

**ROLE PLAY
DEATH WITH DIGNITY?**

1. Give a brief overview of euthanasia and the issues involved.
2. Discuss the attached Salt Lake Tribune and Deseret News articles dealing with the issue.
3. Designate one student to be the judge with the rest of the class to be the jury.
 - A. Have the judge read the Oregon Statute, Death With Dignity Act, and the handout, "To Kill or Not to Kill."
 - B. Let the jury discuss Martha's fate from the handout and reach a decision.
4. Divide the class into five groups. Read the fact situation, "Death With Dignity." Have the groups role play the positions as outlined in the handout: John's father; John's mother; Julie, John's girlfriend; John's Uncle Leo; Reverend Smith.
5. Debrief using the following chart:

Euthanasia okay; it relieves suffering	Euthanasia wrong; okay if family member	Euthanasia morally and ethically wrong	Euthanasia wrong; might get better	Euthanasia legally wrong
(Mom's view?)	(Dad's view?)	(Reverend's view?)	(Julie's view?)	(Uncle Leo's view?)

ROLE PLAY DEATH WITH DIGNITY?

John Jingle lived in a small town in southern Washington. He worked part-time as a lumberjack in northern Oregon. He was 23 when he was hit by a drunk driver. The accident left John with severe brain damage and the inability to walk, talk, eat or drink on his own. There are times when John can't even breathe on his own, and he needs to be hooked up to a respirator. John's doctors state that John's chances for any sort of recovery are nil and that he is sure to live in a hospital or rehabilitation center for the remainder of his life. John suffers from indescribable pain and is unaware of much that goes on around him. However, one thing is sure: John is not happy about his current situation in life. Though he cannot talk, John communicates through hand gestures and facial expressions his desires to end his life. However, due to his inability to move, he is unable to commit suicide as he might wish to do. John's family has come together to decide John's fate. Here are the actors — now you do the role play.

- John's father hates seeing his son suffer, but does not believe it is right to end John's life. He does, however, believe that his wife has a point in stating that John would and does not want to live like this.
- John's mother believes that John would be happier if he could just be released from his severe pain and suffering. She has considered requesting that a doctor she knows in Oregon assist in ending John's life and, therefore, the pain.
- Julie, John's girlfriend, has the hope that John will get better and that the two of them will be able to get married in the next two years as they had planned. She holds strong to her ideal that John's life should not be taken because there is a chance that he could get better, and they don't really know if John would want them to help him die.
- John's Uncle Leo is a district judge in Portland, Oregon, and talks of the legal issues raised by what John's mother wishes to have Dr. Jones do.
- Reverend Smith is the religious leader of the Jingle's non-denominational Church of Nature. He expresses the family's long-accepted belief that taking the life of any of nature's creatures is wrong. Though the Jingle's are only semi-active in the church (for example, they eat meat), they have invited the Reverend to give some "moral and religious" advise.

TO KILL OR NOT TO KILL

Wilfred, age 75, has been suffering from cancer for 20 years, and the pain has become worse and worse. The doctors say there is no treatment to either slow down the cancer's growth or substantially reduce the pain. Wilfred asks his wife, Martha, to relieve him of the terrible pain by bringing him a bottle of pills that would help him end his life. Martha, who cannot stand watching Wilfred suffer anymore, gives him the pills. He swallows them all and promptly dies.

Martha has been accused of manslaughter in the state of Utah. You are the jury and have just heard the preceding as evidence. How do you decide Martha's fate? Remember that manslaughter is the killing of a person without malice or premeditation. Manslaughter can be voluntary (intentional but not premeditated), which is the result of the heat of passion or the diminished mental capacity of the killer, or involuntary (unintentional but done during an unlawful act).