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| **Knowledge Organiser: Do We Need Religion?** | | |
| **Benefits of religion**   * Gives meaning and purpose * Gives common sense of right and wrong * Brings people together in shared belief * Religious rules (e.g. treat others as you’d like to be treated) make the world better for everyone * Answers questions (e.g. why are we here? what happens after death?) that science can’t * Helps lessen fear of death * Offers certainty and motivation to change the way things are * Helps ease sense of injustice in the world: people get what they deserve in the next life if not this one * Comforting to believe that there is a loving being out there who truly knows you * Threat of divine punishment means people follow the rules (God as ‘heavenly policeman’) * Religious art, music, literature, celebrations etc enrich our lives – even if we don’t share the beliefs behind them * Can express and show pride in family heritage and identity | **Problems with religion**   * Stops people asking questions if the answers is always ‘God’ * Used to control and oppress others and to stop social change * Causes conflict as people are willing to die for their beliefs * Comforts of religion are just an illusion – we shouldn’t need a ‘comfort blanket’ * Scientific discoveries sometime contradict religious beliefs * Religious rituals are a distraction from just living good lives * You don’t need God to be good or to have a sense of purpose in life * The modern world demands evidence but most religious beliefs cannot be proven * The modern world values individualism but religion often pushes for collectivism and conformity * Can be used to justify intolerance and discrimination | **Humanist beliefs & practices**  Use <https://humanism.org.uk/> to make sure you can answer these questions:   * What do Humanists believe about God? * Why do Humanists think the meaning of life is? * What do Humanists believe about life after death? * What kinds of ceremonies do Humanists take part in? * Why do Humanists think these ceremonies are important? |
| **Secularism**  The belief that religion should not influence political decisions. Religion is a private matter, not something that should influence the general public. |
| **What is religion for?**   * Neuroscience: evidence that the human brain ‘hardwired’ to believe in God – evolutionary advantage <https://goo.gl/4XsPWc> * Freud (psychology): religion is a ‘comfort blanket’ that protects us from difficult truths * Marx (sociology): religion allows one group of people to control another * Durkheim (sociology): religion helps people to focus on what they have in common and to overcome differences, making more stable societies * Geertz (anthropology): religion gives people a sense of something bigger than themselves and can change lives | | **Aiming for EX? Neo-paganism research links:**  <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-11660115>  <http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/0/20693321>  Be able to describe the beliefs and practices of EITHER modern druids and modern Wiccans – and relate to the benefits/problems of religion. |

You should complete 30-45 minutes of self-quizzing from this every week – see Google Classroom or the VLE for a video demonstration. This will be tested with regular knowledge checks in lessons.

As the year goes on, you should continue to include previous topic knowledge organisers in your self-quizzing.