

Year 8 – Humanism

Key beliefs

Big Questions

- Big questions are questions that do not have a clear or simple answer, if we can find an answer at all!
- Some examples include; What happens after we die? Where do the world come from?
- Humanists would answer big questions based on evidence and experience.
- Whereas religious groups might answer big questions by turning to a God and asking for answers or looking in religious texts.

Humanist ceremonies

Weddings: Humanist weddings are planned around the couple and are very personal. They can choose which words, music, venue or friends and family are involved. A celebrant is a humanist who will often lead the ceremony.

Funerals: A funeral in humanism is also very personal. There are no prayers or religious services. The purpose for the funeral is to remember them and celebrate their life.

Key words

Humanist - A person who does not believe in God but believes that you should be a good person and that everyone is equal.

Atheist – Someone who does not believe in any kind of God.

Agnostic – A person who think that the existence of a greater power cannot be proved or disproved.

Secularism – National institutions such as governments, courts, hospitals and schools that are run without reference to any religion or God.

Dilemma – A situation in which a difficult choice has to be made between two or more alternative.

Empathy – The ability to understand another persons feelings.

Principles – Truths that act as the foundation for a system of belief or behaviour or for a chain of reasoning.

Moral – the principles of right or wrong behaviour.

Ethics - Moral principles that governs a persons behaviour and how they act.

10 commitments

The 10 commitments are a set of moral principles and values that humanists to and follow. These were created by the American Humanist Association.

1. **Altruism:** an unselfish concern for others without expecting reward or recognition.
2. **Caring for the world around us:** Everything in this world depends on each other, So we should make an effort to help and care for the earth and the environment.
3. **Critical thinking:** observe the world around us and ask questions in order to gather information and understand our environment.
4. **Empathy:** The ability to understand other peoples feelings.
5. **Ethical development:** To think about and discuss ethical decisions and dilemmas with others to understand moral issues on right and wrong.
6. **Global awareness:** To learn about and appreciate the diverse cultures and beliefs around us.
7. **Human rights:** The idea that all people are equal and should have rights as human beings.
8. **Peace and social justice:** The promotion of understanding, tolerance and friendship among different communities, countries and religions.
9. **Responsibility:** To be morally responsible for our own actions. We should tell the truth and live up to promises we have made and follow the law.
10. **Service and participation:** To take part in school and the community to help us understand and take part in real life situations and help each other live good lives.

Moral Dilemmas

Moral dilemma 1:

A car is set on fire and you can only choose to save one person, either your parent or a scientist who can cure cancer.

Which decision do you make?

How do you decide this?

Religious people will make this decision based on religious teaching and guidance. But a humanist

Moral dilemma 2: