Topic	Knowledge
Ethics & Ethical Theories	* **Ethics is a branch of philosophy concerned with what is good for individuals and society**. Derives from the Greek word *ethos*. * Normative ethics - **How do we decide what is right and wrong?** Ethics helps us to identify what is right and wrong. When we know what is right and wrong we can make moral decisions. Ethical theories help us to make the right decisions in moral dilemmas.
Utilitarianism	* Utilitarianism is an ethical theory that determines right from wrong by focusing on outcomes. **Jeremy Bentham** (1748-1832), a legal reformer and philosopher developed the utilitarian approach to ethics. Bentham said that all decisions should be made with the **aim of achieving the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people**. Bentham's utilitarianism is often reffered to as act utilitarianism **J.S. Mill develops Bentham's utilitarianism**. Mill argues that happiness is not equal, he argues that some pleasures are better than others. Mill also argued that to stop and use the hedonic calculus for each action is not practical. *Mill developed rule utilitarianism. Rule utilitarians believe that we can maximise utility only by setting up a moral code that contains rules. The correct moral rules are those whose inclusion in our moral code will produce better results (more happiness/ pleasure) than other possible rules. *Strengths include being an easy theory to follow/ apply, maximising happiness makes sense, everyone wants to be happy. *Weaknesses include; people all have different definitions of what happiness is, the outcome of actions can not always be predicted correctly and bad actions could be justified by a utilitarian if the consequences bring about happiness.
Situation Ethics	*Is a **theory where the situation is taken into account, before deciding on the rules of right and wrong**. **Joseph Fletcher** developed the theory of situation ethics in the 1960's. His book: Situation Ethics: the new morality, was published in 1966. Fletcher was a Christian, and his faith influenced his ethical theory. * Situation ethics has Christian foundations. Situation ethics states that there are NO moral laws or rules and that the context is important. The general rule of this approach is that the correct action should be the most loving thing action. * There is no set of rules, because what might be considered immoral in one situation could be considered the most moral thing to do in another. As each situation is different, the outcome therefore will be too. This approach allows the individual to focus on all the factors involved and weigh them up. The general rule of this approach is that the correct action should be the most loving action. * Joseph Fletcher stated that agape is the only love that applies in decision making. Agape love is unconditional love and Fletcher described it as "giving love – non-reciprocal, neighbour regarding". *A strength of the theory is that each situation is different so deserves consideration, however a weakness is that each person's definition of love is different so cannot ensure the most loving action is always carried out.
Virtue Ethics	*An ethical theory that says a right act is the action a virtuous person would do in the same circumstances. Virtue Ethics has founding fathers from both Western and Eastern Philosophy: Plato and Aristotle (Western Philosophy/ Greek) and Confucius and Mencius (Eastern/Chinese philosophy). **Virtue ethics Person based ethics; Not single action based; Focus on whole life**. Dictionary definition: behaviours showing high moral standards **To possess a virtue is to be a certain person**. Virtue ethicists, like Aristotle, said that it is rare to find someone who is fully virtuous. We all possess the virtues to varying degrees. *We all look towards those who are fully virtuous to know what the right action is an a situation. * Strengths of VE; Focuses on the individual and building ourselves into better people and motivates us to work on morality. *Weaknesses of VE; there is no single answer for what should be done in a moral dilemma; focus on developing characteristics instead of identifying right or wrong actions.
Natural Moral Law	*Natural Moral Law - is a form of divine command theory. It argues that God created the universe according to rational principles and that nature is ordered. ***Aristotle is often considered the founder of natural law.** *Aquinas adapted Aristotle's theory to make it fit with a Christian world-view. * The Natural Law is based on Aristotle's idea that **everything has a purpose**, revealed in its design or natural form, and that the fulfilment of the purpose is the supreme 'good' to work towards. * For Aquinas, the creation of the world reveals God's goodness and that implies that what is in the universe is also good and has a purpose. The universe follows certain rational rules, which Aquinas calls natural laws.

	Unlike non human beings (animals), humans have free will, which means they have choice and responsibility. They also have reason. Like Aristotle, Aquinas argues that the primary function of human beings is to reason well. They must use their reason to know God and that is the ultimate fulfilment or happiness. The purpose of human beings is to find truth and in the process lead a virtuous life. **The purpose of the Natural Moral Law then is to work out how humans can be moral. An action is good if it contributes to our purpose or** *telos*.
Deontology	*Deontology- moral system independent of religion, based on two key ideas – reason and duty.* * **Immanuel Kant (**1724 – 1804) was a German Philosopher and one of the most influential thinkers of modern Europe and the late Enlightenment. Kant was born, loved and died in the Prussian city of Königsberg, now part of Russia. * Kant wrote a book called *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*, in this book Kant explains deontology, sometimes called Kantian Ethics. K**ant believed that morality is independent of God's will. It is part of the fabric of the universe and something we can all discover through reason.** We have a sense of moral duty – we feel what is right and wrong and feel compelled to choose what is right to know which acts are right – the acts that are our moral duty to perform, Kant introduces the categorical imperative. The Categorical imperative- act as you would want all other people to act. * Strengths include: Human beings are all treated fairly – not something to be exploited for the greater happiness of others and Clear and easy to follow – clear laws which are the same for everyone * Weaknesses include: Cold and impersonal and No flexibility- deontology leaves individuals no room to consider the circumstances

Key Word	Meaning
Ethics	Moral principles that govern a person's behaviour.
Moral Principles	Moral principles – ideals that we try to follow in our attempt to live right and be good people, instead of bad.
Moral Dilemma	A situation where a decision maker must make a difficult decision between two possible moral decisions.
Utilitarianism	Utilitarianism is an ethical theory that determines right from wrong by focusing on outcomes.
Situation Ethics	A theory where the situation is taken into account first, before deciding on the rules of right and wrong.
Virtue Ethics	An ethical theory that says a right act is the action a virtuous person would do in the same circumstances.
Virtue	Behaviours showing high moral standards
Natural Moral Law	A form of divine command theory. It argues that God created the universe according to rational principles and that nature is ordered.
Deontology	A moral system independent of religion, based on two key ideas – reason and duty
Categorical Imperative	Act as you would want all other people to act.

Quotes
'The greatest happiness for the greatest number'   **Jeremy Bentham**
"It is better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied"   **John Stuart Mill**
Only one thingis intrinscially good, namely love, nothing else at all'   **Joseph Fletcher**
'Reason in man is rather like God in the world'   **Aquinas**
'Always recognise that human individuals are ends and no not use them as a means to your end'   **Immanuel Kant**