

Year: 6
Term: Summer 2
Topic: Why do some people believe in God and some people not?



There are a rising number of people who identify as 'no religion'. These may include people who call themselves atheist who believe that god does not exist. Some people who identify as no religion may call themselves a humanist. Other people are not sure whether there is a God or not and they would call themselves an agnostic whereas someone who would say that there is a God is known as a theist.

People who study philosophy like to think about the answers to the big questions that are difficult to answer. They will try to use reason to prove whether God exists or not.



What do people say about science and believing in God?

Science is a method in which observations about the physical universe are made, patterns are observed, theories and mathematical models are proposed and experiments are constructed to verify the accuracy or otherwise of the theory.

Many of the greatest scientists the world has known were Christians (e.g. Pasteur, Pascal, Newton, Faraday).

Understanding more about the normal operation of the physical universe will never demonstrate that a spiritual world does not exist.

"If God exists, how do we explain all the tragedy and death in the world?"

"Look at all the religious texts that exist. A god must exist in some form."

Why do people believe or not believe in God?

Reasons people do believe:

They have been brought up that way.

They have experienced God – seen him, had a prayer answered.

They have seen a miracle.

They can see evidence that God exists in the world.

They just know God exists (faith).

Reasons people don't believe:

There can't see any evidence.

There are scientific explanations for the world.

There are too many bad things in the world – would God make people suffer?

Prayers aren't always answered.

Glossary

- Agnostic** A person who believes that nothing can be known about the existence of God.
- atheist** A person who disbelieves the existence of God.
- evidence** The available facts about something
- Humanist** A person who seeks natural explanations to answer life's big questions about the world around them.
- philosophy** The study of the nature of knowledge and existence.
- psychology** The study of how people think.
- psychologist** A person who studies how the mind works and how people think.
- reason** The power of the mind to think, understand and form judgements.
- theist** A person who believes in the existence of God.
- theologian** A person who studies religion and the existence of god.