

# Philosophy

with Dr Jennifer Mensch and Dr Michael Olson

## Talking points

### KNOWLEDGE

1. What and when was the European Age of Enlightenment?

### COMPREHENSION

2. How did Kant's ideas on race 'justify' colonialism and contribute to racial inequality?
3. Give an example of implicit bias (from the article or your own knowledge).

### APPLICATION

4. What scientific technologies do you think helped inform ideas on heredity, both during and after the European Age of Enlightenment?
5. How can the history and philosophy of science lead to a greater understanding of scientific ideas?

### ANALYSIS

6. How do you think Jennifer and Michael's work could help change attitudes towards race and discrimination?

### EVALUATION

7. For his time, Kant was well-informed about the world. He knew about colonisation, slavery and different cultures. However, he never travelled more than two hours from his hometown. To what extent do you think his ideas on race would have been different, had he experienced other cultures first-hand, and why?
8. If you were to travel back in time to the European Age of Enlightenment, with no access to modern technologies, how could you convince the scientists and philosophers alive at the time that there is no scientific basis for categorisation by race?

## Activity

Fill in the table, using the internet to research famous philosophers and their ideas (it is important to note that impacts on society can be good, bad or both). Find other philosophers whose work you find interesting to complete the empty rows.

Philosopher	Time period	Main idea	How did this influence society?
Socrates			
Francis Bacon			
René Descartes	1596–1650	Dividing the world into 'natural' (body) and 'spiritual' (mind/soul)	Western medicine has traditionally treated the mind and body as separate
Robert Hooke			
John Stuart Mill			
Jean-Paul Sartre			
Angela Davis			

## More resources

- This video from The School of Life provides an overview of Kant's philosophy and its relevance to today:

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=nsgAsw4XGvU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nsgAsw4XGvU)

- Learn about the difference between race and ethnicity:

[www.nationalgeographic.co.uk/history/2019/02/race-and-ethnicity-explained](http://www.nationalgeographic.co.uk/history/2019/02/race-and-ethnicity-explained)

- This article explains how the European Age of Enlightenment created modern race thinking, and why society needs to understand this to reduce inequality:

[www.slate.com/news-and-politics/2018/06/taking-the-enlightenment-seriously-requires-talking-about-race.html](https://www.slate.com/news-and-politics/2018/06/taking-the-enlightenment-seriously-requires-talking-about-race.html)

- Visit Jennifer and Michael's Futurum webpage to listen to their podcast:

[www.futurumcareers.com/how-philosophers-have-influenced-the-way-you-think-about-race](https://www.futurumcareers.com/how-philosophers-have-influenced-the-way-you-think-about-race)