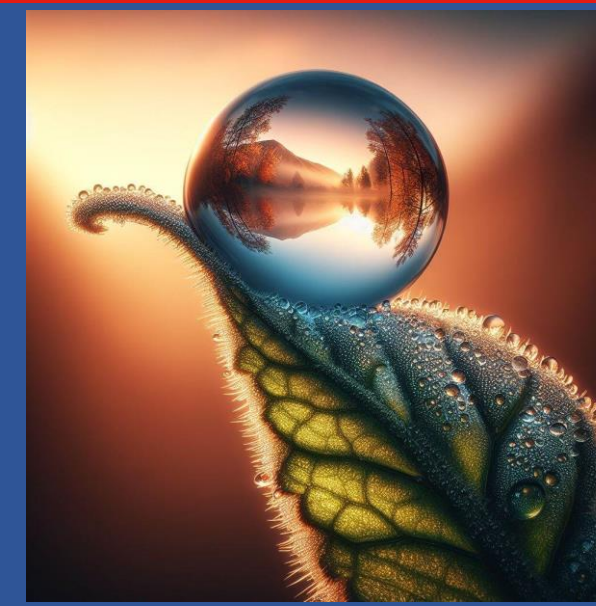
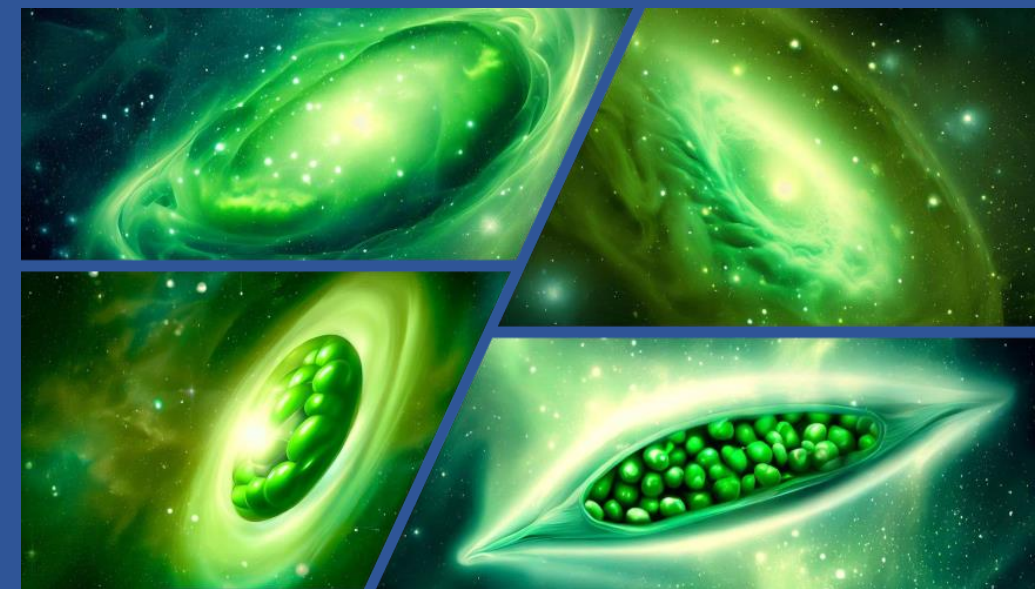




*What questions might this image raise?*



## Big Questions...

...about the nature of reality, the meaning of life, and the significance of being unique

## "the nature of reality"

*consider this in  
the age of GenAI*



how would you describe 'the nature of reality'?

Show drafts 



The nature of reality is a head-scratcher that's been contemplated by philosophers and scientists for millennia, and there's no one definitive answer. Here are a couple of key ways to think about it:

- **Independent Reality:** This view says there's an objective reality "out there" that exists independent of our minds. Mountains stand tall whether we're looking at them or not, and gravity keeps us grounded even if we don't believe in it. Science thrives on this idea, constantly uncovering the rules that govern the universe.
- **Perceived Reality:** This perspective focuses on how our minds interpret the world. Our senses take in information, and our brains construct our understanding of reality. Colors might be mind-made interpretations of light waves, and what we see as a solid chair is actually made of mostly empty space with tiny particles zipping around.

Here are some disciplines that delve into the nature of reality:

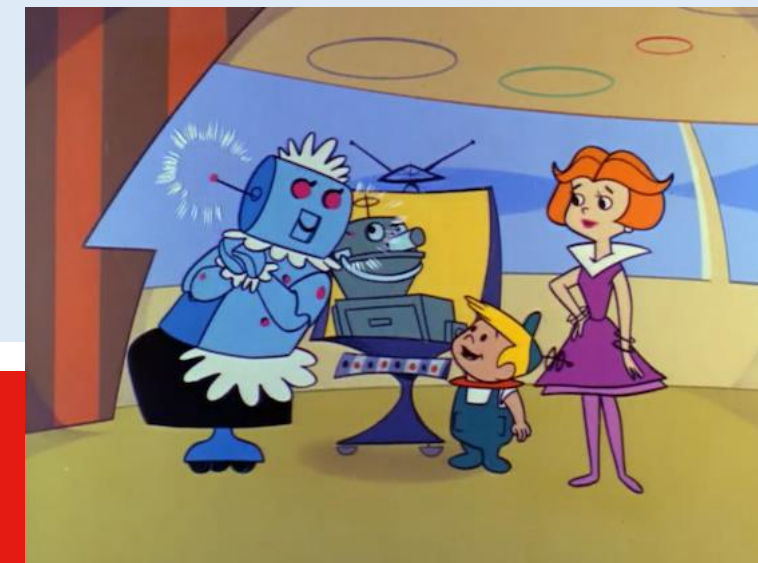
- **Metaphysics:** This branch of philosophy explores the fundamental nature of existence, asking questions about being, time, space, and knowledge.
- **Physics:** Science investigates the objective world, uncovering the laws and principles that shape everything from subatomic particles to galaxies.

Ultimately, the nature of reality is likely a combination of these perspectives. There's an objective world out there, but our perception of it is shaped by our minds. Even science, which relies on the objective world, is limited by our tools and current understanding.

Three 'Big Questions' to consider this afternoon:

- 1. 'Is it real or fake?'**
- 2. Can a robot\* have its own sense of curiosity?**
- 3. What is the future of knowledge?**

*\* for example, a remote telescope in space*





- *Epistemic insight (EI)*
- refers to those 'aha' moments when suddenly we realise something about knowledge that was hidden before.
- It means 'knowledge about knowledge' including knowledge about disciplines and how they interact.

Where was the camera that took this photo? Outside our Galaxy?

We see images like this all the time in science books ... is this a science 'fact'?

This picture is what we predict we would see. So far Voyager is only now leaving our solar system!



When children are asked 'What is science' many of them tell us "facts".



A silhouette of a person with their arms outstretched, set against a vibrant, starry space background with green and blue nebulae. The person is centered in the lower half of the frame, looking out towards the vastness of space.

Is there something uniquely human about the way we engage with these images?

If we send an AI into space – can it only ask the questions we have prompted it to ask – or can it develop a sense of curiosity and come with questions of its own... does it need to have a sense of curiosity to do this?

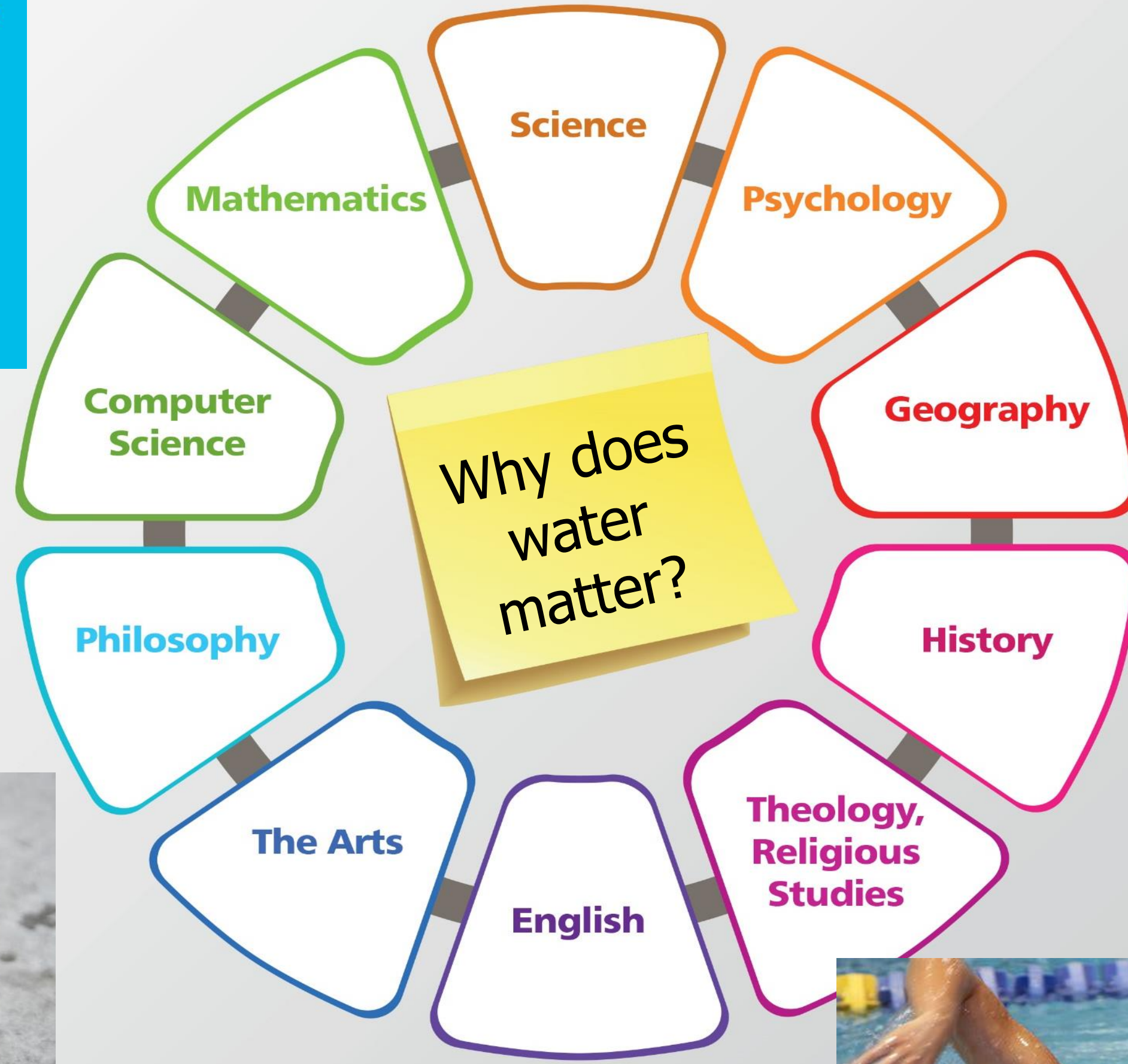
What did you **observe**?

Was your prediction correct?

Did this surprise you?







# Epistemic Insight



**building  
knowledge**  
**working with  
knowledge**



**knowledge**

...about the nature of reality

...about our experiences  
of being human

'informing  
our thinking'  
about 'x'

**disciplines**

methods (ways of working)

types of questions

norms of thought (what is valued)

# What are Big Questions?

**Science** – observations of the natural world

**Maths** – number, shape, space and measure

**The Arts** – beauty, originality, expression

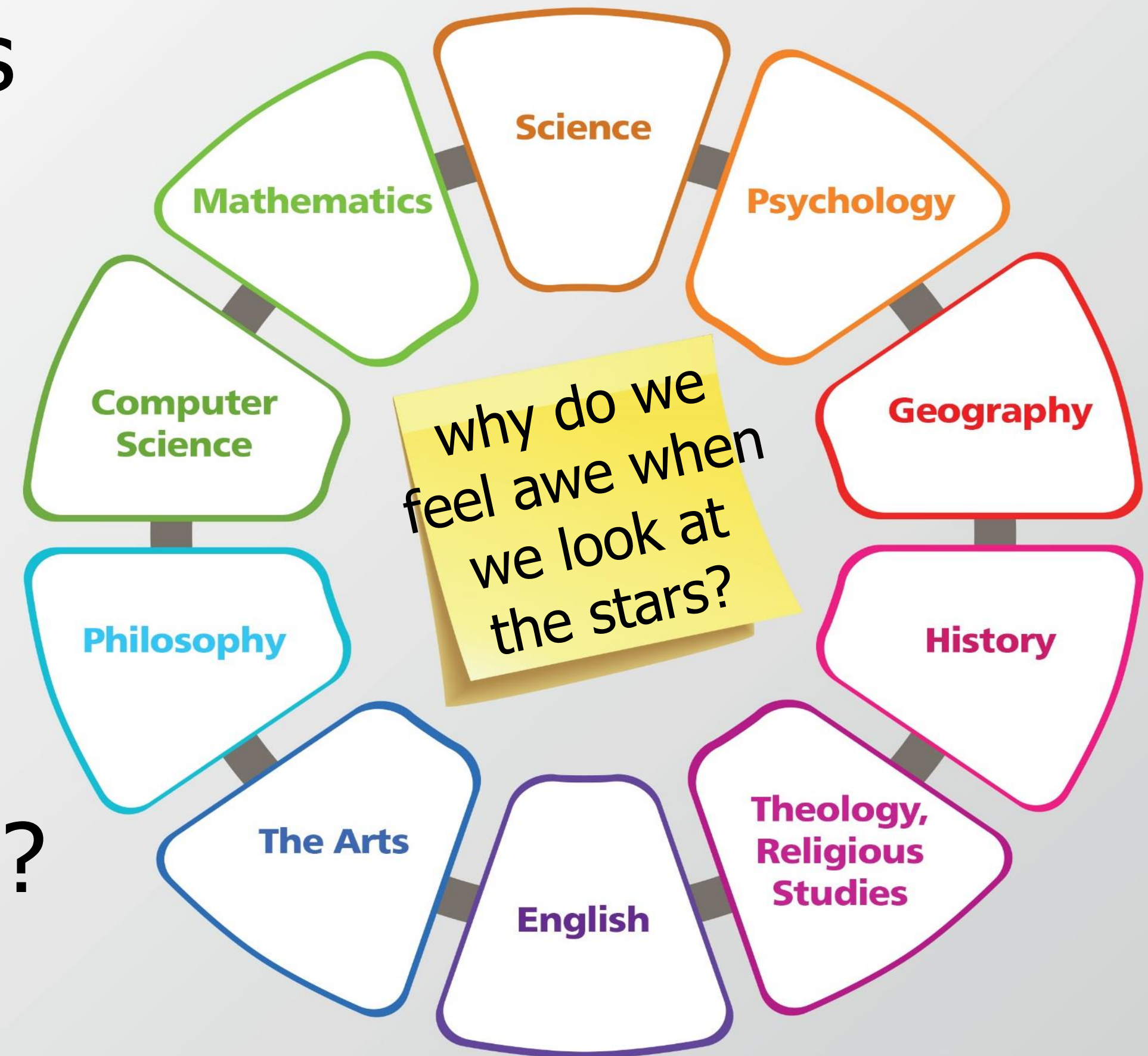


**Geography** – the world and our place in it

**History** – events of the past

**RE** – belief, culture, tradition, meaning, symbolism

- Can science fully answer this question? Why/why not?
- How can science inform our thinking – what does it add to our understanding?
- What about other disciplines?



# Epistemic Insight

**Psychology...** 'I am a thinking, emotional animal'

**Economics...** 'I am a producer, consumer, worker – part of system of exchange'

**Biology...** 'I am an animal that has adapted with distinct and special skills'



**History...** 'I am connected to a heritage, a country, and its stories'

**Chemistry...**  
'I am a mix of chemicals'

**Philosophy...** 'I am a mind with ideas and values'

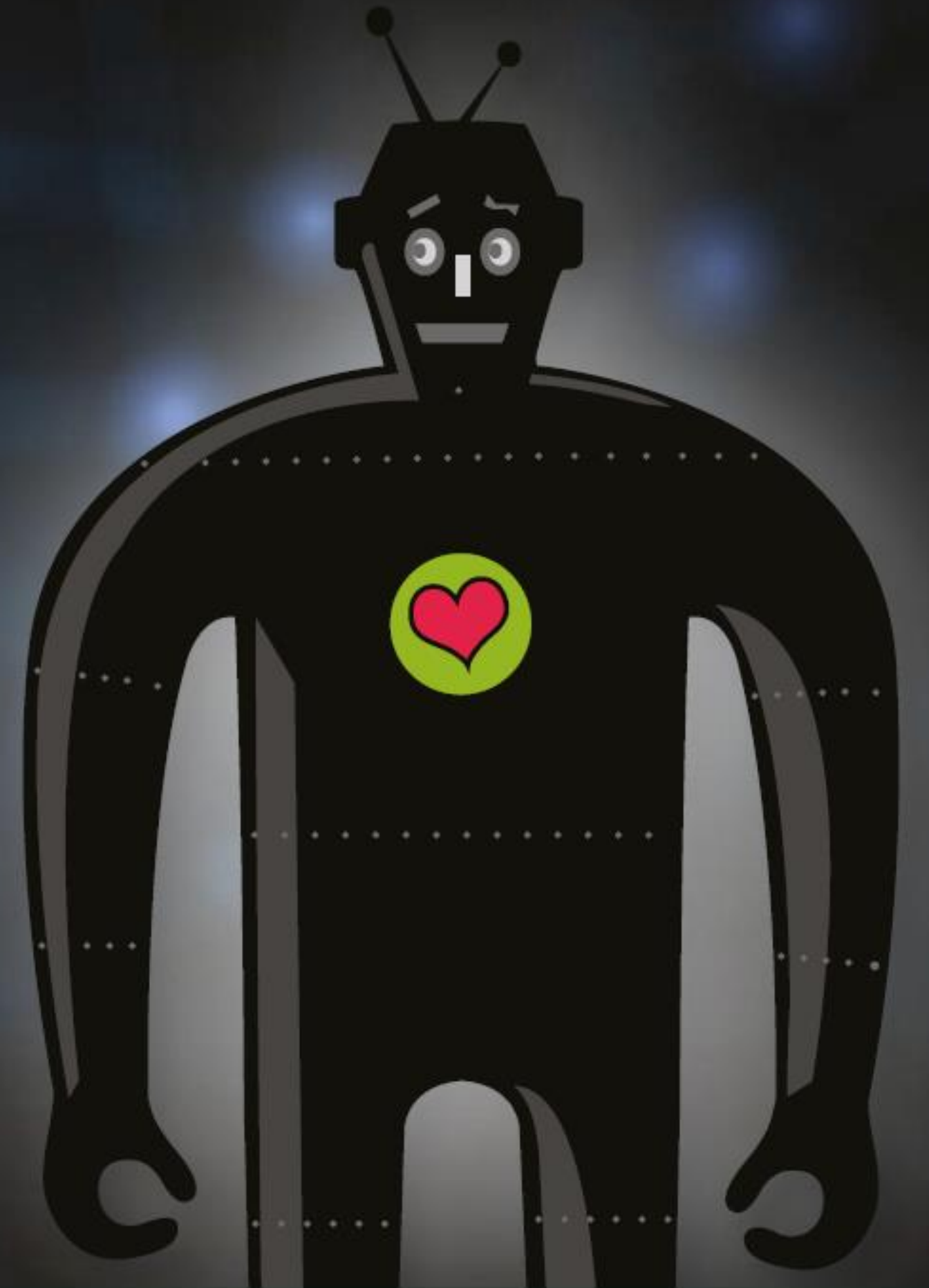
**Physics...** 'I am energy'

**Theology...** 'I am a being that is on a journey that connects with a greater purpose and entity'

Epistemic Insight

# THE EPISTEMIC INSIGHT INITIATIVE

Investigating  
Big Questions  
(IBQ)



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