

A Humanist Manifesto

This PowerPoint sequence supports ideas from RE Today's book *Examining RE: Atheists*, 2018
Start your class off on the next slide.

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A Humanist Manifesto

- A 'manifesto' is a statement of beliefs and intentions. In 1933, Hitler took power in Germany, the movie *King Kong* was released and Manchester City lost 3–0 to Everton in the FA Cup Final.
- The same year, American Humanist Raymond Bragg wrote this:

The time has come for widespread recognition of the radical changes in religious beliefs throughout the modern world. The time is past for mere revision of traditional attitudes ...

- Guess and note down what you think he wrote next.

A Humanist Manifesto

The Humanist Manifesto of 1933 was revised 40 years later in 1973 and again in 2003. It answers these six questions. Did your guesses include any answers to these? If not, make some more guesses now. What would the Manifesto say?

How do we know what is right and true?	How are human beings related to the natural world?
Where do moral or ethical values come from?	What does a fulfilled life look like?
What is the importance of relationships in human life?	How can we live happily?

Your own manifesto

Your own opinions. Working alone, take the six questions from before and write your own 'manifesto'. What do you want to say, from your own religious or non-religious point of view, about the six issues which the Humanist Manifesto addresses?

- I know what is right and true because ...
- My moral values come from ...
- Relationships are important to me because ...
- My connection to Earth and nature is ...
- To me, a fulfilled life is one where ...
- I believe a happy life comes from ...

Humanist Manifesto: read it out

- Read the Humanist Manifesto of 2003.
- Get six students who are good readers to practice and deliver it like a speech, one paragraph each.
- There is a list of over 100 signatories, including 20 Nobel Prize winners, 11 professors, 2 sexologists, film maker Oliver Stone and many other 'great minds'. Which group in the class got closest to the actual points made in the manifesto? Discuss the six paragraphs: did they match your own approaches to the task?

The Humanist Manifesto of 2003: point 1

We affirm the following ...

Knowledge of the world is derived by observation, experimentation, and rational analysis.

Humanists find that science is the best method for determining this knowledge as well as for solving problems and developing beneficial technologies. We also recognise the value of new departures in thought, the arts, and inner experience—each subject to analysis by critical intelligence.

The Humanist Manifesto of 2003: point 2

We affirm the following ...

Humans are an integral part of nature, the result of unguided evolutionary change.

Humanists recognize nature as self-existing. We accept our life as all and enough, distinguishing things as they are from things as we might wish or imagine them to be. We welcome the challenges of the future, and are drawn to and undaunted by the yet to be known.

The Humanist Manifesto of 2003: point 3

We affirm the following ...

Ethical values are derived from human need and interest as tested by experience.

Humanists ground values in human welfare shaped by human circumstances, interests, and concerns and extended to the global ecosystem and beyond. We are committed to treating each person as having inherent worth and dignity, and to making informed choices in a context of freedom consonant with responsibility.

The Humanist Manifesto of 2003: point 4

We affirm the following ...

Life's fulfilment emerges from individual participation in the service of humane ideals.

We aim for our fullest possible development and animate our lives with a deep sense of purpose, finding wonder and awe in the joys and beauties of human existence, its challenges and tragedies, and even in the inevitability and finality of death. Humanists rely on the rich heritage of human culture and the lifestance of Humanism to provide comfort in times of want and encouragement in times of plenty.

The Humanist Manifesto of 2003: point 5

We affirm the following ...

Humans are social by nature and find meaning in relationships.

Humanists long for and strive toward a world of mutual care and concern, free of cruelty and its consequences where differences are resolved cooperatively without resorting to violence. The joining of individuality with interdependence enriches our lives, encourages us to enrich the lives of others, and inspires hope of attaining peace, justice, and opportunity for all.

The Humanist Manifesto of 2003: point 6

We affirm the following ...

Working to benefit society maximizes individual happiness.

Progressive cultures have worked to free humanity from the brutalities of mere survival and to reduce suffering, improve society, and develop global community. We seek to minimize the inequities of circumstance and ability, and we support a just distribution of nature's resources and the fruits of human effort so that as many as possible can enjoy a good life.

Logos and punchy one-line summaries

- The Manifesto has six paragraphs, and is written in rather grown up and dense language.
- If the American Humanists asked you to make six punchy, one-line poster slogans from the six paragraphs, what would your posters say?
- If you developed six logos to express the core ideas of the Humanist Manifesto, what would you design?

Well done!

Did you achieve some of these?

- I learned and can remember at least six points of information about what Humanists want.
- I worked as a good member of a team to discuss, speculate and express ideas about a non-religious way of life.
- I understood in depth what Humanists want.
- I expressed my own ideas about six big questions clearly and deeply.
- I expressed simply the main points of the 2003 Humanist Manifesto.
- I can remember who won the FA Cup in 1933.

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