# Year 8 - Worldviews - What is Humanism?

| Key words | |
|---|---|
| ***agnostic*** | somebody who accepts we can't know whether a god exists or not. |
| ***atheist*** | somebody who does not believe in a god. |
| ***belief*** | accepting that something exists or is true, especially one without proof. |
| ***Big Bang theory*** | Scientific theory for how the universe began. |
| ***evidence*** | information that might lead someone to believe something to be real or true. |
| ***evolution theory*** | Scientific theory for how life has developed on the earth from small organisms over time. |
| ***Golden Rule*** | Treat other people as you'd want to be treated in their situation. |
| ***humanist*** | atheists and agnostics who believe it is possible to lead good and happy lives without god. |
| ***proof*** | a fact that shows something to be real or true. |
| ***scepticism*** | questioning and investigating claims to assess whether they are true or false. |
| ***secularism*** | idea of separation of the government from religious institutions. |
| ***theist*** | somebody who believes in a god. |

## 1. What is atheism and agnosticism?

An **atheist** is somebody who does not believe in a god. An **agnostic** is somebody who says we cannot know whether a god exists or not. **Humanists** are atheists and agnostics who believe it is possible to lead good and happy lives without god. Many humanists believe that it is up to **theists** to prove the existence of a god, not for them to prove there is not a god.

**Reasons for not believing**

**1.** The 'hearing god's voice' could just be your conscience.
**2.** Holy books are written by human beings, why should we trust one holy book over the others?
**3.** We need to think for ourselves, not just believe others.
**4.** Lots of people believing something doesn't make it true.
**5.** Faith is not a reliable enough reason to believe. We should always look for evidence.
**6.** We can't answer all our questions does not mean that we won't be able to answer them in the future.

## 2. What is Humanism?

Humanists UK has been around since 1896. It campaigns for non-religious views to be heard fairly.

**Five core Humanist beliefs, values and goals**

We are made from natural materials. We have the potential to shape ourselves into who we want to be.

We should look for evidence to help us answer our questions. There is no evidence of a supernatural world.

We should be the authors of our own lives. Human beings are creative – this enables us to solve problems and can bring us joy.

We should be kind, compassionate and use empathy when thinking about how to treat other people.

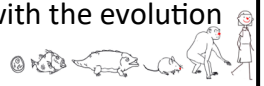
We alone are responsible for making the world a better place.

## 3. What do humanist believe about humans?

**Where do we come from?**

***How did everything begin?*** The world most likely began with a Big Bang theory, evidence of this with the 'red shift'.

***How did we get here?*** Humanists agree with the evolution theory about how the humanity got here.



**Where are we?**

***What are we like as humans?*** Our qualities have evolved over time. **Bad:** we can be angry, irrational, 'stuck in our ways'. **Good:** we are able to reason, understand things, create things, we can use empathy, compassion, & kindness.

**Where are we going?**

***What is the potential of humans?*** We have the potential to make the world a better if we focus on our good qualities.

## 4. What do humanist believe about the world?

**Scepticism:** Beliefs can be mistaken and should be open to question. We should be willing to change beliefs with new evidence, being comfortable with uncertainty.

**Natural place:** The world is natural, there are no supernatural beings or forces. Supporting freedom of belief and non-belief.

**Science:** Asks questions and test claims, claims based on faith cannot be tested by science. Philosophy can be used to answer questions that science can't answer. Being curios is a pleasure and science is a source of wonder.

## 5. What do humanists want for society?

> Want a **pluralist society,** where people from different backgrounds, cultures, and traditions, with a range of worldviews.
> Want a **secular society,** where government and religion is completely separate.
> Believe that secularism supports freedom, fairness, and peace for all, religious and non-religious.
> We are all responsible for making the world a fairer and better place for all, part of this can be done with 'Human Rights'.

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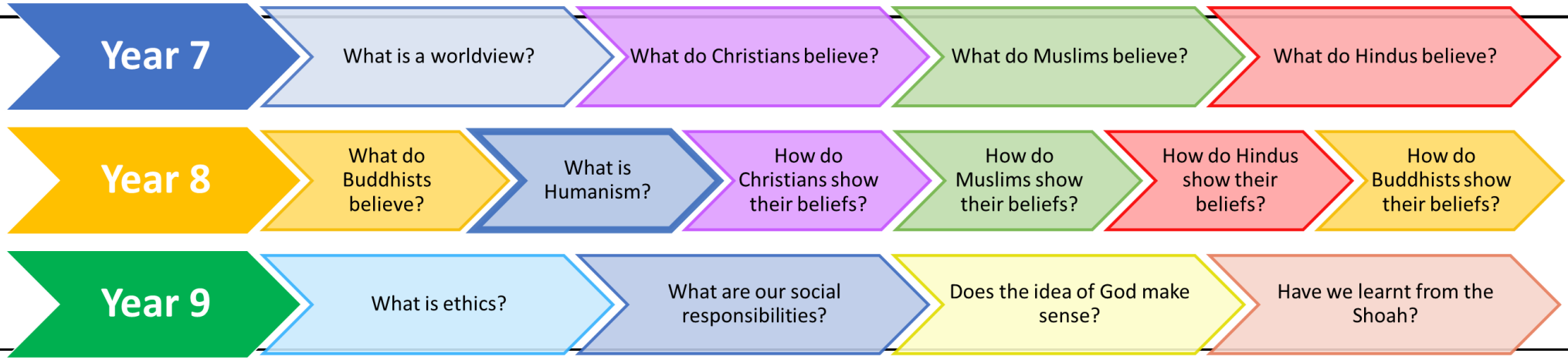
**AIM:** This unit of work is to allow you to develop your understanding of a non-religious worldview. You will use knowledge from previous units on religious beliefs of Christians, Buddhists and Muslims to compare to a non-religious approach to life. You will explore what a belief is, and how humanists aim to live a good life without religious guidance.
Parts of these beliefs will be revisited in future units of work: **'What happens when we die?', 'What is ethics?', 'What are our social responsibilities?' and 'Does the idea of God make sense?'.**




This knowledge organiser gives you the basic information for this unit. There are different ways that you can use your knowledge organiser - **you should not just copy from the knowledge organiser.**
Below are a range of activities you could do, you do not need to do them all. Select the things that you think will help you remember the information. Don't worry if one doesn't work, try a different way until you find an activity that works for you. Some activities are harder than others, chose one that challenges you, if you find one too hard try a different one.

- Use the 'Look, cover, write and check' strategy.
  - **Look:** Look at and read a section for a few minutes.
  - **Cover:** Cover that section/put away the sheet.
  - **Write:** Write anything you can remember from what you just read.
  - **Check:** Check what you have written then correct/add in anything missing.
  - **Repeat:** Repeat this with each section until you can remember it all.
- Write a basic recall quizzing questions. Leave it overnight and try to answer them the next day.
- Write yourself or a partner some quiz questions. Quiz each other or swop your questions to see if you can answer each other's questions.
- Write a letter/blog/article to someone explaining a key idea or concept.
- Get your parents/carers to test you.
- Create mind maps or flashcards.
- Create fact files for each key area.
- Summarise each section in your own words.
- Get sticky with your learning: write out key points from the KO as you read over it on post-it notes.
- Write your own challenging questions using the command words below then, write an answer for these questions.
  - **explain** (say why/how something is done)
  - **compare** (what do two or more things have in common/ different),
  - **evaluate** (weigh up positives and negatives, arguments for and against).
- Draw images and annotate/label them with extra information.
- Put the key words from your KO into new sentences.
- Give yourself spelling tests or keyword definition tests.
- Think about the big picture – why is knowing specific information important to you/other people/society/companies/science/technology?
- Think about the big picture – are there any links in the content on your KO to anything that you have watched on TV, read about or heard in the news?