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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?
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| **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.