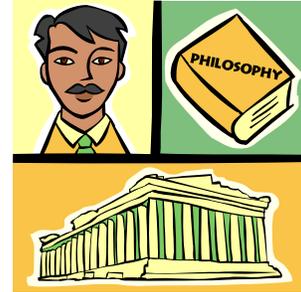


There is no single definition of Humanism. Read the following quotes from Humanists in different times and places. Pick out the beliefs and values that seem to be important to Humanists. Then, try to develop your own meaning of the word based on what you have read.



[God] made man a creature of indeterminate and indifferent nature, and, placing him in the middle of the world, said to him "Adam, we give you no fixed place to live, no form that is peculiar to you, nor any function that is yours alone. According to your desires and judgement, you will have and possess whatever place to live, whatever form, and whatever functions you yourself choose. All other things have a limited and fixed nature prescribed and bounded by Our laws. You, with no limit or no bound, may choose for yourself the limits and bounds of your nature. We have placed you at the world's centre so that you may survey everything else in the world.

We have made you neither of heavenly nor of earthly stuff, neither mortal nor immortal, so that with free choice and dignity, you may fashion yourself into whatever form you choose. To you is granted the power of degrading yourself into the lower forms of life, the beasts, and to you is granted the power, contained in your intellect and judgement, to be reborn into the higher forms, the divine.

Imagine! The great generosity of God! The happiness of man! To man it is allowed to be whatever he chooses to be!

... Considering that we are born with this condition, that is, that we can become whatever we choose to become, we need to understand that we must take earnest care about this, so that it will never be said to our disadvantage that we were born to a privileged position but failed to realize it and became animals and senseless beasts.

~ Pico della Mirando, *Oration on the Dignity of Man*. Italian humanist, 1463 - 1494:
Translated from the Latin by Richard Hooker (©1994)

Reason and free inquiry are the only effectual agents against error.

~ Thomas Jefferson, main writer of the American Declaration of Independence, 1700s

The most formidable weapon against errors of every kind is reason. I have never used any other, and I trust I never shall.

~ Thomas Paine, American writer and thinker in the "Age of Reason," 1700s

They who say that we should love our fellow-citizens but not foreigners, destroy the universal brotherhood of mankind, with which benevolence and justice would perish forever.

~ Cicero, Roman writer

If we are to have peace on earth, our loyalties . . . must transcend our race, our tribe, our class, and our nation; and this means we must develop a world perspective.

~ Martin Luther King Jr., civil rights leader, 1900s

Humanists recognize that it is only when people feel free to think for themselves, using reason as their guide, that they are best capable of developing values that succeed in satisfying human needs and serving human interests.

~ Isaac Asimov, scientist, author, and past president of the American Humanist Association

Humanism is a philosophy of joyous service for the greater good of all humanity, of application of new ideas of scientific progress for the benefit of all.

~ Linus Pauling, scientist, Humanist of the Year in 1961, Nobel Peace Prize in 1962

Humanism is a rational philosophy informed by science, inspired by art, and motivated by compassion. . . .

~ American Humanist Association

People who are Humanists believe ...

Humanism

8.5.3
c

<p>Dictionary or textbook definition of Humanism:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1.2.	<p>Draw a diagram to represent Humanism.</p>
<p>List five facts you know about Humanism.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1.2.3.4.5.	<p>Write down your own definition of Humanism (use your own words).</p>
<p>List two questions you have about Humanism.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1.2.	<p>Name two examples of Humanists and explain why you think they are Humanists.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1.2.
<p>Do you think that your modern world view has been influenced by Humanism? Explain.</p>	