

## KS2 Lesson Plan 1 – Exploring Secularism

What is Secularism?

<b>Background</b>	<p>This lesson can act as an introduction to secularism and secularist views on religion and society. The card match-up activity allows discussion about secularism and associated viewpoints and also introduces six terms: secularism, atheism, agnosticism, theism, pluralism and humanism. Both the card match-up and six viewpoints activities invite discussion of differing viewpoints and encourages pupils to put forward their own developing views. This lesson can be used to teach strands from the DfE KS2 Citizenship Programme.</p> <p>The principles of secularism which protect and underpin many of the freedoms we enjoy are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. <b>Separation</b> of religious institutions from state institutions, and a public sphere where religion may participate, but not dominate.</li><li>2. <b>Freedom</b> to practise one’s faith or belief without harming others, or to change it or not have one, according to one’s own conscience.</li><li>3. <b>Equality</b> so that our religious beliefs or lack of them does not put any of us at an advantage or disadvantage.</li></ol>
<b>Subjects</b>	Citizenship  Religious Education
<b>Curriculum Links – from</b>	<b>The DfE Citizenship programme of study at KS2. Pupils should be taught:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1.<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) to talk and write about their opinions, and explain their views, on issues that affect themselves and society</li></ol></li><li>2.<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) to research, discuss and debate topical issues, problems and events</li><li>g) what democracy is, and about the basic institutions that support it</li><li>h) to recognise the role of voluntary, community and pressure groups</li></ol></li></ol>
<b>Key Question</b>	What is secularism?
<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	<b>Expected:</b> pupils can give a simple explanation of secularism in terms of separation of religion and state.

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	<p><b>Greater Depth:</b> pupils can give a simple explanation of secularism in terms of separation, freedom &amp; equality.</p>
<b>Stimulus</b>	<p>Vocabulary match-up card game - defining terms (at bottom of plan)</p> <p>Introduction: discuss the meaning of the suffix 'ism' in these examples they describe a belief system or theory</p> <p>'ism' a suffix from the Greek</p> <p>Explain that many children and adults find 'isms' quite difficult, as each belief system has many variations. Go on to say that at KS2 we will be only studying the basic or fundamental principles.</p> <p>Studying the etymology of the root words will act as an Aide-mémoire and further develop pupil's understanding of each word.</p> <p>Elicit the pupil's existing knowledge and ask them to match up the 'ism' with the basic definition. Offer as much or as little support as appropriate. Discuss each word with the pupils.</p>
<b>Exercise</b>	<p>Scenario: Imagine that the religions in the UK got together to change the law. They made the government change the law to bring back corporal punishment in schools – instead of being told off or facing a consequence for rule-breaking, your teacher could now hit you with a cane as a punishment.</p> <p>In pairs or small groups, discuss the viewpoints a-f and make notes about what you can tell about the person's beliefs. Does the viewpoint fit into an 'ism'? Which of the viewpoints are secularist?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>"I think it's absolutely right – kids today have no respect for anything or anyone. In my religious book it says that adults should hit children to make them behave and I believe in that 100%."</li><li>"I really don't think that religions should be able to change what happens in schools – that's the job of the government isn't it?"</li><li>"I'm very religious myself and I do believe in smacking my own children. However, I wouldn't tell other parents what to do and I don't think the government should get involved with any religious groups – where will it all end?"</li><li>"God/Gods doesn't/don't exist – full stop - and religion is just story-telling. This is a disgrace and against the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child – religion and politics should not mix."</li></ol>

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	<p>e. “Well, I don’t know whether there’s a god or not, but I do think kids need strong discipline so I’m backing the new law.”</p> <p>f. “This is terrible – the government should be completely separate from religious groups – that way we can ensure equal and fair rights for everyone. I’m not going to tell you whether I am religious or not because that’s my own business or whether I believe in corporal punishment. All I know is that the government should make the law in the proper way and not because religious groups tell them to.”</p>
<p><b>Take it Further</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In a pair, role-play a TV interview with each of the six people above about their views. Take it in turns to play the journalist/TV interviewer and write down three questions to ask each of the people who gave their opinion.</li> </ul>

<p><b>A secular state</b></p>		<p><b>the belief in God/Gods</b></p>
<p><b>atheism</b></p>		<p><b>A country’s law and governance is kept separate from the religion and religious law</b></p>
<p><b>A theocratic state</b></p>		<p><b>not believing that there is a God/Gods</b></p>
<p><b>theism</b></p>		<p><b>A country’s law and governance is based on religion and religious law</b></p>
<p><b>pluralism</b></p>		<p><b>the belief that people can be good without believing in God/Gods</b></p>
<p><b>humanism</b></p>		<p><b>the belief that different people with different</b></p>

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		<b>beliefs &amp; opinions can live well together</b>
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