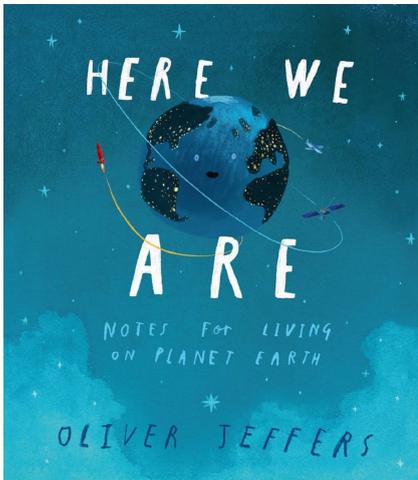


Here We Are: Notes for Living on Planet Earth

by Oliver Jeffers



Here We Are by Oliver Jeffers is a book written as a father's advice to his newborn son: 'These are the things I think you need to know.' The messages in the book are ones that many humanists would have sympathy with.

The book can be read to help introduce students to the humanist approach to life, or it could be read following an introduction to humanism with students asked to make links between the messages in the book and what they know about humanism.

If you don't have the book, you could watch this film:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=cPPQdDwTUvE

Below are some of the key messages in the text and how they can be linked to humanist beliefs and the humanist approach to life.

Page	Text	Links to humanist beliefs and values
3	'Welcome to this planet. We call it Earth... It is the big globe floating in space on which we live.'	The world is a natural place. It is where we will live our whole lives (unless we are lucky enough in the future to visit the moon or other planets).
5	'We're glad you found us as space is very big.'	On the scale of the universe, we and our planet are tiny. However, that does not mean we and our planet are not important to us and to other people.
9	'Then there is the sea which is full of wonderful things.'	The world is full of wonders. We should explore them and learn about them.
11	'There is also the sky. Though that can get pretty complicated'	The night sky can be a source of wonder. In the past we didn't know much about how the universe worked, but today we know a great deal more.
13	'You are a person. You have a body.'	Without our bodies and brains, we do not exist. Our bodies are not perfect but we can do some pretty incredible things.
15	'People come in many shapes, sizes, and colours... but don't be fooled, we are all people.'	We might look different on the outside, but on the inside we are all very similar. It is good that we are all different and have different tastes and talents. It makes life interesting. But, when we think about how to treat other people, we should remember we are all human first, and we should treat everybody equally and with respect.

Page	Text	Links to humanist beliefs and values
17	'There are animals too... They can't speak, though that's no reason not to be nice to them.'	Other animals cannot speak like us, but they can suffer, so we should treat them kindly.
19	You may not be able to speak yet either, even though your head is full of questions.'	Curiosity can be one of the great pleasures in life. We should never stop asking questions. We should look for evidence to help us to find answers.
25	'More often, though, they move quickly, so use your time well. It will be gone before you know it.'	This is the one life we have so we should make the most of it. We should be free to find what makes us happy and support other people to do the same.
27	'Though we have come a long way, we haven't quite worked everything out, so there is plenty left for you to do. You will figure lots of things out for yourself. Just remember to leave notes for everyone else.'	We have answered many questions about how the world works, but we haven't answered everything. We can learn from other people, but we should also think for ourselves about the answers we are given. Human beings have the incredible capacity to share our ideas with each other. This is what has allowed us to make progress in our understanding of the world.
29	'It looks big, Earth. But there are lots of us on here so be kind.'	We need to think about other people as well as ourselves. We can use empathy to imagine how other people might feel. This can help us to see why we should be kind. We should all try to live together peacefully.
31	'Well that is Planet Earth. Make sure you look after it, as it's all we've got.'	Human beings have responsibility for making the world a better place and taking care of each other and the planet. Help won't come from elsewhere. It is up to us.
37	'You're never alone on Earth.'	The connections we make with other people can be one of the most valuable and fulfilling things in life.