# Unit 2: Does science tell the truth?

###### Lesson 3: Pupil Resource 4

Science uses evidence but does religion?

###### Does God exist?

We could call this a religious question. Because it is not directly about the material world, it is not a question that would be asked in science. It is a belief question but it still needs evidence to back it up.

We say that people who believe that God exists have ‘faith’. They may:

* Have an intuition or inner feeling about God
* Like the idea of God because it gives meaning to life
* Have been brought up to believe in God
* Think that the world is so beautiful that it can’t be here just by ‘chance’
* Think that if there is a God then it *explains* how the world is, why it is here, and why we are here

*Scientists have worked out how amazing it is that the laws of nature are just as they are. If any of them were just a tiny bit different there would be no life at all. For example, if the Big Bang had been ever so slightly different, or if the force of gravity was a tiny bit weaker or stronger – then intelligent life would not exist.*

Some scientists who believe in God use this as evidence (but not proof) that an Intelligent Mind – God – created the universe. They call it ‘fine tuning’ as though the universe is a huge piano and God is the piano maker and tuner – tweaking it in lots of different places to make sure it plays the beautiful music he has written.

**Do Martians exist?**

We could call this a scientific question. Science studies the material world. One day it is possible we will know for definite the answer to this question – even if Martians turn out to be nothing but bacteria!

Percy was an astronomer. He:

* May have had a strong feeling that life existed on Mars
* Really wanted to find evidence of Martian canals
* Had been led by the findings of the Italian scientist Schiaparelli to believe in the existence of canals
* Thought that what he saw through his telescope was evidence or ‘proof’ that they existed

Sometimes *evidence* is strong. Sometimes it is found to be weak.

But it is used in science *and* religion.

Beliefs can sometimes be wrong. Sometimes we change our beliefs in the light of fresh evidence. But belief plays a part in science *and* religion.

Work with a partner. Find one similarity between the religious question, ‘Does God exist?’ and the scientific question, ‘Do Martians exist?’ The teacher may like to make a chart of the class’s answers for discussion.