

Understanding the world: overview (age 5+)

Big question: How can I know what is true?

Key vocab: curiosity, questions, evidence, natural, atheist



Knowledge outcomes: Students should know about the following common features of a humanist approach to understanding the world		
Asking questions	Looking for evidence	Believing the world is a natural place
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The belief that one of the things that is special about human beings is our ability to ask questions Asking questions as a way to learn more about the world and to help to make our lives better Curiosity as one of life's great pleasures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not simply believing everything we are told Thinking carefully for ourselves The recognition that people sometimes make mistakes Being allowed to disagree 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The absence of belief in supernatural beings or forces The absence of belief in a god The word for someone who does not believe in a god is 'atheist' Supporting freedom of belief (and not allowing different beliefs to get in the way of friendship)

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 the way humanists understand the world around us – what they do and don't believe in and how they decide what to believe.

Questions and curiosity

- Show the [Philip Pullman on curiosity film](#) and explain that humanists think our curiosity is something special and wonderful about human beings.
- Carry out the [Asking questions activity](#) to explore why humanists believe questions are so important (they can improve our understanding of the world and help to make the world a better place).

Evidence

- Read the story of the [Emperor's New Clothes](#), discuss the meaning of the story, and connect it to the importance humanists place on thinking for ourselves and looking for evidence.

Believing the world is a natural place

- Share and discuss the [Understanding the world information sheet](#).

Summary and assessment

- Review the knowledge outcomes above.
- Ask the students what questions they would like to ask a humanist.