



National Association of Teachers
of Religious Education

Introduction

This lesson explores themes discussed in the TrueTube film Pilgrimage moments: Life after death?

Overview

Suitable for: Key stage 3 or 4 (adaptable)

Key Question: How do experiences of grief influence what people believe about life after death?

Time: 3.55 minutes

TrueTube Film: [Pilgrimage Moments: Life after Death? – TrueTube](#)

Vocabulary:

- Atheism – belief that there is no God
- Agnosticism – belief that we cannot know whether God exists
- Theism – belief in God
- Afterlife – Belief that something of us continues after death
- Soul – the non-physical part of a person
- Grief – emotional response to loss

Linked text: The details about the link, including the transcript of the clip can be found:

<https://www.truetube.co.uk/resource/pilgrimage-moments-life-after-death/>

Lesson

Starter Activity: “What Do People Believe Happens When We Die?”

Display four statements around the room:

1. *Nothing – life ends completely*
2. *Something continues – but we do not know what*
3. *There is an afterlife*
4. *I am not sure*

- Students move to the statement they feel closest to.
- Think, Pair, Share – Students to discuss which statement they agreed with the most or felt closest to and why.
- Emphasise that RE is about exploring ideas respectfully.

Purpose: Activates prior thinking and introduces the diversity of belief.

Main Activities:

1. Clip viewing & first reactions

Play the clip of Jay and Helen.

Ask students to note:

- What does **Jay** say he believes?
- What does **Helen** say she believes?
- How does **grief** affect each of them?

2. Transcript Analysis

Give students the transcript. In pairs, they highlight:

- **Ideas showing atheism**
- **Ideas showing agnosticism**
- **Ideas showing belief in God**
- **Ideas showing how grief shapes belief**

Examples they might highlight:

- *Jay: "I'm really open to the idea that there's something. But I haven't got a clue."*
- *Helen: "I do believe in God... I don't think life just ends."*
- *Helen: "When my mother died... I get a sense of her being with me."*
- *Jay: "It felt really senseless."*
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3. Group Discussion: Does Grief Change Belief?

Introduce the idea of grief and what that means to people. Discuss how grief might affect people.

Put students in small groups and allow them to discuss:

- Why might grief make some people **more** religious?
- Why might grief make others **less** religious?
- Is feeling someone's presence after death a spiritual experience?
- Does Jay's shift from atheist to agnostic make sense?
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Give each group a sheet of paper with a quadrant on it with each question in each box. Pupils to record thoughts as they discuss, ready to feedback to the rest of the group.

Feedback from the groups and further discussion as a class about ideas pupils came up with and any similarities and differences between what they came up with.

4. Creative Reflection Task

Students choose one of the following:

1. **Create a belief map** Draw a diagram showing how different experiences (family, grief, religion, science, culture) influence what someone believes about death.
2. **Write a response to the question:** *"Does anything survive after we die?"* Students give a reasoned personal view.
3. **Create an image** showing the different beliefs people may have about life after death and how this might affect the way they live their lives.

Plenary: Exit Ticket: One Sentence Answer

Students complete on a post it note a completion to one of the statements below:

"Today I learned that grief can..." or ***"My view on life after death is now..."***

This can be put on the board as they leave or kept by the teacher for discussion in a following lesson.

The transcript: Pilgrimage Moments: Life after Death?

Narrator: After a hard day. Helen is having a drink with Jay.

Helen: Do you wanna sip?

Jay: Yeah go on babes, thank you.

Narrator: Raised Catholic. Jay became an atheist in his teenage years, but recently has realised he's more agnostic.

Helen: What I want to know with you is because we talk about atheism and we talk about agnostic being agnostic.

Jay: There could be a lot more than meets the eye in this world and beyond and beyond.

Helen: So you are saying there's something else, right? And because I believe in God, there is something else.

Jay: You do believe in God.

Helen: I do believe in God when we die. What happens to our soul? I don't think life just ends. I'm just thinking that we. We live on in who we've touched. Don't you ever get a sense of something or.

Jay: I'm tempted to think that, but no, I think that I want to think that.

Helen: I know that when like when my mother died, for instance, when you're having to face grief, then that person is still with you. I get a sense of her being with me. Um.

Jay: One second. Just going to have a little cry in the toilet.

Helen: Okay do that.

Jay: I'll be right back love.

Helen: Right. Got it. No. Do the cry.

Narrator: In 2022, Jay lost his close friend and bandmate Tom Parker, who died from cancer aged just 33.

Helen: All right.

Jay: Okay, I'll probably go again, but don't panic.

Helen: Yeah, I'm not panicking because I was great. Great to see you back. No, but no, but it's interesting because I said that about my mother. Only because being the one left behind. Um, you have to think about it. So I know your close friend Tom died. Did you know that he was dying?

Jay: Yeah. Um. So they knew it was serious quite quickly. And, um, there's not really lots you can do.

Helen: Did it make you think a person is here? And what happens to you, um, when that person's not there? Oh, totally.

Jay: Um, I think it felt. Really senseless.

Helen: Did that make you believe less than God? I mean, it's so painful to think of the end of a human. Yeah. All the joy, all the little micro cells that made that in him. Then you just go, well. Is that it? What was it all for?

Jay: I think as much as you can be. I'm agnostic. I'm really open to the idea that there's something. But I haven't got a clue. I haven't got a clue.

Helen: But you have got a clue. You've got loads of clues. That's why you're agnostic. If you're an atheist. It would be like, yeah.

Jay: You've got loads of clues.

Helen: Yeah.

Jay: I'm missing something I think.

Helen: Yeah, but we need to work on it, don't we?

Jay: Yeah, probably. But knowing that someone that I really respect and really love believes in God is a big comfort to me. Thank you. I just don't know if I'm exactly there yet, but.

Helen: And you don't have to be. I'm going to drink some wine now.

Jay: Yeah, maybe I'll get one.

Table for students to complete to go with group work.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Why might grief make some people more religious?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Why might grief make others less religious?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is feeling someone's presence after death a spiritual experience?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Does Jay's shift from atheist to agnostic make sense?