



**What is This?**

**Looking at Life**  
in the **Womb**  
Teen Edition

TEACHER GUIDE

# Looking <sup>at</sup> Life in the Womb

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## Introduction

“What is this?” That might seem like a strange question to you. It might seem so completely obvious that it’s not even worth talking about. “Duh, it’s a baby,” you might say. “My parents have a picture like that of me in my baby album, and pictures like that of my brothers and sisters, too. That’s what a baby looks like before he or she is born.”

On the other hand, maybe your answer is very different. When you see the picture above, you might say instead, “I see a fetus, not a baby.” Maybe you’re thinking, “I see a blob of tissue, I see a part of a woman’s body, but I don’t see a baby. Babies don’t exist until they are born.”

So which is correct? In reality, what is this? That’s the question that we are going to seek to answer in the course ahead of us, and it’s a very important question. Blobs of tissue are just blobs of tissue, and it doesn’t matter too much what happens to them; but babies are people. Babies have rights. Babies need to be loved and cared for, and we should not hurt them.

This course is made up of six modules. Each module will help you think about and answer the question “What is this?” from a different perspective — a scientific perspective, a visual perspective, a logical perspective, a historical perspective, and a theological perspective. By the end, you should be able to form a very clear and well-reasoned answer to the question, “What is this?” Here’s our plan:

### What Is This?

**Module 1:** What Does Human Development Say?

**Module 2:** What Does the Ultrasound Say?

**Module 3:** What Does Scientific Reasoning Say?

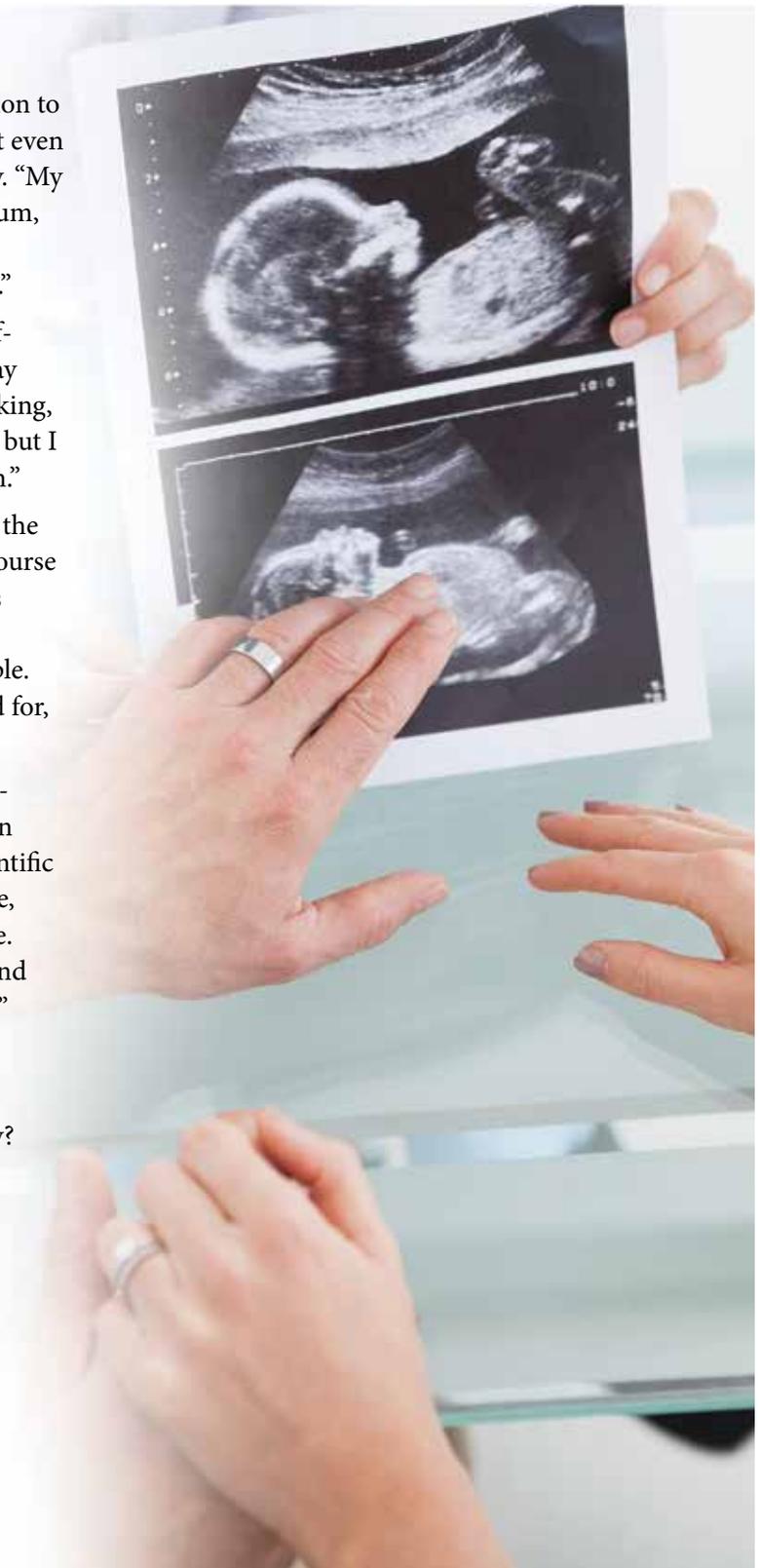
**Module 4:** What Does History Say?

**Module 5:** What Does the Word of God Say?

**Module 6:** What Do You Say?

## Let’s get started!

**Digital versions** of the teacher and student guides, as well as the “Looking at Life in the Womb” videos, are available free of charge on [LCMSlife.org](http://LCMSlife.org).



## Teacher Guide

The Ultrasound Education Project *What is This?* brings the miracle and sanctity of human life into your middle- or high-school classroom through the use of ultrasound technology. Learners will understand that pregnancy, even in its earliest stages, always involves a new human being – a life worth protecting and defending. The content and activities in this unit have been aligned with the Common Core State Standards and other recognized national academic standards.

Through the use of high-quality film and an age-appropriate teaching curriculum, the reality that the pre-born are human beings will be evident. By the end of the unit, learners will understand that pregnancy, even in its earliest stages, always involves a new human being – a life worth protecting and defending.

Ultrasound is proven to be the most effective means of providing education about prenatal development and unborn life. Not only this, but it is also the most valuable tool in the cause to eliminate abortions across our nation. This is because the very sight of a beating heart or a flailing limb of a baby in the womb is enough to convince observers of the humanity of the unborn. For this reason real ultrasounds, provided by volunteers, have been chosen to be at the heart of this unit. The curriculum surrounding these ultrasounds has been developed to enhance their inherent effectiveness.

This unit is comprised of six modules. The basic lesson in each module will require an hour of class time, but each module will also provide additional, optional activities that could require up to an additional hour, for a total of two hours per module. Thus you could cover all six units in as little as six hours, or as much as twelve hours, depending on the time available. Additionally, the curriculum will still be coherent even if some modules (i.e., 4 and 5) are skipped entirely. The goal is to give you maximum flexibility.

The entire curriculum is centered on the simple question, “What is this?” The six modules each investigate the answer to the question from a particular perspective.

### What Is This?

**Module 1:** What Does Human Development Say?

**Module 2:** What Does the Ultrasound Say?

**Module 3:** What Does Scientific Reasoning Say?

**Module 4:** What Does History Say?

**Module 5:** What Does the Word of God Say?

**Module 6:** What Do You Say?

Modules 1 through 4 will be intentionally secular in nature and would be appropriate for use in both public and Christian schools. Module 4, though it will discuss Christianity, will do so only from a historical perspective, simply demonstrating the fact that Christianity effected a radical change in the morality of the Western world in the early centuries A.D. Module 6 will be a culminating exercise that could be either Christian or secular, depending on whether you incorporate module 5, which is the only module that is explicitly Christian.

Please note: All of the sections that have a blue line are not included in the student edition.

### Vocabulary:

To assist with the implementation of this unit, the following vocabulary words will be helpful for the students to know. Some of these are introduced within the context of the module itself.

**womb** – uterus

**zygote** – fertilized egg; single-celled (in the first week)

**embryo** – after zygote starts to multiply (2 – 7 weeks)

**fetus** – baby that has all major parts, is at least eight weeks old and is in the mother’s womb

**conception** – fertilization of an egg by the sperm

**trimester** – three month period

**gestational age** – measure of the baby’s age starting from the time of the mother’s last menstrual period

**ultrasound** – medical imaging of a baby using sound waves

**sonographer** – medical person who performs the ultrasound

**argumentation** – systematic reasoning based on scientific evidence

**eugenics** – study improving the human race by selective breeding

**incarnation** – the embodiment of a deity in human flesh

**project cycle** – stages a project goes through from the inception of the idea through evaluation of its value

**project-based learning** – instructional approach to learning that occurs as the result of utilizing projects

**service learning** – learning that occurs as the result of integrating formal instruction with community service

### Materials:

picture cards, presentation slides, ruler, string, (optional: modeling materials), ultrasound video ([lcmsslife.org/resource/looking-at-life-in-the-womb-teen-edition/](http://lcmsslife.org/resource/looking-at-life-in-the-womb-teen-edition/)), Power Points, Student Recording Sheets



# Module 1:

## What Does Human Development Say?

**Objective:** Explore human growth and development from conception through adulthood and understand the changing characteristics and the timeline in which they occur.

**Materials:** picture cards, presentation slides, ruler, string, Power Point, Student Recording Sheets 1A and 1B, (optional: modeling materials)

**Vocabulary:** womb, conception, zygote, embryo, fetus, trimester

When scientists conduct research, they often make a claim, gather evidence, analyze the information, and communicate a conclusion based on their findings. In these first three modules you will look at the scientific evidence for human development and use this to support your own conclusion as you answer, “What is this?”

Let’s begin ...

## Part I – Identification of the Images

You will start by looking at some images from Mayo Clinic<sup>1</sup>, a well-known and respected medical facility. As you look at each slide, answer these questions for yourself: What is it, and why do you think so? Write your ideas on the Student Recording Sheet 1A.

<sup>1</sup> Images from: Mayo Clinic Healthy Lifestyle: “Pregnancy Week by Week, Fetal Development: The 1st Trimester”, Mayo Clinic, Accessed 13 January 2015 [mayoclinic.org/healthy-living/pregnancy-week-by-week/in-depth/prenatal-care/art-20045302](http://mayoclinic.org/healthy-living/pregnancy-week-by-week/in-depth/prenatal-care/art-20045302)  
“Pregnancy Week by Week, Fetal Development: The 2nd Trimester”, Mayo Clinic, Accessed 13 January 2015 [mayoclinic.org/healthy-living/pregnancy-week-by-week/in-depth/fetal-development/art-20046151](http://mayoclinic.org/healthy-living/pregnancy-week-by-week/in-depth/fetal-development/art-20046151)  
“Pregnancy Week by Week, Fetal Development: The 3rd Trimester”, Mayo Clinic, Accessed 13 January 2015 [mayoclinic.org/healthy-living/pregnancy-week-by-week/in-depth/fetal-development/art-20045997](http://mayoclinic.org/healthy-living/pregnancy-week-by-week/in-depth/fetal-development/art-20045997)

MODULE 1 - Student Recording Sheet 1A

Slide	What is it?	Why do you think so?
A		
B		
C		
D		
E		
F		
G		

At which point in the slides did the images become recognizable? \_\_\_\_\_

How old do you think the image in this slide is? \_\_\_\_\_

## Question Prompt:

### At what stage can learners identify a human being?

Show students the Power Point of images, one at a time, allowing them time to record their observations. As students look at each picture, at some point they should be able to identify the picture as a human being. Have them note at which point they made this determination (What is it?) and what characteristics allowed them to do so (Why do you think so?). Most students will identify the image as a human being by Slide D (5 weeks) or Slide E (6 weeks). [Note: These are actual ages of the baby based on conception, not the often reported gestational age.]

## Part II – Age of the Images (Conception through Birth)

Now that you have identified the images as that of a human being, see how well you can identify ages of human growth from conception through birth. For the baby images from conception through birth, try to predict the age of each image. Think about the criteria that you are using to justify your predicted age of each image, and write these on Student Recording Sheet 1B. As you predict an age, place the image on a timeline. Make sure that you create your timeline first, and then drop your images on it at the appropriate places. You will then be given the actual ages and allowed to reposition the images on the timeline, as necessary.

Compare your predicted ages to the actual ages. How close were they? Why do you think this was so?

How much time is there between each of the pictures? Why do you think the pictures were provided at these time intervals?

Images of a human being from conception through birth are provided. These images can be printed and the students can be provided with the images on cards, allowing them to physically sequence them. Alternatively, the images can be supplied electronically and the students allowed to manipulate them as such.

This activity can be done individually and/or as a group activity. Giving students the time to sequence and estimate age by themselves first encourages individual thinking. The subsequent group discussion

leads to better understanding as students defend their ideas and consider those of others.

If digital images are being used, and it is desired to incorporate technology, web-based timeline programs such as

Timeline ([readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/student-interactives/timeline-30007.html](http://readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/student-interactives/timeline-30007.html)),

Timeglider ([timeglider.com](http://timeglider.com)), or timeline apps such as Popplet (lite) can be used to create the timeline using graphics (supplied images) and text.

After the students have completed the timeline, give them the actual ages (provided in the Power Point). Allow them time to compare their predicted ages with the actual ages of the images and to make any necessary adjustments on their timelines.

## Question Prompt:

How close were your predictions to the actual ages? Why do you think you observed the difference that you did? What criteria did you use when determining the age of the images?

Students should offer a variety of reasons for their thinking.

## Question Prompt:

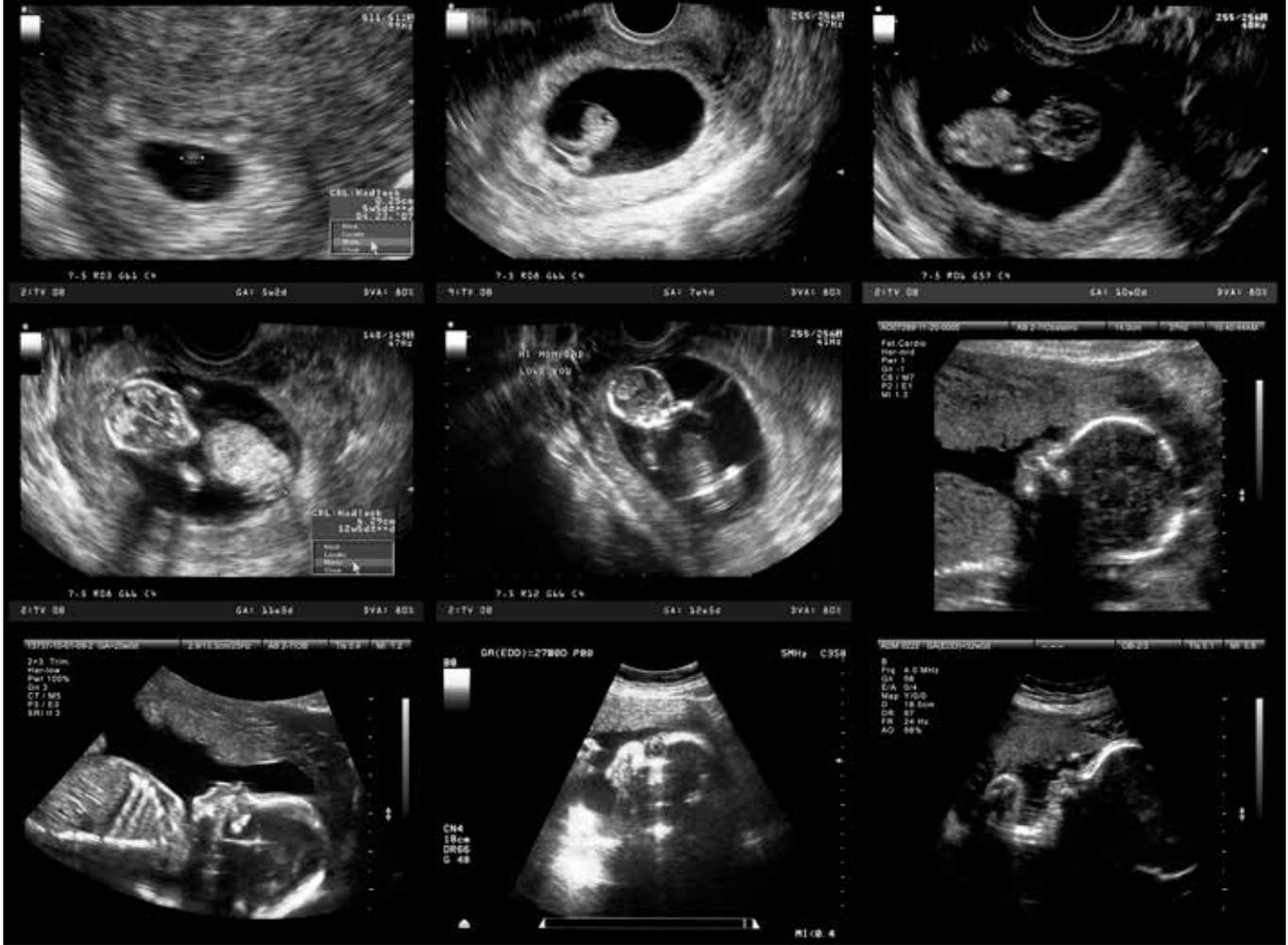
Why do pictures appear weekly until 8 weeks and then jump to longer time intervals between pictures as the age increases?

Much more development occurs in the earlier weeks than in the later weeks and at a faster pace. Therefore, there is much more of a difference from one week to another in the early weeks of growth and development than there is in later weeks.

If time allows ...

Now that you have sequenced the images of the baby for each of your early images, investigate how quickly the baby actually grows in length during its early weeks. Refer to the Interactive Prenatal Development Timeline on [EHD.org](http://EHD.org)<sup>2</sup> for help with determining baby lengths at multiple points of gestation. Use a ruler to cut pieces of string to represent the length of the baby during these weeks of growth. What do you notice about the growth rate of the baby?

<sup>2</sup> Measurements can be found at [ehd.org/science\\_main.php?level=b&submit1.x=48&submit1.y=9&ops=&re=on&L1=1&L2=0](http://ehd.org/science_main.php?level=b&submit1.x=48&submit1.y=9&ops=&re=on&L1=1&L2=0).



## Part III – Extending the Age of the Images (Birth through Adult)

You will continue adding images from birth through adulthood to your timeline. Take, collect, or use twelve pictures of random people at various ages and doing different activities. Assign a letter to each person in order of increasing age, beginning with “O.” Predict the age of each person, and record the criteria that you used to determine their age. (Note: You may or may not be able to obtain the actual ages.)

Discuss with a partner how you determined the age for each person that you did.

For more engagement, an assignment can be given in advance for students to take pictures or bring in pictures of people at different ages doing various activities. However, if preferred, the teacher may supply these pictures for the students. Students should not use pictures of people they know for this activity, as this will bias their age predictions. However, students may take/bring in pictures of people they know for use by other students who do not know these people.

Students should notice that the process they use to determine the age of these images was similar to the process that they used for determining the age of the images prior to birth. They likely used specific criteria for both size (growth) and activity (development) to evaluate the ages of the images.

Add these new images to your timeline. As you look at your timeline from conception through adulthood, what do you notice about the growth and development rate for human beings?

In continuation, students should notice that the rate at which humans grow and develop levels off as they get older. The expected outcome of this activity, which will be applied in Module 3, is the realization that there is no specific age at which the image suddenly becomes a human being. The images have human characteristics from conception that rapidly develop and grow, then ease with time.

CONCEPTION			
Image	Predicted Age	Justification Criteria	Actual Age
A			
B			
C			
D			
E			
F			
G			
H			
I			
J			
K			
L			
M			

Image	Predicted Age	Justification Criteria	Actual Age
N			
O			
P			
Q			
R			
S			
T			
U			
V			
W			
X			
Y			
Z			

MODULE 1 - Student Recording Sheet 1B - Teacher

Image	Predicted Age	Justification Criteria	Actual Age	Length
A			1-2 weeks	
B			3 weeks	
C			4 weeks	
D			5 weeks	
E			6 weeks	
F			7 weeks	
G			8 weeks	
H			10 weeks	
I			14 weeks	
J			19 weeks	
K			23 weeks	
L			27 weeks	
M			31 weeks	
N			38 weeks	

## Module 1: Additional Activities

### Math Extension – Age/Weight/Height Relationships (Human Growth)

Have students find the data for average height of human beings at different stages, from conception through adulthood, using the data found on EHD.org.<sup>3</sup> Have students first predict the shape of the curves when graphing age vs. height and/or weight. Then have students actually graph the data and describe the shape of the curves. These graphs can be created by hand or using a technology tool such as a graphing calculator or graphing website. Students should be able to identify a hyperbolic relationship showing that height and weight initially increase rapidly with age and then taper off.

### Art Extension – Modeling (Human Growth)

Using the height (length) data that they obtained in the previous section, ask students to create models to scale using clay or other suitable media. This will provide students with a visual representation of how quickly human growth occurs.

### Science/ELA Extension – Developmental Stages (Human Development)

Have students either individually or in groups research stages of human development based on the pictures in the sequencing activity. Have them identify the developing abilities of humans at the various ages and report/present on these to each other. This should allow students to recognize the initial rapid increase of human capability that levels off with age.

### Resources:

Endowment for Human Development:

[ehd.org/index.php](http://ehd.org/index.php)

Mayo Clinic Human Development:

[mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle](http://mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle)

[lozierinstitute.org/voyage/](http://lozierinstitute.org/voyage/)

<sup>3</sup> [ehd.org/science\\_main.php?level=b&submit1.x=48&submit1.v=9&ops=&re=on&L1=1](http://ehd.org/science_main.php?level=b&submit1.x=48&submit1.v=9&ops=&re=on&L1=1)



## Module 2:

### What Does the Ultrasound Say?

**Objective:** Examine the “live” growth and development of a human being.

**Materials:** ultrasound video ([lcmslife.org/resource/looking-at-life-in-the-womb-teen-edition/](http://lcmslife.org/resource/looking-at-life-in-the-womb-teen-edition/)), Student Recording Sheet 2A

**Vocabulary:** ultrasound, sonographer, trimester

Now that you have studied pictures of the growing baby and appreciate the rate at which the growth occurs in the developing human being, it is time to see this happening in real time. Wonderful technology, the ultrasound, allows us to see the baby developing and moving inside its mother’s womb. These “pictures” are obtained by bouncing high-frequency sound waves through the mother’s womb and off of the baby, creating an image.

As you watch the ultrasound of a real baby, what can you see?

Encourage students to share their discoveries from the ultrasound viewing with partners, in small groups, or as a class, as appropriate. Listen for common insights, and use these to summarize this module. Expected comments may include, “I did not expect the baby to move so much,” “I did not expect to see fingers and toes on the baby,” and/or “I didn’t expect the baby to look so much like a baby.”

### Module 2: Additional Activities

#### The Life of a Developing Baby

Have students create a first-person story from the perspective of a developing baby in its mother’s womb. This can be done by writing or using storyboard technology (web or app based).

Ultrasound — What Can You See?	
<b>First Trimester:</b>	
<b>Second Trimester:</b>	
<b>Third Trimester:</b>	
<b>What I know now that I didn't know before I saw this ultrasound:</b>	



## Module 3:

### What Does Scientific Reasoning Say?

**Objective:** Reflect metacognitively and communicate on when life begins through the process of scientific argumentation, using evidence to support your reasoning.

**Materials:** Student Recording Sheets 3A and 3B

**Vocabulary:** ultrasound, sonographer, trimester

We have spent the last two modules looking at the growth and development of a human being from conception through adulthood. Our country's governance is based on the rights of human beings. It is significant, therefore, to determine when a human being is considered as such. Your assignment is to look at the scientific evidence you have gathered and make this determination.

#### Definition Study

First, make sure that you clarify and understand the definitions of *zygote*, *embryo*, and *fetus*. These are words that you may use in your explanation of a human being. Additionally, consider the word *baby*. How would you define this?

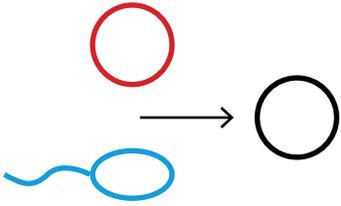
Students should be working with a common definition of these terms. This can be achieved by having them conduct a definition study. This may be something as simple as looking up the definitions of these words and recording them. Have students use the Frayer model<sup>4</sup> to think critically about the meaning of the vocabulary words. An example of this model is provided.

Alternately, a class discussion could be conducted to consider their prior knowledge of these terms from previous science classes, Modules 1 and 2, personal experiences, etc., and come to a class consensus.

Note: The word “baby” is interesting to have students consider and define. A consensus on its definition may be difficult to reach. Using common resources to determine its definition will likely spark a discussion all its own.

<sup>4</sup> “Frayer Model,” West Virginia Department of Education, Accessed 6 April 2015 [wvde.us/math4life/educators/strategies-for-teaching-and-learning/frayer-model/](http://wvde.us/math4life/educators/strategies-for-teaching-and-learning/frayer-model/)

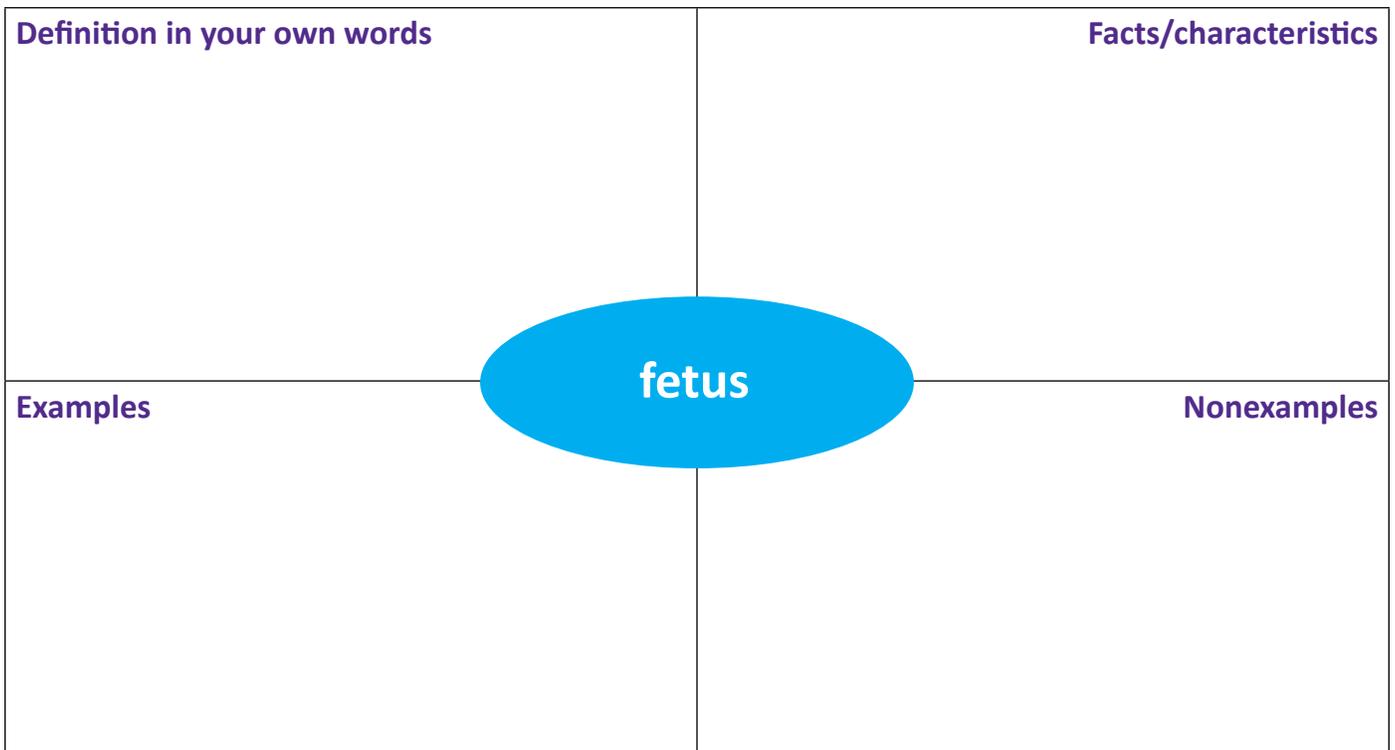
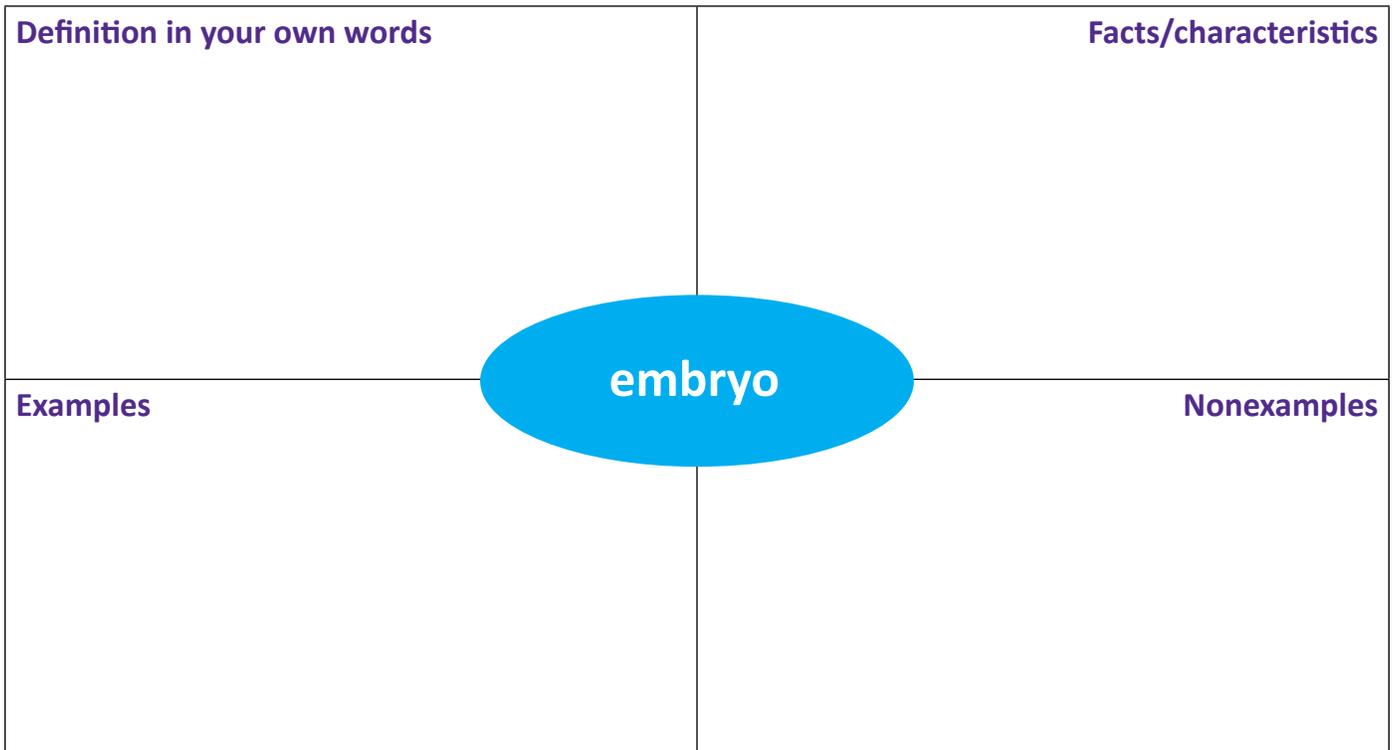
## Frayer Model Example

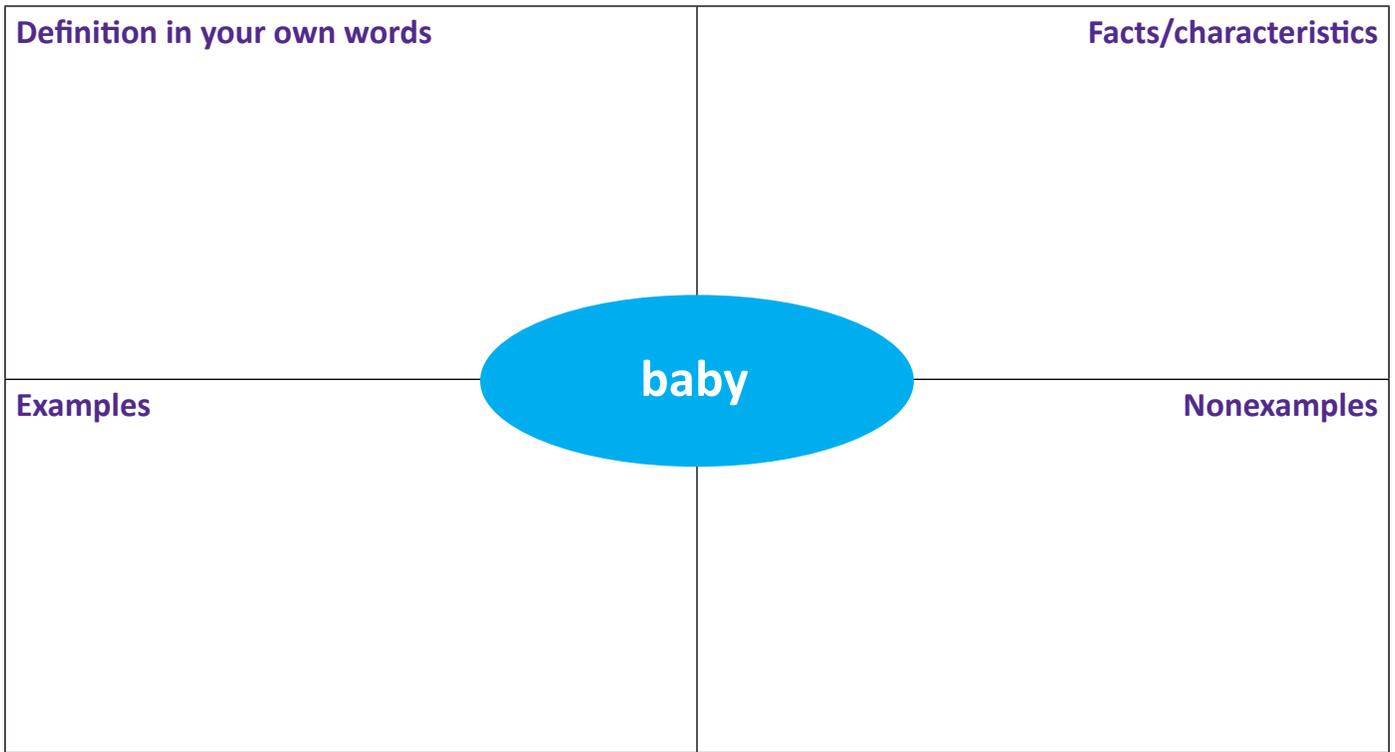
<p><b>Definition in your own words</b></p> <p>Single cell organism that develops from the fertilization of an egg by the sperm</p>	<p><b>Facts/characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- single cell</li> <li>- forms from egg and sperm</li> <li>- occurs from fertilization in the first week</li> </ul>
<p><b>zygote</b></p>	
<p><b>Examples</b></p> 	<p><b>Nonexamples</b></p> <p>Embryo; baby in the womb</p> 

MODULE 3 - Student Recording Sheet 3A

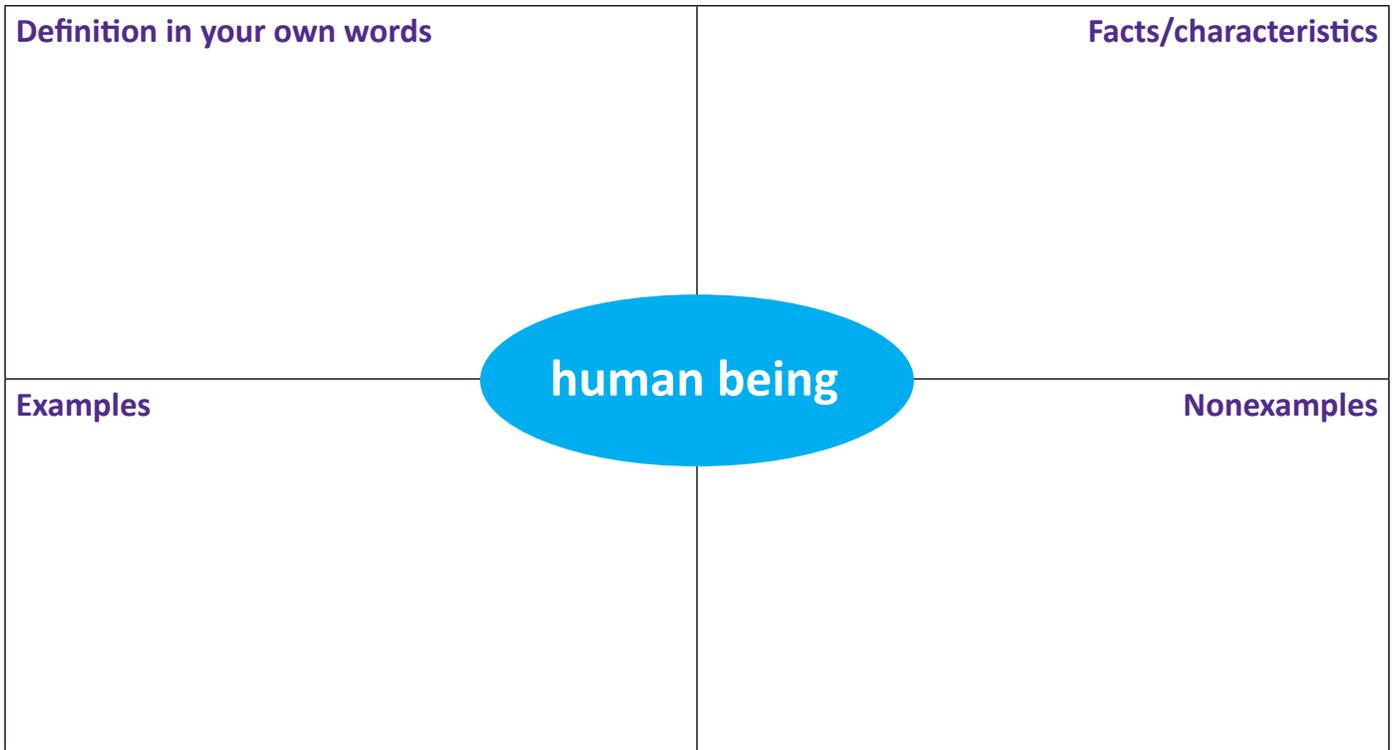
## Definition Study

<p><b>Definition in your own words</b></p>	<p><b>Facts/characteristics</b></p>
<p><b>zygote</b></p>	
<p><b>Examples</b></p>	<p><b>Nonexamples</b></p>





(Optional)  
 Conclusion based on evidence to be completed AFTER the Argumentation Activity



Additional comments on *human being*:

## Scientific Argumentation – Essay/Symposium/Debate

You will communicate your answer by writing an essay, simulating a symposium, or engaging in a mock debate. The questions you are to answer are these:

When do you think that life begins for a human being? Why? Use scientific argumentation — evidence and reasoning — to support your claim.

To prepare, think about the criteria you used to determine the ages of the images in Module 1, and define what you were looking at on the ultrasounds in Module 2. Your criteria likely included differences in size and level of development and/or activity. What other criteria might you use to distinguish the images? With a group, brainstorm some ideas. Use this as a starting point to determine any essential differences between the embryo and the adult.

The SLED<sup>5</sup> acronym (Size, Level of development, Environment, Degree of Dependency) is helpful for identifying common ways of differentiating human growth and development.

Complete the “What’s the Argument Here?” activity sheet<sup>6</sup> to identify the criteria, determine their strength, and justify your reasoning for their strength in the argument. Use this sheet to guide your essay, symposium, or debate.

Some additional questions to consider include these:

**How relevant are these differences when it comes to defining human beings and their designated rights?**

**Is one stage of development more valuable than another?**

**Is there a point at which more or different levels of rights should be given?**

Students may write individual essays defending their views or they may form groups based on similar thinking and engage in a symposium or debate with groups of differing views. The resources below provide some excellent guidelines and rubrics for these types of activities.

Note: It is important in choosing any of these methods of expression to not lose sight of the question: What is

<sup>5</sup> “How to Defend Your Pro-Life Views in 5-Minutes or Less,” Scott Klusendorf of Life Training Institute, Accessed January 16, 2015. <https://prolifetraining.com/resources/5-min-pro-lifer/>

<sup>6</sup> “Evaluating Scientific Arguments with Slow Thinking,” Beth A. Covitt, Cornelia B. Harris, and Charles W. Anderson, *Science Scope*, November 2013, pp. 44–52.

the right to life for an unborn child? The answer to this question for this project should NOT be dependent on the mother’s life situation.

### Resources:

“Bringing Historical Scientific Arguments Back to Life,” Allyson Rogan-Klyve, Micki Halsey Randall, Tyler St. Clair, and Ron Gray, *Science Scope*, March 2015, pp. 25–33. [Symposium guidelines are given.]

“The Language of Argumentation: Using Debate to Spark Interest and Learning in Science,” Laurie Taylor, *The Science Teacher*, Summer 2013, pp. 44–49. [Debate guidelines are given.]

“The Argumentation and Evaluation Guide: Encouraging NGSS-Based Critical Thinking,” Janis Bulgren and James Ellis, *Science Scope*, March 2015, pp. 78–85. [Argumentation evaluation guidelines are given, along with good writing prompts.]

## Module 3: Additional Activities

### System 1 and System 2 Thinking

This is an opportunity to introduce students to System 1 (fast – ex., what to eat for breakfast) and System 2 (slow – ex., what college to attend) thinking and decision-making skills. This can be helpful for assisting students with the process for making difficult or complex decisions that they will be faced with throughout their lives. Additionally, connections can be made to evaluating socio-scientific arguments and associated errors in judgment. Several activities described in the article could facilitate further instruction into the scientific-argumentation process and the evaluation process.

“Evaluating Scientific Arguments with Slow Thinking,” Beth A. Covitt, Cornelia B. Harris, and Charles W. Anderson, *Science Scope*, November 2013, pp. 44–52.

### Evaluating Arguments

This exercise is also an opportunity for students to become knowledgeable on evaluating the claims of others and determining their strength, based on the quality of the evidence presented. Activities described in the article below could be used to hone this skill in students, either before they present their essay/symposium/debate or as an evaluation of their own presentations, after they are completed.

“The Argumentation and Evaluation Guide: Encouraging NGSS-Based Critical Thinking,” Janis Bulgren and James Ellis, *Science Scope*, March 2015, pp. 78–85.

## What’s the Argument Here?

1. What socio-scientific issue is in question?

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2. What scientific question does this address?

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Answer the questions below to identify the scientific argument:

1. What is the scientific claim? *(Hint: A scientific claim is an answer to the scientific question.)*

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2. What scientific evidence is provided? *(Hint: Scientific evidence are data and observations that support the claim.)*

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3. What reasoning supports the claim? *(Hint: Reasoning describes how an underlying scientific concept connects the evidence to the claim. The reasoning could be in these lessons, or you may have to use your background knowledge about science to develop the reasoning.)*

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Consider the scientific argument and complete the table below. Which criteria (factors) can you comment about for the argument? For each criterion that is relevant, indicate whether the scientific argument is strong or weak for that criterion and explain why.

### Evaluating the argument (adapted)

<b>State the claim for the argument:</b>		
<b>Criterion (factor)</b>	<b>Strength (Strong or Weak)</b>	<b>Explain why the scientific argument is strong or weak for each criterion you list.</b>

Adapted from “Evaluating Scientific Arguments with Slow Thinking”, Beth A. Covitt, Cornelia B. Harris, and Charles W. Anderson, *Science Scope*, November 2013, pp. 44–52.



## Module 4:

### What Does History Say?

**Objective:** Investigate how history has dealt with various issues related to the sanctity of human life.

**Materials:** Power Point

**Vocabulary:** eugenics

Module 4 follows a “read-then-discuss” format, and there are a variety of ways you could cover the material in the classroom. The text for each section could be read aloud in class or assigned to students to read individually. The discussion questions likewise could be covered in class, assigned to students individually, or covered in small groups, who then report their insights to the class as a whole. Do what works best for your classroom. The accompanying Module 4 Power Point can be used as an aid in class discussion.

When scientists do research, they compare their conclusions with those of other scientists. When political leaders make decisions, they consult their advisors. When the rest of us make decisions or are looking for solutions, we also frequently ask for the advice of other people. We don’t do it because truth is determined by majority vote; sometimes the majority of people are wrong! We do it because sometimes other people might notice things we have not noticed. We can add their wisdom to our own, and we can learn from their mistakes, in order to get a more complete understanding.

That’s our next step in this course. In the first three modules, we’ve investigated the question, “What is this?” from scientific, technological, and logical perspectives. We’ve used our own wisdom to answer the question. Now let’s see what other people have said. Let’s compare and contrast our results with theirs.

We’ll do this by taking a whirlwind eight-stop tour through world history, seeing how people in different times and places answered the question, “What is this?”

#### History Tour Stop #1: Ancient Israel and Ammonite Worship

*1400s B.C. through 500s B.C.*

The vast majority of people throughout history were not able to see what you have already seen in this course. They did not have ultrasound technology. They did not understand the mechanics of sperm, eggs, and DNA in the development of a human being. Because of this, they were not asking precisely the same question that we are asking. They were not looking at an ultrasound photograph of a human embryo and asking, “What is this?”

Nevertheless, they did make judgments about what was in the womb and its value. In fact, the question in the ancient world was not so much “What is this?” as “Is life even valuable?” We take it for granted that innocent people should not be murdered, but ancient people did not necessarily agree on this.



### A Child Offered to Molech<sup>7</sup>

You shall not give any of your children to offer them to Molech, and so profane the name of your God: I am the LORD. (Lev. 18:21)

Some valued life, and some did not.

Take, for example, the ancient Ammonites' worship of their god Molech. The Ammonites not only had no respect for life in the womb; they had no respect for the lives of their children who had been born. We read in the ancient Hebrew Scriptures how the Ammonites sacrificed their children to Molech by burning them in the fire. The Hebrews were prohibited by their religion from doing this.

Nevertheless, the practice of child sacrifice was so common and so tempting that some of the Hebrew kings did it anyway, contrary to the religion they claimed to follow:

Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, and for Molech the abomination of the Ammonites, on the mountain east of Jerusalem. (1 Kings 11:7)

The Hebrew Scriptures state that the Hebrew God was displeased with this, and some of the nation's kings did take action against it:

[The LORD said:] "They built the high places of Baal in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, to offer up their sons and daughters to Molech, though I did

<sup>7</sup> Foster, Charles. *Offering to Molech*. 1897. Illustrators of the 1897 *Bible Pictures and What They Teach Us*. Wikimedia Commons. 2 January 2015. [upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/89/Foster\\_Bible\\_Pictures\\_0074-1\\_Offering\\_to\\_Molech.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/89/Foster_Bible_Pictures_0074-1_Offering_to_Molech.jpg)

not command them, nor did it enter into my mind, that they should do this abomination, to cause Judah to sin.” (Jer. 32:35)

And [King Josiah] defiled Topheth, which is in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, that no one might burn his son or his daughter as an offering to Molech. (2 Kings 23:10)

The Ammonites are just one well-known example among many ancient cultures that did not place high value on human life.<sup>8</sup> Even when these cultures recognized a life as human, it did not mean that they valued it.

## Discussion Questions for Stop #1: Ancient Israel and Ammonite Worship

1. If you are familiar with *The Hunger Games*, describe the culture in which these stories take place. What parallels do you find between *The Hunger Games* and some real-life civilizations?

*The Hunger Games* is a popular trilogy of books that has also been made into movies. In it, adults force teens to participate in a series of brutal games in which they must fight one another to the death. Such complete disregard for human life has been demonstrated all too often in history.

2. If someone truly believes that it is moral to torture and kill innocent children, what could you possibly say that might persuade that person to change his view?

There is no easy answer to the question, though several possibilities might be discussed. Ultimately, it leads us to reflect upon the fact that there exist evils in this world with which it is nearly impossible to argue. It is difficult to find common ground with someone who looks at evil and calls it good.

## History Tour Stop #2: Greek and Roman Infanticide

300s B.C. through A.D. 300s

Our next stop in history will be a look at the ancient Greek and Roman value of life. In many ways our culture is indebted to the Greeks and Romans. Their contributions to the arts and sciences are the foundation on which

<sup>8</sup> See, for example: Kennedy, Maev. “Carthaginians sacrificed own children, archaeologists say”. *The Guardian*. 21 January 2014. Accessed 2 January 2015, [theguardian.com/science/2014/jan/21/carthaginians-sacrificed-own-children-study](http://theguardian.com/science/2014/jan/21/carthaginians-sacrificed-own-children-study) IncaMayanAztec.com. “Tradition of Inca Human Sacrifices”. 2013. Accessed 2 January 2015, [incamayanztec.com/inca-human-sacrifice.html](http://incamayanztec.com/inca-human-sacrifice.html)

what we call “Western civilization” is built. Whether we know much about them or not, their thinking has shaped much of the way we think.

Among the Greeks and Romans we again find a mixed attitude toward the value of human life. On the one hand, we have the oath of Hippocrates, which many doctors still take today. As part of this oath, new doctors take the following pledge:

I will neither give a deadly drug to anybody who asked for it, nor will I make a suggestion to this effect. Similarly I will not give to a woman an abortive remedy.<sup>9</sup>

In contrast to Hippocrates’ view of life, however, we also find that the practice of infanticide by exposure was widespread in these cultures. When a woman gave birth, her husband would decide whether the family would keep the baby or not. If not, the infant would just be left alone outside to starve or be eaten by animals.

### Infant Bones Excavated from a Site in Ancient Roman Britain<sup>10</sup>



What follows is a famous letter from a husband to his wife regarding their new baby. Notice how casual he is about what he is telling her to do.

Hilarion to Alis his sister, heartiest greetings, and to my dear Berous and Apollonarian. Know that we are still even now in Alexandria. Do not worry if when all the others return I remain in Alexandria. I beg and beseech of you to take care of the little child, and as soon as we receive wages I will send them to you. If — good luck to you! — you bear offspring, if it is a male, let it live; if it is a female, expose it. You told Aphrodisias, ‘Do not forget me.’ How can I forget you? I beg you therefore not to worry.

The 29th year of Caesar, Pauni 23.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Stigall, W. “The Hippocratic Oath.” *The Linacre Quarterly*. 2 March 2022. Accessed 10 June 2025. <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC9297488/>

<sup>10</sup> Pappas, Stephanie. “Ancient Rome Infanticide Practices Did Not Favor Boys After All, DNA Study Suggests.” *The Huffington Post*. 27 January, 2014. Accessed 2 January 2105, [huffingtonpost.com/2014/01/27/ancient-rome-infanticide\\_n\\_4669734.html](http://huffingtonpost.com/2014/01/27/ancient-rome-infanticide_n_4669734.html)

<sup>11</sup> Egypt, 1 B.C. (Oxyrhynchus papyrus 744. G)

A number of historians have noted that Rome's widespread practice of abortion and infanticide of its children led to a population decline that was a factor leading to the eventual collapse of the empire.<sup>12</sup>

## Discussion Questions for Stop #2: Greek and Roman Infanticide

1. In Hilarion's letter, why do you think he tells his wife to expose the child only if it's a girl?

Perhaps it is because boys would carry on the family name, and the perception was that they would bring greater honor to the family. This attitude is exhibited in modern times. For example, during several decades in the latter 20th century, China maintained a one-child-per-family policy. Since boys tended to be preferred to girls there also, infant girls were aborted at a higher rate than boys, skewing the gender distribution of the younger generation. There are literally not enough young Chinese women for the young men to marry.

2. The ancient Greeks and Romans were brilliant and powerful people, but that does not necessarily mean they were always morally good. From what you have learned in school regarding these ancient cultures, can you give other examples of their moral failures?

The most well-known example is probably Rome's gladiatorial games, where death in the arena was a form of entertainment. Rome's brutal persecution of early Christians and routine practice of death by crucifixion are other examples.

## History Tour Stop #3: The Long Consensus

*300s through 1900s*

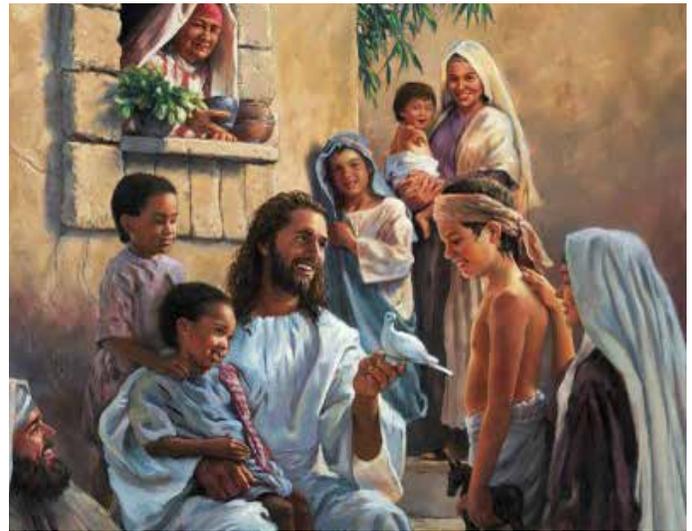
In the first century, a new player came on the world stage. The religion called Christianity grew out of the older religion of the Jews. It started as a small movement within the Roman Empire, but within about 300 years it came to dominate the empire. And after the ancient empire of Rome was divided and eventually collapsed, the teachings of Christianity continued to spread and shape the thinking of people all over the world.

What is remarkable about Christianity is that it brought to the ancient Roman world a new idea about life: Every life is precious, whether that life is young, old, strong, weak, male, female, born, or unborn. Every life is

<sup>12</sup> See, for example: Rodney Stark, *The Rise of Christianity: A Sociologist Reconsiders History* (Harper Collins, 1996), pp. 95-128.

worth protecting. Equally remarkable is that Christians were in 100 percent agreement about this. Christianity spread to many nations and many languages, but they all agreed about the value of life. As the centuries went by, the Christians disagreed among themselves about many things, and they were often divided into many groups, but still they never argued about the value of human life for a solid 1900 years. They all taught the same thing during all of that time. That's why we'll call this huge chunk of time "The Long Consensus." In fact, even many people who are not Christian have adopted Christian ideas about life. It has been the bedrock of civilized thinking for almost two millennia.

We should remember, though, that during most of this time period, Christians still didn't know all the details that you know. They hadn't seen ultrasound photographs. They couldn't see sperm or egg cells, and they didn't know that the union of those cells made a human embryo. It didn't stop them from making a clear judgment about life, however. They simply understood that every life was a gift from their Creator. So from the union of a man and woman in sexual intercourse through the birth of a child, the Christians taught that people should not do anything to try to stop a new life from being born.



**The early Christians insisted that the lives of all children are valuable.<sup>13</sup>**

Here are some thoughts from different people from many time periods and cultures that reflect the Long Consensus regarding human life:

[Christians] marry, as do all. They beget children, but they do not destroy their offspring. (Letter to Diognetus, A.D. 80 – 160)

<sup>13</sup> Stanek, Jill. "Stanek Sunday quote: 'Let the little children come to Me.'" 17 July 2011. Accessed 2 January 2015, [jillstane.com/2011/07/stanek-sunday-quote-let-the-little-children-come-to-me/](http://jillstane.com/2011/07/stanek-sunday-quote-let-the-little-children-come-to-me/)

You shall not slay a child by procuring an abortion, nor shall you destroy it after it is born. (Letter of Barnabas, A.D. 80 – 130)

We have been taught that to expose newborn children [i.e., to leave them out to die or be found] is what wicked men do. We have been taught this so that we will not do harm to anyone and so that we will not sin against God. (Justin Martyr, ca. 155)<sup>14</sup>

For us, since we have forbidden murder once and for all, we may not even destroy the fetus in the womb, even though at that point the human being still derives its blood from other parts of the body for sustenance. To hinder a birth is merely a speedier killing of a man. Nor does it matter whether you take away a life that is born or destroy one that is preparing to be born. It is a human if it is going to be a human. You already have the fruit in its seed. (Tertullian, ca. 210)<sup>15</sup>

[D]o not murder a child by abortion or kill a newborn infant. (Didache, first century)

Therefore brothers, you see how perverse they are and hastening wickedness, who are immature, they seek abortion of the conception before the birth; they are those who tell us, “I do not see that which you say must be believed.” (Augustine of Hippo, 400s)<sup>16</sup>

For those who have no regard for pregnant women and who do not spare the tender fruit are murderers and infanticides. (Martin Luther, 1500s)<sup>17</sup>

If it seems more horrible to kill a man in his own house than in a field, because a man’s house is his most secure place of refuge, it ought surely to be deemed more atrocious to destroy the unborn in the womb before it has come to the light. (John Calvin, 1500s)<sup>18</sup>

The unborn child is from the very first a child. It is still developing and has no independent life. But it is a man and not a thing, nor a mere part of the mother’s body. ... He who destroys germinating life kills a man. ... The fact that a definite NO must be the presupposition of further discussion cannot be contested, least of all today.” (Karl Barth, 1900s)<sup>19</sup>

<sup>14</sup> First Apology 27, 29.

<sup>15</sup> Apology 9.

<sup>16</sup> Sermon 126, line 12.

<sup>17</sup> What Luther Says: An Anthology, compiled by Ewald M. Plass (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1959), Vol. 2, No. 2826, p. 905.

<sup>18</sup> Commentaries on the Four Last Books of Moses (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1950), pp. 41-42.

<sup>19</sup> Church Dogmatics, trans. G.W. Bromiley and T.E. Torrance (Edinburgh: T. & Y. Clark, 1961), 4.3, pp. 415-417.

## Discussion Questions for Stop #3: The Long Consensus

1. Some people claim, “All morality is relative. The Christians always cared for their infants; the Romans sometimes left them outside to be eaten. Neither morality is better than the other. They are just two different but equal moralities.” Do you agree with this? Are all moralities equal, or are some moralities objectively better than others?

Moral relativism often dominates the thinking of our youth today, so this is an important question to discuss carefully. Many people would like to say that all morality is relative, but black-and-white issues like this force us to realize that this is not so. Our consciences tell us that some moralities are superior to others. There exists an objective, external morality by which all social moralities are judged.

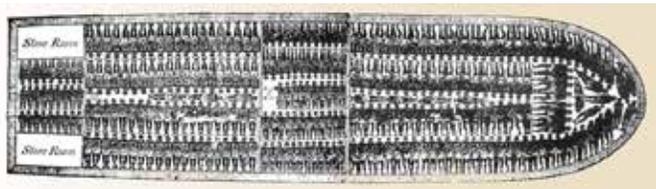
2. Why do you think the Christian attitude toward human life has been so appealing, even to many non-Christians?

It reinforces what our consciences are already telling us. One can make the case that there was nothing actually new or original about Christian morality. Christians simply taught publicly what the human conscience had been saying all along. Whereas other moral systems suppressed the conscience, Christianity was honest about the high standards our conscience sets before us. This resonates with many people, even non-Christians.

## History Tour Stop #4: Racism and Slavery Infanticide

### 1500s through 1800s

Our next stop in history does not deal with human embryos, but it does deal with the question, “What is this?” In the centuries leading up to the 1800s, Europeans and Americans would look not at a baby revealed by ultrasound, but at an African human being, and ask, “What is this?” Some said that Africans were humans deserving the same rights as white people. Others said that Africans were human, but that they did not have the same value and rights as whites, so they could be kidnapped from their homelands and transported as slaves to the lands of the white men. It was only through the long efforts of those willing to take a stand and go against society that slavery was finally ended, and the horrible aftermath of racism is still with us today.



**Africans packed in a slave ship were not treated with human dignity.<sup>20</sup>**

It is important to recognize the parallel between the unborn babies of our generation and the African slaves of previous generations. In both cases, members of a supposedly civilized society looked at them and could not agree about what they were seeing. They could not agree whether these were people who had full human rights or not. It reminds us how easy it is to be blind to the humanity of another person when that person becomes inconvenient to us. Consider this quote by Alveda King, niece of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.:

Abortion and racism are both symptoms of a fundamental human error. The error is thinking that when someone stands in the way of our wants, we can justify getting that person out of our lives. Abortion and racism stem from the same poisonous root, selfishness.<sup>21</sup>

## Discussion Questions for Stop #4: Racism and Slavery

1. Can you name other categories of people in history who were denied the same rights as others because people failed to recognize their full human dignity?

Examples would include the “untouchables” at the bottom of the Hindu caste system, Jews during the Nazi Holocaust, and Native Americans in the face of the westward expansion of the United States.

2. What is it about human life that makes it valuable?

This question gets at the roots of our belief systems. For religious students, the answer would likely be that life has value because it is a divine creation. Nonreligious students might cite the testimony of our conscience, or that the truth is simply self-evident to our reason.

<sup>20</sup> “William Wilberforce.” *Hull City Council*. Accessed 2 January 2015. [hullcc.gov.uk/portal/page?\\_pageid=221,494859&\\_dad=portal&\\_schema=PORTAL](http://hullcc.gov.uk/portal/page?_pageid=221,494859&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL)

<sup>21</sup> “Abortion Quotes.” BrainyQuote. Accessed 2 January 2015. [brainyquote.com/quotes/keywords/abortion.html#j2SP3L50iVxr3MTj.99](http://brainyquote.com/quotes/keywords/abortion.html#j2SP3L50iVxr3MTj.99)

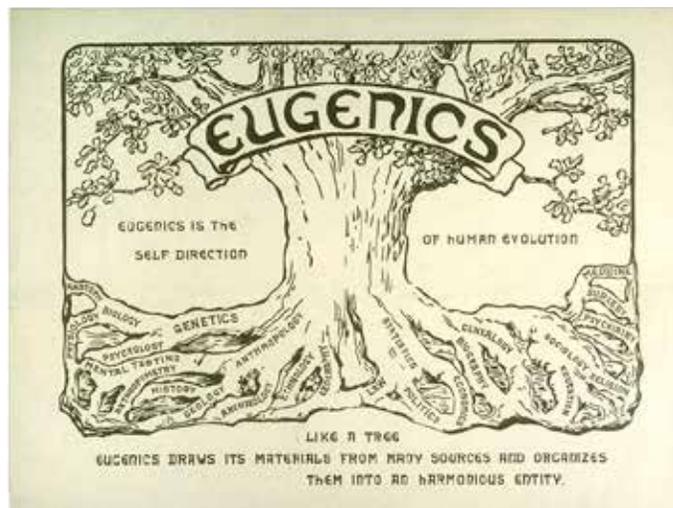
## History Tour Stop #5: The Modern Eugenics Movement

Early 1900s

By the late 1800s the thinking of many people in Western civilization was changing. Charles Darwin had published his famous books, *The Origin of Species* and *The Descent of Man*, and many influential people were adopting his new explanation for the origin of life. Rather than believing that human life was the work of a divine Creator, people began to see it as the result of random, natural processes at work over long periods of time. According to this new view, human beings are not designed. They are just accidents of nature, and accidents do not have nearly the same value as designed creatures.

Equally important is the fact that people now began to believe that the human race had advanced as far as it had through a process known as evolution by natural selection. In natural selection, the weak members of a population die off when they are young and don’t produce many offspring, but the strong members live long and produce many strong offspring. Only the strongest members of this next generation then survive to pass on their genes to the generation beyond them, and so on and so forth. This is called “survival of the fittest.” The weak die off to make room for the strong, and in this way the whole species becomes better and better.

Notice that this leads to a completely different view of life than the one that had been commonly held for the past 1900 years. In Christian morality the strong people are supposed to help and care for the weak ones, but according to Darwin’s theory of natural selection, this is not how a species advances. According to natural selection, a species advances only when its weak members



**Early thinkers of the 20th century believed that through the science of eugenics they could advance the evolution of the human species.**

get out of the way and produce few offspring, so that its strong members can produce many.

Out of this thinking came a new movement called “eugenics.” The word “eugenics” literally means “good birth.” In the early 1900s it became popular among Europeans and Americans to create programs that sought to reduce the number of “bad births” (people with undesirable ethnicity, intelligence, physical characteristics, etc.) and to increase the number of “good births.” Here are three quotes that will give you an idea of what eugenics was about:

With savages, the weak in body or mind are soon eliminated; and those that survive commonly exhibit a vigorous state of health. We civilized men, on the other hand, do our utmost to check the process of elimination; we build asylums for the imbecile, the maimed, and the sick; we institute poor-laws; and our medical men exert their utmost skill to save the life of every one to the last moment. There is reason to believe that vaccination has preserved thousands, who from a weak constitution would formerly have succumbed to small-pox. Thus the weak members of civilized societies propagate their kind. No one who has attended to the breeding of domestic animals will doubt that this must be highly injurious to the race of man. (Charles Darwin, *The Descent of Man*)<sup>22</sup>

[We should] apply a stern and rigid policy of sterilization and segregation to that grade of population whose progeny is tainted, or whose inheritance is such that objectionable traits may be transmitted to offspring. (Margaret Sanger, *Woman and the New Race*)<sup>23</sup>

Sparta must be regarded as the first *völkisch* state. The exposure of the sick, weak, deformed children, in short, their destruction, was more decent and in truth a thousand times more human than the wretched insanity of our day which preserves the most pathological subject. (Adolph Hitler)<sup>24</sup>

One of the most visibly horrible results of the eugenics movement was the Nazi program during the 1930s and early 1940s to establish their Aryan race as superior to all others in the world. The Nazis went so far as to seek to kill off entire populations of those they deemed unfit. Following the exposure of the Nazis’ horrible crimes after World War II, the more aggressive eugenics programs lost much of their popularity, but the eugenics mindset persists to this day.

<sup>22</sup> Goodreads. 2 January 2015, [goodreads.com/quotes/tag/eugenics](https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/tag/eugenics)

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., ch. 6.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

For example, because babies in the womb can now be tested for Down Syndrome, about 90% of them are currently aborted. These children are not protected because they are weak; they are killed because they are weak. That is eugenics. It’s not talked about as much as it used to be, but that kind of thinking is still with us.

## Discussion Questions for Stop #5: The Modern Eugenics Movement

1. In what way do beliefs about the origin of human life influence beliefs about the value of human life?

This question is answered by simply summarizing the main points of the reading. Darwinism and the eugenics movement share the same presuppositions.

2. Many modern people suggest that one of the best ways to combat poverty in Africa is to give more contraceptives and abortions to the women who live there, so that there will be fewer Africans to feed. Does this seem like a good idea? Does this seem like a moral idea?

The idea certainly has eugenic overtones. Another way to phrase the question is this: “When people are suffering, do we seek to resolve the problem by eliminating the suffering or eliminating the people?” There is also a parallel here with the modern right-to-die movement, which maintains that the preferred way to end suffering is to end life.

## History Tour Stop #6: Planned Parenthood

1900s to Present

One well-known leader of the eugenics movement, quoted in our last section, was Margaret Sanger. Sanger was in favor of preventing births in low-income and minority communities. She thought that the lives of women would be improved if they could be helped to have fewer children. She also thought that society as a whole would be improved if black Americans would have fewer children. Here are a few more quotes from Margaret Sanger

“The most merciful thing that a large family does to one of its infant members is to kill it.”<sup>25</sup>

“Plan for Peace”

Article 1. The purpose of the American Baby Code

<sup>25</sup> Margaret Sanger, *Women and the New Race*, Eugenics Publ. Co., 1920, 1923. Accessed online 2 January 2015, [lifenews.com/2013/03/11/10-eye-opening-quotes-from-planned-parenthood-founder-margaret-sanger/](https://www.lifenews.com/2013/03/11/10-eye-opening-quotes-from-planned-parenthood-founder-margaret-sanger/)

shall be to provide for a better distribution of babies ... and to protect society against the propagation and increase of the unfit.

**Article 4.** No woman shall have the legal right to bear a child, and no man shall have the right to become a father, without a permit.

**Article 6.** No permit for parenthood shall be valid for more than one birth.<sup>26</sup>

Birth control must lead ultimately to a cleaner race.<sup>27</sup>

We should hire three or four colored ministers, preferably with social-service backgrounds, and with engaging personalities. The most successful educational approach to the Negro is through a religious appeal. We don't want the word to go out that we want to exterminate the Negro population, and the minister is the man who can straighten out that idea if it ever occurs to any of their more rebellious members.<sup>28</sup>

In 1921 Margaret Sanger founded the American Birth Control League to help accomplish her goals, and this organization later changed its name to Planned Parenthood. Today Planned Parenthood is America's largest abortion provider and a leader in providing sex education.

Planned Parenthood promotes itself as an organization devoted to helping women and praises its founder Margaret Sanger as a hero in the fight for "reproductive freedom." It even changed its name to Planned Parenthood, because its leaders thought that the name sounded nicer than "The Birth Control League." We should realize, however, that both Sanger and the organization she founded have a history of explicit racism and eugenics.

## Discussion Questions for Stop #6: Planned Parenthood

1. If the United States had actually adopted Margaret Sanger's "Plan for Peace," quoted above, what do you think would be the effects on our nation today?

Answers will vary. Ironically, in a sense Sanger has been more successful than even she hoped to be. Rather than having to impose her agenda of child limitation on society using legal force, her ideas have been so thoroughly incorporated into contemporary American

<sup>26</sup> Birth Control Review, April 1932, pp. 107–108.

<sup>27</sup> April 1932 Birth Control Review, p. 108.

<sup>28</sup> Woman, Morality, and Birth Control. New York: New York Publishing Company, 1922, p. 12.

# BIRTH CONTROL REVIEW

Edited by Margaret Sanger

TWENTY CENTS A COPY NOVEMBER, 1923 TWO DOLLARS A YEAR



A ball and chain represent Margaret Sanger's view in 1923 toward human life and motherhood.

thinking that many Americans voluntarily carry out her plan for their lives.

2. Why do you think Sanger's followers thought "Planned Parenthood" was a more attractive name than "The American Birth Control League"?

Perhaps it is because "control" has a negative connotation; people don't like to be controlled. The word "parenthood", on the other hand, is a positive thing. "Planned Parenthood" makes it sound like the organization will help one plan something good. Ironically, Planned Parenthood makes most of its money only when people choose not to be parents – i.e., abortion.

## History Tour Stop #7: The Sexual Revolution

1950s to 1970s

From the 1950s through the 1970s, another major change took place in the thinking of many Americans. For the previous 1900 years, the act of sexual intercourse between a man and a woman had held a very special place. It was always part of a "package deal," so to speak, that included a man and his wife committed to love each other for life and the children that their loving sexual union might produce. This whole package put together was called "family."

In the middle of the twentieth century, however, this package was completely taken apart in the minds of many people. No longer was sexual activity reserved only for a husband and wife, but it now became open for anybody and everybody. It became acceptable for people who were not married. It became legal for married couples to divorce with no penalty for either of them. People began accepting the idea of same-sex relations. In the minds of many people, there was no longer any necessary connection between sex and marriage.

Likewise, sex and babies were disconnected. For the previous 1900 years, people recognized that the obvious purpose of sex was to create life. Of course, people also knew that sex gives pleasure and strengthens a bond of



**Hugh Hefner, a pornographer and leader of the sexual revolution, promoted sex outside of marriage and encouraged men to use women for their pleasure.**

love between a husband and wife, but there was no denying the obvious: Sex makes babies. In fact, that's one of the big reasons it was so important to keep sex within marriage. Mom and Dad had to stay around and stay together to take care of their children.

At the time of the sexual revolution, however, sex was separated from babies. Since people wanted to engage in sex with people to whom they were not married and with whom they did not want to raise children, they demanded technologies that would allow them to have sex but stop the babies from coming. Contraceptives and abortion were the products they demanded.

The disconnection also goes the other way. Since the time of the sexual revolution, people have also pursued methods of getting babies without sex. Using sperm and egg donation, artificial insemination, and *in vitro* fertilization, a person can now become a parent without having any relationship at all with the other parent of the child they create.

Within a few decades, Americans stopped thinking about sex as part of a “package deal” and started thinking instead that it has no necessary connection at all with marriage or children. You can see evidence of this everywhere in our culture: movies, TV, music, magazines,

and the internet. Sex is portrayed as a recreational activity, and it doesn't have to mean anything more unless you want it to.

## Discussion Questions for Stop #7: The Sexual Revolution

1. Fifty years ago the people promoting the sexual revolution promised that it would bring freedom and happiness like never before. Fifty years later, do you think that families and children are better off because of the sexual revolution?

The increase in divorce, single parents, divided families, the pornography industry, sexually transmitted disease, abortions, and psychological trauma provide substantial evidence that there was more freedom and happiness prior to the “liberation” of sex from marriage and family.

2. What advantages do you see in exercising self-control and saving all sexual activity for your future marriage?

One avoids much of the risk of all the problems mentioned in question 1.

## History Tour Stop #8: Battle over Abortion

January 22, 1973

The ideas of the sexual revolution and the eugenics movement in our culture came together in 1973 to create a landmark change in American law when the United States Supreme court issued its *Roe v. Wade* decision on January 22. The court overturned the majority of state laws prohibiting abortion, declaring that there was a “right to privacy” implied in the United States Constitution that gave every woman the right to abort her child. *Roe v. Wade* marked the legalization of abortion in America. On June 24, 2022 the United States Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade* with the *Dobbs v. Jackson* decision that made the legality of abortion a decision for the people, to be legislated at the state level.

Since then, the battle over abortion continues. Abortion is legal in some states, has restrictions in others, and is legal up to birth in a few. Opponents of abortion have not given up, and they have actually won some significant victories over the years. The total number of abortions in America has slightly decreased in the early twenty-first century, and many abortion clinics have closed. Many states have passed laws requiring a waiting period before getting an abortion. As older women who have had abortions tell their heartbreaking stories of

loss, the younger generation of Americans is increasingly opposed to abortion. In fact, Norma McCorvey, who was known as ‘Jane Roe’ in the Roe v. Wade case, changed her mind and worked for over 20 years until she died to end abortion.

As you have seen in this course, ultrasound technology has opened up a whole new window into the world of unborn children. For many young people today, the first picture in their baby album is an ultrasound image. Many young mothers who planned to have an abortion have seen their baby on an ultrasound screen, heard the heartbeat, and chosen instead to give life to their baby. When asked, “What is this?” they know the truth: “That’s my baby!”



Lutherans advocate for abortion to be made illegal.

## Discussion Questions for Stop #8: Battle over Abortion

1. In 1973 the Supreme Court declared that women have a “right to privacy” that includes the right to abortion. In saying this, whose rights did the court overlook completely?

It overlooked the right to life of women’s unborn children. The purpose of government is to protect the interests of its weakest citizens, and the United States government has failed to do that.

2. What is the status of abortion in your state? Do you think that opponents of abortion should give up or should they continue their advocacy for abortion restrictions, and seek to make abortion illegal? Why?

Hopefully, students see reason to continue the struggle. It is worth pointing out that the struggle to end black slavery took over 100 years. The politicians and

the wealthiest slave owners had powerful reasons to support slavery, and the abolitionist cause appeared hopeless for a long time. Nevertheless, the abolitionists persevered, and their cause eventually prevailed.

## Module 4: Additional Activities

### The Value of Life Timeline

Without referencing your notes or the information you just read in this module, try to identify all eight “History Tour Stops” on the following timeline. In an attractive way, summarize and label what you just learned.

Challenge students to identify all eight “History Tour Stops” on the following timeline without referencing their notes or student booklets. Invite them to explain the main point of each “stop” to the class. Students can also be urged to think creatively and add other historical events to the timeline that are pertinent to these life issues.

Note: The large timeline graphic for this activity can be copied from Slide 28 of this module’s presentation.



## Worldwide Protection for Unborn Babies

Students may research the legality of abortion around the world to color in the map so that it depicts the protection offered to children around the world.

Students may use reputable organizations such as Family Watch International <https://familywatch.org/> and the Charlotte Lozier Institute <https://lozierinstitute.org/> to research the legality of abortion around the world to color in the map so that it depicts the protection offered to children around the world. Discuss the patterns you find. Where are children most and least protected?

Note: The large map graphic for this activity can be copied from Slide 29 of this module's presentation.

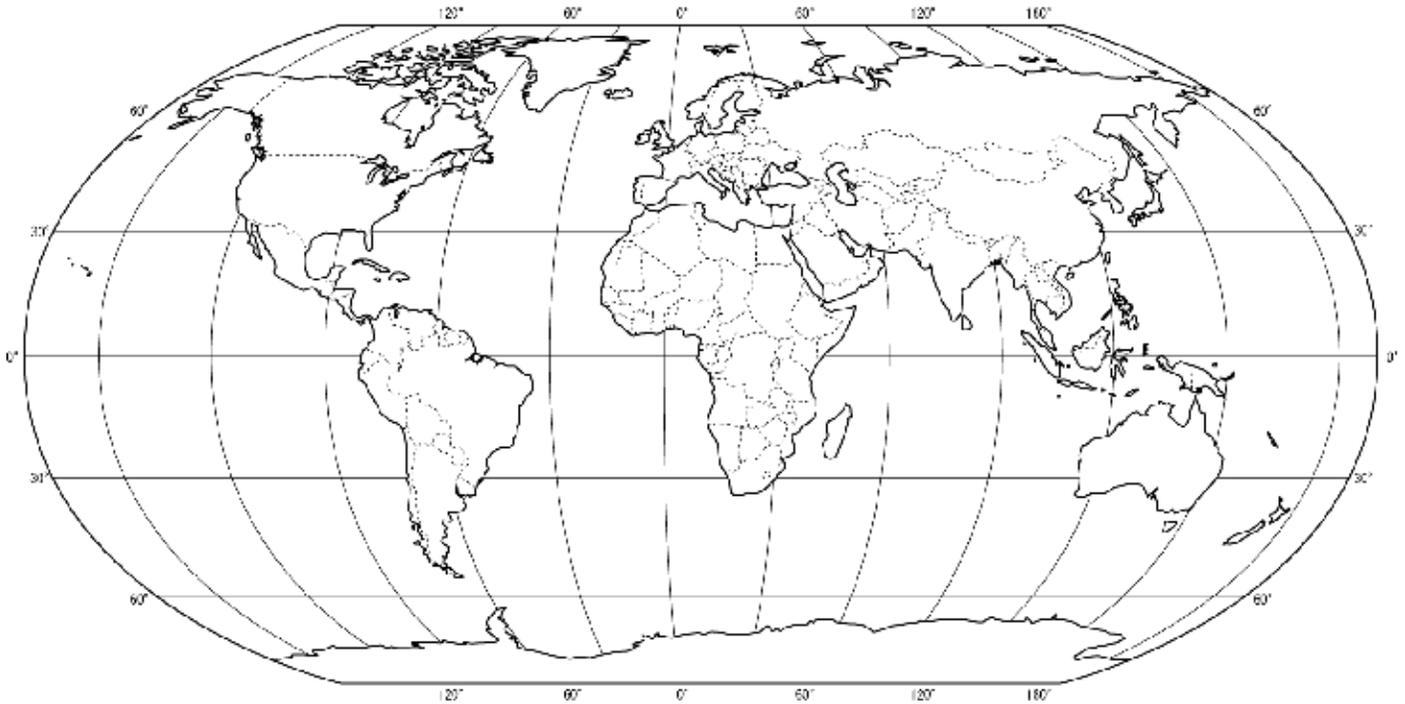
# Worldwide Protection for Unborn Babies

Green: Abortion is prohibited entirely or permitted only to save a mother's life.

Yellow: Abortion is permitted to preserve a mother's health or life.

Orange: Abortion is permitted for women in difficult social or economic situations.

Red: Abortion is permitted for any reason.





## Module 5: What Does the Word of God Say?

**Objective:** Explore what the Bible says about the sanctity of human life.

**Materials:** Power Point

**Vocabulary:** incarnate

In Module 4 you learned that Christians from the very beginning have loved and cherished the lives of children in their mothers' wombs. Why is this so? What does the Bible say about children before they are born? That's what we're going to explore in the unit ahead.

Module 5 is a relatively straightforward Bible study, outlined by discussion questions. Students could work on these individually, in small groups, as a whole-class discussion, or some combination of these options. The accompanying Module 5 Power Point can be used as an aid in class discussion.

### The Meeting of the Babies

We'll start with a Bible story in which two of the main characters are unborn babies. Please read Luke 1:39-45.

In this story, who is the baby in Elizabeth's womb? Who is the baby in Mary's womb? What would each of these children later grow up to do?

Elizabeth's son was John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ. Mary's son was Jesus, the Savior of the world.

In English, people often use the word "fetus" to describe a human developing in the womb, but "baby" to describe one that has been born. Using two different words can make it seem like these are two different things. In the Bible, however, the same word is used to describe both babies in the womb and babies who have been born.



Mary and Elizabeth

The New Testament was originally written in Greek, and the Greek word for “baby” is *brephos*. We find it in Luke 1:41 and 1:44, but also in several other Bible passages. For example, who is the *brephos* in Luke 2:16?

Jesus.

We also find *brephos* in Luke 18:15. In the very next verse (Luke 18:16), what does Jesus say about babies?

He says, “Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God.” Our Lord loves children. He does not want them denied His merciful touch.

In Luke 1:44, we discover that it is even possible for a baby in the womb to experience an emotion! How does the baby in Elizabeth’s womb feel? Why do you think he feels this way? What does he do as a result?

John the Baptist leaped for joy. God allowed him to sense that he was in the presence of his unborn Savior.

Back in biblical times, girls got engaged when they were pretty young. Mary was probably only a teenager about your age, and she was unmarried and pregnant with a baby she never asked for. Many people nowadays would say that a girl in Mary’s situation has a right to end her pregnancy. Mary had no such thought, however. Read Luke 1:38. Rather than demanding the right to choose what is best for her, what attitude did Mary take toward her life? How does Mary serve as an example for all of us?

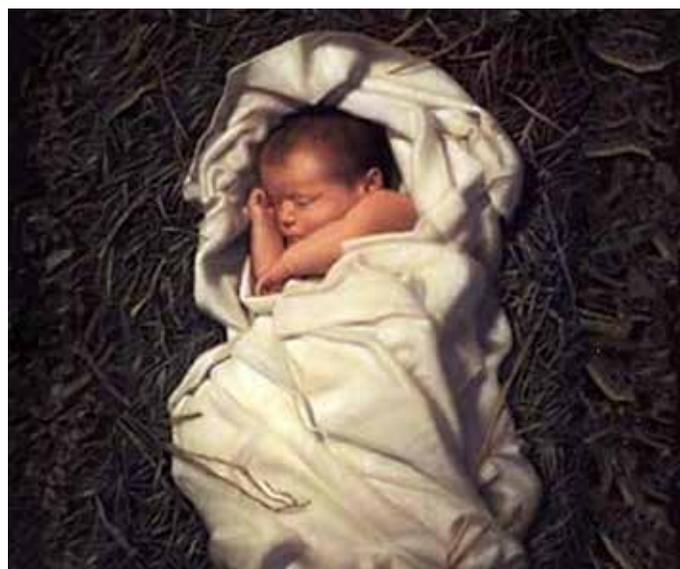
Mary said, “Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.” Mary placed herself at God’s disposal. She was willing to follow His leading in her life, even if His plan was quite different from what she had anticipated.

It is worth pausing to reflect upon the fact that we naturally have an obsession for control over our lives. Self-determination and personal choice are some of our culture’s highest moral goods. The abortion issue is not only a matter of the identification and value of life. A deeper and more fundamental issue at stake is the question of each of our relationships with God. Will we determine our steps, or will He?

Our students are encouraged to make plans for the future, and rightly so, but when these plans become ends in and of themselves, they become idols. Many a teen knows that abortion is wrong, but, when confronted by a pregnancy that disrupts his/her plans, his/her true god (which is actually a false god!) wins out. Abortion becomes the solution that allows a person to continue in devotion to his/her idolatrous plans. Mary was willing to sacrifice her plans for the sake of God’s greater plan, even though it cost her dearly. (See Luke 2:35.)

## The Incarnation: God Became an Embryo!

Now let’s think a little more carefully about the baby that Mary was carrying. From eternity past, Jesus has always been truly God, equal to God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. There was never a time when Jesus did not exist. At a certain point in history, however, Jesus also became a true human being. He didn’t just look like a human being. He didn’t just put on a human body like you would put on a shirt, only to take it off again later. When Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit within the Virgin Mary, God actually became one of us!



**True God and True Man**

We call that moment Jesus’ “incarnation.” If you’ve ever studied Spanish before, you know that the word *carne* means “meat” or “flesh.” That’s a helpful way to remember what “incarnation” means. Incarnation is “in-carne-tion”; it means “in the meat” or “in the flesh.” Jesus is now “God in the meat,” “God in the flesh,” truly God and truly one of us.

Read Hebrews 2:14-17. Why is it important that Jesus “had to be made like his brothers in every respect” (v. 17)?

There is a mystery here in that only a human being can bear responsibility for another human being’s sin. See, for example, Romans 5:18-19. Adam sinned, and we all bear the guilt. We all sin, and Jesus bore the guilt. We are all connected to Adam, so we all share in his sin. But now that God has truly become one of us, we all share in His salvation.

Of course there is one important way Jesus is different from us. What is it? Why is this difference also very important? See Hebrews 4:15.

Jesus was and is sinless. He is the spotless Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. When He died, He did not die for His own sins, but for ours.

Take a look at the following list of Jesus' characteristics. All of them are true of Jesus, but some of them are true because Jesus is truly God, and others of them are true because Jesus is truly human. For each characteristic, circle "D" if it is true because of Jesus' divine nature and "H" if it is true because of His human nature.

Jesus ...	Divine Nature	Human Nature
is all-powerful.	D	H
has a mother.	D	H
grew up.	D	H
knows everything.	D	H
has arms and legs.	D	H
raised the dead.	D	H
learned to walk.	D	H
died.	D	H
commands the angels.	D	H
was an embryo.	D	H

Answers:

Jesus ...	Divine Nature	Human Nature
is all-powerful.	D	
has a mother.		H
grew up.		H
knows everything.	D	
has arms and legs.		H
raised the dead.	D	
learned to walk.		H
died.		H
commands the angels.	D	
was an embryo.		H

Have you ever thought to yourself: "God is somewhere up there in His perfect paradise of heaven, but I'm just stuck down here in this sinful, painful place called earth. How could God possibly understand what I'm going through?" When you're feeling that way, how does Jesus' incarnation provide hope?

Our Lord Jesus has experienced every kind of trial, temptation, and suffering that we experience, plus much more. He drank the cup of God's wrath to its bitter dregs for our sake. When we pray to the Son of God, we pray to one who knows about suffering. He's been there.

Here's the bottom line. Jesus was and is fully human. He shared in every part of our humanity except for sin. That means He didn't just start being human as an adult. He didn't just start being human when He was laid in a manger. He started being human at His incarnation, when He was conceived by the Holy Spirit. Mary carried God in her womb. God became a human embryo because God became fully human, and human beings begin as embryos.

## So What about Me?

So we've seen that Jesus was already Jesus while in the womb, and John was already John while in the womb. What does the Bible say about the rest of us? When did our lives begin?

King David, inspired by God's Holy Spirit, spoke for the rest of us when he penned some of the most famous psalms in the Bible. These psalms are prayers that we all can pray. Read Psalm 139:13-14. According to David, what happened in his mother's womb?

God knitted him together.



**You knitted me together in my mother's womb.  
(Psalm 139:13)**

On another occasion, when David was feeling grieved over his sinful affair with Bathsheba, he wrote Psalm 51. Read Psalm 51:5. What does it say about his conception?

He was already sinful when he was conceived. Therefore he was obviously already a person.

Considering the passages we have studied so far, how would the Bible answer our question, "What is this?"

Have students share and defend their answers. Address any doubts or questions they have.

## And Who Is My Neighbor?

We've seen that the Bible gives a pretty clear answer to the question, "What is this?" Now let's think about another question: "Why should this matter to me?"

You will find a well-known parable in Luke 10:25–37; please read it. In verse 29, the lawyer asks Jesus the question, "And who is my neighbor?" Rather than giving a short, dictionary-style answer, Jesus instead tells a story that drives the point home. Try to summarize Jesus' teaching in a few words by completing the following sentence: "According to Jesus, my neighbor is ..."

Answers will vary. "Someone who needs my help," might be a good answer.



**"You go, and do likewise." (Jesus, Luke 10:37)**

The Fifth Commandment reads, "You shall not murder" (Exodus 20:13). When Martin Luther explained it in the Small Catechism, he wrote, "We should fear and love God so that we do not hurt or harm our neighbor in his body, but help and support him in every physical need."

Notice that there are two parts to this explanation. The first part tells us what NOT to do; the second part tells us what we SHOULD do. Sometimes we sin by doing what we should not do. These are called sins of "commission." Other times we sin by not doing what we should do. These are called sins of "omission."

Answers will vary.

Now consider Jesus' parable. If you found yourself walking along a road and came across a man lying stripped, beaten, and half-dead, do you think you would do something about it or just pass by on the other side? Realistically, what could you do, even as a teenager?

Now consider this. If you found yourself living in a town where the bodies of baby children were literally being torn limb from limb in an abortion facility every week, do you think you would do something about it or just pass by on the other side? Realistically, what could you do, even as a teenager?

This could be a convicting moment for some students. Be sensitive. We all would like to believe that we would never ignore a murderous atrocity occurring in our midst, but the reality is that we often do just that. Allow students to voice their initial ideas for taking action, but keep in mind that Module 6 will be devoted entirely to taking a stand and making a difference. There will be a time later for more detailed plan-making.

## Neither Do I Condemn You

In the Bible God speaks clearly about life in the womb, and when we ignore what God says, we sin, and sin has consequences. Many people would like to believe that the choice to have an abortion is a positive thing — that it usually helps women out of a difficult situation and improves their lives. When we actually hear from women who have had abortions, however, we find that this is not the case. Sin has consequences.

Read and reflect on the following quotes. These are just a few of thousands of testimonies of women who have had abortions and compiled their stories as part of the Silent No More Awareness Campaign ([silentsnomoreawareness.org](http://silentsnomoreawareness.org)). Their stories are all unique, but they all have one thing in common: Each of these women regrets her abortion and doesn't want to see others repeat her mistake.

"If only I would have known the terrible and devastating consequences to my actions. If only I knew then how desperately I would want my child back."

Haylee | KS, United States

"As I look at my three living children, I think of what my first child would have looked like, what their personality would have been. I will always regret my abortion. It was the greatest mistake of my life."

Susan | CA, United States

"The law requires a "counseling session" prior to the abortion procedure. The doctor didn't tell me that the psychological scars may still be present years later; that there was no drug that would numb my heart."

Barbara | OH, United States

"I still struggle. I hate myself for what I did. I have not told my family. I say I had a miscarriage to those who do know because I cannot bear to tell them the truth."

Jennifer | TX, United States

“I do feel like I was pressured by my family members to do this. To this day I feel shame and guilt. I think about them daily. And that is why I am silent no more.”

Kellee | OH, United States

“I knew having an abortion was the wrong choice, but I didn’t want to face it. These two abortion choices often flashed back on me, often times of depression, which led to drinking, promiscuity, low self-worth, and wanting to run from myself.”

J | TX, United States

“If my story can prevent just one baby from being aborted and one girl from making the most painful mistake of her life, then it was worth telling. Abortion steals so much more than the precious, priceless life of your baby, a unique gift from God. It steals what could have been from them, from you, and your family.”

Stephanie | TX, United States

“I can’t believe what an enormous tragedy abortion is, and how Planned Parenthood acts like it’s No Big Deal. I know that there are millions of people just like us out there.”

Michael | VT, United States

“Please understand the horror of getting an abortion. It’s not a procedure to fix an illness; it’s to end a life. It’s not all going to go away, you will think about it for the rest of your life. It will haunt you. It’s not a perfect solution or fix. What you will be left with is FAR worse than any fear of motherhood. It’s not a way out.”

Jenna | IN, United States



**“Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more.” (Jesus, John 8:11)**

“I also felt like I took something from my kids that I could never replace. I stole from them the chance to have a relationship with their brother or sister. I took something from the children that I killed! I became used to running and stuffing things inside so I could get by and so no one would know what I did or the pain that was really in my heart!”

Chrystal | IN, United States

“I only remember the “counselor” asking if I had any questions. I asked when my baby would have been born, began crying, and that was it. Had I been probed by the counselor if having an abortion was my choice and what I wanted, I would have said no, but it was never probed whether I was there under duress.”

Jessica | IL, United States

“The cold, dark, heart-breaking experience at the abortion clinic slowly infiltrated every area of my life. It’s so ironic that the abortion clinic tells you how quick and safe the procedure is, but never mentions that the effects are destructive and will last a lifetime.”

Katie | IN, United States

“It is my desire in life to help women who have experienced the same pain and tell others of my regret, so I might help them make the choice I was not strong enough to make.”

Erica | GA, United States

“I had an abortion. It was my choice. I regret it.”

Erica | IL, United States

“I now know that I was not informed on how the abortion would affect me afterward, emotionally or spiritually. I did regret it, but stuffed that feeling for almost 17 years.”

Karyn | NY, United States

“I’m living proof that you never get over an abortion. Every time someone dies or I see a couple struggling to become pregnant, I’m reminded of how precious life is. If I can offer one bit of advice to a young woman in a similar situation to mine, it’s don’t have an abortion. You’ll regret it the rest of your life, just like I have.”

Debbie | MT, United States

“After years of pain, I finally went through a healing program and was able to turn it over to God and receive His forgiveness and that’s why I’m ‘silent no more!’”

Karli | MI, United States

What do you find most striking about these women’s testimonies? What themes seem to recur over and over?

Answers will vary.

Jesus came into the world for women like these. Read John 8:2-11, where Jesus meets a woman caught and convicted of her sin. What are Jesus’ final words to her in verse 11? Describe Jesus’ attitude toward this woman.

He says, “Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more.” Jesus does not condone her sin. He forgives it.

How can these words of Jesus serve as a model for us when we encounter women who have had abortions? What does God desire that they hear?

It is estimated that between one-quarter and one-third of American women have had abortions. It is quite possible that some of your students have had an abortion. When we discuss abortion in nearly any context, keep in mind that there are likely post-abortive women present. Do not minimize the sin of abortion, but do not withhold the gospel either. These women need Jesus. “For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.” (John 3:17)

The excerpt is first printed in its uninterrupted entirety; then it is repeated with notes for discussion.

## Module 5: Additional Activities

### Silent No More Awareness

Browse the website [silentnomoreawareness.org/testimonies](http://silentnomoreawareness.org/testimonies). Watch some of the videos. Think about what you encounter there.

Direct your students to the website [silentnomoreawareness.org/testimonies](http://silentnomoreawareness.org/testimonies), or take some time perusing its testimonies as a class. Watch some of the videos. Discuss what the students encounter there. The testimonies of these women are compelling, and it is worthwhile reflecting on what they have to say.

Consider having students write a short letter of comfort and hope that responds to one of these hurting women. Discuss how the gospel of Jesus Christ applies to their lives.

### ELCA Social Statement on Abortion

It is not only unbelievers who challenge us regarding abortion, but also many who bear the name of Christ. The historic universal consensus of the Christian Church on abortion no longer holds. Read and think carefully about the following excerpt from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America’s official 1991 statement regarding abortion. Where does its teaching go wrong?

It is not only unbelievers who challenge our students regarding abortion, but also many who bear the name of Christ. The historic universal consensus of the Christian Church on abortion no longer holds. This exercise will give students an opportunity to discern and respond to false teaching within the Church. Direct students to read and think critically about the following excerpt from the ELCA’s official 1991 statement regarding abortion. Then discuss it carefully as a class. Before beginning, it is important to make sure you have sufficient time to complete the discussion. Presenting false teaching without allowing time to respond to it is not helpful.

## A Social Statement on Abortion

(ELCA, 1991, pp. 6–7)<sup>29</sup>

This church recognizes that there can be sound reasons for ending a pregnancy through induced abortion. The following provides guidance for those considering such a decision. We recognize that conscientious decisions need to be made in relation to difficult circumstances that vary greatly. What is determined to be a morally responsible decision in one situation may not be in another.

In reflecting ethically on what should be done in the case of an unintended pregnancy, consideration should be given to the status and condition of the life in the womb. We also need to consider the conditions under which the pregnancy occurred and the implications of the pregnancy for the woman's life.

An abortion is morally responsible in those cases in which continuation of a pregnancy presents a clear threat to the physical life of the woman.

A woman should not be morally obligated to carry the resulting pregnancy to term if the pregnancy occurs when both parties do not participate willingly in sexual intercourse. This is especially true in cases of rape and incest. This can also be the case in some situations in which women are so dominated and oppressed that they have no choice regarding sexual intercourse and little access to contraceptives. Some conceptions occur under dehumanizing conditions that are contrary to God's purposes.

There are circumstances of extreme fetal abnormality, which will result in severe suffering and very early death of an infant. In such cases, after competent medical consultations, the parent(s) may responsibly choose to terminate the pregnancy. Whether they choose to continue or to end such pregnancies, this church supports the parent(s) with compassion, recognizing the struggle involved in the decision.

Although abortion raises significant moral issues at any stage of fetal development, the closer the life in the womb comes to full term the more serious such issues become. When a child can survive outside a womb, it becomes possible for other people, and not only the mother, to nourish and care for the child. This church opposes ending intrauterine life when a fetus is developed enough to live outside a uterus with the aid of reasonable and necessary technology. If a pregnancy needs to be interrupted after this point, every reasonable and necessary effort should be made to support this life, unless there are lethal fetal abnormalities indicating that the prospective newborn will die very soon.

Our biblical and confessional commitments provide the basis for us to continue deliberating together on the moral issues related to these decisions. We have the responsibility to make the best possible decisions in light of the information available to us and our sense of accountability to God, neighbor, and self. In these decisions, we must ultimately rely on the grace of God.

<sup>29</sup> Accessed 2 January 2015, [download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/AbortionSS.pdf](http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/AbortionSS.pdf)

## Teacher Guide: A Social Statement on Abortion

“This church recognizes that there can be sound reasons for ending a pregnancy through induced abortion.”

**Comment: The choice of words here is significant, because it obscures the hard reality of the topic being discussed. “Ending a pregnancy” sounds less evil than “ending a life” or “killing a baby,” but all three phrases actually describe the same thing. It is good to insist upon calling a thing what it is.**

“The following provides guidance for those considering such a decision. We recognize that conscientious decisions need to be made in relation to difficult circumstances that vary greatly. What is determined to be a morally responsible decision in one situation may not be in another.”

**Comment: God’s standards of right and wrong are absolute. Their truth does not change from one situation to another, though these absolute truths do apply differently to different situations. It is vital to maintain this distinction.**

The soldier who shoots an attacking terrorist and the drug dealer who shoots an enemy gang member are both pulling a trigger, but the first is acting within his vocation and the second is acting contrary to it. The absolute truth of the Fifth Commandment remains the same in both cases.

**It is another matter entirely to claim that, while it is normally wrong to murder, if one’s circumstances are difficult enough, then one may murder. This is moral relativism, not a proper application of moral truth.**

“In reflecting ethically on what should be done in the case of an unintended pregnancy, consideration should be given to the status and condition of the life in the womb.”

**Comment: Students should be well-prepared by now to respond to this sentence. The question regarding the embryo is “What is this?” not “What is its status and condition in the womb?” If the embryo is a human being, then it is a life worth preserving, regardless of its “status and condition” in the womb.**

“We also need to consider the conditions under which the pregnancy occurred and the implications of the pregnancy for the woman’s life.”

**Comment: No, these conditions and implications are not relevant to the question of the humanity of the embryo and our moral obligation to defend that life. For each of us who already have been born, the conditions under which we were conceived and the implications of our existence for our mothers’ lives do not affect the fact that we are human and our lives are worth living. The same is true for lives yet to be born.**

“An abortion is morally responsible in those cases in which continuation of a pregnancy presents a clear threat to the physical life of the woman.”

**Comment: Taken strictly at face value, this is a statement with which we could agree. Sometimes, in our efforts to save one life, an unavoidable and unintended consequence is the death of another. In these rare cases, however, it is important to note that the goal is not to take a life, but to save a life. The death of the child is an unintended and unavoidable consequence.**

“A woman should not be morally obligated to carry the resulting pregnancy to term if the pregnancy occurs when both parties do not participate willingly in sexual intercourse. This is especially true in cases of rape and incest.”

**Comment: It is impossible to maintain this argument once one comes face to face with a person conceived through rape or incest. (Consider the story of Rebecca Kiessling: [rebeccakiessling.com](http://rebeccakiessling.com).) This argument says, in effect, to such a person, “Your life was not worth protecting, because of what your father did.” It becomes clear that rapists should be punished for their crime, not their children.**

This is not to make light of rape. Mothers who bear children conceived in rape carry a tremendous burden, and they need the love and support of the Church, but abortion is not a solution to their difficulty. Among the Silent No More testimonies, there are women who are victims of rape who went on to have an abortion, and they testify that their abortions only compounded their grief.

“This can also be the case in some situations in which women are so dominated and oppressed that they have no choice regarding sexual intercourse and little access to contraceptives.”

**Comment: Note that there is an imbedded assumption here that people have a right to contraceptives, a position contrary to the historic teaching of the Christian Church.**

“Some conceptions occur under dehumanizing conditions that are contrary to God’s purposes.”

**Comment: This is true, but it does not make the children conceived any less human or loved by God. David and Bathsheba conceived a child under conditions contrary to God’s purposes, but that fact did not make the child inhuman.**

“There are circumstances of extreme fetal abnormality, which will result in severe suffering and very early death of an infant. In such cases, after competent medical consultations, the parent(s) may responsibly choose to terminate the pregnancy.”

**Comment: When our Lord Jesus encountered people who were deformed, leprous, suffering, blind, lame, mute, and with reduced life expectancies, He did not kill them. He healed them; He cared for them. We are to follow His example.**

“Whether they choose to continue or to end such pregnancies, this church supports the parent(s) with

compassion, recognizing the struggle involved in the decision.”

**Comment: The Church is called always to act in compassion, but sometimes compassion involves delivering a stern rebuke and loving correction. It is uncompassionate to smile and look on while our brothers and sisters in Christ walk in sin and become entrapped by it.**

“Although abortion raises significant moral issues at any stage of fetal development, the closer the life in the womb comes to full term the more serious such issues become.”

**Comment: Why should this be so? Growing older does not make us more human. The question regarding the embryo is “What is this?” not “How developed is this?” If the embryo is human, then he/she is deserving of life from the moment of conception, regardless of age.**

“When a child can survive outside a womb, it becomes possible for other people, and not only the mother, to nourish and care for the child. This church opposes ending intrauterine life when a fetus is developed enough to live outside a uterus with the aid of reasonable and necessary technology.”

**Comment: It is commendable that this church opposes killing some children, but why only children strong enough to survive outside the womb? Shouldn't the Church be especially concerned with protecting the lives of the weakest and most helpless? Does being strong make one more worthy of protection?**

“If a pregnancy needs to be interrupted after this point, every reasonable and necessary effort should be made to support this life, unless there are lethal fetal abnormalities indicating that the prospective newborn will die very soon.”

**Comment: This is advocacy for infanticide and euthanasia. The subject is no longer merely abortion. The child being discussed here is one who can live outside the womb “with the aid of reasonable and necessary technology.” The assumption behind this statement is that those who will soon die anyway may be put to death intentionally by human decision. Abortion and euthanasia may at first seem to be separate topics, but they and all life issues actually are closely intertwined.**

“Our biblical and confessional commitments provide the basis for us to continue deliberating together on the moral issues related to these decisions. We have the responsibility to make the best possible decisions in light of the information available to us and our sense of accountability to God, neighbor, and self.”

**Comment: Using clear language is important here. We are not called to make decisions in light of “our sense of accountability to God,” because our sense of accountability to God may be perverted and entirely contrary to His will. Rather, we are called to make decisions in light of the clear commands God has given in Scripture. His word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path.**

“In these decisions, we must ultimately rely on the grace of God.”

**Comment: The grace of God is for all, and all who repent of their sin receive it. All those post-abortive women who acknowledge their sin and look to Jesus are freed through His atoning blood.**

**Those who refuse to acknowledge their sin, however, are refusing God's forgiveness for that sin: “For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries” (Hebrews 10:26–27). To persist in sin deliberately is to invite the wrath of God on oneself.**



# Module 6:

## What Do You Say? (aka What Can You Do?)

**Objective:** Formulate a personal answer to the question “What is this?” and develop a plan of action.

**Materials:** Student Recording Sheet 6A, project creation materials

**Vocabulary:** project cycle, project-based learning, service learning

Use a KLEW<sup>30</sup> chart to review and summarize the answer to the focus question, “What Is This?” for the previous modules. As the chart is completed, consider:

- What did you Know?
- What did you Learn?
- What Evidence do you have?
- What Wonderings do you have (questions you have, what you can do)?

The KLEW chart can be completed individually, in small groups, or as a class. For Wonderings, steer students not only to what additional questions they

have, but also to what they “wonder” they may be able to DO with what they “say.”

As you realize all that you have learned and thought about through the modules in this unit, what can you do to communicate your stance on “What Is This?” Choose a project that you can realistically implement with available resources.

Students can express their personal reaction to the entire unit in a variety of ways. These include the creation of an essay, a poem, a poster, or some other creative medium of their choosing that can be used to communicate their stance to others. Additionally, students can develop projects,<sup>31 32</sup> and engage in service learning.<sup>33 34</sup>

<sup>30</sup> “Updating the K-W-L Brings the Focus Back to Literacy, Evidential Thinking”, Accessed 17 January 2015, [beyondpenguins.ehe.osu.edu/issue/learning-from-the-polar-past/updating-the-k-w-l-brings-the-focus-back-to-literacy-evidential-thinking](http://beyondpenguins.ehe.osu.edu/issue/learning-from-the-polar-past/updating-the-k-w-l-brings-the-focus-back-to-literacy-evidential-thinking)

<sup>31</sup> “Science in the 21st Century: More Than Just the Facts,” Jeremy F. Price, Diane Silva Pimentel, Katherine L. McNeill, Michael Barnett, and Eric Strauss, **The Science Teacher**, October 2011, pp. 36–41.

<sup>32</sup> October 2011, pp. 36–41. “Project-Based Science Instruction: A Primer,” Kabba Colley, **The Science Teacher**, November 2008, pp. 23–28.

<sup>33</sup> “High Quality Instruction That Transforms: A Guide to Implementing Quality Academic Service Learning,” Accessed 17 January 2015. [sl.dpi.wi.gov/files/sl/pdf/high\\_quality\\_learning\\_web.pdf](http://sl.dpi.wi.gov/files/sl/pdf/high_quality_learning_web.pdf)

<sup>34</sup> National Youth Leadership Council on Service Learning, Accessed 17 January 2015, [nylc.org/about](http://nylc.org/about)

## KLEW Chart

Know	Learn	Evidence	Wonder

## Module 6: Additional Activities

### Pro-life Resources

Sources of pro-life information and ideas for pro-life advocacy can be researched and presented to the students, so that they can become aware of some ideas of what they can do.

### Service Learning

Using the information students learned, service learning can be implemented as students are encouraged to create a project idea. They will develop a plan of action, delineate specific, realistic actions they can take to further their determined cause, identify the resources needed, and implement their plan.

### Resources

“Science in the 21st Century: More Than Just the Facts,” Jeremy F. Price, Diane Silva Pimentel, Katherine L. McNeill, Michael Barnett, and Eric Strauss, **The Science Teacher**, October 2011, pp. 36–41.

““Project-Based Science Instruction: A Primer,” Kabba Colley, **The Science Teacher**, November 2008, pp. 23–28.

“High Quality Instruction That Transforms: A Guide to Implementing Quality Academic Service-Learning,” Accessed 6 April 2015, [dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/service-learning/pdf/high\\_quality\\_learning\\_web.pdf](http://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/service-learning/pdf/high_quality_learning_web.pdf)

National Youth Leadership Council on Service Learning, Accessed 6 April 2015, [nylc.org/page/who-we-are#](http://nylc.org/page/who-we-are#)



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