

Year Group	Subject	Topic
4	Religious Education	Humanism

Knowledge Organiser

Key question and focus for this unit:

How is Humanism the same as and different to religion?

Pupils will begin to explore the role of Humanism and its belief embedded in science. Children will find similarities between religions and Humanism to explore how different they really are. Children will learn about Humanist celebrations including naming ceremony and a wedding.

Overview

- Humanism puts human beings and their interests at the centre of things.
- Rather than focussing on religion, divine or supernatural matters, humanists believe that fulfilment is achievement through human interventions and collective efforts.
- Humanism is a broad philosophy, and there are many different types of humanists. Most do not believe in a God or deity.
- Humanists believe that people should think freely for themselves, be rational and work together to achieve human happiness.



Humanist Origins

- Humanism can be traced back to the ancient philosophers of Greece and beyond.
- Two of the most important were Protagoras and Epicurus.
- Protagoras (490 – 420 BCE) thought that everything could be explained without supernatural or divine causes.
- Epicurus (341 - 270 BCE) also held the view that God is not necessary to explain the way things are.

Humanist Beliefs

It is important to remember that there are many kinds of humanist, who all believe in different ideas. Below are some of the most common beliefs:

- Humanism is not a religion and most humanists do not believe in God or life after death.
- Humanists believe in a '**Golden Rule**', which is '**Treat other people as you would like them to treat you.**' Humanism is all about doing good and making people happy.
- Humanism is all about finding and giving love, making others happy and making the best of the one life that we have together here on Earth.
- Humanists are **rational**. They believe that science and human thought are powerful tools for bettering life and creating a happy existence for all. They believe that science provides the best explanation for our existence – they do not believe that God created the Earth.
- Humanists are **ethical** – they value human beings – treating all equally. They believe in 'common humanity' – even though we have differences, we are all human.


Humanist Ceremonies and Milestones



Baby Naming and Welcoming: To celebrate the birth of their baby, humanists often hold these non-religious ceremonies. Parents state their love and commitment to the child, and some name 'guide-parents.' A tree may be planted to grow with the child.

Weddings: Humanists who wish to spend their lives together can commit to one another in non-religious wedding ceremonies. They often exchange vows and have poetry/prose readings.

Funerals: Humanists believe that we only have one life, and so celebrating one's life when it ends is particularly important. Humanist funeral officiants try to find out as much about the person as they can, to capture their life and personality.

Key Vocabulary		Non-Religious World View		Humanists don't believe in a religion or a god. In the past, some Humanists did believe in religion, but during the 19 th and 20 th centuries, Humanists became more secular.						
Humanist	Someone who believes in the Humanism worldview.	Humanists actively seek to live good lives without following a religion. Their moral values are based on human nature and life experiences. Humanists base their moral principles on reason, shared human values and respect for others. They believe people should work together to improve the quality of life for all. Thinkers such as Charles Darwin, Marie Curie and George Eliot have all influenced Humanism.								
Secular	Not connected with religious or spiritual matters.									
Atheist	Someone with no belief in God or gods.									
Worldview	Your ideas about life or the world.	<h3>Main Beliefs of Humanism</h3> <table><tr><td><u>Non-Existence of Gods</u> Most Humanists are atheists. They rely on science and have found no evidence that a god exists or ever existed.</td><td><u>Meaning of Life</u> Humanists give their lives meaning by living good lives. They make good choices and take an interest in the world around them.</td><td><u>Science</u> Scientific investigations gather evidence to find the truth. Humanists also use evidence to see what is true.</td></tr><tr><td><u>No Purpose to the Universe</u> They believe that the universe was created by chance, so there is no purpose to the universe.</td><td><u>Reason</u> Humanists believe decisions should not be made on emotions, but on reason, rationality and logic.</td><td><u>Ethical Decisions</u> To live good lives, decisions must be weighed up for their positive and negative consequences for all. Humanists believe there are no perfect decisions.</td></tr></table>			<u>Non-Existence of Gods</u> Most Humanists are atheists . They rely on science and have found no evidence that a god exists or ever existed.	<u>Meaning of Life</u> Humanists give their lives meaning by living good lives. They make good choices and take an interest in the world around them.	<u>Science</u> Scientific investigations gather evidence to find the truth. Humanists also use evidence to see what is true.	<u>No Purpose to the Universe</u> They believe that the universe was created by chance, so there is no purpose to the universe.	<u>Reason</u> Humanists believe decisions should not be made on emotions, but on reason, rationality and logic.	<u>Ethical Decisions</u> To live good lives, decisions must be weighed up for their positive and negative consequences for all. Humanists believe there are no perfect decisions.
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Ethical	Someone who is honest and follows good moral practice.									
Rationality	Thinking about things clearly, in a logical way, with decisions based on facts.									



Key Vocabulary		Humanism Symbols and Meanings	Humanists believe in a golden rule in life. This is to treat others how you would like to be treated.
BHA	The British Humanist Association (now operating as Humanists UK). Many Humanists in the UK are members of this association.	<p>The Humanist symbol is called the Happy Human. It was designed by Dennis Barrington who won a competition organised by the BHA in 1965. The symbol was chosen as the design was simple. The symbol shows a human, but it could have been either a male or female. Within a few years, this symbol became the international symbol of Humanism. The symbol is still used, in a range of adapted forms, in the present day.</p> 	

The British Humanist Association Values		
	Treating people with fairness and respect.	Respecting and promoting freedom, human rights and the law. Engaging in conversation and discussion with attention to detail.
	Celebrating human achievement, progress and potential.	Engaging in conversation and discussion with attention to detail and evidence.
		Cooperating with others to make good things happen, including with those of different beliefs. 