

Meaning, Branches and Importance of Humanities

Humanities are one of the major groups of academic disciplines. The field of study teaches students how history, art, music, religion and culture have shaped the modern world. While on one hand, Humanities centres on art, music and literature, on the other hand, Social Sciences focuses on anthropology, archaeology and politics. That is why even though the two streams are different they are often studied together as both complement each other.

Humanities are academic disciplines that study aspects of human society and culture. They use methods that are primarily critical, or speculative, and have a significant historical element as distinguished from the mainly empirical approaches of the natural sciences, yet, unlike the sciences, it has no central discipline. The humanities include ancient and modern languages, literature, philosophy, history, human geography, law, politics, religion, and art.

The humanities are studies about human culture, such as literature, philosophy, and history. Studying the humanities gives general knowledge, but not a practical trade.

Humanities is a broad academic field under which students study various types of human interactions, using methods that are largely analytical, critical or exploratory. Humanities contain something explicit to explore in it. It serves several disciplines, where human beings and society focuses on different kinds of studies. Humanities are also referred to as Integrated Humanities which states this stream as the study of the following subjects:

- History
- Geography
- Religious Education
- Sociology
- Psychology
- Government and Politics
- Law

Branches of humanities:

The different branches of humanities include literature, art, music, philosophy, history, religion and language. People use humanities to document and explore the human experience, and there are further branches that intersect with the scientific world.

Literature, most generically, is a body of written works. More restrictively, literature refers to writing considered to be an art form or any single writing deemed to have artistic or intellectual value, often due to deploying language in ways that differ from ordinary usage.

Importance of Humanities in School Curriculum

ÉThe humanities help us understand others through their languages, histories and cultures.

ÉThey foster social justice and equality.

ÉThey reveal how people have tried to make moral, spiritual and intellectual sense of the world.

ÉThe humanities teach empathy.

É They teach us to deal critically and logically with subjective, complex, imperfect information.

É They teach us to weigh evidence sceptically and consider more than one side of every question.

É Humanities build skills in writing and critical reading.

É The humanities encourage us to think creatively. They teach us to reason about being human and to ask questions about our world.

É The humanities develop informed and critical citizens. Without the humanities, democracy could not flourish. .

É Humanities can help us think critically and help us reason well so that we can gain insight into a variety of subjects and topics.

É Humanities have been an important field since the times of Ancient Greece, and the knowledge was used to explore poetry, history, culture and the arts.

É Humanities teach many fundamental skills such as critical thinking, analysis and creativity. These skills are useful not only for those considering graduate level studies or professional degrees, but also for those considering careers in business.

É The humanities play a number of roles in a man's life, including providing greater insight into the world, helping to better understand both the past and the future and fostering a sense of empathy. Broadly defined, the humanities are the study of human culture through art, literature, philosophy, music and languages.

É Better curriculum coverage and coherence: When a school humanities curriculum uses the National Curriculum objectives for history and geography as its platform, rather than its aim, the overarching story of history can be developed through cross-phase planning, making sure that children are learning in a progressively sequenced way. Coherence, organising content into well-sequenced orders, can be difficult to achieve when tied to themes or topics, since they may be interpreted in a variety of ways. Being explicit with children that they are learning 'geography' might also make it easier for them to see how the content fits into the bigger picture of the subject.

É A subject-based humanities curriculum supports high-quality teaching: With the National Curriculum as the platform and coherence as an aim, there is scope for learning to be systematically developed over time. When National Curriculum objectives are mapped out and taught sequentially, assessing learning within the humanities subjects becomes a far simpler task. Aligning this with knowledge organisers that carefully outline the substantive knowledge that needs to be learned can help to make assessments more accurate, more so than in one unit of work.