

<b>Conflict</b>	Dispute between sides, can be between individuals, groups or nations.
<b>Forgiveness</b>	Letting go of blame against a person for wrongs they have done; moving on.
<b>Holy War</b>	War that is believed to be sanctioned by God.
<b>Justice</b>	Bringing fairness back to a situation.
<b>Just War</b>	Set of rules for fighting a war in a way believed to be justified and acceptable to God.
<b>Nuclear Deterrence</b>	Having nuclear weapons with the aim of deterring/preventing other states attacking for fear of retaliation and nuclear war (possibly leading to Mutually Assured Destruction).
<b>Pacifism</b>	Belief that all violence is wrong, which then affects all behaviours
<b>Reconciliation</b>	Making up and rebuilding relationships between two groups/sides after disagreement.
<b>Retaliation</b>	To pay someone back for their harmful actions.
<b>Terrorism</b>	Use of violence and threats to intimidate others; used for political purposes to build fear in the ordinary population and to secure demands from Government.
<b>Weapons Of Mass Destruction</b>	Weapons which cause widespread, indiscriminate damage (eg nuclear, chemical, biological).

The aim of this unit is to understand the different viewpoints about war and its impacts. You will look at different religious beliefs, weapons of mass destruction and the effects of war.

**Non-Religious attitudes to war:**

People who don't follow a religion, such as humanists and atheists, have their own viewpoints on conflict. Their views are similar to Christians; they don't agree with it. However, their reasons for these views are different from Christians because they don't believe in God.

Humanists and atheists would agree that life is valuable, to be lived to the fullest. But this is not because they believe God created it. They don't believe in life after death, so they feel that life is to be valued because the only life someone has is the one they enjoy on earth. This leads them to think that great care should be taken with human life.

Most Humanists believe that violence only causes damage to and loss of life therefore is best avoided; war should only be used as a last resort. The only reason a war might be viewed as 'just' is if it is in self-defence, or in protecting others, for example, defending a weaker nation.

Both humanists and atheists are against any conflict that is caused by religion. Atheists blame much of the world's conflict on religion.

**Religious attitudes to war:**

**Christianity**

- They believe that life is sacred, and has value because God created it; therefore, nobody should take someone's life.
- God created humans in his image, therefore, we should respect his work by cherishing it, not destroying it.
- Christians place great emphasis on the importance of peace. They follow the teachings and example of Jesus, who they view as a peacemaker. "Turn the other cheek".
- However, many Christians will accept conflict as a last resort, providing all other peaceful methods have been explored, such as negotiating, discussions, and sanctions.
- They do not accept war or violence that is caused by religious differences, or by those trying to impose their religious beliefs on others.

**Islam**

- The word "Islam" means peace or submission to God. Muslims believe obeying God's call and living by His moral values leads to a peaceful life. "Oh you who believe! Enter into peace (Islam) wholeheartedly" Surah 22:08
- Muslims should work for peace, even when they face criticism and hate from others "Most Gracious are those who work on the earth in humility and when the ignorant address them, they say "Peace" Surah 25:63
- The Qur'an described Islam as "Dar as Salaam" the house of peace.
- Muslims greet each other by saying "salaam alaykum" "May peace be upon you"
- The Ummah (Muslim community) is very important – Muslims should try to live in peace with each other and support each other.
- One of Allah's attributes is As Salam source of peace.
- Heaven is described as a place of peace "For them will be a home of peace in the presence of the Lord" Surah 6:127
- Peace means more than just absence of war, but also the absence of corruption, tyranny, oppression, and injustice.

**Weapons of mass destruction:**

**Arguments for:**

Having WMDs acts as a deterrent. Countries are much less likely to attack if WMDs are present

Having WMDs actually keeps the peace. The use of a WMD on Hiroshima and Nagasaki brought the war to an end. More people would have died if the war had continued.

The use of a WMD at the end of the Second World War gave an important message. No nuclear weapons have been used since. This is a good thing.

WMD manufacture provides jobs and wealth to a country eg many people in Scotland are employed by the UK's nuclear deterrent system called Trident.

**Arguments against:**

There can never be an acceptable reason to have or potentially use WMDs. They kill huge numbers of innocent people

They are controlled from a distance or dropped from planes or drones. The people who use them never fully understand the damage they cause. Too easy to walk away from this kind of destruction.

WMD production and maintenance is expensive. Money would be better spent on education or healthcare.

WMDs create inequality. Only the rich and powerful can afford them.

WMDs can easily fall into the wrong hands or be used by poor leaders eg the threat posed by the unpredictable leadership in North Korea.

Biological and chemical weapons are frequently used by dictators to keep people living in fear and preserve power eg chemical attacks by the government on Syrian people who want to change the government.

**Can a war be holy?**

A Holy War is a war declared or waged in support of a religious cause. For many people, the idea of a Holy War seems to be a contradiction. They think that no activity that involves killing in large numbers can possibly have any religious inspiration or justification.

Christianity and Islam are peaceful religions. Therefore wars in the name of religion seem to go against religious teachings. Christians and Muslims believe that peace should always be a priority, there are some who believe however that there are certain circumstances where their religion needs to be defended.

There are teachings in the Qur'an and the Christian Old Testament which suggest that violence can be appropriate sometimes.