Why should I be good?

What does the word 'good' mean?

GOOD

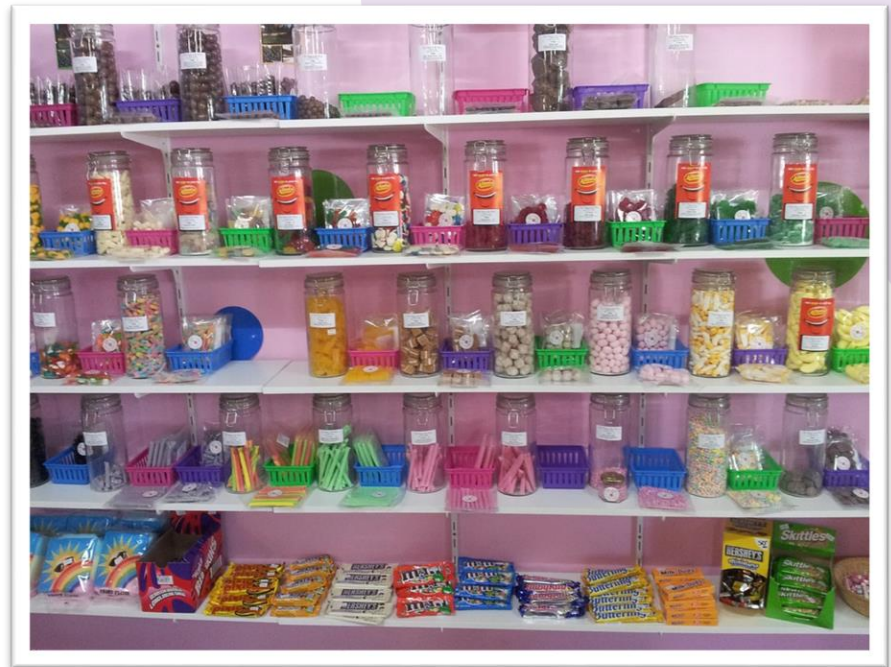Do not use the words 'good' or 'goodness' in your answer.

The sweet shop

You are in a sweet shop with some friends. The owner of the shop is not looking. One of your friends tells you to steal some sweets.
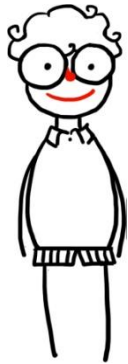
What should you do?
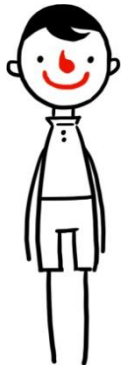
Why?

Why wouldn't you steal the sweets?

I might get caught and get in trouble.

The shopkeeper will be unhappy.

It's against the law.

I wouldn't like it if someone stole from me.

I would feel like a bad person.

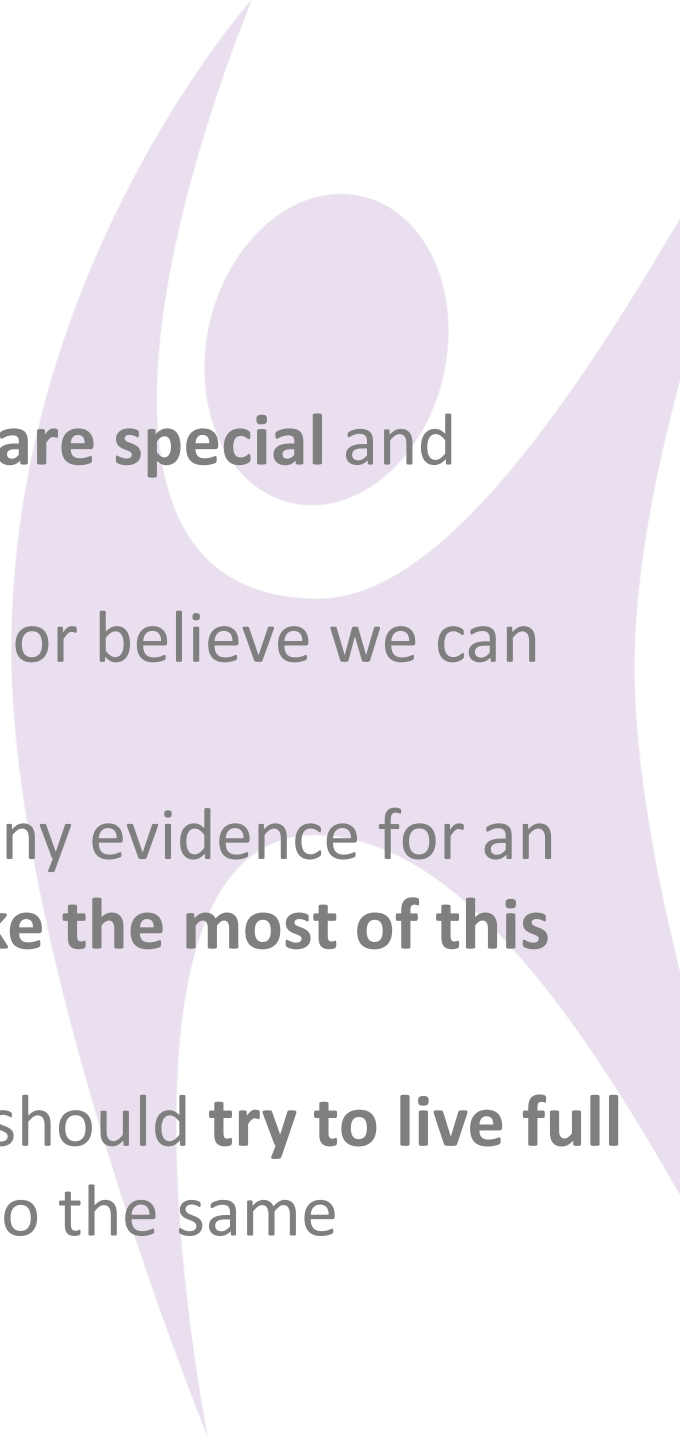If everyone did it, then the sweet shop would have to close down.

Motivations

Reasons to do good things	Reasons not to do bad things
1) Rewards	1) Fear of punishment
2) Following rules and laws	2) Breaking rules and laws
3) It makes you feel good	3) It makes you feel bad / guilty
4) Making other people happy	4) Hurting other people
5) Would like it if others did the same to me	5) Wouldn't like it if someone did the same to me
6) The world would be a better place if everyone did the same	6) The world would be a worse place if everyone did the same

Key beliefs of humanists

- Humanists believe **human beings are special** and human life is valuable

- Humanists **don't believe in a god**, or believe we can never know if there is a god

- Humanists don't believe there is any evidence for an afterlife: we should therefore **make the most of this life**

- Humanists believe human beings should **try to live full and happy liv**es and help others do the same
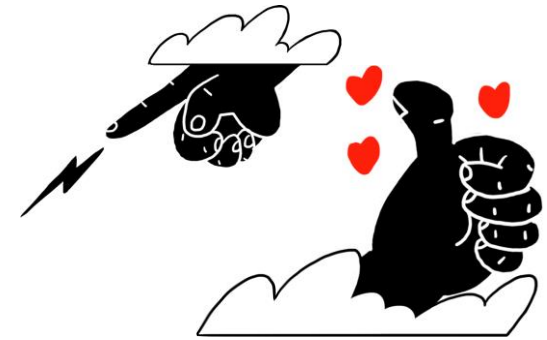
Why do humanists believe we should be good?

Humanists don't believe we will be rewarded or punished for our behavior after we die.

Humanists, like many people, think we should not just think about rewards and punishment when deciding what to do. If this were the only reason to be good, then we might not do the right thing if we saw no opportunity for reward, or danger of punishment.

They believe we should be motivated to do good things because:

- We should **treat others the way we would like to be treated**

- If everyone tries to do the right thing, we can **make the world a better place**; if everyone does the wrong thing, then everyone will be worse off

- Making other people happy can **make us happy**

Reason and Empathy

Reason: thinking about the consequences of our actions.

Empathy: considering how others will feel.

Reason and Empathy can help us understand why we should be good.

Humanists believe we don't need to believe in a god to be good.

Are reasons important?

Does it matter why we are good as long as we are good?

Are some reasons to be good simply selfish reasons?

Are some reasons to be good better than others?