

Being good

Why might humanists think we should be good to each other?

Ask the students why they think we should be good. If the students bring up rewards and punishments, ask them why we reward people who are good and punish people who are bad.

Explain that many humanists believe we should be good to other people because we all want to be **happy**. We all want to be treated with **kindness** and respect and none of us wants to suffer or be harmed. Our actions have an **impact** on other people. Humanists believe we need to take care of each other, other animals, and the planet. Being good to each other **makes the world a better place to live**.

Give the students a list of actions and ask them whether they would make them feel happy or sad.

- 1) Someone helps you to do something you find difficult
- 2) Someone lies to you
- 3) Someone bullies you
- 4) Someone shares their sweets with you
- 5) Someone ignores you
- 6) Someone gives you a smaller piece of cake than everyone else
- 7) Someone lets you choose to do what you would like to do

Explain that there is a lot of agreement on the things that make us feel happy and sad. We have many shared feelings and needs. Thinking about how we might feel can help us to imagine how other people might feel. Many humanists believe this can help us to work out how we should treat other people.

How might humanists decide what is the best thing to do?

Explain that rules can sometimes help us to decide what we should do and sometimes other people can help to guide us. However, humanists believe we also need to **think carefully for ourselves** and try to act in a way that supports happiness and avoids suffering (note: this does not mean we must always act in ways that make people happy in the moment - sometimes we need to think about the bigger picture - e.g. helping a child to live a happy life might mean we don't always give them sweets whenever they demand them).

Many humanists believe

- We need to think about the **consequences** of our actions on other people.
- We need to use **empathy** to think about how other people might feel.

Humanists will often say that we should treat other people the way we would like to be treated. This is called **the Golden Rule**.

Being good can make us happy

Explain that many humanists believe there are other benefits to being good. Making other people happy can also make us happy. And being good can sometimes persuade other people to be good too.

Show the quotes on the slides and discuss them with the students.