

Year 5: Why should people with religious faith care about the environment?

Christianity: The Creation

God created the Universe. There are two stories about how God created it which are found at the beginning of the book of Genesis in the Bible.



Stewardship

Christians believe that God appointed human beings to be in charge of what he created and to care for the world as responsible custodians.

God said, *'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.'* (Genesis 1:26)

Many Christians understand this as evidence that humans have **dominion** over God's creation. This could suggest that humans have the power to use the world and its resources as they like, but it does not mean that humanity should exploit the Earth's resources.

This teaching suggests that humanity's purpose is to look after the world that God has created. This is known as **stewardship**.

Buddhism

To some Buddhists, living **'skilfully'** means to live without producing waste. The whole world benefits from avoiding needless exploitation.



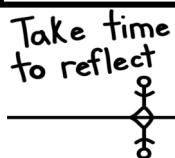
Karma

If a person has the right mindset, Buddhists believe that the actions they perform will be beneficial, not just to themselves, but to the whole world, including the **environment**. They believe our actions affect the planet in a harmful way because we are selfish and we crave things. These actions will only result in more suffering in the future.



Venerable Thich Nhat Hanh said, *"In order to effect change we must recover ourselves, one must be whole. Since this requires the kind of environment favourable to one's healing, one must seek the kind of lifestyle that is free from the destruction of one's humanness."*

Most Buddhists believe that people need to live simply and respect the cycle and balance in nature so that everything can continue for future generations.



How do you take care of the environment?



Vocabulary

compassion	To show sympathy, pity and concern.
creation	To make something new.
dominion	To have control.
environment	The air, water and land in or on which people, animals and plants live.
impact	The effect an action has.
moral development	To have an understanding of right and wrong.
stewardship	To take care of something, such as the environment, an organisation or property.



stewardship

Islam: The Creation

All religions believe in respect for creation and the environment. Many Muslims believe that human beings have the role of **guardianship or khilafah** of the planet.

One of the central pillars of Islam is **Tawhid**. This concept of oneness is reflected in **Allah's** creation. Human beings and nature form one whole that humans must preserve:

Allah created the earth and all that is in it, including animals and its resources - it is people's heritage.
Qur'an, 6:165; 2:256-7

Most Muslims believe that Allah has given **reason** to humans. Humans must use this gift in their **stewardship** of creation:

...greater indeed than the creation of man is the creation of the heavens and the earth.
Qur'an 40:57



CRC Article 14: All children have the right to their own religion.

