

How does being non-religious affect my life?

Teachers note

This activity can be used at the beginning of students' learning about humanism and non-religious worldviews to explore their pre-existing knowledge and opinions, before deepening their understanding with the other resources on understandinghumanism.org.uk, which explore why humanists hold the beliefs that they do. Alternatively, it could be used following a unit of learning on humanism to assess what the students have learned and allow them to discuss and evaluate some of the claims made by humanists.

Humanists are non-religious. They do not believe in a god or in an afterlife.
What are the consequences of these beliefs on their lives?

Activity

Cut out the statements below and then pick one from the pile.

Ask yourself...

if the following statement is true, **'I am non-religious'**,

...then is it possible that the other statement you have picked is also true.

For example, if 'I am non-religious,' then is it possible that 'I am a good person'.

Extension

Once you have thought about whether it is possible, you could also ask...

- Is it likely that it is true?
- Is it certain that it is true?

Alternatively, you could try the activity with the following statements instead of 'I am non-religious'.

- 'I don't believe in a god...'
- 'I believe this is the only life I have...'

Many humanists believe that, if you are non-religious, and if you don't believe in a god or an afterlife, then it is possible that all the other statements are true. The same is true if you are religious. Humanists believe that the things that we value and think are important in life are available whether you are religious or not. For humanists, being religious is not necessary for human beings to lead good, happy, and meaningful lives.

Statements

My life can be meaningful	I have reasons to be good to other people
I can think human beings have value	I can celebrate at Christmas time
I can get married	I can be happy
I can cope when bad things happen	Something of me survives my death
I can help to make the world a better place	I can understand how the world works
I am not afraid of death	I am a good person
I have reasons to be kind to other animals and the planet	I can find wonder in the world