.What is the absolutist and situationist view of Suicide and Euthanasia?
(5 marks)

3.What principles does the atheist rationalist base their views on?
What would they say the Islanders should do
(5 marks)

5. "A person who wishes to take their own life should be left to get on with it. It is nothing to do with anyone else" Discuss giving different points of view.
(5 marks)

Absolutist (Theist)
Situationist (Theist)
Rationalist (Atheist)

Omniscient
Omnipotent

Propositional
Revelation - Revelation
downwards

Non Propositional
Revelation – revelation
upwards

“God is the giver and taker of life, only He has the right to take it away”

Catholics believe that people should not interfere with this process by

- Using contraception
- Artificial insemination by a donor
- Suicide
- Euthanasia

What happens is part of God’s plan for them

Humans should respond lovingly to the challenges of life including suffering and pain. They should not prevent the creation of life or show lack of faith in God through suicide or euthanasia.

All people can be helped through anything by the love and support of their community

Protestants believe that intelligence is a gift from God. Science and medicine should be used to improve the quality of life but with responsibility

Protestants weigh up the principles of preserving life at all costs against Jesus’ teaching on love and forgiveness. Protestants allow abortion and contraception and respond sympathetically to suicide and euthanasia