

RE, Philosophy and Ethics (RPE) –

Closure work for Year 8

You've now been introduced to the topic of Religion in the Contemporary World and we are now going to look at Humanism, a popular belief in modern Britain and you'll find out what they believe and why, as well as how, their ideas could relate to Philosophers' beliefs.

Tasks:

1. Read this summary of what Humanists believe:

- Humanists believe human beings are special and human life is valuable
- Humanists don't believe in a god, or believe we can never know if there is a god
- Humanists don't believe there is any evidence for an afterlife: we should therefore make the most of this life
- Humanists believe human beings should try to live full and happy lives and help others to do the same

2. Create at least three symbols, which explain what Humanists believe and then, beneath each symbol, explain why you have created that symbol.

3. Read this summary on Aristotle and Happiness.

"Happiness does not lie in amusement; it would be strange if I were to take trouble and suffer hardship all my life in order to amuse myself" (Aristotle).

Is having a good life just about happiness?

- Aristotle wrote over 2,000 years ago and came up with the idea of eudaimonia
- Eudaimonia is a Greek word which means 'flourishing' or 'the good life'

- Instead of focusing on pure happiness Aristotle suggests we should try and build a balanced, full life with achievements you can be proud of and a legacy after you have died.

4. Summarise:

- a. What is this belief called?
- b. What might lead to eudaimonia?
- c. What might not lead to eudaimonia?

5. Read this summary on Bentham and Happiness.

“Create all the happiness you are able to create: remove all the misery you are able to remove” (Bentham).

Hedonism is a belief that pleasure is the only goal in life

- Hedonists believe the only purpose of life is to get as much pleasure as possible
- They do not think anyone should be made to suffer
- They want to maximise pleasure and reduce pain for the most people

6. Summarise:

- a. What is this belief called?
- b. How might Bentham's idea link to happiness?

7. Stretch and Challenge: ‘Happiness should be the only thing people should aim for’.

- a. Respond to this statement, using Hedonism to agree

On the one hand a hedonist would argue that happiness is the most important aim in life and that we should reduce pain and increase happiness, because...

b. Respond to this statement, using Eudaimonia to disagree

On the other hand the theory of eudaimonia says...

c. Conclude with an overall conclusion

It could be concluded that...