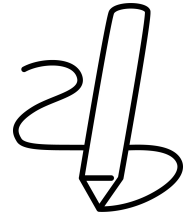


The one life: overview (age 11+)

Big question: How should I live?

Key vocab: mortality, the one life, meaning, happiness, connections, wonder, freedom, personal autonomy, responsibility, tolerance, equality, diversity



Knowledge outcomes: Students should know about the following common features of a humanist approach to living a happy life		
The belief we have one life and it is up to us to make the most of it	The absence of belief in an ‘ultimate’ external meaning to life, but the capacity to make our own lives meaningful	Believing that everyone should have the freedom to pursue what makes them happy, as long as they cause no harm
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The belief we are mortal • Potential positive consequences of accepting this is the one life we have on how we live • Recognising that our atoms, genes, ideas, works, and contributions to society can survive our deaths • The memories of someone who has died, and the impact they had on our lives, as sources of comfort and joy • Humanist funerals as an occasion for the living to grieve, to share memories, and to celebrate the life of the person who has died 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making life meaningful by seeking happiness in the here and now and supporting others to do the same • The belief there is no one single answer to what makes a happy or meaningful life • Finding meaning in connections, creativity, curiosity, achieving our goals, and making the world a better place • Feeling connected to something bigger than ourselves – a community, human history, and the natural world • Finding wonder in the natural world, the human story, science, and art 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting personal autonomy – the freedom to make choices in life about what we believe and how we live • Being the authors of our own lives • The responsibility to think carefully about our choices and the consequences of our actions • Being tolerant of different people’s lifestyle choices • Celebrating the diverse ways people can find happiness • Trying to create a world in which everyone has the opportunity to find happiness in the here and now

Introduction

- Begin with the [‘A humanist approach to life: a summary’ slide](#) to introduce/recap the core features of a humanist approach to life.
- Explain that you are going to explore how the belief that this is the one life we have affects how humanists choose to live. (If already covered, remind students about the humanist understanding of human beings: we are material and mortal and we were not created or designed for any special purpose. You could show the [slide featuring the quote from Richard Norman](#). Explain that the challenge for humanists is whether it is possible to find happiness and meaning in life when one begins from this understanding of our nature.)

Mortality and making the most of life

- Show and discuss the [What should we think about death? film](#).
- You could also show and discuss the [Philip Pullman on life and death film](#).
- Share the [Making the most of life information sheet](#) and discuss the humanist understanding that death is the end of our life and how that affects how they choose to live.
- Digging deeper: share and discuss the [Should death be a source of fear and sadness? information sheet](#).

Making life meaningful

- Show the [How can I be happy? film](#).
- Share the [Making life meaningful information sheet](#) and discuss the value humanists place on freedom, responsibility, connections, and the need for tolerance and equality.

- You could also share the [What is a humanist approach to living a happy life? information sheet](#) and /or show and discuss [What are the ingredients of the good life?](#), in which various humanists say what they think about how we should live our lives
- Digging deeper:
 - Share the [Wonder: a humanist perspective information sheet](#) and discuss where humanists believe awe and wonder can be found in a non-religious life
 - Share and discuss the [Criticisms of a humanist approach to meaning activity](#).
 - You could also show and discuss the short films
 - [Making things better](#) featuring AC Grayling
 - [Are we insignificant?](#) featuring AC Grayling
 - [Humanism and music](#), in which musician Frank Turner describes what gives his life meaning

What survives?

- Share the [What survives? information sheet](#) and discuss the humanist understanding of an afterlife.
- Carry out the [River of life activity](#).

Humanist funerals

- Share the [Humanist funerals information sheet](#) and discuss how humanist funerals reflect the humanist understanding of life and death. If the students have not encountered humanist ceremonies before you could share the [Humanist ceremonies information sheet](#) and discuss the importance of freedom and connections in a humanist approach to life.
- You could watch the short films featuring humanist celebrants talking about humanist funerals:
 - [Funerals: stories and sadness](#)
 - [Funerals: what we leave behind](#)
- Carry out the [Humanist funerals activity](#).

Summary and assessment

- Choose one or more of the following:
 - Share and discuss the [Multiple choice questions](#).
 - Carry out the [Fill in the blanks activity](#).
 - Ask students to complete the [humanist responses activity](#).
- Review the knowledge outcomes above.
- Ask the students what questions they would like to ask a humanist.