

What is humanism? overview (age 7+)

The suggestions below support an introduction to humanism. Other resources found under the five areas of knowledge on understandinghumanism.org.uk (human beings, understanding the world, the one life, humanist ethics, and society) will enable a fuller and richer exploration of the content introduced here.

Key vocab: non-religious, natural, evolved, science, evidence, potential, one life, freedom, happiness, empathy, responsibility

Introduction

- Explain that you are going to introduce students to a non-religious worldview called humanism.
- Begin with the '[The humanist approach to life: a summary](#)' slide to introduce the core features of the humanist approach to life.

What is humanism?

- Watch [What is humanism?](#) on BBC Bitesize: www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/znk647h/articles/zmqpkmn.
- Share and discuss the [What is humanism information sheet](#) to explore the core features of a humanist approach to life.
- You could also share the [What do humanists value? information sheet](#).
- With younger students, you could read [Here We Are](#) by Oliver Jeffers and discuss how the messages in the book might link to a humanist approach to life. Use the [Here We Are information sheet](#) to help. If you don't have the book, you could watch this film: www.youtube.com/watch?v=cPPQdDwTUvE
- With older students you could watch the BBC Bitesize film [Five facts about non-religious beliefs](#) (featuring humanist teenager Cerys) to explore what humanists believe and how they put their beliefs into practice: www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zkyn2sg/articles/zfs2kmn
- Carry out the [Humanism through objects activity](#) using the objects to provide a tangible way to help the students remember the core features of a humanist approach to life.
- Digging deeper: Watch the film [When did you decide you were a humanist?](#) and discuss the way that many humanists discover that the label fits the beliefs they already held.

Summary and assessment

- Share and discuss the [Multiple-choice questions](#).
- Carry out the [Fill in the blanks activity](#).
- Review what the students have learned about humanism. Recap the core features of a humanist approach to life.
- Share the [Happy Human symbol](#) and ask students to decorate it with words and pictures that illustrate what it means to be a humanist.
- Ask the students what questions they would like to ask a humanist.