

Human solidarity

1) Ask the students to make a list of ways in which human beings are **different** from each other. Once they have made a list, share a few examples with them (e.g. physical differences, place of birth, talents, personalities, beliefs).

2) Then ask the students to make a list of ways in which all human beings are **similar** to each other.

Suggest that they consider the things we need, the things we want, the things we value.

Once they have made a list, share a few examples with them (e.g. our need for food, health, and friendship; our desire to be happy and to be treated with respect; and the value we place on fairness, honesty, and kindness).

Explain that many humanists think that, when we are deciding what kind of society we want, it is important to focus on what we all **share** rather than how we differ. Share and discuss the quotes below.

'We are far more united and have far more in common with each other than things that divide us.'

Jo Cox politician and humanist

'The truth of humanity is that we are one, whilst we are different. We must oppose any who seek to divide and dehumanise us.'

Alice Roberts, President of Humanists UK

'Science has shown that all human beings belong to the same species, so we should respect each other.'

Lola Tinubu, Association of Black Humanists

'Being a humanist means being a person that puts human beings first, being a person that doesn't look at humans in terms of their religions, in terms of their tribes, in terms of their races. A person that looks at people because they are human beings like you.'

Kato Mukasa, Uganda Humanists Association

Our differences can be positive: we can celebrate the rich variety of human talents and personalities. But when it comes to how we treat each other, many humanists believe we need to recognise that **we are all human beings first** with many shared interests, needs, and feelings. We should not treat people differently according to their gender, race, nationality, sexuality, disabilities, or religion or belief.

3) Show the students the slide featuring quotes about being a citizen of the world.

Ask the students what they think the people mean by these words.

Explain that human beings often divide themselves up into groups and focus on how other people are different from them. This division has been at the root of much conflict and suffering, including war, slavery, and discrimination. Tribalism can sometimes be a bigger cause of harm than individually selfish behaviour. Humanists typically support the sentiments expressed in these quotes. This does not mean humanists believe we must get rid of all countries and borders, but many believe we should show **human solidarity** regardless of where we come from or our many other differences. Recognising that we are all human can help us to see that we should **treat people equally**.

'If 'humanism' means anything at all, it must surely embrace respect and concern for all human beings, whether they are members of our own family or group or society or are people on the other side of the world whom we do not know and will never meet. It means a responsiveness to the needs of all with whom we share a common humanity.'

Richard Norman, humanist philosopher