

# Crises of Conscience

## Task Instructions: Exploring Crises of Conscience

In this unit, we've examined several "crises of conscience"—situations where individuals, societies, or even entire nations face difficult moral dilemmas, often with no easy answers. Your task is to delve deeper into one of these crises, or another of your choosing, and explore its complexities.

### Choose a Crisis:

Select one of the crises below or identify another contemporary issue that presents a significant ethical challenge. If you choose a topic not covered in class, please discuss it with your teacher first.

### Write a piece:

Write a piece covering the crisis you've picked

Write to a specific purpose: to reflect, to explain, to argue, to express

Write in a specific text type: Short story, speech, personal essay, feature article.

For more information regarding text types, see [HERE](#)

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## Labour Exploitation

**Idea:** Explores the human and environmental costs of fast fashion, including sweatshop labour and worker exploitation.

**Video:** The True Cost (2015) - Documentary on the fashion industry

☐ Watch Clip: [The True Cost Trailer](#)

☐ Read:

<https://globalaffairs.org/bluemarble/how-shein-and-temu-get-around-us-labor-laws-ban-products-made-forced-labor>

### Consider the following:

- ☐ How does the fashion industry's pursuit of profit impact workers in developing countries?
  - ☐ What ethical dilemmas do consumers face when buying cheap clothing? Is it acceptable for consumers to benefit (cheap prices) from the suffering of labourers?
  - ☐ How does this relate to the moral dilemma in Omelas?
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## Environmental Degradation

**Idea:** Examines the impact of climate change and the ethical responsibilities of individuals, corporations, and governments.

**Video:** Before the Flood (2016) - Documentary on climate change

☐ Watch Clip: [Before the Flood Trailer](#)

☐ Read: [about how climate change disproportionately affects vulnerable communities](#)

### Consider the following:

- ☐ How does environmental degradation disproportionately affect vulnerable communities?
  - ☐ What sacrifices are being made for economic progress, and who bears the cost?
  - ☐ How does this create a crisis of conscience for individuals and societies?
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### Technology and Exploitation

**Idea:** Explores how the mining of conflict minerals (parts used in mobile phones) in the Congo fuels violence and exploitation.

- ☐ Watch Clip: [Congo: Blood, gold and mobile phones](#)
- ☐ Read: <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cn01k8948v1o>

#### Consider the following:

- ☐ How does the demand for technology contribute to suffering in other parts of the world?
  - ☐ What ethical responsibilities do tech companies and consumers have?
  - ☐ How does this relate to the moral dilemma in Omelas?
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### Dependence on Social Media

**Idea:** Examines how social media platforms manipulate users, exploit their data, and contribute to societal issues like addiction, polarisation, and misinformation.


- ☐ Watch Clip: [The Social Dilemma | Official Trailer](#)
- ☐ Read: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/petersuciu/2025/02/09/social-media-literacy-still-lacking--could-that-change/>

#### Consider the following:

- ☐ What are the consequences of social media addiction and polarisation?
  - ☐ How does this create a crisis of conscience for tech companies and users?
  - ☐ How does this relate to the moral dilemma in Omelas?
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### Taiwan and semiconductor chips

**Idea:** Explores the complex relationship between Taiwan, its semiconductor industry (TSMC), and global powers like the US and China. Focuses on how Taiwan's economic importance makes it a focal point of geopolitical tension and the potential for crisis.

**Watch Clip:**  [Why the U.S. and China are So Interested in Taiwan](#)

**Read:**

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2024-10-22/silicon-chip-semiconductor-dominance-tsmc-nvidia/104497676>

#### Consider the following:

- ☐ How does Taiwan's position as a leading semiconductor producer create both opportunities and vulnerabilities?
- ☐ What are the ethical dilemmas faced by companies like TSMC, caught between competing geopolitical interests?

- ☐ How does the potential for conflict in the Taiwan Strait create a crisis of conscience for global leaders, businesses, and individuals who rely on semiconductors? Is it acceptable to rely on a potentially unstable source for vital technology?