

MORE RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

On ethos and values

Tony Eaude *Values Education: developing positive attitudes* (National Primary Trust)

A pamphlet based on research and practice in schools, based on pioneering work at West Kidlington Primary school, Oxfordshire. Definitely worth reading and trying in your school. See www.npt.org.uk.

Ethos - a new magazine from the Values Education Council and Positive News, for teachers, school managers, and anyone else interested in issues such as values education, personal development and school ethos. Free pilot issue from office@positivenews.org.uk or 01588 640022.

Peer support: an overview (National Children's Bureau, Spotlight series) describes peer support, clarifies principles of good practice, and identifies the benefits and the contributions.

On bereavement

3 new videos from the National Children's Bureau, excellent resources for teacher development and some very useful lessons for anyone involved with young people: ***A death in the lives of...***, ***You'll always remember them when you're old*** (Primary), and ***It will be OK*** (Secondary), feature children and young people talking about what helped and what didn't help them come to terms with a death in the family.

See also the website of Jessica Kingsley Publishers www.jkp.com for a selection of useful books on bereavement counseling.

On creativity

Teaching Thinking and Creativity

Can it be done? This new magazine for teachers certainly thinks so. Find out more at

www.thinkingonlinecatalogue.co.uk

FICTION

Geraldine McCaughrean and Richard Brassey Britannia: *100 great stories from British history* (Dolphin)

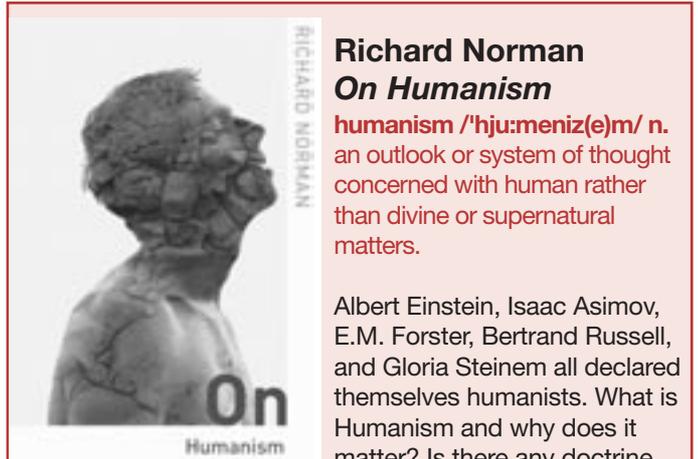
Are there really no more heroes? Some of these tales might not be strictly true (and the notes discuss this in an informative way) and many have a rather old-fashioned patriotic feel, but they do include some very modern tales and they celebrate virtues that any parent or teacher might like to encourage: courage, resilience, and generosity.

Philip Pullman *The Scarecrow and His Servant*

(Doubleday)

Pullman's tale will entertain younger readers while raising ethical and ecological issues.

HUMANISM



Richard Norman *On Humanism*

humanism /'hju:meniz(e)m/ n.
an outlook or system of thought concerned with human rather than divine or supernatural matters.

Albert Einstein, Isaac Asimov, E.M. Forster, Bertrand Russell, and Gloria Steinem all declared themselves humanists. What is Humanism and why does it matter? Is there any doctrine

every humanist must hold? If it rejects religion, what does it offer in its place? Have the twentieth century's crimes against humanity spelled the end for Humanism?

New from Routledge in 2004, this timely and powerfully argued philosophical defence of Humanism is highly recommended by the BHA for teachers and older students.

www.humanism.org.uk

All BHA resources for teachers can be found on our website, including:

Ideas for Inclusive Assemblies

Humanist perspectives on social and moral issues: ethics, abortion, animal welfare, crime and punishment, discrimination and prejudice; drugs; embryo research; environmental issues; euthanasia; family matters; genetic research and engineering; human rights; immigration and asylum; nature; sexuality; smoking; suicide; vegetarianism; war; world poverty.

Humanist perspectives on philosophical and religious issues: the golden rule; creationism; celebrations and ceremonies; death and other big questions; evil and suffering; God; Jesus; miracles and faith healing; religious festivals and ceremonies; Humanism and humanist history; the happy human symbol

NEW ON THE WEBSITE

Humanists talking, humanist "Thoughts for the Day" and some sample humanist assemblies.

COMING SOON IN 2005

Most of the above collected into photocopiable books for secondary and primary teachers.

See new BHA Order Form, available in the Spring.



HUMANISM is the belief that we can live good lives without religious or superstitious beliefs. Humanists make sense of the world using reason, experience and shared human values. We seek to make the best of the one life we have by creating meaning and purpose for ourselves. We take responsibility for our actions and work with others for the common good.

The British Humanist Association exists to promote Humanism and represent and support people who seek to live good lives without religious or superstitious beliefs. In education the BHA promotes rational thinking and moral education, offers teaching resources, and campaigns for reform of RE and an end to religious privilege and compulsory worship in schools.

Ed-Lines

Winter 2004 / 5

The education newsletter of the **BRITISH HUMANIST ASSOCIATION**
1 Gower Street, London WC1E 6HD

www.humanism.org.uk

Orders and general enquiries:

020 7079 3580 or info@humanism.org.uk

Education Officer Marilyn Mason,

direct line 020 7079 3584,

or education@humanism.org.uk



for the one life we have

A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO EVERYONE IN EDUCATION

Head teachers came second after family doctors in a survey of professions trusted to tell the truth. 84% trusted head teachers, while only 24% trusted people who ran big companies or Government ministers. 7% trusted tabloid journalists.

Committee on Standards on Public Life, reported in September 2002

THE NEW NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR RE

The publication of the first ever National Framework for Religious Education in England in the autumn confirmed the inclusion of Humanism for which the BHA had worked for so long.



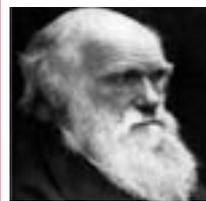
"Secular world views" are included from Key Stage 1 onwards, and an introductory statement reads: "Many pupils come from religious backgrounds but others have no attachment to religious beliefs and practices. Therefore, to ensure that all pupils' voices are heard and that the RE curriculum is broad and balanced, it is recommended that there should be opportunities for all pupils to study ... Secular philosophies such as humanism."

Humanists will welcome this recognition of a world view that will be personally meaningful to many pupils and interesting and relevant even to those who do not share humanist beliefs. The Framework acknowledges that a wide range of ideas about religion and morality co-exist in our society and should be encountered in RE; there is much in it that should encourage more inclusive teaching and a better understanding of today's pluralist world.

BHA Education Officer Marilyn Mason commented: "I'm delighted that Humanism is explicitly included in the guidance, which I hope will be well received and widely adopted. Humanism can, like religions, be taught about in an impartial and balanced way that enables better mutual understanding without compromising pupils' personal beliefs. This could be a significant step forward for RE in England."

At the launch of the Framework the QCA reported that 98% of teachers wanted the Framework to become statutory. The *TES* reported that 92% of SACRES approved of the Framework and 77% "backed plans to teach views such as humanism". A BBC poll found 111 to 40 in favour of teaching about atheism in RE.

The BHA has already published on its website suggestions on how Humanism would fit the stages and concepts offered in the Framework. SACRES, advisers and teachers interested in including Humanism are recommended to go to www.humanism.org.uk or contact our education officer for advice.



Darwin Day 2005

Friday 11 February 6.00 p m

LSE, Aldwych, London

Darwin -

A "Devil's Chaplain"?

Dr James Moore

Chair: Richard Dawkins

James Moore explores questions such as: How dangerous was Darwin's science? What role did he give God? Is there any truth in the story of his deathbed conversion?

The event is co-hosted by LSE's Interdisciplinary Institute of Management.

Tickets are £5 (FREE to BHA members and LSE staff and students). Teachers and sixth-formers will be very welcome.

Send a stamped self-addressed envelope with any payment necessary to the BHA, or email info@humanism.org.uk.

See www.humanism.org.uk for more information.

DID YOU KNOW...

65% of young people are not religious, according to *Young People in Britain: The Attitudes and Experiences of 12-19 Year Olds*, a 2004 research report for the DfES,

<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/research/data/uploadfiles/RR564.pdf>

(See more statistics and links on religion and belief at

www.humanism.org.uk)

The average British child spends £365 per year on crisps and sweets, an amount that would supply a family in Malawi with

grain for a year, or provide food and shelter for a great many tsunami survivors. According to the World Food Programme, there is enough food in the world; distribution is the problem. PSHE, Citizenship and RE lessons can use these facts as starting points for lessons on world poverty and development, politics, health and nutrition, waste, and how charities operate.

See www.oxfam.org.uk, www.concern.net or

www.foodaid.org.uk for more information.

USING THE INTERNET WISELY

There are, as every teacher knows, good and bad websites.

Some of those found in RE or PSHE lessons may be racist, biased or inaccurate (for example

<http://www.martinlutherking.org>). Should we censor internet use in schools or can we teach pupils to use the internet discriminatingly? Your ideas and suggestions would be welcome.

Samaritan's Purse shoebox appeal

The BHA had more complaints than usual this year about Samaritan's Purse and requests for suggestions of alternative charities, perhaps because it is now (after BHA pressure in previous years) more open about its Christian evangelical aims. This Summer we plan to offer a "cut out and keep" list of the alternative suggestions we have collected, in plenty of time for Christmas 2005.

Young people want Philosophy

Just before the Tomlinson proposals for the 14-19 curriculum were released *Guardian Education* in October published some proposals from young people. Amongst other things, they wanted a life skills course to include PE, cooking, annual trips away, philosophy, geography, general knowledge, preparing for life, stress management and interaction; and work experience to be monitored by a national organisation.

ARE YOU GLAD WE'RE HERE?

The BHA is an educational charity funded entirely by membership, donations and legacies.

We do not own property, we do not have wealthy sponsors, and we are unlikely ever to be funded by the Government.

We give away a lot of material and advice, because that is what we are here for. If you value our services, please consider making a donation or joining the BHA by:

phoning 020 7079 3580;
emailing info@humanism.org.uk;
or on-line at www.humanism.org.uk.

DO YOU REALLY WANT EDLINES?

If you are not involved in education or are receiving *Edlines* in error, please let our Education Officer know by phone or email, and we will remove you from our mailing list.

...OR WOULD YOU LIKE MORE COPIES?

Please order more copies of *Edlines* or photocopy this one if it would be useful to colleagues, or suggest that they contact us to be added to our mailing list.

...OR WOULD YOU PREFER EDLINES BY EMAIL?

We could keep you informed more economically and efficiently, and do our bit for the environment, if we sent out a simple email version of *Edlines*. If you would prefer this, please email education@humanism.org.uk with "Subscribe to Edlines" in the subject box.

HUMANIST TEACHERS

Would you join an Association of Humanist Teachers?
Do humanist teachers have enough issues and concerns in common to justify an association?

Are there enough humanist teachers to sustain an organization, which could be facilitated and supported, though not led, by the BHA?

Do teachers have time to participate actively in an association?

What form of association and activities would teachers like to see?

Please contact the BHA with your views.

How do humanists respond to natural disasters?

Pictures of the tsunami in December and January brought home to us all the destructive power of natural forces. As religious spokespersons struggled to explain this terrible event, humanist responses were much also in demand.

How would a humanist explain this event to children?

For most humanists, the tsunami confirmed their disbelief in an omniscient, omnipotent benevolent god. Many, like Simon Hoggart in *The Guardian* (8/1/05), found some consolation in that disbelief: "The cliché is that there is much comfort in religion. I find the opposite; there is far more comfort in a lack of religion - the certainty that the victims did not deserve their fate and that none of them are now paying for their last unshriven deeds."

Humanists do not look for explanations, comfort or solutions outside the natural and human worlds. We make sense of the world using reason and experience - so would look to science to explain the causes of earthquakes and tsunami and to help us to predict where and when they will happen. Modern communications can be used to warn people of impending disasters and to educate them on how to protect themselves.

Humanists also believe in our common humanity, and there was much in the tsunami aftermath to reassure us that human beings can feel for and help others: in the concern and generosity of people here and in other places thousands of miles from the disaster who empathised with the suffering of victims and survivors and who gave what they could to help, and in the courage and kindness of local people and tourists caught up in the tsunami who helped and comforted each other as best they could. Most of us can imagine what it would be like to lose everything and we probably hope that we would have acted bravely and compassionately if we had been there. Ultimately, that's all humanists have to trust in.

The tsunami does raise some questions for thoughtful people of all faiths and none: Why do these disasters always seem to hit the poor harder than the rich? Is it because they have to live in less safe areas, and in less safe buildings? Is it because they do not have the benefits of modern communication and warning systems?

Humanists will want to reflect, but not pray, on these matters. They will want to think about how we could help to prevent or alleviate such suffering in the future. Could we do more about the inequalities in the world? How can we ensure that everyone living in vulnerable areas knows how to build towns safely and what to do if disaster strikes? (One widely reported story described how 10-year-old Tilly Smith saved the lives of tourists on a Thailand beach when she recognised the early signs of a tsunami, which she had learnt about in Geography.)

How can we make sure that we don't forget about the survivors when the media have moved on? It will take more than just a few weeks to rebuild lives, and pupils could be encouraged to donate to long-term development projects, by, for example, giving up sweets or crisps (on which they spend an average of £1 a day, enough to provide a lot of food and shelter in a developing country). Pupils could find out how their donations are spent by charities and more about the forces that cause natural disasters. Younger pupils might also find it reassuring to learn that the UK is not particularly prone to earthquakes and other extreme natural events. We can learn something from most experiences, even the most terrible ones.

See *A humanist perspective on suffering and evil* on www.humanism.org.uk and British Red Cross "assembly kits" at www.redcross.org.uk/educationtak.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION

Abortion: Rights, Responsibilities and Reason and **Abortion: Dilemmas and Decisions** (Education for Choice)
Two new cross-curricular KS4+ workbooks. The first explores issues of citizenship, religion, law and ethics, and the second enables students to explore the decisions that might lead to and result from an unintended pregnancy. Both contain lesson plans, tools and fact sheets to enable exploration of complex issues in a safe and stimulating way. £17.50 (plus £2.50 p&p per copy) for both parts from efc@efc.org.uk or 020 7837 7221.

<http://www.ruthinking.co.uk/>

A website containing everything you ever wanted to know about sex and more - no nonsense advice for teens.

www.ncb.org.uk/sef

A new-look website from the Sex Education Forum offering the latest information on SRE, 'frequently asked questions' and links to members' websites. It is designed for anyone with a professional interest in SRE and features briefings and factsheets covering topics such as the Sexual Offences Act and how to develop good SRE policy and practice.

CITIZENSHIP

B Algarra and others *Global lines* (British Red Cross)
Teaching pack on global citizenship developed by the Red Cross for secondary schools, containing a CD Rom, task and activity sheets, photographs, maps, posters and personal accounts from around the world.
See <http://www.redcross.org.uk/standard.asp?id=23398>

Global citizenship resources on rain forests, water, and health issues from www.globaleye.org.uk

Issues - recent new titles in these useful collections of resources, *Terrorism* and *Religions and Beliefs in Britain*, include humanist perspectives.
See www.independence.co.uk/publicationslist

PHILOSOPHY AND THINKING SKILLS

Nigel Warburton *Philosophy: the Essential Study Guide* (Routledge)

A new guide to acquiring the skills needed to succeed in philosophy - reading, listening, discussing and writing - from the writer of *Philosophy the Basics* and *Philosophy: Basic Readings* (revised editions of both published in 2004)

Arrange a free 10-week Philosophy course in your school taught by a visiting tutor by contacting www.royalinstitutephilosophy.org

A Level RE and Philosophy conferences

See www.alevelphilosophy.co.uk to find out what's coming up in your area for AL students.

Ian Gilbert *Little Owl's Book of Thinking* (Crown House Publishing, www.crownhouse.co.uk)

An introduction to thinking skills through stories in which Big Owl teaches Benny the owlet about flying and leaving the nest, catching mice, being different ... The stories are short and simple (and didactic) enough for quite young children but fairly demanding in terms of vocabulary and concept. Any book that introduces children to the idea that "an unexamined life is not worth living" (attributed to a wise Mediterranean owl who lived 1000s of years ago) must be a good thing. Excellent for reading aloud and discussing.

Bargain Philosophy 4 Children books available from Bookstall Forum - phone 01332 368039 or e-mail patrick.hill@btconnect.com to check prices and stocks.

SCIENCE

Robert Winston *What Makes Me, Me?* (Dorling Kindersley)
Full of questions, quizzes and illustrations, this book could inspire pupils to become biologists and geneticists.

Lesson plans and ideas about evolution in the future for KS2-3 from www.thefutreiswild.com

Peter Ackroyd *The Beginning: Voyages Through Time* (Dorling Kindersley)
The story of life on Earth.

John Brockman (ed) *When We Were Kids: How a Child Becomes a Scientist* (Jonathan Cape)

Though the eminent contributors seem to have little background in common, encouragement to explore and engage with the world around them seems to be one important factor in the making of a scientist. Does school science do that enough?

RE

Rosemary Rivett and Lat Blaylock *A Teacher's Handbook of Religious Education* (RE Today Services)

A very useful guide for the RE department, it includes a section on Humanism. Order from 0121 472 4242

Guidance for Religious Visitors to Schools (PCfRE)

Not new but always worth having a few in stock to give to visiting speakers. Order from 0121 472 4242.

Guidance on selecting resources

from the RE Council of England and Wales. Are you sure that your resources dealing with religion are factually correct, sensitive, authentic, fair and balanced? Find useful guidance for any teacher selecting resources about religion and belief at <http://www.religiouseducationcouncil.org/teacherguidanceonresourceselection.htm>.

MAINLY FOR MANAGERS

On bullying and homophobia

Stand Up For Us aims to help schools challenge homophobia in the context of developing an inclusive, safer and more successful school environment for all, for anyone working in early years settings, primary, secondary and special schools, off-site units and Pupil Referral Units (PRUs). The resource and associated materials can be downloaded from

<http://www.wiredforhealth.gov.uk/cat.php?catid=1101>

Bullying a Guide to the Law (National Children's Bureau / Children's Legal Centre)

<http://www.ncb.org.uk/resources/abacleguidetolaw.pdf>

Making Schools Safer using Effective Anti-bullying Strategies (National Children's Bureau)

<http://www.ncb.org.uk/resources/spotlight4briefings safer.pdf>

Radical thinking

Can anything be learnt from the radical child-centred educational experiments of legendary educator A S Neill? An updated version of Neill's ***Summerhill*** (Open University Press) is out soon, celebrating the school's methods and survival.

Roland Meighan *Damage Limitation: trying to reduce the harm schools do to children* (Educational Heretics Press)

Several distinguished contributors consider "how to get educated despite school".