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## Lesson plan

# Capital punishment

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<b>The big picture</b>	Capital punishment (the death penalty) is where a government orders a person put to death by the state as a punishment for a crime. Crimes that may incur the death penalty in some countries include crimes against humanity, espionage, genocide, murder, treason and war crimes.
<b>Learning objectives</b>	<p>What? Learn about the extent of the use of capital punishment in the twenty-first century.</p> <p>Why? To understand the continuing use of capital punishment.</p> <p>How? After studying this topic, students should be able to evaluate and analyse the past/continuing use of capital punishment and religious attitudes towards it.</p>
<b>Starter activity</b>	Write down what you understand about the use and purpose of capital punishment.
<b>Lesson activities</b>	<p>Make a detailed timeline on the ending of capital punishment.</p> <p>Discuss, either in groups or in pairs: 'Is there any place for capital punishment in a modern ethical society?'</p> <p>Prepare a group response to the following statements:</p> <p>'We cannot teach that killing is wrong by killing.' (US Catholic Conference)</p> <p>'To take a life when a life has been lost is revenge, it is not justice.' (Archbishop Desmond Tutu)</p> <p>Punishment should be inflicted: 'for the sake of ratifying the feeling of hatred — call it revenge, resentment, or what you will — which the contemplation of such [offensive] conduct excites in healthily constituted minds.' (James Fitzjames Stephens)</p>
<b>Plenary</b>	Explain opinions to the rest of the class.
<b>Homework task</b>	Write an essay on the various arguments for and against the use of capital punishment.
<b>Differentiation</b>	Teachers may wish to make key points on a worksheet for dyslexic or EAL students.

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