

God and atheism: why do people disagree so much about whether God is real and what God is like?

This work will enable you to think about the two questions above. Have some paper and pens ready to work and set yourself up to use some online clips. You will be learning from a range of viewpoints and you need to be able to express your own and other people's views clearly, and to argue and give reasons for what you think. There are some right answers, but some of this work is about deep disagreements. That's where answers come down to beliefs, not proof.

First, make a note of these 7 keywords. If you don't know their meanings yet, then you soon will do. God / atheist / agnostic / omnipotent / omniscient / omnipresent / omnibenevolent.

Second write completions to these prompts:

- A. Out of about 7 billion people on the planet, about 6 billion people believe in some kind of God. I think this is because...
- B. Atheism has grown in the UK in the last 50 years. I think this is because...

An A-Z of Religion and Belief

Get ready to watch two clips from the BBC series 'An A-Z of Religion and Belief', each clip is less than 3 minutes. When you have seen it, summarise what the clip said in just 4 sentences.

The first clip is called: 'O is for Omnis' <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/religious-education-ks3-a-z-of-religion-and-beliefs-0-is-for-omnis-power-of-god/zjgv47h>



Pause to write your four sentences.

The second clip is called 'A is for Atheism'

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/religious-studies-ks3-a-is-for-atheism/zdkcwtv>



Pause to write your four sentences.

Key Questions

Write your answers in well thought out sentences.

- If there was a god, what would the god be able to do?
- The ancient gods of Egypt, Greece and Rome are not worshipped today. Why not?
- How would an atheist respond to these 4 philosophical claims, that God is 'omni-this and omni-that'?
- What does the word 'Atheist' mean?
- Why study atheism in RE?
- Are the arguments between atheists and those who believe in God endless, or can they be solved?
- Is an atheist a 'believer' too? A person who believes there is no god?

Complete the grid

KEYWORD	Your definition of the word	If you believe in this, how could it affect your life?	Give one objection to believing in this and a reason why people say it.
Omniscient			
Omnipotent			
Omnipresent			
Omnibenevolent			
Atheist			
Agnostic			
God			

How strong is this argument?

Here are 8 reasons for believing in god or not. Sort them first. Which point away from belief in god and which do not? Then rank them on the chart below: which are good reasons to be an atheist?

'The world is full of suffering and pain, which hurts innocent people.'	'Life is short: 80+ years fly by. No one can be sure of anything after death.'
'The world is beautiful, intricate, and nearly perfect for human life.'	'Religions claim to be about love and peace, but often practice hate and war.'
'For 2 centuries, things that used to look like miracles have been scientifically explained.'	'Humanity is capable of huge goodness and also of massive evil. Too random for a god to make!'
'Human psychology sometimes uses religion to prop up our sense of failure or our fear of death.'	'Life is a mystery: there's loads we cannot explain about it. That's awesome.'

Four arguments that point towards belief in God, in order of their strength	Four arguments that point towards atheism, in order of their strength

Some students expressed their views about God in art. Here's an example. You can try this task as well.



James (13).
God: Making or Marring?
"The art shows an omnipotent figure carving the world, while not explicitly stating that the figure is God. Is this figure a creator or a character manipulating the surrounding that already exists? The picture may represent creation but equally it could represent the marring of Earth. At first glance, it's easy to think that it represents a creator at work, but I also wanted a sense of ambiguity. Is this figure shaping Africa lovingly or tearing the continent apart?"

BBC Resources for RE are well planned, balanced and informative, and aimed at the right age group for learning. This series, An A-Z of Religion and belief, was made for 11-14s. Programme consultant: Lat Blaylock, RE Today.