

Leicester City Council Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2024-29

Religion and Worldviews
Diversity, Community and Cohesion



Leicester
City Council

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[1] <https://www.reonline.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Putting-big-ideas-into-Practice.pdf>

Foreword

We are pleased to introduce this exciting new agreed syllabus for religious education in Leicester. It reflects the many changes that have taken place since the last one was implemented. Based on a worldviews approach, it encompasses both religious and non-religious perspectives, reflecting inclusion as well as diversity. It includes input from several faith communities in Leicester to reflect the lived experiences of people in the city. By following it, pupils will develop knowledge, skills and understanding about a wide range of religions and worldviews, enabling them to play a full part in a diverse society. This will enable them, over time, to navigate an increasingly complex world.

This new agreed syllabus is the result of collaboration between members of Leicester SACRE, primary and secondary school teachers and headteachers, a range of faith communities as well as from local and national experts in the field.

We are very happy to commend this syllabus, trusting that it will transform teaching and learning, achieve high quality RE for all and enrich community cohesion.

Cllr Elaine Pantling

Cllr Manjula Sood MBE, Asst City Mayor

Leicester City Council

Introduction from the Chair and Vice Chair of Leicester SACRE

When Wendy Harrison, who is also our Consultant RE Adviser, agreed to undertake the complete re-write of our locally Agreed Syllabus for RE, we felt it was in safe hands with someone who knows Leicester teachers and pupils very well.

However, I feel she has gone beyond expectations in her painstaking and imaginative work to incorporate national initiatives and the latest educational research and produce a syllabus which is fit for purpose in 2024 and beyond, and inclusive of all pupils, of religious and non-religious worldviews.

The substantive knowledge of each religion and worldview is not superficial but supported by resources from practitioners' lived experience. This informs the disciplinary element of the syllabus where beliefs and ethics are discussed and builds progressively right through school from Reception to examination level.

Leicester City SACRE have been kept on board throughout the process through the Agreed Syllabus Conference and we wholeheartedly commend the new syllabus to be used in Leicester and beyond.

Anne Fishenden
Current chair of Leicester SACRE

Seema Ahmad
Current Vice Chair of Leicester SACRE

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Section 1: Introduction

1.1 Purpose and aims

The syllabus is based upon a worldviews approach^[2] which is about the ways in which people make sense of the world and the impact this has on their daily life. The term refers to both religious and non-religious worldviews. This is explained clearly in the short video clip, 'No-one Stands Nowhere' (Theos)^[3]. The syllabus requires pupils to consider the lived experiences of people, rather than simply study religions which may be disconnected from real experience. This 'world religions' approach can fall into the trap of viewing everyone who belongs to a religion in the same way rather than exploring the diversity between AND within religions. It also tends to neglect non-religious perspectives. In this syllabus pupils learn about religion and worldviews (RWs) through the key concepts that connect them. The aim is to transform teaching and learning in order to achieve high quality Religious Education (RE) for all.

The principal aim of RE in Leicester is to help pupils develop knowledge, skills and understanding about a wide range of religions and worldviews, enabling them to play a full part in a diverse society. Pupils will:

- develop thinking skills which enable them, over time, to navigate an increasingly complex world
- understand how as well as what to learn, through disciplinary and substantive knowledge
- understand that diversity exists between and within religions and worldviews
- know and understand about non-religious and secular perspectives
- reflect upon, and respond to, the ways in which local, national and world events are linked to beliefs, communities, identities, expressions of faith and conflicting interpretations

The new agreed syllabus is the result of close collaboration with members of Leicester SACRE, primary and secondary school teachers and headteachers, a range of faith communities as well as from local and national experts in the field.

1.2 The national context

Many changes have taken place since the last syllabus was written. Views about the curriculum and assessment have evolved, there have been several Ofsted Frameworks (with the present one focusing on the curriculum) and two key Ofsted reports on RE. The way RE is taught has changed, with a new focus on a worldviews approach. Teachers should take note of the following reports:

Ofsted Deep and Meaningful: The religious education subject report 2024 ^[4]

Ofsted research review series: Religious Education, 2021 ^[5]

Religious Education Council. Developing a Religion and Worldviews Approach in Religious Education in England, 2024 ^[6]

The Church of England Education Office. Religious Education in Church of England Schools, A Statement of Entitlement, 2019 ^[7]

Woodhead, L. The rise of 'no religion in Britain: The emergence of a new cultural majority, 2016 ^[8]

[2] <https://religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/rwapproach/>

[3] <https://www.theosthinktank.co.uk/comment/2021/05/12/worldviews-film>

[4] <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/subject-report-series-religious-education/deep-and-meaningful-the-religious-education-subject-report>

[5] <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/research-review-series-religious-education/research-review-series-religious-education#curriculum-progression>

[6] <https://religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/rwapproach/>

[7] <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-02/re-statement-of-entitlement-for-church-schools.pdf>

[8] https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/documents/1043/11_Woodhead_1825.pdf

School Inspections

Ofsted^[9]

In schools without a religious character, Ofsted inspects religious RE as part of inspections under section 5. In most schools with a religious character RE is inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 or as provided in the academy's funding agreement. In a Voluntary Controlled school with a religious character, Ofsted inspects RE, but not collective worship. Inspectors may gather evidence from anywhere they consider to be relevant (including RE lessons) to evaluate pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education (which includes British values), personal development and/or behaviour and attitudes.

SIAMs^[10] (The Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools)

SIAMs is the system of inspection used by the National Society, on behalf of the Church of England and Methodist Church, to fulfil their legal obligations under Section 48 of the 2005 Education Act. As such, it makes judgements on religious education, collective worship, and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) education in Church of England and Methodist schools.

1.3 The Leicester context

Leicester's diverse religious communities worship in numerous places of worship located across the city. Non-religious belief also plays a major role in Leicester, which has the only building dedicated to secularism in the UK. Leicester is noted for many festivals and celebrations throughout the year which involve different religions and cultures and are enjoyed by the wider community. In 2015 researchers at the London School of Economics and Political Science officially named Narborough Road as the most diverse street in the UK^[11] with 22 countries of birth represented among the 108 proprietors. The 'Story of Leicester: Faith and Belief'^[12], summarises why we owe Leicester's children and young people a syllabus that helps to understand the diversity around them. It is only by being educated about people's religions and worldviews that they will learn to make sense of the world around them and find their place within it.



[9] <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/ofsted-handbooks-and-frameworks>

[10] <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2023-08/2023-siams-framework.pdf>

[11] <https://www.leicestermercury.co.uk/news/leicester-news/world-one-street-how-narborough-140090>

[12] <https://storyofleicester.info/faith-belief/>

The photographs on the previous page show Diwali, Hanukkah (Chanukah) and Christmas celebrations in Leicester (2022). Diwali is primarily a Hindu festival, but also has importance for Sikhs and Jains. Celebrations in Leicester are the largest outside of India and thousands of people from diverse communities participate. A few weeks later, Christians celebrate Christmas and as with Diwali, they are joined by those who have different worldviews. These events help to bring the communities together (locally, nationally and globally) and provide a real sense of belonging and the sharing of something special. As preparations for Christmas take place in Leicester, the Jewish community celebrates Hannukah. Like Diwali, this festival is sometimes known as the ‘festival of lights’ and the Hannukah menorah is set up in Victoria Park for all to see. The numerous festivals and celebrations that take place throughout the year reflect the city’s diversity and people’s commitment to inclusivity. It is vital that pupils in our schools learn about and come to understand different religions and worldviews so that they grow up with a common sense of humanity, a desire to demonstrate that ‘we have more in common than the things that divide us.’ (Jo Cox, MP)

Main religious groups in Leicester Census data

RELIGION	2021	2011
Christian	91,161	106,972
Muslim	86,443	61,440
No religion	84,607	75,280
Hindu	65,821	50,087
Sikh	16,451	14,457
Buddhist	1,181	1,224

In a diverse city such as Leicester people may belong to one group, or many. The sense of identity may come about through sharing an interest, going to the same school or university or may be beyond a person’s control, e.g. ethnicity or sexuality. To fully grasp how religious and worldviews communities work, we must understand the interplay between different groups and individuals. This means pupils are engaged in so much more than simply ‘doing Hinduism’ or visiting the local mandir without any understanding of its history and relationship with the wider community.

Section 2: Legal requirements for RE

The primary legislation regard is found in The Education Act (1996) and the School Standards and Framework Act (1998). Circular 1/94 and the subsequent revision of this guidance in 2010 (Religious Education in English Schools: Non-Statutory Guidance 2010) offered an interpretation of the legislation.

2.1 - Legal requirements

All maintained schools in England must provide Religious Education (RE) for all registered pupils, including those in the sixth form and reception classes, unless withdrawn by their parents [School Standards and Framework Act, 1998, Schedule 19; Education Act 2002, Section 80]^[13]. This requirement does not apply to children below compulsory school age in nursery schools or classes. Each Local Authority (LA) is required to review its locally Agreed Syllabus (AS) every five years. The teaching of RE is set out in the AS, determined by the LA. The AS must be consistent with Section 375(3) of the Education Act 1996, School Standards and Framework Act, 1998, Schedule 19^[14] which states that it must 'reflect that the religious traditions of Great Britain are in the main Christian, whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain.'^[15] The law does not define what these principal religions are. RE should be provided for all registered pupils except for those withdrawn at the request of parents/carers [School Standards and framework Act, 1998, Section 71]^[16].

Right of withdrawal

Parents/carers may withdraw their children from all or part of the RE curriculum [Education Reform Act 1988, S2 (1)(a)]. They do not have to provide a reason for this, and the school must comply with the request. It has a responsibility to supervise any pupils who are withdrawn from RE but is not required to provide additional teaching or incur extra costs. If parents/carers wish their child to receive an alternative programme of RE it is their responsibility to arrange this. This could be provided at the school in question or another local school. The pupil may receive external RE teaching if this does not significantly impact on his/her attendance.

2.2 - Types of schools in England and RE

All schools that are state funded, including free schools and academies, are legally required to provide RE as part of their curriculum. All are required to teach RE to all pupils at all key stages (including sixth form), except for those withdrawn.^[17]

Maintained schools

These are controlled by the LA and must follow the National Curriculum.

Community schools

Previously known as 'county' schools, these schools are where the governing body is made up of people from the local community and the school itself. They also have governors appointed by the LA. They must follow their AS for RE.

Voluntary Controlled (VC) schools

These schools are similar to VA schools but are controlled by the LA which employs the staff and sets admissions. They have a religious foundation and have Foundation Governors appointed by the appropriate religious body. They also have governors from the local community and the LA. The foundation or trust (usually a religious organisation) owns the land and buildings and generally forms a quarter of the governing body. Schools with a religious character must follow the AS unless parents request RE that reflects the religious foundation of the school.

Grammar schools

These are state funded schools which select their pupils based on academic ability. They can also be maintained schools. These schools follow the AS.

[13] <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/31/schedule/19>

[14] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/281929/Collective_worship_in_schools.pdf

[15] <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/section/375>

[16] <https://www.education-uk.org/documents/acts/1998-school-standards-framework-act.html>

[17] <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-framework-for-key-stages-1-to-4/the-national-curriculum-in-england-framework-for-key-stages-1-to-4>

Special schools

These are schools that cater for pupils with a range of special needs from moderate to severe learning difficulties. Some schools also have pupils with profound multiple learning difficulties. These schools should provide RE so far as is practicable. Within this context they should follow the AS. (See Appendix 5 for guidance.)

Academies

These are independent, state-funded schools, which receive their funding directly from central government. All were previously part of the LA. Many academies belong to a multi-academy trust (MAT). Academies have more freedom and control over the curriculum, school hours, term dates, etc. They are required to teach RE in accordance with their funding agreements. This depends on whether the academy has a religious designation. For those without a religious character, RE is likely to be based on the AS, though there is no legal requirement to do so. What matters is that the syllabus chosen meets legal requirements. Academies with a religious character must provide RE in accordance with the tenets of the faith specified in the designation. They may, in addition, provide RE that is in line with an AS and teach about other faiths if they choose.

Free Schools

Free schools are set up by parents, teachers or other bodies under the government's legislation of 2011. They were originally designed to raise educational standards in areas where there was traditionally low attainment. RE is determined by the school's funding agreement, as with academies.

2.3 - Time allocation for RE

For this syllabus to be delivered effectively, schools should note the following recommended time allocations. In special schools the time requirements should be met as far as is practicable.

FOUNDATION STAGE

EYFS

Nursery: non statutory entitlement

Reception: delivered flexibly according to the statutory requirements of the EYFS Framework and to help meet the early learning goals (ELG).

Key Stage 1: 36 hours per year

Key Stage 2: 45 hours per year

Key Stage 3: 45 hours per year

Key Stage 4: 5% of curriculum time

Section 3: The Leicester Agreed Syllabus

3.1 - Statutory content: religions

The syllabus fulfils the requirement of the Education Reform Act 1988. It is written to 'reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian whilst taking into account the teachings and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain.'^[18]

Which religions are compulsory?

Reception - Year 6

The units of study for each year all include plans which cover one term or more. The first section of the plan provides instructions about which religions and worldviews are compulsory, ensuring that Christianity and 'the other principal religions represented in Great Britain' are taught. In addition to Christianity, teachers are provided with options regarding other compulsory RWs. Also included are additional suggestions which are not compulsory but reflect a range of RWs as well as the local context. When choosing which RWs to teach schools need to consider continuity across all years. In practice this means that they will focus on a small number of RWs to ensure depth in learning but include aspects of others where appropriate.

Teaching about different religions and traditions

Occasionally there are instances where pupils are required to cover aspects of several religions in one year. This does not mean that they are teaching about each religion in detail. Rather, they are teaching about how aspects of these religions link to the key concepts in the progression strands (See 3:2). This is to ensure coherence, continuity and progression. It means that pupils understand why they are studying an aspect of a particular religion or worldview, i.e. they are building upon common concepts to develop what is sometimes referred to as 'sticky knowledge' (the connection of old knowledge to new knowledge). For example, in year 2, while studying sacred scriptures, a school might choose to focus upon Hindu traditions as their compulsory Dharmic tradition but in addition might also include Sikhi because of the centrality of the Guru Granth Sahib. Taught well, this approach does not confuse. Rather, it enables pupils to see the bigger picture. What matters is how RWs are linked conceptually so that pupils' knowledge and understanding is built up in a coherent way.

How to make choices

When choosing which RWs to teach teachers should consider:

- The big picture: what has come before and what comes next. Teachers should ask: Why am I teaching this religion? Why now?
- The demographic of the school: how are pupils' needs being met?
- Depth in learning: choices must ensure that pupils build upon knowledge year by year.
- Whether the content includes a balance of Abrahamic and Dharmic traditions as well non-religious worldviews.

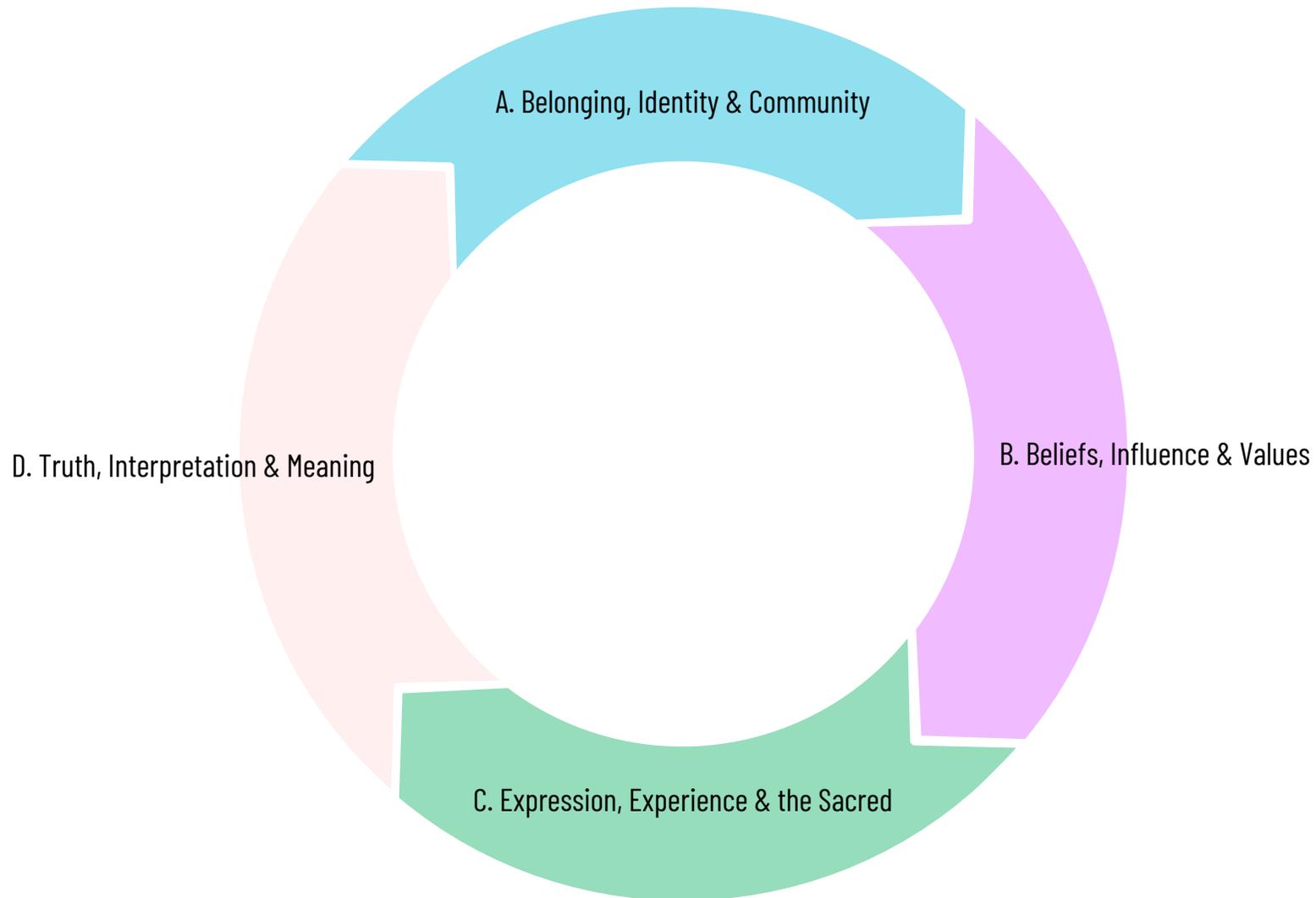
Key Stage 3

Compulsory religions are set out in the Pathways for each year.

[18] <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/section/375>

3.2 Progression strands

These conceptual strands are mapped out for teachers from Reception to Key Stage 3, ensuring progression. They are based on key concepts common to all religions. They inform the learning objectives, learning outcomes and assessment. Appendix 1 shows how each is developed across years. This makes planning the curriculum more coherent and help pupils make sense of the content.



3.3 Subject content: Primary

As explained above, both content and knowledge are linked directly to the concepts. The content heading for each year, along with key questions, is set out in the table below. Schools must follow these topics and questions to ensure that continuity is built into the curriculum. Detailed content plans are provided within the units, but teachers may adapt these if they wish. However, it is hoped that the detail provided will strengthen continuity, save teachers' time and support non-subject specialists. The syllabus includes a plan for Nursery but RE is not compulsory in schools until Reception.

School Designed Units

These must be taught during the summer term of years 3 and 4. The syllabus provides suggestions for these, but schools are free to design this unit in whatever way they feel is appropriate. Details can be found in Appendix 3 which includes a planning template which teachers must include to ensure rigour.

Subject content, Reception - Year 6

RECEPTION: SPECIAL AND SACRED			
Autumn Which people, stories and events are special to me?	Spring What do I know about Easter and Holi?	Summer Why are some places and objects special or sacred?	
Year 1: SPECIAL AND SACRED STORIES			
Autumn 1 What do stories from religious traditions teach about God? What can we learn from other stories?	Autumn 2 How are stories and celebrations linked?	Spring What do creation stories teach people about God and human nature?	Summer What do people learn from stories and festivals?

Year 2: SACRED TEXTS, BELIEFS AND CONNECTIONS		
Autumn What are sacred texts and why do they matter?	Spring and Summer What do we mean by religion and worldviews? What beliefs, values and practices are important in religions and worldviews?	
Year 3: EXPRESSION AND EXPERIENCE		
Autumn How do people express their beliefs through worship and caring for others? How do people use their senses in worship?	Spring What do we mean by religious and spiritual experiences?	Summer School designed unit See Appendix 3
Year 4: WHY COMMUNITIES MATTER		
Autumn What does pilgrimage mean to individuals and communities?	Spring Which RWs communities can we find in our neighbourhood?	Summer 1 School designed unit See Appendix 3
Year 5: COMMITMENT, PROMISES AND MEANING		
Autumn How do people welcome new life into the world? How do people show their commitment to a religion?	Spring How do people celebrate marriage?	Summer What do people believe about the afterlife? How is this expressed in funeral practices?
YEAR 6: BIG QUESTIONS: WHAT DO PEOPLE BELIEVE?		
Autumn and Spring How do people know who or what to believe? What do people believe about the existence of God? What do people believe about good, evil and suffering? How do people choose between right and wrong? What do people believe about caring for the world and others? What do people believe about peace?		Summer Consolidation of learning. What is my religion or worldview?

Subject content: Secondary

Key Stage 3

Teachers should use their professional judgement to plan and teach the pathways for Key Stage 3. The compulsory content is set out for each Pathway.

Key Stage 4

All pupils in Key Stage 4 must follow a programme of study for RE. Legal requirements are met if the school or college is following an examination course. For pupils NOT following an examination course, the school must provide an alternative. More detail can be found in the secondary section of the syllabus.

3.4 Substantive and disciplinary knowledge: Primary and Secondary

In its 2021 'Research Review series: religious education',^[19] Ofsted sets out two main types of knowledge:

1. Substantive knowledge: knowledge about various religious and non-religious traditions
2. Disciplinary knowledge: a) methods or 'ways of knowing' b) Personal knowledge

Teaching must include both types of knowledge and both are clearly set out in the syllabus. Learning should be led by disciplinary knowledge, which allows the pupils to focus upon **how** they are going to learn. This then leads to the substantive knowledge that pupils need to know and understand, i.e. **what** they need to know. In practice, the two types of knowledge should be integrated, i.e. the 'what' should be taught alongside the 'how.'

Substantive knowledge

This is about establishing what must be taught, the building blocks of knowledge. In the syllabus layers of knowledge are built up and sequenced year on year so that progression can be seen in learning, held in place by the four main conceptual strands. When these connections are made, the curriculum makes sense. For example, teachers must be clear about the key concepts in any Bible story they cover and then decide what knowledge pupils need to make sense of that concept. 'Previous learning' included in each unit helps teachers to connect ideas and strengthen continuity and coherence. Please note that while the 'Substantive Knowledge' section outlines what pupils need to know, the content itself is written for teachers, especially the web links at the end of each unit (though some include video clips for children).

Disciplinary knowledge: 'Ways of Knowing'

This is about the methods that establish the substantive facts. For example, pupils might read about aspects of Hindu traditions but will deepen their understanding by first-hand experience, e.g. talking to members of the community. In this syllabus disciplinary knowledge is developed primarily through the lens of Theology, Philosophy and Social Science, but also other disciplines such as art, literature and music. These disciplines will need to be explained to pupils.

- a) Theology: the study of people's beliefs. This includes exploring where beliefs come from, how they have changed over time, how beliefs connect with concepts within a RW and the different ways in which people engage with and interpret their RWs. Theologians often use hermeneutics to interpret sacred texts.
- b) Philosophy: means 'the love of wisdom.' This is about what is known and how it is known. Philosophers ask questions about how people think and reason about the world. They might use methods such as thought experiments, philosophical enquiries, debates, critical thinking and reasoning processes.
- c) Social Science: this is about the ways people live their lives, i.e. how people live and why they live in the ways that they do. Social scientists might use surveys, interviews, ethnographic studies and data analysis.

Disciplinary knowledge is about how pupils handle substantive knowledge appropriately, i.e. the methods and tools used. In practice, this means that they might:

- Interview representatives of different religions and worldviews.
- Observe practices and ways of living, e.g. when visiting a place of worship.
- Read sources of wisdom and debate, appreciate or recognise claims to truth

[19] <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/research-review-series-religious-education/research-review-series-religious-education>

- Go beyond 'the facts' of religions and worldviews by exploring the emotional and sensory world of religion.
- Analyse data and statistics, e.g. to find out about different communities locally, nationally and globally and understand how these are subject to change.

Pupils should be introduced to these subjects from Reception onwards, in an age-appropriate way. Over time they will learn to link questions more closely to the appropriate subject discipline. For example, they will consider how a social scientist uses data and how this can be applied to RE.

Personal Knowledge: this is part of disciplinary knowledge

This is about the ways in which pupils reflect upon and understand their own relationship to the subject matter and also about raising self-awareness of the assumptions they make. It includes pupils' personal knowledge of their own position (positionality), and the way they learn to express this and recognise how theirs might differ from others. How do pupils relate what they are learning in RE to their own worldview? How do they analyse this? It is not appropriate to assess personal knowledge.

3.5. Assessment: Primary

(See Appendix 2)

Teachers must assess what pupils know and remember and whether pupils are making the expected progress in RE. They are required to report to parents on pupils' progress and achievements in RE. It is worth considering the statement, 'It is the curriculum that is the progression model, not assessment'^[20] which means that if the curriculum is taught as directed, pupils will make progress. The progression strands, linked to the learning objectives, outcomes and activities form the basis for assessment. Appendix 2 provides more detail about how to approach assessment, set tasks and record pupils' achievement.

[20] <https://clioetcetera.com/2020/02/08/what-did-i-mean-by-the-curriculum-is-the-progression-model/>

Assessment: Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation stage statutory framework explains that Reception children will be assessed at the end of the year against the Early Learning Goals (ELGs). Teachers will use their judgement and knowledge gained across the year to decide if the child is meeting the expected levels of development or has not yet met the expected levels of development (if they are 'emerging'). The legal document is updated annually.^[21] RE has links to various elements of the ELG (Personal and Social Education / Communication and Language / Literacy) but has particular relevance in Understanding the World, subsection 'ELG: People, Culture and Communities,' where, children at the expected level of development will: 'Know some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities in this country, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class.'

Other links:

Communication and Language

ELG: Listening, Attention and Understanding

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Listen attentively and respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments and actions when being read to and during whole class discussions and small group interactions.
- Make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their understanding.
- Hold conversation when engaged in back-and-forth exchanges with their teacher and peers.

ELG: Speaking

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Participate in small group, class and one-to-one discussions, offering their own ideas, using recently introduced vocabulary.
- Offer explanations for why things might happen, making use of recently introduced vocabulary from stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems when appropriate.
- Express their ideas and feelings about their experiences using full sentences, including use of past, present and future tenses and making use of conjunctions, with modelling and support from their teacher.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

ELG: Self-Regulation

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly.
- Set and work towards simple goals, being able to wait for what they want and control their immediate impulses when appropriate.
- Give focused attention to what the teacher says, responding appropriately even when engaged in activity, and show an ability to follow instructions involving several ideas or actions.

ELG: Managing Self

- Children at the expected level of development will:
- Be confident to try new activities and show independence, resilience and perseverance in the face of challenge.
- Explain the reasons for rules, know right from wrong and try to behave accordingly.

[21] <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>

ELG: Building Relationships

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Work and play cooperatively and take turns with others.
- Form positive attachments to adults and friendships with peers.
- Show sensitivity to their own and to others' needs.

ELG: Literacy

ELG: Comprehension

Children at the expected level of development will:

Demonstrate understanding of what has been read to them by retelling stories and narratives using their own words and recently introduced vocabulary.

- Anticipate – where appropriate – key events in stories.
- Use and understand recently introduced vocabulary during discussions about stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems and during role-play.

Links: Non-statutory guidance which many teachers use to support their ongoing assessment:

Development Matters <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/development-matters--2>

Birth to Five [Birthto5Matters-download.pdf](#)

Assessment: Years 1-6

These are the key questions teachers should ask when thinking about assessment:

1. What am I assessing?
2. Who am I assessing for?
3. What will I do with the outcomes?

The answers to these questions will, to some extent, depend on the school's own assessment procedures. Overall, evidence should be demonstrated through pupils' work shown through learning activities, conversations with pupils and assessment tasks. It needs to be kept simple. It is not necessary to produce complex spreadsheets or data. Ofsted inspectors are not likely to ask to see the detail of internal data. They are more interested in what any data (or any other type of evidence) shows and how teachers use it to move pupils on in their learning. Two main types of assessment need to be carried out.

Formative assessment (Assessment for Learning)

This is ongoing, based on the learning outcomes in the syllabus, and may include retrieval activities (low stakes quizzes, Odd One Out games, whole class feedback, etc.). It is granular, providing feedback, 'in the moment' so that teaching can be adapted responsively. It informs decisions about the next steps needed to make progress. It should not be used for accountability. On its own it is not valid or reliable enough to show evidence of progress, but it can help teachers to identify gaps in knowledge + misconceptions.

Summative assessment (Assessment of learning)

This is about summarising and reporting learning. A variety of tasks may be used which draw on a range of subject knowledge, including extended writing, presentations, spoken and visual accounts. It is about how much of the curriculum pupils know and remember. Summative assessment is primarily about identifying the performance of individuals, though there are occasions when group assessment might be appropriate.

What this means in relation to the syllabus

Formative and summative assessment should be based on:

- the key questions at the beginning of each term or terms
- the learning outcomes set out in the unit plans, which are based on the progression strands
- outcomes evidenced through things such as interviews with pupils, scrutiny of pupils' work, double page end of unit summaries in books and assessment tasks.

Assessment: Key Stage 3

Guidance can be found in the Key Stage 3 plans.

Assessment: Key Stage 4

This will be in line with the requirements of the examination board. If pupils are following a non-examination course teachers must follow the guidelines for Key Stage 3.

How to use the units

Reception

The units of study provide detailed content, but it is recognised that teachers need to be allowed flexibility in the way they teach the material. They will need to consider, for example, overall planning for the EYFS, the ability of children on entry, etc. However, teachers should ensure that the starter questions (at the top of each term) are addressed in as much depth as possible to enable Year 1 teaching to build upon this knowledge.

Reception-Year 6 unit plans	
Units of work are set out are set out in the following way:	
Introduction	A summary of what will be covered throughout the year.
Worldviews context	A brief outline of how the learning links to the worldviews approach.
Progression strands	The key concepts which drive the learning.
Termly plans which include: a) Religions and Worldviews to be covered	See 'Teaching about different religions and traditions' in Section 1.
b) Content overview	This content matches the compulsory content headings. Teachers may be flexible in the way they teach the content.
c) Previous learning	Each unit references what has gone before, including links to the present topic. Teachers may use this to design retrieval activities.
d) New learning	Having identified previous learning, this sets out the new learning objectives. These are based on the progression strands.

e) Unit expectations and outcomes	This shows how pupils should demonstrate that they have achieved the learning objectives and includes subject specific skills. Evidence for these should be demonstrated through a variety of ways, including pupils' work, conversations with pupils and assessment tasks.
f) Key vocabulary and concepts	It is essential to identify these to pupils and to reference them as learning progresses.
g) Teacher guidance	This provides key information for teachers about how the content should be approached, including advice about how to deal with potentially problematic or controversial areas.
h) Disciplinary knowledge (See Section 1)	This is about how the subject is taught. It is set out in the form of questions linked to key disciplines. Personal Knowledge is an aspect of disciplinary knowledge.
Substantive knowledge (See Section 1)	This is what is being taught, the knowledge that pupils need in order to understand the key concepts. Note: Teachers must include substantive knowledge but may adapt the content.
Resources, links, etc.	These are mainly for teachers, not pupils. They include a wide range of helpful books, weblinks, etc. to support teaching and learning. They include some age-appropriate video clips as well as content at GCSE level (to help teachers!).
Teaching suggestions	These link to the expected learning outcomes at the beginning of the unit and provide teachers with some suggestions about how to approach learning activities.

NOTE:

Throughout the syllabus, RWs is used to refer to Religion and Worldviews.
Where quotes from the Bible are used, these are from the Good News version.

NURSERY

Nursery

Overview

Schools are not legally required to teach RE until Reception but the foundations can be laid in Nursery. *The following plan from Uplands Infant School, Leicester, [22]* provides an example of good practice.

Uplands Infant School Leicester: example

In Nursery there is a focus on children learning through their own experiences of family celebrations, rather than through discrete RE teaching. This is implemented through discussion, videos, books, art and role-play. To maximise children's opportunities for immersive learning events are sequenced in context throughout the year. In Reception this is further developed, and children learn to see family celebrations in a wider religious context and to compare their experiences with other religions. In both Nursery and Reception, RE is taught as part of Understanding the World.

Term 1

Special people: Me and my family- who is special to me? In Reception and Key Stage 1 children will develop this knowledge to learn about key religious figures, e.g. Jesus being special to Christians.

Special occasions: Children will be exposed to activities linked to these celebrations to help develop their understanding. Examples of special occasions may include weddings, birthdays, Eid, Diwali, Halloween, Christmas (introduce the Nativity as the story of the birth of Jesus, to be built upon in Reception).

Key Vocabulary: Me, Sister, Brother, Mum, Dad, Grandparent, Aunty, Uncle, Cousin, Christmas, Diwali, Nativity, Jesus, God

Nursery

Term 2

Focus on children's own experiences and family celebrations, through discussion, videos, books, images and role-play.

What do we celebrate with our families? For example, weddings and birthdays.

Special Occasions: Children will be exposed to activities linked to these celebrations to help develop their understanding building on previous exposure with other celebrations. Special occasions may include Chinese New Year, Shrove Tuesday (Pancake Day), Ramadan and Easter (link back to Christmas & Christians)

Key vocabulary: Easter, Ramadan

Term 3

Focus on children's own experiences and family celebrations, through discussion, videos, books and images and role-play.

What do we celebrate with our families? For example, weddings and birthdays.

Special Occasions: Children may begin to gain an understanding that not everyone has the same celebrations or celebrates in the same way. Questions may include: What do we celebrate with our families? How do we celebrate? What do others celebrate? How?

[22] <https://www.uplandsinfant.org.uk/teaching-and-learning/religious-education/>

Useful books for Nursery and Reception

Armitage, D and McQuerry, M. Big ideas for Little Philosophers (Board books), 2020-2021 G.P.Putnam's Sons:

Equality with Simone de Beauvoir

Happiness with Aristotle

Imagination with René Descartes

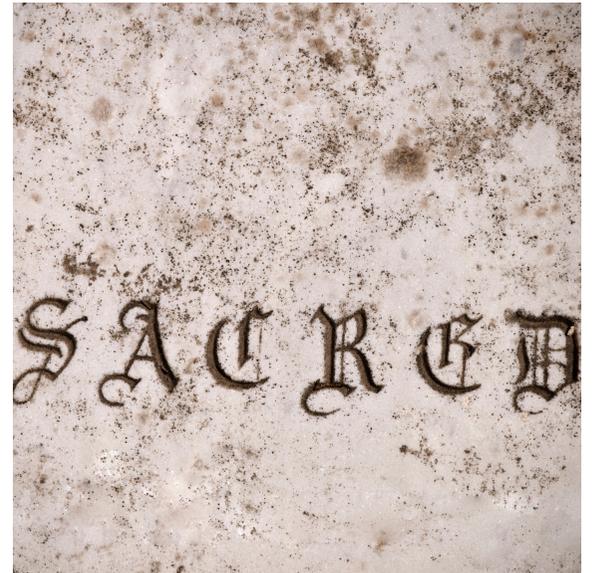
Kindness with Confucious

Love with Plato

RECEPTION

RECEPTION

Special and Sacred



Overview

The concept of 'special' should arise naturally from pupils' own interests and lives. During Reception teachers should develop this concept, enabling children to make wider connections and form the foundation for exploring the concepts of community and identity. The learning is driven by key questions. It is important to start with where the pupils are then move from family to school to the wider community. This section is more flexible than for other years, to enable teachers to meet the needs of their pupils. However, the broad areas under 'Substantive Knowledge' must be covered. The words 'theology', 'philosophy' and 'social science' should be introduced to support disciplinary knowledge. Throughout the year, teachers should use appropriate stories to provide building blocks for year 1.

Worldviews context

'When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child...' (1 Corinthians 13:11). In terms of their understanding of concepts, young children are limited in terms of their cognitive development but at the same time capable of making comments that reflect great depth of thought and imagination. This includes thinking about what is special in their world, then other people's. The fundamental question is, how do children see the world? What makes some people special? Why do we feel the need to celebrate special things? What things might be considered holy or sacred? How do others see the world?

Which religions should be taught?

Compulsory

Christianity

Hinduism

Other RWs should be taught as and when appropriate, based on teachers' judgement.

Autumn

Which people, stories and events are special to me?

Who is special to me and why?

Families, friends, community.

Special events

Advent and Christmas.

Why these are special for Christians.

Why Christians think that Jesus was a special baby: the Nativity story.

How the Nativity story is celebrated in school.

New life: How Christians might celebrate the birth of a baby.

Diwali

Why Rama and Sita are special to Hindus.

How Diwali is celebrated in school.

Spring

What do I know about Easter and Holi?

Easter

How we can see Easter around us.

Signs and symbols.

What Christians remember at Easter

The Easter story.

Holi

The stories of Krishna and the colours, and Holika and Prahlad.

How Hindus celebrate Holi in Leicester.

Summer

Why are some places and objects special or sacred?

The idea of special and sacred

What makes something special.

What makes objects and places special.

Special clothes.

Why some are considered sacred.

What we can see in a church and a mandir.

Visit * to a church and mandir: Important objects, pictures and symbols.

*or through virtual tours, video clips, images, etc.

Progression Strands: concepts which pupils should understand

A: Belonging, Identity & Community

- What it means and how it feels to belong to different groups.
- What some people and groups are special.
- How people come together to celebrate special events, e.g. birth.
- How schools celebrate special events.

B: Beliefs, Influences & Values

- Why Christmas and Easter are special for Christians.
- Why Diwali and Holi are special for Hindus.
- Why people might not belong to a religion.

C: Expression, Experiences and the Sacred

- How people celebrate festivals.
- How stories are expressed through festivals.
- Why places of worship matter to people.
- What makes some places, and the things inside them, sacred or holy.
- How being inside special and sacred places makes people feel.

D: Truth, Interpretation & Meaning

- Why stories are important to Christians and Hindus.
- What meaning is given to these stories.
- How symbols and artefacts in places of worship have special meaning for believers.

Reception: Autumn Term

Which people, stories and events are special to me?

New learning objectives

Pupils should know and understand:

- What it means to belong to different groups.
- How people come together to celebrate special events, e.g. birth.
- Why Christmas is special for Christians and why Diwali is special for Hindus.
- How people celebrate Christmas and Diwali, including in school.
- Why stories are important to Christians and Hindus.
- How some people show that they belong to a religion.

Religions and Worldviews

Compulsory

- Christianity
- Hinduism

Other RWs as directed in the units

Disciplinary Knowledge: ways of knowing

Disciplinary knowledge helps to deepen children's understanding of substantive knowledge. **You do not have to use every question:** some may be useful as a starter for enquiry, others for promoting deeper learning. These questions relate to content across the whole of Reception.

How might pupils learn?

How might pupils learn?

They could:

- Ask important questions.
- Talk to people from different religions and worldviews.
- Use pictures and video clips to help them understand what happens at festivals.
- Look at paintings to help them understand the stories of the Nativity and Rama and Sita.
- Listen to music used at Christmas and Diwali and think about how this helps people to feel close to God.

Theology is about what people believe. Theologians might ask:

What does the word 'God' mean?
Why do people celebrate new life?
Who do Christians and Hindus believe are special in the Nativity and Diwali stories?
What might Hindus learn from the Diwali story?
What might Christians learn from the Nativity story?
Why do Christians believe that Jesus was a special baby?
Why are Christmas and Easter special times for Christians?
Why is Diwali a special time for Hindus?
How can clothes be special or sacred?

Artists might ask:

How can paintings of the birth of Jesus help us to understand the Nativity story?
How can paintings of the Ramayana help us to understand the story of Rama and Sita?
Could some art be described as sacred?

Philosophy is about ways in which people think. Philosophers might ask:

How are we similar/different to each other?
How do we decide what makes someone special?
What does the word 'family' mean?
How do we decide what to celebrate?
Why do Christians think that Jesus is a special person?
Why do people have special ceremonies to welcome new life into the world?
Could stories about festivals have many meanings?
How is 'special' different to 'sacred' or 'holy'?
What makes something good or evil/bad?

Musicians might ask:

Why do Christians sing carols at Christmas?
How do the words of some carols express Christian beliefs about Jesus?
How does music and dance help Hindus celebrate Diwali?

Social Science is about how people live. Social Scientists might ask:

What do people do in families?
How is a family different to another kind of group?
Are all families the same?
Why do families celebrate special occasions together?
Why do people come together to celebrate the birth of a baby?
Why do people in Leicester come together to celebrate festivals?
Why is it important for some people to show that they belong to a religious group?

Reflections: Personal knowledge

What does family mean to me?
Why are some things special to me?
How am I special?
How does it feel to belong?
How do I celebrate festivals and events?
Do the Christmas and Diwali stories have any meaning for me?
How do festivals make me feel?
Which celebrations have I taken part in at school and outside of school?

Substantive Knowledge: what pupils need to know

Who is special to me and why?

- Groups the children belong to: school, friends, clubs, family, community, etc.
- Different types of families.
- How belonging to a family can make people feel special.
- The ways in which people come together to celebrate special events such as birthdays.
- What someone might wear to show that they belong to a RW.

What do people wear to show that they belong?

Think about what pupils (or adults) might wear:

- A uniform for a particular job, e.g. police officer, nurse.
- A school uniform.
- Special clothes for a party or celebration.
- Clothes that have links to their religion.

Resources

Special clothes: head coverings

Cohan, M. Hats of Faith, Shade 7 Ltd. 2027

<https://hatsofffaith.com>

Special Events

How do Christians celebrate the birth of a baby?

(Note: this is covered in detail in Year 5, autumn term)

Go through the basic actions and words that take place during an infant baptism. Emphasise the following:

- All parents think that their baby is special and will celebrate in some way.
- Not all babies are baptised.
- Different religions and worldviews have special ceremonies to welcome babies into the world.

Christmas

Jesus: A special baby

Explore why pupils get excited when they think about Christmas. Use an Advent calendar to explore this idea. Explain that Advent is special for Christians, and it is a time when they prepare for the celebration of the birth of Jesus.

Why Christmas is special for Christians

This could be introduced by looking at Christmas cards, pictures, a Christmas crib/Nativity scene.

- Tell the Nativity story, focusing on the key characters: Mary, Joseph, Angel Gabriel, shepherds, Wise Men, Jesus: Matthew 1: 18 – 2:12, Luke 1:26-35, 2:1-20.
- Provide children with some context, e.g. when this took place (around 2000 years ago), where Bethlehem is.

Summary of story

Mary was told by the Angel ('messenger') Gabriel that she was going to have a baby and he would be called Jesus. This means that Jesus was sent by God, so he is very special to Christians. When it was almost time for Mary to give birth, she and Joseph had to travel to Bethlehem because the Roman rulers wanted to put together a list (called a census) of everyone living in the land. This meant that everyone had to return to the place of their birth to be counted and Mary and Joseph had to travel to Bethlehem, where Joseph's family came from. Everyone was doing the same thing which meant that there was no room for them to stay. As a result, Mary had to give birth to Jesus in a stable. Jesus was visited by angels, shepherds and later, by wise men who had learned that a great king would be born when a special star appeared in the sky. They brought three special gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

Why and how do Christians celebrate Christmas?

- It is very important to Christians that they remember the birth of Jesus because they believe he was God's gift to them. This is why they go to church and give each other gifts.
- Not all Christians will celebrate Christmas in the same ways or even on the same day. There are many different Christian denominations/groups and communities, each with their own beliefs, traditions and rituals. This reflects diversity within the Christian tradition in this country and all over the world.
- In the Church of England, The 12 days of Christmas involve special church services, such as Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve and a Christmas Day morning service. During services there will be readings from the Bible, special hymns (carols) and prayers. The four weeks of Advent before Christmas are also important preparation time.
- Singing of carols: these are often a way of re-telling the Nativity story, e.g. Silent Night, Oh Little Town of Bethlehem, Away in a Manger, While Shepherds Watched.

Why Christmas is special for many people

Even if they are not religious, there are many reasons why people enjoy celebrating Christmas, e.g. decorations, presents, food, family and friends. Think about the feelings that are associated with Christmas.

How Christmas is celebrated in schools

- Nativity plays.
- Singing carols and special assemblies.
- Giving cards and gifts to each other.
- Putting up Christmas decorations.
- Playing Christmas music.
- Having a special meal.
- Having parties with special food.

Diwali

Why Diwali is special for Hindus

The word Diwali means 'rows of lighted lamps'. It celebrates the story of Rama and Sita's return home from 14 years of exile. The story of Ramayana shows how good won over evil, light over darkness and knowledge over ignorance. It is celebrated by Hindus, Sikhs and Jains but our focus is upon the Hindu festival.

- Diwali is known as the 'festival of lights' because houses, shops and public places are decorated with small oil lamps called 'diyas' or 'divas.' Traditional **diva** lamps are small clay pots filled with ghee or oil, containing a cotton wick which many Hindus light as an act of daily worship.
- Diwali always falls sometime between October and November, but the exact date varies each year as the Hindu calendar is based on the Moon.

Special people: The story of Rama and Sita

The Ramayana is a poem which tells the story of Rama and Sita. It is dated between the 4th – 7th century BCE.

Lakshmi and Diwali

For Hindus, God can be seen in many ways in the form of different deities. During Diwali, as well as honouring Rama and Sita, Hindus also worship Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth and purity. As Rama, Lakshman and Sita returned home, people lit lamps to guide their way in the dark. To remember this, during Diwali people light candles and divas in their homes to guide Lakshmi, in the hope that she will bestow good fortune on their home for the coming year. Light is also a symbol of good things overcoming bad things. Diwali is celebrated in India and all around the world in many different ways, for example:

- Many Hindus honour Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth. Lamps are lit and windows and doors are left open to help her find her way into people's homes. Colourful patterns called rangoli can be seen on the doorsteps of homes to welcome in visitors and good fortune in the shape of Lakshmi. Some Hindus will leave the windows and doors of their houses open so that she can enter and grant good fortune.
- People may also spring-clean the home, wear new or best clothes, exchange gifts, prepare special meals, decorate buildings with lights, and have fireworks displays.
- Some Hindus, e.g. in the Gujarati tradition, celebrate the Hindu New Year on the day after Diwali (but occasionally a day later).

How Diwali is celebrated in Leicester

- Leicester's celebration of Diwali is one of the biggest events outside of India and has everything from dance, fireworks, food and fashion.
- The festival begins with the city's lights switch-on and ends with fireworks display and entertainment on Diwali Day.

How Diwali is celebrated in schools

- Special plays and dancing in assemblies
- Sharing of special food
- Dressing up and acting out the story of Rama and Sita
- Making Diwali decorations, e.g. rangoli patterns
- Sending cards and exchanging presents

Resources

Families and difference

Beer, S. Love Makes a Family, Caterpillar Books 2021
Brooks, F. All About Families, Usborne 2028
Edwards-Middleton, R & L. My Family and Other Families, DK Children 2022
Hegarty, P. We Are Family, Caterpillar Books 2018
Hoffman, M. The Great Big Book of Families, Frances Lincoln 2010
Putill, S. It's OK to be Different, Dunhill Clare Publishing 2022
Sotomayor, S. Just Ask! Philomel Books, 2019

Stories, Christmas, Diwali

Amery, H. The Usborne Children's Bible, Usborne 2009
Briggs, R. The Snowman, Puffin 1980
Doyle, M. Rama and Sita, Bloomsbury 2018
Donaldson, J. The Christmas Pine, Alison Green Books 2022
Fletcher, T. The Christmasaurus, Penguin 2021
Hargreaves R. Mr Men, Little Miss, Happy Diwali, Penguin Random House 2020
Hay, J. The Owl Who Came for Christmas, MacMillan 2022
McFarlane M. Sacred Stories, Simon & Schuster 2012
Orlandi, L. Look Inside: The Time of Jesus, Lion 2014
Pelikan, J. The Illustrated Jesus Through the Centuries, Yale University Press 1997
Shah, S. The Best Diwali Ever, Scholastic 2021
Umrigar, T. Binny's Diwali, Scholastic 2022

Links for teachers

Different families

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/z478gwx/articles/zbd78xs>

Christening/baptism: video clip

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p01149v1>

The first Christmas: video clips

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/religious-studies-ks1-the%20christian-story-of-the-first-christmas/z7fp382>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/assemblies-ks1-christianity-the-first-christmas/z9sc3j6>

Paintings

<https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/stories/the-nativity>

Nativity Art Around the World

<https://cultivatedlearning.org/nativity-art-around-the-world/>

Nativity Scenes: diverse culture

<https://www.atlasobscura.com/online-courses>

BBC CBeebies – My first Festivals

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/shows/my-first-festivals>

Diwali teaching resources

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/diwali-teaching-resources/zw48kty>

How a family celebrates Diwali

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/how-diwali-is-celebrated/zk63qp3>

Rama and Sita

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/religious-studies-ks1-the-hindu-story-of-rama-and-sita/zdtmnr>



Key vocabulary and concepts

General: belonging, ceremony, family, holy, sacred, special.

Christianity: Advent, Angel Gabriel, baptism, candles, cross, christening, Christmas, godparents, gold, font, frankincense, Jesus, Joseph, Mary, myrrh, Nativity.

Hinduism: diya lamps, Diwali, rangoli patterns, Lakshmi, mandir.

End of unit expectations

Pupils should be able to talk, draw/paint, role play about:

- Different groups and what it means to belong to them.
- How people come together to celebrate special events, e.g. birth of a baby.
- Why Christmas is special for Christians and Diwali is special for Hindus.
- What people do to celebrate Christmas and Diwali, including in school.
- Which stories are important to Christians and Hindus and why.
- What people do at Christmas and Diwali to remember the story of the Nativity and of Rama and Sita.

Reception: Spring Term

What do I know about Easter and Holi?

Previous learning: what pupils know and remember.

Reception Autumn Term

- What is meant by special.
- Why festival times are special for families and communities.
- The meaning of Christmas and Diwali: why festivals matter.
- Why Christians believe that Jesus is a special person.
- Why Rama and Sita are special to Hindus.



New learning objectives

Pupils should know and understand:

- How people come together to celebrate special events.
- Why Easter is special for Christians.
- Why Holi is special for Hindus.
- How people celebrate Easter and Holi.
- How both festivals might mean different things to different people.
- How stories are expressed through the celebrations of Easter and Holi.



Religions and Worldviews

Compulsory

- Christianity
- Hinduism

Other RWs as directed in the units

Disciplinary Knowledge: ways of knowing

Disciplinary knowledge helps to deepen pupils' understanding of substantive knowledge. **You do not have to use every question:** some may be useful as a starter for enquiry, others for promoting deeper learning.

How might pupils learn?

They could:

- Ask important questions.
- Talk to people from different religions and worldviews.
- Think about how festivals such as Easter and Holi may have different meanings.
- Look at pictures and video clips to help them understand what is special about Easter and Holi.

Theology is about what people believe. Theologians might ask:

Why does the Easter story matter to Christians?
Why do Christians call the day Jesus died 'Good Friday'?
What do Christians believe happened to Jesus on Easter Sunday?
What might Hindus learn from the story of Prahlad and Holika?
What do Hindus believe about God?
Why are some stories and festivals sacred or holy?

Philosophy is about the ways in which people think. Philosophers might ask:

What is puzzling about the Easter story?
How might Easter eggs be linked to the Easter story?
Is seeing believing?
Can stories have different meanings?

Social Science is about the way people live. Social scientists might ask:

How do Christians show that Easter is important to them?
How do Hindus show that Holi is important to them?
Why might non-religious people celebrate Easter?
Why do people want to remember things that happened in the past?

Artists might ask:

How does the way an artist (such as Leonardo Da Vinci) portrays an event like the Last Supper deepen our understanding of a story in the Bible?
How do paintings of Krishna and Radha help us to understand their story?

Reflections: Personal knowledge

What do I think about the Easter story?
What does Easter mean to me?
What can I understand through the story of Holika and Prahlad?
Why do friends sometimes let you down?
What stories have meaning for me?

Substantive Knowledge: what pupils need to know

Easter

How can we see Easter around us?

Easter eggs, Easter cards, hot cross buns, signs on churches.

What Christians remember at this time: The Easter Story

Remind pupils about the Nativity story and how this shows Christians that Jesus was special. Explain that although his followers believed that Jesus was a very special person, others did not like the things he said and did and plotted to kill him. Christians believe that three days after he had been killed, Jesus came alive again. Christians call this the Resurrection and this is what they celebrate at Easter. The Resurrection is hard to understand. Think about the story of The Very Hungry Caterpillar. At the end of the story we read that the

caterpillar built a house, or cocoon, around himself and he stayed there for two weeks. After that time he nibbled a hole in the cocoon, pushed his way out and became a beautiful butterfly. One way of describing this is to say that the caterpillar found a new way of being alive. That is what Christians believe happened to Jesus. He died but found a new way to become alive forever.

Holi: The story of Prahlad and Holika

Holi (or 'Festival of Colours') is one of the most important festivals celebrated by many Hindus. This story is about good and evil (link with Diwali and Rama and Sita, Autumn term).

How Hindus celebrate Holi

Holi begins with Holika Dahan, when bonfires are lit. The bonfire is a reminder of the story of Holika and Prahlad. This purifies the air of anything evil. Foods like popcorn, grains, coconut and chickpeas may be thrown into the fire. On the second day, Rangwali Holi, people cover each other in brightly coloured paint called gulal to remember the love story of Krishna and Radha. All around the world huge crowds gather to do this.

Krishna

The festival of Holi is also associated with Lord Krishna. Hindu scriptures describe him as a very mischievous young boy. This is why practical jokes and paint fights take place during the festival. Krishna had dark blue skin but wanted to be fairer, like Radha, who he loved. His mother Yashoda suggested that he painted Radha's with different colours. This may be why, during Holi, people throw perfumed coloured powder at each other. It could also be why one of the names of Holi is the 'festival of love', as it is in part celebrating the love between Krishna and Radha (as well as emulating his prank).

Note: Introducing the story of Krishna provides a simple introduction to the idea that Hindus worship God in many forms.

How Holi is celebrated in Leicester

Quote from someone attending the festival in 2023: 'Holi is the celebration to introduce spring, it's love over evil and it's celebrated with colours and love. The event brings people together, and we've been doing it at Spinney Hill Park for over 25 years'.

Resources

Amery, A. The Usborne Children's Bible, Usborne 2009

Amery A & Young, N. The Usborne Easter Story, Usborne 2011

Boon, F. The Story of Easter, Authentic Media 2019

Carle, E. The Very Hungry Caterpillar, Penguin 1974

Links for teachers

Easter

What is Easter?

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/ztkxpv4/articles/z4t6rj6>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zct7tcw>

Events of Easter week

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/z6b96v4/revision/1>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zdcbcj6/revision/7>

Video clip: the story of Easter

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/religious-studies-ks1-the-christian-story-of-easter/zhgv47h>

Animation: The Last Supper

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0114z3b>

Crucifixion and Resurrection: video clips

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/z4txnk7>

Holi

What is Holi? Video clips

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zh86n39/articles/z4qqy9q>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/56522271>



Key vocabulary and concepts

Easter: cross, Easter, Easter cards and eggs, Good Friday, palm crosses, Palm Sunday, Resurrection, tomb.

Holi: bonfire, evil, good, Holi, Holika, Krishna, Prahlad, Rangwali, Vishnu.

End of unit expectations

Pupils should be able to talk, draw, role play about:

- The ways in which people come together to celebrate special events.
- Why Easter is special for Christians and why Holi is special for Hindus.
- What people do to celebrate Easter and Holi.
- How both festivals might mean different things to different people.
- How stories are linked to the celebrations of Easter and Holi.

Reception: Summer Term

Why are some places and objects special or sacred?

Previous Learning: what pupils know and remember

Reception, Autumn and Spring Terms

- How special and sacred times are celebrated
- Why Easter and Holi are special for believers



New learning objectives

Pupils should know and understand:

- Why places of worship matter to people.
- What makes some places, and the things inside them, sacred or holy.
- How symbols and artefacts in places of worship have special meaning for believers.
- How being inside special and sacred places makes people feel.



Religions and Worldviews

Compulsory

- Christianity
- Hinduism

Other RWs as directed in the units

Disciplinary Knowledge: ways of knowing

Disciplinary knowledge helps to deepen pupils' understanding of substantive knowledge. **You do not have to use every question:** some may be useful as a starter for enquiry, others for promoting deeper learning.

How might pupils learn?

They could:

- Ask important questions.
- Talk to Christians and Hindus about their places of worship and the things they might find inside them.
- Watch what happens when people visit the place of worship (more likely to be in the mandir, where people worship every day).

Theology is about what people believe. Theologians might ask:

What does sacred mean?
What does holy mean?
Why is a church special to Christians?
Why is a mandir a special place for Hindus?
Why do Christians and Hindus go to churches and mandirs?
What makes an object special or sacred?
Why are some objects inside places of worship considered to be special?
How do people believe sacred objects should be treated?
How might being inside a church or mandir make people feel closer to God?

Reflections: Personal knowledge

Why are some objects special to me? Are any sacred?
How did it feel inside the church/mandir?
How did I know that some things were special or sacred?
What can I learn from stories?
What makes me happy, sad, peaceful?

Philosophy is about the ways in which people think. Philosophers might ask:

Why is this building or object important?
Why might some places be called sacred or holy?
Who decides?
How is a special place different to a sacred place?
How might being inside these places make non-religious people feel?
Could anywhere be a special place?
Does the special or sacred place have to be a building?

Social Science is about the way people live. Social scientists might ask:

What might people do inside a church and mandir?
How do people use the special objects in a place of worship?
Why might people like to do these things with other people, rather than on their own?
Could they do these things anywhere?
Why do people come together to celebrate?
Can you celebrate by yourself?

Substantive Knowledge: what pupils need to know

The idea of special and sacred/holy

Think about:

- What makes objects and places special – memories attached to them, links to special people.
- Why different places that are special to us – what makes them so special? Association with particular people, communities, events, etc.
- How we use our senses to decide how a place can be special – sound, smell, touch, sight.
- Why some buildings are special (home, school, shops) but some are considered to be sacred or holy.
- The words ‘sacred’ and ‘holy’: what they mean, how we use them.
- What we mean by sacred places of worship such as churches and temples.
- Ways in which places of worship can tell us something about what people believe.
- Sacred places of worship in the neighbourhood – how do we recognise them? Have any of us been inside one?

Ideally, a visit should be arranged to a church and masjid. If this is not possible, use video clips (see below), pictures, virtual visits or invite members from faith communities into school.

Christian church

There are many kinds of churches. This is too complex for young children to understand, so for the purpose of this unit learning will be based on a conventional Church of England. However, teachers can use phrases such as ‘Not all churches are like this’ and ‘Not all Christians worship like this.’

- The church is where Christians come together to worship and learn about God. Some people refer to it as ‘God’s house.’
- Christians do not all worship in the same way. This means that churches do not all look the same or have the same things inside them.

What might we see inside a church?

- **An altar or communion table:** this is where bread and wine are blessed for Holy Communion. During this service Christians say ‘thank you’ to Jesus for what he has done for them (link to Easter).
- **A plain cross:** Symbolises Jesus’ death. (Link to Easter) A crucifix has the figure of Jesus on it.
- **A lectern:** a stand from where someone usually reads from the Bible. The Bible is the holy scripture for Christians.
- **A pulpit:** a raised platform from where the priest preaches a sermon (a talk based on teachings in the Bible).
- **A Bible:** the holy scriptures for Christians. The Bible might be placed on the lectern.
- **A font:** A large bowl on a stand filled with holy water which is used to baptise people.
- **Statues, pictures, stained glass windows:** these represent key figures and stories in the Bible.

What might we see outside a church?

Church buildings come in many different shapes and sizes and can be traditional or modern, just like houses. Some have flat roofs while others have towers and spires. These differences are important because they tell us something about the beliefs of the people who worship there.

Links

A visit to a church: video clip

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zdykjsx/articles/zpk6xbk>

Inside a church

<https://www.nationalchurchestrust.org/explore/why/intriguing-insides>

Hindu mandir

Hinduism (also called Sanatana Dharma, meaning 'eternal dharma') is one of the world's oldest religions, going back more than 4,000 years and made up of many different traditions. A mandir (temple or dwelling place) is a place where Hindus worship and where the deities (gods) live. Over time, the Hindu population has grown in the UK and it is now common to see purpose-built mandirs in towns and cities. Leicester has many mandirs, each with its own character. As with other religions and worldviews, Hindus do not all believe the same thing and different mandirs will reflect this.

What might we see inside a mandir

These features will be looked at in detail in Year 3. At this point you might want to introduce some of them, mainly through pictures and film clips.

- **Deities/murtis:** Hindus believe in one supreme being called Brahman. Brahman can be represented by numerous different deities or murtis, who can be male or female. A mandir can be dedicated to one particular deity, or have shrines to several. Hindus view worship as visiting the deities.
- **Shrines:** These are holy places which house the deities or gods. They are usually decorated with fruit, flowers and incense which are offered to the deities.
- **A dome:** in the main shrine room there may be a dome, symbolising the idea that Hindus can reach up to God.
- **Arti (aarti) lamp:** During the worship, an arti lamp is passed around in front of worshippers. Hindus then place their hands over the flame and then over their heads to receive God's blessings from God. The lamp is also waved before the deities.
- **Bell:** The Priest rings this to awaken the deities and call people to worship. It indicates that worshippers are entering the holy and spiritual home of the gods.
- **Aum/Om symbol:** the most sacred symbol of Hinduism word or sound for God, the first word said by Lord Shiva. Hindus will say this at the beginning and end of all prayers.
- **Incense sticks:** these perfume the air.

What might we see outside a mandir?

Just like churches, mandirs do not all look the same, whether they are in this country or in India. However, there are some common features that you might see outside:

- **Tower or Shikhara:** this can be pyramid-shaped or conical and may be covered with carvings and sculptures. These may represent different deities or important Hindu stories. The decorations represent the idea of a palace, highlighting the idea that God is like a King.
- **Material and colours:** mandirs are usually made of stone or marble.

Many Hindus also have a shrine at home. This is often in a corner of the best room in the house. It is a way of honouring the gods and goddesses. Worship at the shrine may involve the whole family, or sometimes it is done alone. Home is a very important place for prayer.

What might Christians and Hindus experience when they visit their church or mandir?

What might they see, hear, touch, smell, taste? Pupils might:

- See things that they have never seen before, e.g. stained-glass windows, deities.
- Hear music, e.g. organ, chanting.
- Touch special objects, e.g. Bible, arti lamp.
- Smell incense.
- Taste, e.g. prashad.

This will help children have a deeper experience when they visit a place of worship, as opposed to simply listing significant objects.

Links for teachers

Hindu worship in the temple

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zjmqmsg/revision/3>

Inside a mandir

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/religious-studies-ks2-my-life-my-religion-hinduism-inside-hindu-temple/zb2t39>

Video clip: inside a mandir: video clip

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zvv8q6f/articles/z8c22v4>



Key vocabulary and concepts

Church: altar, Bible, font, Holy Communion, lectern, priest, pulpit, spire, stained-glass window, tower.

Mandir: arti, Aum, bell, deities, fruit, incense, Ganesh, murti, prashad, puja tray.

End of unit expectations

Pupils should be able to talk, draw, role play about:

- Why places of worship matter to people.
- Things that make some places, and the objects inside them, sacred or holy.
- Symbols and objects/artefacts in places of worship which have special meaning for believers, e.g. a Christian cross or a Hindu deity.
- How people might feel when they are inside somewhere sacred – what senses will they use?
- What things are similar in a church and a mandir and which things are different?

UNITS OF STUDY: KEY STAGE 1

YEAR 1

Year 1

Special and Sacred Stories



Overview

Pupils begin by continuing the themes followed in Reception but with a focus upon special stories and traditions. This helps pupils to understand how stories help people make sense of the world, as individuals and communities. They also learn about the ways in which stories include important concepts or 'big ideas' which form part of religions and worldviews.

Worldviews context

How do stories and narratives help us understand the world? How does different types of writing, e.g. poetry, fiction, non-fiction, plays, help us make sense of things? Books are influential in helping us to make our minds up about big ideas, e.g. politics and religion. Humorous books can change our mood; autobiographies might change the way we think about a person; travel books may make us want to see the world. As we get older, we start to develop a preference of certain authors and styles. In other words, stories and different types of writing are hugely influential in shaping the way we see the world. This unit builds the foundation for thinking about the role played by sacred scriptures and the impact these have on people's worldviews.

<p>Autumn 1 What do stories from religious traditions teach about God? What can we learn from other stories?</p> <p>Stories How stories are passed on and help people understand the world. What makes these stories special.</p> <p>Sacred texts Stories from the Bible. Examples from other religions and worldviews.</p>	<p>Autumn 2 How are stories and celebrations linked?</p> <p>The narratives behind celebrations Christmas: Big ideas and key people in the narrative. Hanukkah (Chanukah): A time of remembrance, a celebration of light. The symbolism of peace in celebrations</p>	<p>Spring What do creation stories teach people about God and human nature?</p> <p>Stories and sacred texts Creation stories from different RWs The idea of a Creator Humanist viewpoint</p>	<p>Summer What do people learn from stories and festivals?</p> <p>Judaism: Passover, the Exodus, Sukkot Christianity: Lent and Easter Islam: Eid-ul-Adha</p>
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Progression Strands: concepts which pupils should understand

A: Belonging, Identity & Community

- How stories of all kinds give communities a shared identity.
- The ways in which festivals and celebrations bring people together through a sense of belonging.

B: Beliefs, Influences & Values

- How stories form part of religious and non-religious beliefs and help people understand the world.
- What stories from the Bible teach people about God and the way they should lead their lives.
- How stories relating to key festivals reflect religious beliefs and concepts, e.g. Christmas and Incarnation.
- Why Easter is so important to Christians.
- Why Passover is so important to Jews.
- How festivals reflect the idea of peace.

C: Expression, Experiences and the Sacred

- How stories inform what happens during festivals, e.g. lighting candles at Hanukkah.
- How stories are used as part of observance of festivals, e.g. telling the story of the Exodus at Passover.
- How some stories are considered to be special and/or sacred.

D: Truth, Interpretation & Meaning

- How stories can mean different things to different people.
- How different stories may contain 'truth' and what this means to different people.
- Why people have different views about how the world began.

Year 1: Autumn 1

What do stories from religious traditions teach about God?

What can we learn from other stories?

Religions/Worldviews

Compulsory

- Christianity
- Judaism

Additional suggestions:

Stories from other RWs with special meanings.

Content overview

- How stories and narratives are passed on and help people understand what God is like.
- How stories and narratives help people understand the world and things that matter to them.
- What makes some stories special and/or sacred.

Sacred texts: Christianity and Judaism

- The Torah (Judaism): Moses
- The New Testament (Christianity): Jesus' parables

Previous learning: what do pupils know and remember from Reception

What is meant by special and sacred.

Why Jesus was a special baby.

Diwali, Easter, Holi

Links to this unit

- The importance of stories.
- Special people

New learning objectives Pupils should know and understand:

- How stories form part of beliefs and help people understand the world.
- What some narratives from sacred texts teach people about God and the way they should lead their lives.
- Why some stories are considered to be special and/or sacred.
- How stories can mean different things to different people.
- How different stories may contain 'truth' and what this means to different people.

Unit expectations and outcomes

Evidence for these should be demonstrated through learning activities, conversations with pupils and assessment tasks. (See Appendix 2)

To achieve the learning objectives, pupils should be able to:

- Explain how stories form part of beliefs.
- Talk/write about stories from sacred texts which teach people about God and the way people should lead their lives.
- Identify stories considered to be special and/or sacred.
- Ask questions about the different meanings stories have, including what people mean by 'truth', e.g. 'Is it a true story?'



Key vocabulary and concepts

General: holy, revelation, sacred.

Christianity: forgiveness, Gospels, Jesus, parables, stories.

Judaism: burning bush, Egyptians, G-d, Israelites, Moses, Pharaoh, Torah.

Teacher guidance

Storytelling has existed since time began. Before writing existed, people told stories to each other. Stories are evident in every culture and from every age. They are one of the ways in which ideas and memories are passed to future generations. Oral traditions can take many forms and may include epic poems, chants, rhymes, songs, etc. Not all these stories are historically accurate or even true, but they help to bring communities together and may appear in many forms, e.g. myths, legends, fables, etc. Stories may have different meanings, e.g. moral, religious, personal. They can teach us very important lessons.

How to teach this unit

Start with where the pupils are, with what they experience in their own lives. What are their favourite books? Why? Introduce a non-religious story and think about how people may have different interpretations of its meaning. Pupils need to understand that stories hold different types of truths. Some offer solutions to life's mysteries. Hypothesise about alternative endings. Talk about why some books are special, e.g. because of their meaning, their sentimental or historical value, who they belonged to in the past, etc. Explain that some books (sometimes called scriptures or texts) are considered sacred or holy by believers and may include different types of writings including songs and poems. This may be because people think they are inspired by God or were received by way of special revelation. This is a basis for more detailed work on sacred texts in year 2. Having introduced the idea of storytelling and the importance of stories, you should then go on to look at examples from sacred scriptures from Christian and Jewish traditions. The sacred scriptures of Judaism were written at different times between about 1200 and 165 BC. These are the Tenakh (Tanach), which contains 24 books of Jewish scriptures. The Torah (the first five books, the Law) was revealed by G-d* to Moses. The second section is called the Nevi'im (the Prophets) and the third the Ketuvim (Writings). The Bible is the Christian sacred scripture and contains the Old and New Testament (written by Christians in the first century AD). The New Testament contain the gospels (the 'good news' of Jesus), the Acts of the Apostles (the events following the death and Resurrection of Jesus), letters from St Paul to different churches and the book of Revelation (prophecy).

Note

Using the word 'story' when describing accounts from sacred scriptures may be considered offensive as it can imply that the content is untrue. It would be preferable to use words such as 'accounts' or 'narratives'.

*The word G-d is written in this way by Jewish people as a sign of respect. This is explained in more detail in year 2.

Disciplinary Knowledge: ways of knowing

Lead the learning with disciplinary knowledge, which enables the pupils to focus upon **how** they are going to learn about this topic. This then leads to the substantive knowledge that pupils need to know and understand, i.e. **what** they need to know. In practice, the two types of knowledge should be integrated with the 'what' being taught alongside the 'how.' Disciplinary knowledge is initially set out in the form of questions. **You do not have to use every question:** some may be useful as a starter for enquiry, others for promoting deeper learning when you are looking at substantive knowledge.

How might pupils learn?

They could:

- Talk to members of faith communities.
- Read different types of stories and texts and talk about what they might mean.

Theology is about what people believe. Theologians might ask:

Why do stories matter?
When were they written and does this make a difference to the way we understand them?
Who were they written for?
What might people learn from these stories?
How do people know if a story is special or sacred?
Does that make a difference?
What do the Moses stories tell people about G-d?
What do Christians mean by forgiveness?
What do the parables teach Christians about God?
What do Christians mean by forgiveness?

Philosophy is about what people think. Philosophers might ask:

How can stories have different meanings?
Can religious stories have meaning for non-religious people?
How do people know if a story is true or not?
How might stories help people to understand right and wrong?
How can the context of a story help people understand it better?
Do words always mean the same thing?
How might stories suggest answers to mysteries?

Social Science is about how people live. Social Scientists might ask:

What beliefs bring communities together?
How do RWs pass stories on through generations?
How do stories bring communities together?
How do stories make a difference to peoples' lives?
What difference might Jesus' parables make to peoples' lives?
Why is the story of Moses important to Jewish people?

Artists might ask:

How can paintings add to our understanding of stories from the Old and New Testament?

Reflections: Personal knowledge

What meaning do these stories have for me?
Does my family have stories which are special to them?
How do stories help me understand myself?

Substantive Knowledge: what pupils need to know

Judaism

The Jewish story of [Moses: a special baby](#) (Exodus 2)

The life of Moses is found in the Torah. This account builds on the idea of 'special' in Reception, i.e. how people show that babies are special and why Jesus is considered special by Christians. Moses is a very special person within Judaism. He has links to many other parts of the syllabus, e.g. Passover (Spring/Summer term), Sacred Scriptures (Year 2, Term 1), Abrahamic religions (Year 2, Spring). This text tells the story of how Moses was hidden in the bulrushes by his mother after the Egyptian Pharaoh threatened to kill all baby boys. He was found by Pharaoh's daughter and brought up in the Egyptian palace.

An encounter with G-d: Moses and the Burning Bush [Exodus 3:1-14 -4:17](#)

This introduces pupils to the concept of G-d and his relationship with individuals, in this instance Moses, who had several encounters with G-d. He helped the Israelites form a special relationship with G-d and received G-d's laws through the Ten Commandments. Encounters such as these are called '[direct revelation](#)'. This kind of experience is explored in more detail in Year 5, Autumn 2.

What do these stories teach us about G-d?

God developed a special relationship with Moses, even though he was a flawed person. God went on to show his care for the Israelites, giving them laws to live by and setting them free from the Pharaoh's rule.

Christianity

The Bible is divided into two sections, the Old and New Testament. The parables are found in the New Testament, in the Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John), which tell the 'good news' of Jesus and include accounts of his birth and teachings. Jesus often used parables when he was explaining difficult ideas to people. A parable is a story based on everyday life that has a deeper meaning.

Teach about one of these parables in detail

The Parable of the Lost Sheep: Matthew 18: 10-14, Luke 15

The Parable of the Lost (Prodigal) Son/the Two Sons: Luke 15: 11-32

The Parable of the Lost Coin: Luke 15: 8-10

What these parables teach Christians about God

- God cares about individuals.
- God has a forgiving nature.

Other stories may be chosen from:

Judaism: for example, ones which show individuals encounters with G-d, e.g. Noah, Joseph, Samson, David and Goliath, Daniel, Jonah.

Christianity: for example, other parables told by Jesus.

Other stories with a meaning

Non-religious stories may be used to explore the idea that one story can be viewed in different ways, depending on who wrote it, the intended audience, etc.

Examples

Cohen I, Forward, T. The Wolf's Story: What Really Happened to Little Red Riding Hood. Walker Books, 2005.

Fransman, K, Plackett, J. Gender Swapped Fairy tales. Faber, 2020.

Resources

Bible stories

Emmerson, J. Great Stories from the Old Testament. North Parade Publishing, 2022

Emmerson J, The Story of Jesus. North Parade Publishing, 2022

Mayhew, J, Morris, J. Mrs Noah's Garden. Otter-Barry Books, 2020

Mayhew, J, Morris, J. Mrs Noah's Pockets. Otter-Barry Books, 2017

Powell Smith, B. The Brick Bible: Old and New Testament. Skyhorse Publishing, 2011, 2012

The Usborne Children's Bible. Usborne, 2009

Stories from other religions

McFarlane, M. Sacred Stories: Wisdom from World Religions, Beyond Words. Simon & Schuster, 2012

Pai, R. The Gita for Children. Swift Press, 2022

Illustrated Myths from Around the World. Usborne Publishing, 2016

101 Tales: The Great Panachatantra Collection. Wonder House Books, 2020.

Note

Story books based on sacred scriptures may not be an accurate reflection of the original text.

Links for teachers

Moses

Video clip: the Jewish story of Moses

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/religious-studies-ks1-the-jewish-story-of-moses/zmfp382>

National Gallery: Painting of The Finding of Moses

<https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/nicolas-poussin-the-finding-of-moses>

Painting of Moses and the Burning Bush

The Lost (Prodigal) Son

Rembrandt: Painting of The Prodigal Son

<https://www.rembrandtpaintings.com/the-return-of-the-prodigal-son.jsp>

Video clip: parable of the Lost Son

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p018zdcq>

The Lost Coin

Video clip

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/ks1-religious-education-treasure-champs-27-thankfulness/z7tg9ty>

Parables

The ministry of Jesus, includes the Lost Sheep parable

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zn2jxg8>

The Good Samaritan

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p018zhhw>

Stories from different religions

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/religions-of-the-world/zfxwpg8>

Teaching suggestions

Moses: a special baby

Pupils could

- Talk about why babies are special and how people celebrate this, drawing on learning from Reception.
- Based on the story from Exodus 2: 1-10, produce a storyboard, role play the story, etc.
- Compare the idea of Moses being a special baby with the nativity story (idea of Jesus as a special baby).
- Consider /discuss why the Pharaoh's daughter wanted to save the baby and how this changes Moses' life.

An encounter with G-d: Moses and the Burning Bush: [Exodus](#) 3:1-14 -4:17

Pupils could

- Tell the story from [Exodus](#) 3:1-14 -4:17 through writing or pictures.
- Think/write about how people feel when they encounter something they cannot explain.
- Discuss why G-d appeared in this way. Why was the ground 'holy'?
- Make a list of reasons why Moses seemed unwilling to do the job G-d gave him. Why do we sometimes feel we can't do things?
- Use works of art to describe events in Moses' life.

Parables

Pupils could

- Write about the story of the Lost/Prodigal Son (or another parable) as seen through a painting, e.g. Rembrandt. What is the artist trying to show about the story? How does this help you to understand the story better?
- Discuss whether it is always possible to forgive someone.
- In pairs, produce a storyboard about a modern-day parable. Remember, it must be a story with a special meaning.
- Summarise a parable and show different interpretations of what it about teaches people about God.
- Hypothesise about aspects of stories, e.g. what if the lost son had not returned home? What if Moses had run away from the burning bush?

Year 1: Autumn 2

How are stories and celebrations linked?

Religions/Worldviews

Compulsory

- Christianity
- Judaism

Additional suggestions:

Aspects of other RWs, e.g. Peace, festivals of light, symbolism of light

Content overview

- The narratives behind celebrations: Christmas and Hanukkah (Chanukah)

Previous learning: What do pupils know and remember?

Reception

Christmas: why Jesus is special to Christians

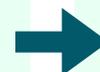
Celebrations

Importance of stories and narratives



New learning objectives Pupils should know and understand:

- How stories of all kinds give communities a shared identity.
- The ways in which festivals and celebrations bring people together through a sense of belonging.
- How stories relating to key festivals reflect religious beliefs and concepts, e.g. Christmas and incarnation.
- How stories inform actions and rituals during festivals, e.g. lighting candles at Hanukkah.
- How festivals reflect the idea of peace.



Unit expectations and outcomes

Evidence for these should be demonstrated through learning activities, conversations with pupils and assessment tasks. (See Appendix 2)

To achieve the learning objectives, pupils should be able to:

- Give examples of the different ways festivals such as Christmas and Hanukkah bring communities together to celebrate.
- Explain how festivals reflect key stories, beliefs and concepts.
- Give reasons why some stories are considered sacred.
- Describe the ways in which stories inform actions and rituals during festivals, e.g. lighting candles at Hanukkah.
- Explain how festivals reflect the idea of peace.



Key vocabulary and concepts

Christmas: Advent, Angel Gabriel, Annunciation, gospels, Incarnation, Mary, Messiah, Nativity, shepherds, Son of God, wise men and gifts.

Hanukkah: dreidel, freedom, menorah, remembrance.

General: community, peace, light and dark, community.

Teacher guidance

The work on Christmas builds on the work done in Reception but explores the narrative and its meaning in more depth. During these units, paintings are used to explore ideas more deeply. Various festivals and celebrations are explored throughout the syllabus. This unit focuses on the stories behind the festivals and also how people celebrate them.

How to teach this unit

A good starting point would be to refer to Reception and talk about celebrations with which the pupils are familiar. Christmas is a good starting point because although all pupils will know about it, they will not all celebrate it, or at least, not in the same way. Provide a clear context for stories, e.g. where did this happen, who wrote about it, etc. Explain that Christmas is when Christians celebrate the birth of Jesus, as described in the gospels ('good news') of Matthew and Luke. The exact date of Jesus' birth is unknown. When using images of Jesus and the Nativity, be sure to include examples from around the world – see links). It is important that pupils understand where Jesus was born. Looking at images from around the world will help pupils appreciate both his heritage and the ways in which he is portrayed across the world. While pupils are less likely to be aware of Hanukkah, you could use images of the menorah which is lit in Victoria Park every year. You could use images alongside those of Christmas and Diwali lights to develop the concept of 'festivals of light' and the concept of light, i.e. overcoming darkness. Learning about Hanukkah will help pupils start to build up their understanding about Judaism begun in the previous term with accounts of events in Moses' life.

Note

Using the word 'story' when describing accounts from sacred scriptures may be considered offensive as it can imply that the content is untrue. It would be preferable to use words such as 'accounts' or 'narratives'.

*The word G-d is written in this way by Jewish people as a sign of respect. This is explained in more detail in year 2.

Disciplinary Knowledge: ways of knowing

Lead the learning with disciplinary knowledge, which enables the pupils to focus upon how they are going to learn about this topic. This then leads to the substantive knowledge that pupils need to know and understand, i.e. what they need to know. In practice, the two types of knowledge should be integrated with the 'what' being taught alongside the 'how.' Disciplinary knowledge is initially set out in the form of questions. You do not have to use every question: some may be useful as a starter for enquiry, others for promoting deeper learning when you are looking at substantive knowledge.

How might pupils learn?

They could:

- Talk to members of faith communities.
- Read different types of stories and texts and talk about what they might mean.
- Observe practices during festivals in Leicester.
- Explore the emotional and sensory aspects of celebrations and festivals.

Theology is about what people believe. Theologians might ask:

What does the Nativity story teach Christians about Jesus?
Why do Christians believe that Jesus was special?
What do Christians mean by incarnation?
What does it mean to say that Jesus came to earth in human form?
Why was Jesus sent to earth?
What did the angels mean by 'peace on earth'?
How do Christmas carols show beliefs about Jesus' birth?
Why do Jewish people believe that Hanukkah is special?
What is significant about the lighting of the menorah?
What meaning is given to the symbols and artefacts used by Jewish people during Hanukkah?

Philosophy is about what people think. Philosophers might ask:

Why might people celebrate events that happened thousands of years ago?
Why does light and dark symbolise?
What does 'peace' mean?
Why do non-religious people celebrate Christmas?

Social Science is about how people live. Social Scientists might ask:

How do festivals and celebrations bring people together?
Why do Christians want to celebrate Christmas?
Do people have to be religious to celebrate Christmas?
Why do people like to celebrate with others?
Why do people feel happy at festival times?
Who could we talk to about these festivals?
What would we see people in Leicester doing during autumn festivals?

Artists might ask:

How might paintings help people to understand religious events?

A musician might ask:

In what ways does music contribute to festivals and celebrations?
What type of music makes people feel celebratory?
How does the style of music and songs differ between religions?

Reflections: Personal knowledge

Which festival or special time has a special meaning for me?
How does it make me feel?
Which festivals have I taken part in?
What does peace for me feel like?

Substantive Knowledge: what pupils need to know

Christianity

Why Advent and Christmas are special for Christians

Advent is the period leading up to Christmas when Christians prepare for the celebration of the birth of Jesus. In the Old Testament there are prophecies about the promised Messiah (anointed or chosen one). From a Christian point of view, this person was Jesus, God in human form Incarnation). The Angel Gabriel informs Mary that she will have a son who will be called 'the son of the Most High God.' This event is referred to as the Annunciation (announcement). Luke 1: 30

Painting of the Annunciation: <https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/fra-filippo-lippi-the-annunciation>

Who is important in the Christmas story

Jesus

Christians believe that God came down to earth in the form of Jesus (the incarnation). This is why his birth is so important.

Images of Jesus from around the world

<https://faithhub.net/christ-around-the-world/>

Mary

Mary called her baby Jesus, just as the angel Gabriel had told her to (see above). Mary is an important figure in some types of churches, especially Roman Catholic.

Paintings of the Virgin Mary

<https://www.artst.org/virgin-mary-paintings/>

The Shepherds: Luke 2: 8-20

These were keeping watch over their flocks at night when the angel of the Lord brought them news that Christ had been born. They were the first to be informed of Jesus' birth.

Painting of the shepherds

<https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/guido-reni-the-adoration-of-the-shepherds>

The Kings (Wise Men) Matthew 2:1-12

The Kings, or Magi, are mentioned only in Matthew's gospel (2:1-12). It is generally assumed there were three since they brought three gifts; gold, frankincense and myrrh.

Painting of the Three Kings

<https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/jan-gossaert-jean-gossart-the-adoration-of-the-kings>

What did Jesus really look like?

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-35120965>

How Christians celebrate Christmas

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/ztkxpv4/articles/zdjf4j>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zdcbcj6/revision/6>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p02mwyn6>

Judaism

Hanukkah (Chanukah)

Judaism was the main religion of Israel at the time of Jesus' birth and Hanukkah recognises an important part of Jewish history. It is a time of remembrance, a celebration of light. The holiday is also known as the Festival of Lights. This term is used to describe other religious festivals, notably Diwali.

Hanukkah (Chanukah)

- Origins of the festival: the re-claiming of the Temple and the miraculous oil.
- Importance of the menorah or Hanukkiah: Hanukkah is celebrated over eight nights, and a special nine-branched menorah, called a Hanukkah menorah or Hanukkiah, is lit. The ninth candle (placed in the centre) is used to light all the others and is known as the 'shammash' or helper candle.
- How the festival is celebrated: Traditional foods, such as latkes and doughnuts, both oily foods, as the miracle involved oil, are often enjoyed during the festival. Games are played with a spinning top called a dreidel. Children are given small gifts and Hanukkah gelt (money or chocolate coins).
- The significance of the festival: Jews regard Hanukkah as a celebration of religious freedom, perseverance, and the triumph of light over darkness.
- Celebrations in Leicester: Hanukkah has been marked in Leicester in Leicester for more than 30 years. Candles are lit on a large ceremonial menorah, on Victoria Park.

How do Jewish people celebrate Hanukkah?

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/articles/zm6d7nb>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/watch/my-first-festival-hanukkah>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/z24kqyc/articles/zbjxg8>

Festivals and the concept of peace

Christmas

Suddenly, a great army of heaven's angels appeared...singing praises to God: *'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom he is pleased.'* Luke 2: 13,14
The birth of Jesus is seen as a message of hope and peace, symbolising God's love and reconciliation with humanity.

Spirit of Giving: Christmas is a time when people often engage in acts of generosity and giving, promoting a sense of goodwill and community, along with a spirit of peace and harmony.

Global Celebration of Peace: Christmas has become a time when people around the world express a desire for peace and goodwill.

Ceasefires and Truces: During World War I, there were instances of soldiers declaring unofficial ceasefires and truces during the Christmas season.

Diwali

Symbolism of Light: Diwali is characterised by the lighting of lamps, candles, and fireworks, symbolising the victory of light over darkness, good over evil, and knowledge over ignorance. It is also replacing negativity with positivity, love, and peace.

Forgiveness and Reconciliation

Diwali is a time for families and communities to come together, forgive past grievances, and reconcile with one another. This creates an atmosphere of peace.

Prayer and Reflection Many people use Diwali as a time for prayer, meditation self-reflection and spiritual enlightenment.

Cultural Harmony

While Diwali has its roots in the Hindu tradition, the celebration emphasises universal values that contribute to a sense of peace both within individuals and the wider community.

Hanukkah

Miracle of light

The lighting of the Hanukkah candles symbolises the triumph of light over darkness, goodness over evil. This can be seen as a symbolism for the triumph of peace over conflict, as light often represents hope and harmony.

Spiritual Reflection

Hanukkah provides an opportunity for individuals and communities to celebrate together, bringing about a sense of unity and peace among people.

Acts of kindness

During Hanukkah, people perform acts of kindness and charity, such as giving to those in need and supporting others. This contributes to a sense of communal well-being and promotes the values of compassion and generosity, which are central in fostering peace.

Resources

Stories which show the different meanings of Christmas

Ahlberg, A. The Jolly Christmas Postman. Puffin, 2013
Briggs, R. The Snowman. Puffin, 2022
Donaldson, J. The Christmas Pine. Alison Green Books, 2022
Dr Seuss. How the Grinch Stole Christmas. Harper Collins, 2016
Fletcher, T. The Christmasaurus. Puffin, 2021
Kerr, J. Mog's Christmas. Harper Collins, 2020
Wojciechowski, S. The Christmas Miracle of Jonathan Toomey. Walker Books, 1995

Hanukkah

Rouse, SA. Sammy Spider's First Hanukkah. Kar-Ben Copies Ltd, 1995

Music: Christmas carols, Handel's Messiah

Note: Story books based may not accurately reflect religious practices during festivals.

Links for teachers

Christmas

First Christmas

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/religious-studies-ks1-the%20christian-story-of-the-first-christmas/z7fp382>

Three Kings

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zvxtgwx/revision/6>

The Nativity

<https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/stories/the-nativity>

Celebrations

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/z478gwx/articles/zb33pg8>

Hanukkah

In Leicester

<https://leicestershirepress.com/2022/12/14/leicesters-jewish-community-gets-ready-for-hanukkah/>

The story of Hanukkah

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/religious-studies-ks1-the-jewish-story-of-hanukkah/z47wxyz>

What is Hanukkah?

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/znwhfg8/articles/zj446v4>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/religious-studies-ks2-what-is-hannukkah/zm6d7nb>

Teaching suggestions

Pupils could

- Find out about the different ways festivals such as Christmas and Hanukkah bring communities together to celebrate, including in Leicester.
- Write about one example of how a festival is linked to a story.
- Describe the ways in which stories inform actions and rituals during festivals, e.g. lighting candles at Hanukkah.
- Give examples of how festivals reflect the idea of peace.
- Talk to members of faith communities about their festivals and celebrations.
- Use famous paintings of the Nativity as a starting point, paint a picture showing a key aspect of the nativity story and write about it OR Design a stained-glass window to illustrate the nativity story, based on a painting they have looked at. Alongside this, explain the meaning of incarnation.
- Identify the key people in the Nativity story and use Bible texts to explain their part in the story.
- Compare different ideas about Christmas through greetings cards.
- Look at a picture of the menorah in Leicester. Write about what this represents to Jewish people.
- Summarise how a Jewish family might celebrate Hanukkah, if possible by talking to someone from the Jewish community.

Year 1: Spring Term

What do creation stories teach about God and human nature?

Religions/Worldviews

Compulsory

- Christianity
- Judaism
- Humanism
- Islam

Additional suggestions:

Creation stories from other traditions and cultures.

Content overview

Creation stories from religions and worldviews.
The origins of good and evil.

Previous learning linked to this unit:

What do pupils know and remember?

Reception

Importance and significance of stories

Year 1

How stories contribute to a sense of belonging and strengthen shared beliefs.

Ideas about God (story of Moses + parables of Jesus)

New learning objectives

Pupils should know and understand:

- How stories form part of key religious beliefs, e.g. the origin of sin.
- What stories teach about God, e.g. Creator of the world.
- How stories can mean different things to different people.
- Why people have different views about how the world began.

Unit expectations and outcomes

Evidence for these should be demonstrated through learning activities, conversations with pupils and assessment tasks. (See Appendix 2)

To achieve the learning objectives, pupils should be able to:

- Explain how creation stories form part of religious beliefs e.g. about how the world was created.
- Re-tell the sequence of creation from at least one RW.
- Explain what stories teach about God and people, e.g. God the Creator, the Garden of Eden.
- Give reasons why people might believe different things about how the world began.
- Give reasons why some people might not believe that the world was created by a divine being.



Key vocabulary and concepts

Christianity: Adam, Bible, creation, Eve, revelation, Sabbath, sin, The Fall.

Judaism: Adam, creation, Hawwah (Eve), revelation, Sabbath/Shabbat, sin, Torah.

Hinduism: Brahma, reincarnation, Shiva, Vishnu.

Humanism: Big Bang, evolution. **Islam:** Adam, Allah, Hawwa (Eve) Qur'an.

Teacher guidance

Creation stories are narratives that try to explain the origins of the universe, humanity, and the natural world. These stories vary between and within different religious and cultural traditions. Pupils will learn about religious and non-religious perspectives, giving them an opportunity to develop their critical thinking. The narratives also explore the idea of the origins of good and evil – again, something which is developed elsewhere in the syllabus.

How to teach this unit

Begin with a story, poem or video clip which enables pupils to consider the wonder of the universe. This will lead to questions about how everything came into being. These ideas will be developed through the syllabus in terms of beliefs in God and questions about the existence of God. You should deepen understanding of Judaism by teaching about Shabbat, the day G-d rested. This shows how a narrative has a bearing on practice. Alongside this, show how this is interpreted by Christians. It is important to consider a non-religious viewpoint such as Humanism alongside religious creation accounts. Explore ideas about good/evil and introduce the idea of moral choices.

Disciplinary Knowledge: ways of knowing

Lead the learning with disciplinary knowledge, which enables the pupils to focus upon how they are going to learn about this topic. This then leads to the substantive knowledge that pupils need to know and understand, i.e. what they need to know. In practice, the two types of knowledge should be integrated with the 'what' being taught alongside the 'how.' Disciplinary knowledge is initially set out in the form of questions. You do not have to use every question: some may be useful as a starter for enquiry, others for promoting deeper learning when you are looking at substantive knowledge.

How might pupils learn?

They could:

- Ask people from different worldviews what they believe about how the universe came about.
- Read different accounts of creation/evolution and talk about how we decide what to believe.
- Read different types of creation stories and accounts and talk about what they might mean.
- Discuss the meaning of literal truth and allegory.

Theology is about what people believe. Theologians might ask:

What might we learn from creation stories?
Who wrote these stories? When?
What do religious people learn from creation stories?
What do creation stories tell people about God?
What might it mean to be created in God's image?

Philosophy is about what people think. Philosophers might ask:

Why do people have different views about how the world began?
How do Humanists think the world began?
What questions do creation stories make us ask?
Why is there something rather than nothing?

Social Science is about how people live. Social Scientists might ask:

Where do ideas about creation and the beginning of the world come from?
Why do people feel the need to explain how the world/Universe began?
When did people start telling stories about the creation

What do Abrahamic faiths teach about sin and evil?
Who made the world?
How might religious creation stories be interpreted by different people?
Where do creation stories come from?
How did the world begin and how will it end?

How did the Universe come to be?
What is the world made of?
How can we know what exists?
What makes something true?
What makes people good or bad?
Why do people sometimes choose to do the wrong thing?
Why did Adam and Eve do what they had been told not to?

of the world?
How do different Christians interpret the Biblical account of creation?
Does the story of Adam and Eve teach us anything about the way people behave?

Musicians might ask:

How does music about creation and the Universe make us feel?
Why might that be?

Reflections: Personal knowledge

What do I believe about how the world/Universe began?
What meaning do creation stories have for me?
What do I find puzzling about these stories?
How can I know what is true about the beginning of the world/Universe?
How do I decide between right and wrong?

Substantive Knowledge: what pupils need to know

Christianity and Judaism share a common creation story which is recorded in the book of Genesis (chapters 1 and 2). This is the first book of the Bible and the first book of the Jewish Torah. In this account God creates the world in six days. On the sixth day, God creates humans, Adam and Eve, in his own image.

Christianity

Based on the creation accounts in Genesis, most Christians believe that human beings were:

- Created in the image of God.
- Put in charge of animals, meaning that they have a responsibility to look after them.
- Placed at the top of the created world, meaning that they can use animals for food.
- Created as humans (rather than evolving over many millions of years).

Creation, revelation and allegory

In many religions and worldviews, people believe that creation is one way in which God has revealed himself to people. Some people read the creation story in Genesis literally whereas others see the account as an allegory.

What is meant by The Fall? (Genesis 3)

This refers to what happened when Adam and Eve disobeyed God. This is called 'sin' by Christians and is known as ['the fall.'](#)

What does this mean for Christians?

Christians believe that Adam and Eve's greatest punishment was that they became separated from God and their relationship with him was spoiled. Jesus enabled their sins to be forgiven. Some Christians believe that sin has been passed down to all people from Adam and Eve. This belief is called **'original sin'**.

Judaism

Jews believe that all humans enter the world free of sin and that individuals are responsible for their own actions. For Jews, the account of creation in Genesis teaches them more about their special relationship with G-d and the importance of [Shabbat](#) (the holy day of rest). As human beings were created in the image of G-d, they must treat people well.

The importance of the seventh day: How do Jews celebrate Shabbat?

Shabbat begins at sunset on Friday evening and ends at sunset on Saturday evening. Services are usually led by the rabbi, though in some synagogues anyone can take the lead. Public worship allows Jews to show love for G-d, a requirement of the Torah, listen to the Torah and worship together as a community.

How do Christians celebrate the Sabbath (Sunday)?

Sunday is a special day for Christians as it commemorates the resurrection of Jesus (John 20:10). Christians may attend church services on that day and some will do no work and spend time with the family.

Hinduism

The universe is thought to be millions of years old and in line with the belief in [reincarnation](#), is not the first or the last. Hindus believe that the universe was created by [Brahma](#). It is preserved by [Vishnu](#). As part of the cycle of birth, life and death it is [Shiva](#) who will ultimately destroy the universe. This allows Brahma to start the process of creation all over again. Hindus have many stories about how the universe began.

Islam

Muslims believe in one God, Allah, who was responsible for the creation of the universe. There is no single story of creation, but there are references to it in many places in the Qur'an. Allah made the first man, Adam, out of soil. Hawwa (Eve), the first woman, was created from the side of Adam and lived with him in paradise. They disobeyed Allah. They were forgiven but were sent from Paradise to the Earth. The Earth was created over six days to provide a home for Adam, Hawwa and their descendants to live. The name 'Hawwa' is not mentioned in the Qur'an but is found in Islamic tradition.

- What does this mean for Muslims?
- Muslims do not believe that original sin is passed on at birth. Islam defines sin as anything which goes against the teachings of Allah.

- Muslims believe that the Qur'an provides the most accurate account of creation according to their faith.
- Muslims believe that Allah expects human beings to look after the natural world.

Humanism

[Humanists](#) have an account of the origin of the universe that does not include God or supernatural beings. They believe that:

- Human beings have natural origins and evolved naturally like all other living things.
- Science and the search for evidence provide the best way to answer questions about the world.
- The universe is place that evolved naturally and that it started with the [Big Bang](#).
- People have good and bad feelings, instincts, and behaviours.
- People should care for the environment and for animals.

Creation stories from other traditions and cultures

Native American: Irquois Creation Story

In this story a woman falls from the sky and lands on the back of a turtle. Animals help create land on the turtle's back, and the woman gives birth to twins who become the parents of the human race.

Norse Mythology: Creation in Ginnungagap

The world is created from the primordial void called Ginnungagap. The first beings, Ymir (a frost giant) and Audumla (a primeval cow), emerge, and their interactions lead to the creation of the world.

Greek Mythology: Theogony

Theogony describes the birth of the gods and the creation of the cosmos. Chaos, the first divine being, gives birth to Gaia (Earth), Tartarus (Underworld), and Eros (Love), setting the stage for the birth of the gods and the world.

Chinese mythology: Pangu and the Cosmic Egg

Here, the universe is contained within a cosmic egg. Pangu, a giant, emerges from the egg and separates yin and yang, creating the earth and the sky. As Pangu dies, his body parts become elements of the natural world.

All these stories try to explain the fundamental questions about the origins of life within the context of their respective religious and cultural traditions.

Resources

Wood, N. Mr and Mrs God in the Creation Kitchen. Candlewick Press, 2006

Sacred stories: Wisdom from World Religions: McFarlane, M, 2012

Usborne Illustrated Myths from Around the World, 2016

Links for teachers

The world that God made

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p018zgqh>

Creation story

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/z3n8239/articles/zwxwmbk>

Christianity: Nature of God

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zf626yc/revision/7>

Judaism

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zjbyb82/revision/2>

Jewish Shabbat

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zbm8jty/revision/3>

Creation stories: Hinduism

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zv2fgwx/revision/7>

Creation stories in Islam

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zv2fgwx/revision/8>

Creation stories from around the world

<https://inthebeginning.world>

Teaching suggestions

Pupils could

- Discuss what the Genesis creation account teaches Christians about God and about people.
- In groups or pairs discuss why you think Adam and Eve disobeyed God. Why do we often do things we are told not to?
- Write about what might have happened if Adam and Eve had obeyed God.
- Discuss different ways in which at least one creation account could be interpreted (seen in a different way).
- Compare one account of creation with another. What do the accounts have in common? How are they different?
- Ask people from different worldviews what they believe about how the universe came about.
- Read different types of creation stories and accounts and represent one or two through a painting or a poem.

Year 1: Summer Term

What do people learn from stories and festivals?

Religions/Worldviews

Compulsory

- Christianity
- Judaism
- Islam

Content overview

Easter	Ramadan
Passover	Eid-ul-Fitr
Sukkot	Eid-ul-Adha

Previous learning linked to this unit:

What do pupils know and remember?

Reception

The Easter story.

Year 1

The link between stories and festivals.

New learning objectives

Pupils should know and understand:

- How stories of all kinds give communities a shared identity, including how they celebrate festival times such as Easter and Passover.
- How stories relating to key festivals reflect religious beliefs and concepts, e.g. resurrection, freedom.
- How stories can bring meaning to the idea of 'sacred' and 'holy.'
- How stories play a part in the observance of Easter and Passover.

Unit expectations and outcomes

Evidence for these should be demonstrated through learning activities, conversations with pupils and assessment tasks. (See Appendix 2)

To achieve the learning objectives, pupils should be able to:

- Show how Easter and Passover bring communities together through the ways they observe and celebrate these events.
- Explain how stories relating to key festivals reflect religious beliefs and concepts, e.g. how Jesus' Resurrection links to beliefs about life after death.
- Give reasons why some stories are considered 'sacred' and 'holy.'
- Explain how stories play a part in the observance of Easter and Passover, e.g. the events of Holy Week and Easter, the telling of the Exodus during the Passover meal.



Key vocabulary and concepts

General: freedom, sacrifice.

Lent, Holy Week, Easter: Easter Sunday, eternal life, fasting, forgiveness, Good Friday, Palm Sunday, redemption, Resurrection, salvation, sin.

Passover/Pesach: freedom, Exodus, Haggadah, Moses, plagues, seder, slavery, Sukkot.

Eid-ul-Fitr, Eid-ul-Adha: Five Pillars, Hajj, iftar, Night of Power, Prophet Ibrahim, Prophet Ismail, sacrifice.

Teacher guidance: Context and introduction

Teaching in this unit should emphasise the deeper meaning of festivals and the way in which they are observed. Passover, for example, is rich in symbolism and links to Jewish history and the concept of freedom. Sukkot also celebrates the Israelites' freedom from slavery as well as harvest and the time spent travelling in the desert when the Israelites lived in fragile dwellings. In terms of Islam, the connections can be seen between Ramadan and the practice of fasting in Christianity (Lent).

How to teach this unit

The Easter story was covered in Reception. It might be necessary to go over the main points of the story again. This unit is rich in stories: the 10 plagues, the flight out of Egypt, the crossing of the Red Sea, the account of Jesus' death and Resurrection, the account of Abraham and Isaac and the Prophet Ibrahim and Prophet Ismail.

It is important that pupils learn how events in the past still have deep meaning for believers today.

Disciplinary Knowledge: ways of knowing

Lead the learning with disciplinary knowledge, which enables the pupils to focus upon **how** they are going to learn about this topic. This then leads to the substantive knowledge that pupils need to know and understand, i.e. **what** they need to know. In practice, the two types of knowledge should be integrated with the 'what' being taught alongside the 'how.' Disciplinary knowledge is initially set out in the form of questions. **You do not have to use every question:** some may be useful as a starter for enquiry, others for promoting deeper learning when you are looking at substantive knowledge.

How might pupils learn?

They could:

- Ask believers why these festivals are so important to them and why fasting is sometimes an important feature.
- Visit a church and look for symbols relating to Easter.
- Visit a synagogue and look for symbols relating to Passover.
- Read different types of narratives and texts about Easter and Passover and talk about what they might mean.
- Read relevant texts and debate claims to truth, e.g. is it possible to come back from the dead? Can we find similar stories in other worldviews?
- Go beyond 'the facts' of religion and worldviews by exploring, for example, the emotional and sensory aspects of fasting and celebration.

Theology is about what people believe. Theologians might ask:

What is the narrative of Easter about?
Where does this story come from?
Why does Easter matter to Christians?
What does the Easter narrative teach Christians about God and about Jesus?
Why is Jesus sometimes called 'the Son of God'?
Why is the cross an important symbol for Christians?
What do Christians mean by forgiveness?
Why does Passover matter to Jewish people?
Why might Jewish people re-tell the story of Passover to each other?
What does the Passover narrative teach Jewish people about God?
Why does remembering past events matter to Christians and Jews?
Why do stories from the past matter?

Reflections: Personal Knowledge

What meaning do these stories have for me?
How have I experienced forgiveness?
Can I celebrate Easter if I'm not a Christian?
How do these stories make me feel?

Philosophy is about what people think. Philosophers might ask:

What is puzzling about the idea of resurrection?
Could the story of Jesus' Resurrection be understood in more than one way?
How do we know if stories are true?
What is meant by freedom?
What is meant by sacrifice?
Why does what happened in the past matter?

Social Science is about how people live. Social Scientists might ask:

What do Christians do to remember Easter?
Why do people often eat together to celebrate something important?
Why are the foods on the Seder plate important to Jewish people?
How do Jewish people show that family is important to them?
How do Jewish people remember Passover and how does this relate to community and identity?
How do people express their deep feelings about the history of their traditions?
How might we find out the way people celebrate these festivals in Leicester?

Substantive Knowledge: what pupils need to know

Christianity: The Easter Story

Bible references

[Matthew Chapters 27 & 28](#)

[Mark Chapters 15 & 16](#)

[Luke Chapters 23 & 24](#)

[John Chapters 19 & 20](#)

Based on the creation accounts in Genesis, most Christians believe that human beings were:

- Created in the image of God.
- Put in charge of animals, meaning that they have a responsibility to look after them.
- Placed at the top of the created world, meaning that they can use animals for food.
- Created as humans (rather than evolving over many millions of years).

Why Easter is important to Christians

Key beliefs that are important to Christians:

- **The Resurrection of Jesus:** Christians believe that after Jesus was crucified and buried, He rose from the dead on what Christians call Easter Day, overcoming death and sin.
- **Redemption and Salvation:** Christians believe that Jesus' death and Resurrection made it possible for human beings to have a new relationship with God through salvation. This goes back to the Fall. (See Spring term). Redemption means being saved from sin. Jesus is often referred to as 'the Lamb of God'. This is because, like a lamb that would traditionally have been sacrificed (see Passover, below), Christians believe that He died on behalf of other people.
- **Symbol of Hope:** Easter symbolises hope and new life. The Resurrection represents the triumph of light over darkness (link to other festivals such as Diwali), good over evil, and life over death.
- **Confirmation of Jesus' Identity:** The Resurrection shows Christians that Jesus is the Son of God. For them, it helps to make sense of his teachings, miracles, and the claims he made about himself.
- **Eternal Life:** For Christians, Jesus' resurrection is seen as a guarantee that believers will experience life after death.
- **Celebration of God's Love:** Easter is a time for Christians to reflect on and celebrate the depth of God's love for humanity. The sacrifice of Jesus on the cross and his resurrection are seen as expressions of divine love.

How do Christians celebrate Easter?

Easter is the most important Christian festival. It is [celebrated](#) in different ways by different groups of Christians but the basic beliefs remain the same.

Lent

Lent is the period of 40 days which comes before [Easter](#), beginning on Ash Wednesday. It is a time of reflection and preparation when Christians remember the time when Jesus fasted in the desert for 40 days and was tempted by the devil. For this reason, Lent is marked by fasting, prayer and sometimes making donations to charities.

Palm Sunday

This is the Sunday before **Easter Sunday**, the first day of Holy Week. It celebrates and Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem riding on a donkey. Crowds of people greeted him, throwing palm branches on the road. Some churches give out small crosses made from palm leaves as a reminder of this occasion and of Jesus' death on the cross.

Maundy Thursday

This is the Thursday before Easter Day. Christians remember when Jesus shared the Passover meal with his disciples, eating bread and drinking wine. This is known as the **Last Supper and it can be found** in Matthew 26:17-30. **'Maundy'** means 'commandment' and reminds Christians that Jesus, at the Last Supper, commanded his disciples that they should love one another. In some churches, including Roman Catholic, the Priest washes the feet of 12 people to remember how Jesus washed the feet of his disciples at the Last Supper. Use paintings of the Last Supper to explore aspects of this story.

<https://www.ranker.com/list/best-last-supper-paintings/ranker-art>

Good Friday

On Good Friday, Christians remember when Jesus was crucified and is the most solemn day of the year. Some Christians hold a procession called the Stations of the Cross, which re-enacts Jesus' journey carrying his cross to his crucifixion. When Jesus died on the cross he asked God to forgive the people who had killed him. This links with his teaching on forgiveness in the parables (autumn term).

Easter Sunday

This is the day Christians celebrate Jesus' Resurrection. Good Friday and Easter Sunday show that people could be forgiven for the sin that came into the world when Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit (See Spring term). The Resurrection is considered by many Christians to be proof of life after death. St Paul wrote in the New Testament about Jesus' resurrection and emphasised the importance of this belief. He explained that he himself saw Jesus after his resurrection, and he tells how Jesus appeared to the apostles and over 500 other people. Easter is a joyful time, expressed both through worship and through family time. Easter cards may be sent, special meals prepared and Easter eggs given to children.

Links for Teachers

Ash Wednesday and Lent

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zmpqf4j/revision/4>

Jesus' crucifixion and Resurrection

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/z43f3k7/revision/6>

Video clip: the Christian story of Easter

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/religious-studies-ks1-the-christian-story-of-easter/zhgv47h>

Easter

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zdcbcj6/revision/7>

Video/audio

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/easter-resources-ks1-ks2/zjy22sg>

Ukrainian Pysanky Easter eggs

<https://time.com/6166140/pysanka-ukraine-easter-egg-history/>

Easter and the Symbolism of Peace

Forgiveness and Redemption

The Easter story emphasises these themes through the idea of Jesus' sacrifice. The belief in the forgiveness of sins and the opportunity for spiritual renewal can bring a sense of inner peace to individuals.

Promotion of peaceful values

Easter celebrations often focus on teachings about love, compassion, and forgiveness, which are values associated with peace. This encourages individuals to cultivate peaceful attitudes and relationships.

Peace Symbols

Symbols associated with Easter include the dove and the rainbow which both have peaceful connotations. The lamb is also sometimes seen as a symbol of peace, while the dove represents peace and the Holy Spirit.

Judaism: Passover/Pesach

Jesus was Jewish and would have celebrated Passover. His crucifixion took place during Passover. It is one of the most important religious festivals in the Jewish calendar and celebrates the time when the Israelites were led out of Egypt by Moses. Jews have celebrated Passover [since about 1300 BCE](#), following the rules laid down by G-d in Exodus 13:3: 'Remember this day, the day on which you left Egypt, the place where you were slaves.' The story of Passover can be found in the book of Exodus. The Israelites had been enslaved in Egypt under the rule of Pharaoh. God, through Moses, sent [ten plagues](#) upon Egypt to convince Pharaoh to release the Israelites. The last plague was the death of the firstborn sons. Each Israelite household had to take a male lamb, look after and kill it. Blood from the lamb was to be brushed on their door frames. This would tell an avenging angel that it was an Israelite home and to 'pass over'. The families would then roast the lamb and eat it with bitter herbs and unleavened bread. At midnight every Egyptian firstborn, including the firstborn of the Pharaoh, was struck down by the angel. The Egyptians were terrified and demanded Pharaoh let the Israelites go. They left Egypt, led by Moses.

The account of the Exodus

It took Moses around forty years to reach the Promised Land. During that time he was given the Ten Commandments.

How do Jews celebrate Passover (Pesach)?

The celebration of Passover lasts for seven or eight days, depending on tradition. It is a time for Jewish people to reflect on their history, freedom, and the importance of faith. Before celebrations can begin houses must be cleaned from top to bottom to remove any traces of chametz (leaven or yeast) from the home. This is a reminder of when the Israelites left Egypt and did not have time to let their bread rise.

How Jewish people use stories

The Passover celebration includes a storytelling ritual known as the seder, or order. During the Passover meal, spent at home with family and friends, the story of this escape, or exodus, is told through passages from the [Haggadah](#) (a sacred text). This oral tradition has been passed down through generations so that the story is not forgotten and children, who will one day retell it to their children. The youngest child asks four questions about why the night is different to other nights.

The Seder Meal

Symbolic foods are eaten from [the Seder plate](#), along with prayers and blessings.

Jewish people also celebrate [Sukkot](#) which is a reminder of the time the Israelites lived in the wilderness after they were freed from slavery in Egypt. This period is commemorated with the building of tent-like structures called sukkah.

Links for teachers

What is Passover?

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/znwhfg8/articles/zn22382>

The Story of the Passover

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p011507s>

What is a Passover meal?

https://www.chabad.org/holidays/passover/pesach_cdo/aid/1751/jewish/What-Is-a-Seder-Passover-Meal.htm

Pesach and Sukkot

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zv626yc/revision/10>

Video clips

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/religious-studies-ks2-celebrating-passover/z4kvrj6>

The story of Moses

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/religious-studies-ks1-the-jewish-story-of-moses/zmfp382>

Connections to Islam

Fasting: [Ramadan](#)

Ramadan is special because it is believed to be the month in which the Prophet Muhammad began to receive revelations of the Qur'an (see Year 2, Autumn term). We have seen how fasting is important to Christians during Lent. In Islam it is one of the [Five Pillars](#) that they must follow (see year 2, Spring term). The fourth pillar is 'SAWM', the obligation to fast during Ramadan. It teaches Muslims self-discipline and brings them closer to Allah. Reasons for fasting include:

- obedience to God and self-discipline
- becoming spiritually stronger
- appreciating God's gifts
- developing empathy for the poor
- giving thanks for the Qur'an, which is believed to have been revealed in the month of Ramadan
- sharing fellowship with other Muslims

Iftar

The breaking of the fast at the end of daytime.

Night of Power (Laylat Al-Qadr)

This is the name given to the night when the Angel Jibril first appeared to the Prophet Muhammad and began revealing the Qur'an and it is celebrated during Ramadan. For Muslims, this is the most important night in Ramadan.'

Eid-ul-Fitr

This festival occurs at the end of Ramadan. It is a joyful day of thanksgiving to Allah when Muslims celebrate the fact that they have completed their fasting.

Eid-ul-Adha

This is a commemoration of sacrifice. It also marks the end of Hajj, the annual pilgrimage to Makkah (see Year 4). During Hajj, Muslims remember when the Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham in Judaism) dreamt that Allah told him to sacrifice his son, Isma'il (Isaac in Judaism). At the last minute, Allah told him to sacrifice a ram instead. This was a test of the Prophet's loyalty to Allah. On the first morning of Eid-ul-Adha, Muslims around the world attend morning prayers at their local mosque. The service includes communal prayers and a sermon which teaches the importance of obeying Allah and talks about the lesson learnt by Ibrahim. Traditionally, Muslims slaughter an animal, such as a sheep, camel or goat and may share this with family, friends as well as the poor and needy. The practice of slaughter is still practised in some Islamic countries, but in the UK meat is bought from halal butchers. Eid-ul-Adha is a special occasion when people wear new clothes, spend time with family and friends, and presents and cards are exchanged.

Links for teachers

Ramadan and Eid-ul-Fitr

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/explainers-56695447>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/23286976>

Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-ul-Adha

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/znhhsrd/revision/8>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zhjff4j>

Teaching suggestions

Pupils could

- Use symbols and pictures (e.g. cross, Passover plate) to show how Easter and Passover bring communities together through the ways they observe and celebrate these events.
- Look at paintings depicting the crucifixion and Resurrection and explain what the artist was trying to show.
- Explain how eating and drinking certain things might help Christians and Jews remember important events. Compare this with the way they and their family and friends eat special things at certain times.
- Re-create the Seder plate with explanations of all the symbolic food.
- Visit a church and/or a synagogue and look for symbols relating to Easter and Passover.
- Design a poster and/or leaflets inviting people to come to an Eid-ul-Fitr celebration in Leicester.
- Recreate the story of the Prophets Ibrahim and Ismail and/or Abraham and Isaac through a radio script, podcast, etc.

YEAR 2

Year 2

Sacred Texts, Beliefs and Connections



Overview

Pupils draw on what they have learned already about aspects of different worldviews and look at how beliefs are revealed through sacred scriptures. This leads on to the connections between worldviews, within the context of Abrahamic and Dharmic traditions as well as non-religious worldviews. Pupils will also consider their own position.

Worldviews context

The way people view the world is dictated to some extent by where they are born, the family/tradition they are born into and other things they experience, from birth onwards. For those people who belong to a particular RW, this includes recognising the significance of sacred texts, revelation (a theme that is revisited later in the syllabus) and what people believe about God. To properly understand it is vital to look at what connects them and in turn, what connects us as human beings. 'No-one stands nowhere.'

<https://www.theosthinktank.co.uk/comment/2021/05/12/worldviews-film>

Autumn

What are sacred texts and why do they matter?

Sacred scriptures

How they are regarded and used by believers.

Spring and Summer

What is a religion? What is a worldview?

What beliefs, values and practices are important in religions and worldviews?

Personal worldviews: what shapes these?

Beliefs

Connections between RWs

Progression Strands: concepts which pupils should understand

A: Belonging, Identity & Community

- How religions and worldviews connect people, e.g. to families, local and national communities, globally.
- How sacred scriptures are used in worship and ceremonies to bring communities together.
- How worldviews connect with each other.

B: Beliefs, Influences & Values

- What people in different RWs believe about revelation and sacred scriptures.
- What people from Abrahamic and Dharmic traditions hold as key beliefs.
- What Humanists believe.
- What RWs believe about peace.
- What shared beliefs exist within and between worldviews.

C: Expression, Expression & Sacred

- Why some texts are considered to be sacred.
- How sacred texts are used in personal and communal worship and other ceremonies.
- How people show respect for sacred scriptures.

D: Truth, Interpretation & Meaning

- What believers mean by 'truth' in sacred scriptures and how this can be interpreted in different ways.
- Why the concept of revelation is central to understanding some sacred scriptures.
- How 'peace' may be interpreted in different ways.

Autumn

What are sacred texts and why do they matter?

Religions/Worldviews

Compulsory

- Christianity
- Islam **OR** Judaism
- Buddhism, Hinduism or Sikhi. (Choose one)

In addition to teaching about the above RWs in depth, reference should be made to others as and when appropriate.

Content overview

- Why sacred scriptures are considered to be sacred.
- Difference between Abrahamic and Dharmic scriptures.
- How people show respect for sacred scriptures.
- What the scriptures contain.
- How they are used in worship.

Previous learning: What do pupils know and remember from year 1?

What religious traditions teach about God.
Stories and celebrations.
Creation stories.

Linked to this unit

Reception

Bible stories: the Nativity, Easter; Hindu stories: Rama and Sita, Holika and Prahlad.

Year 1

Special and sacred stories; texts from the Torah and New Testament; the narratives behind Christmas, Easter, Hanukkah and Passover; creation stories.

New learning objectives Pupils should know and understand:

- What is meant by revelation.
- How sacred scriptures are different to other kinds of books.
- How sacred scriptures are used in worship and ceremonies to bring communities together.
- How and why people show respect for sacred scriptures.

Unit expectations and outcomes

Evidence for these should be demonstrated through a variety of ways, including pupils' work, conversations with pupils and assessment tasks. (See Appendix 2)

To achieve the learning objectives, pupils should be able to:

- Explain how sacred scriptures and texts are different from other types of books.
- Identify and name key sacred scriptures.
- Provide examples of the ways sacred scriptures are used in worship and ceremonies.
- Explain the different ways Abrahamic religions view sacred texts compared to most Dharmic religions.



Key vocabulary and concepts

Buddhism: dharma/dhamma, Tripitaka.

Christianity: Bible, gospels, Old and New Testaments.

Hinduism: Bhagavad-Gita, Mahabharata, Ramayana, Upanishads, Vedas.

Islam: Angel Jibril, Hadith, madrassah, Prophet Muhammad, Night of Power, Qur'an, Sunnah, revelation, Tawhid.

Judaism: Aron Kodesh (Ark), Ketuvim, Nevi'im, parochet, Sefer Torah, Shabbat, Shema, Talmud, Tanakh, Ten commandments, yad.

Sikhi: Adi Granth, granthi, Guru Granth Sahib.

General: sacred, beliefs, values, truth, revelation

Teacher guidance: Context and introduction

This unit builds upon areas covered in Year 1. Pupils have learnt about why certain books are special to people and what makes some sacred. They have studied texts from the Old and New Testaments and learn why Jesus is important to Christians and why Moses is important to Jews. In Reception and Year 1 they have also learnt about stories from other religions such as Hinduism. During this term the focus upon the idea of sacred texts, i.e. texts which are linked to God or relate to a religion. Pupils need to understand, at an appropriate level, that Dharmic religions do not focus so much on one particular scripture in the way that Abrahamic religions do, Sikhi being an exception. Exceptions are difficult to explain. For example, the Quaker faith is rooted in Christianity, but not all Quakers feel that it has a key scripture at its centre.

Remember: a worldviews approach puts people first which means you need to focus not just on the facts behind sacred scriptures but what they mean to people, whether during worship with others or alone.

How to teach this unit

- Building on what was covered in year 1, explain that while some stories of different cultures and religions were passed on orally, some were gradually written down and these form an important part of how people view the world (their 'worldview').
- Re-visit what is meant by special, sacred and holy. Give examples of books and texts which fall into these categories.
- Ensure that the connection between a religious worldview (particularly Abrahamic religions) and sacred scriptures is clear, i.e. the scriptures provide authority in terms of what to believe, how to behave, etc.
- One of the key concepts in this unit is 'revelation'. In many religions, revelation comes directly from God and reveals something about God. This explains why sacred scriptures are held in such high regard and considered as authority within religions. Once pupils have grasped this concept, move on to the different ways sacred texts are treated and used in worship and ceremonies.
- It is important to set the context, i.e. think about questions relating to when the sacred texts were written, who were they written for, etc.
- It is useful to use the phrase 'some people believe' when explaining the key points about scripture and texts. At this stage this will at least help pupils to start to understand about diversity between and within religions and worldviews.
- At the end, bring together similarities and differences. Where possible, choose some examples of sacred texts that can be open to interpretation.

Disciplinary Knowledge: ways of knowing

Lead the learning with disciplinary knowledge, which enables the pupils to focus upon **how** they are going to learn about this topic. This then leads to the substantive knowledge that pupils need to know and understand, i.e. **what** they need to know. In practice, the two types of knowledge should be integrated with the 'what' being taught alongside the 'how.' Disciplinary knowledge is initially set out in the form of questions. **You do not have to use every question:** some may be useful as a starter for enquiry, others for promoting deeper learning when you are looking at substantive knowledge.

How might pupils learn?

They could:

- Talk to members of faith communities.
- Read different types of stories and texts and talk about what they might mean.
- Observe practices and ways of living, e.g. see how sacred texts are used in a place of worship or in the home.
- Read sources of wisdom and debate claims to truth.

Theology is about what people believe. Theologians might ask:

How are beliefs sometimes interpreted differently?
Who wrote these texts?
When were they written?
Why are they sacred or holy?
Who were they written for?
Where could we find them?
How can we find out more about them?
How are sacred texts different to other books?
Why do some religions treat their sacred texts in a special way?
Why are sacred texts used in worship and special occasions?
How do people use sacred texts in the home?
Why do believers seek answers to problems from sacred texts?
Who decides that a book is 'sacred'?
What is the Bible and how do people interpret it?
What objects are sacred or holy to people and why?

Philosophy is about what people think. Philosophers might ask:

Can a book be holy?
Why might people interpret sacred texts in different ways?
Do some texts contain more 'truth' than others?
Why do people swear on the Bible and other holy scriptures? For example, in law courts.
Can everyone in a religion all believe the same thing?
Do things have to be literally true for people to follow them?
Should sacred texts change to fit in with the 21st century?
Should a non-religious person have to treat a sacred text in a special way?
What do Humanists need to guide them through life?

Social Science is about how people live. Social Scientists might ask:

How do sacred texts guide people about how to live their lives and treat others?
Without religious texts to guide them, what sources do non-religious people to help them lead good lives?
How does sharing the same sacred text help bring people together?
Why do some people have sacred texts in their homes?
Why do people tell stories from sacred texts?
Is it important that texts are passed on through generations?
Do people of all RWs have things they regard as sacred or holy?

Reflections: Personal knowledge

Do I consider any books to be sacred?

Do I consider any books to be more special than others?

How do some stories make me feel?

Substantive Knowledge: what pupils need to know

Some books may be described as special, sacred and holy. Many people believe that God has, in a variety of ways, inspired people to tell or write about the beliefs and values that will help them understand how to live their lives. This may be through revelation or by other means.

What is meant by revelation?

Many people believe that God revealed the content of sacred texts to a person or to different people. For example, Muslims believe that the Quran is the literal word of Allah (God) as revealed to the Prophet Muhammad. Following these revelations, texts were generally written down so that others could learn from them. For Christians, Jesus is the ultimate revelation of God's word. To understand sacred texts we have to understand something about two groups of religions (covered in more detail in the spring and summer terms)

Abrahamic traditions

These are Christianity, Islam and Judaism. The Prophet Abraham (Ibrahim in Islam) is a significant Prophet for all three religions, for different reasons. These traditions share a focus on key figures, including many prophets, as well as a common belief in one God, a reverence for sacred scriptures, and commitment to following the teachings of the scriptures. Some figures who appear in the sacred scriptures of all three Abrahamic religions are the Prophets Adam, Abraham/Ibrahim, Moses/Musa. While these religions share some things in common, they also have distinct beliefs, practices, and interpretations of the scriptures.

Dharmic traditions

These religious traditions, mainly Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhi, originated in the Indian subcontinent and share certain things in common. Each of these traditions has its own unique beliefs, practices, and scriptures but also share some common themes such as karma (the principle of cause and effect), reincarnation (the belief in the cycle of birth and death), and the pursuit of liberation or enlightenment. These traditions also often emphasise the importance of non-violence, compassion, self-discipline, and spiritual growth.

Differences in the way traditions view sacred texts

In **Abrahamic** faiths 'revelation' is final, and knowledge of God is fixed, as set out in the scriptures. While there might be discussions and interpretations within communities, there is a strong emphasis on a singular, revealed truth. The one main sacred scripture is usually considered to be the only valid source of wisdom. **Dharmic** religions may have multiple sacred texts and draw on texts from other faiths. Revelation is continuous, not fixed, with more emphasis on the search for truth and enlightenment than following what is written in sacred texts. Sikhi is an exception because followers believe that the Guru Granth Sahib is the embodiment of truth and holds the key to enlightenment. However, the scripture was written by several Gurus and others, rather than being something that was revealed to just one individual.

Abrahamic religions

Christianity: The Bible

Christians regard [the Bible](#) as the Word of God. This means that the people who wrote the Bible were inspired by God to write down what they witnessed and what was revealed to them. Christians must therefore follow what the Bible teaches.

What does it contain?

The Bible is divided into the Old and New Testament. There are 39 books in the Old Testament and 27 books in the New Testament. These represent the covenants (promise/contract) made between God and human beings.

Old Testament

The first part of the Bible is called the Old Testament, which begins with God's Creation of the universe and humanity. It is a collection of books that were written before the life of Jesus. It contains rules which Christians seek to live by, such as the Ten Commandments in the book of Exodus.

New Testament

This begins with the four Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) which describe the life, death, Resurrection and ascension of Jesus. These books are followed by the Acts of the Apostles which tells the story of the early church. The New Testament also contains the letters of the early Church leaders to the early Christians, such as St Paul's letters to churches and individuals. It ends with the Book of Revelation, which tells Christians about the end of the world and contains a great deal of imagery.

Who wrote the Bible?

The Bible was compiled by several people who believed that they were inspired by God to do so. This means that Christians believe that it contains the word of God and this makes it different to other books. The Old Testament was originally written in Hebrew and the New Testament was written in Greek.

How is the Bible used in worship?

Different Christian denominations may use the Bible in different ways. For example, the large pulpits placed centrally in many non-conformist churches such as Methodists and Baptists, represent the importance placed on preaching from the word of God. In other churches such as Roman Catholic, there will always be readings from the Bible, a sermon (typically shorter than in a non-conformist church) before the bread and wine are consecrated using Jesus' words from the Bible (Matthew 26: 26-28).

How is the Bible used in ceremonies?

The Bible plays a key role in initiation or commitment ceremonies (See Year 3, Spring term). In each ceremony there will be readings from the Bible which will link the ceremonies to certain texts. These ceremonies include baptism (sometimes called 'christening'), marriage and funeral services

When promises are made in such ceremonies, they are also made with God. This makes them different to non-religious worldviews.

How do individuals use the Bible?

Christians may use passages or texts from the Bible to help them focus when they pray. This may provide guidance about how they can live their lives in the way God would want them to. Christians believe that the Bible is different from any other book because it is God's word or contains God's words. The Lord's Prayer ('Our Father'), taught by Jesus (see year 3, autumn term) is frequently said by Christians.

Different interpretations of the Bible

Christians can be broadly categorised into three groups:

1. Those who believe that the Bible is the true word of God. For example, they believe that God literally created the world in six days.
2. Those who believe that the Bible was compiled by humans who were inspired by God. They do not necessarily take every word of the Bible as being the literal word of God. For example, when reading the creation story, they might accept that that God did create the world as outlined in Genesis but not literally in six days.
3. Those who believe that the Bible is a good guide to understanding their faith but could be interpreted to fit modern society. For example, when reading the creation story, they might believe that the Genesis account is simply a story to help Christians understand that God is the creator of the world.

Islam: the Qur'an

For Muslims [the Qur'an](#) is the most important revelation, from [Allah](#) (God) to the Prophet Muhammad (Muslims' most important Prophet).

Who wrote the Qur'an?

Muslims believe that the Quran is the literal word of Allah (God) as revealed to the Prophet Muhammad. The first revelation was given in 610 AD at the Cave of Hira near Makka during the [Night of Power](#). and it continued until he died in 632 AD. It is believed that the Prophet Muhammad received the revelations through the angel Jibril (Gabriel). The Prophet memorised the revealed verses, as did his followers. These revelations form the Qur'an, considered to be the final and complete revelation. It is written in its original language, Arabic, and Muslims around the world recite and memorise it as an essential part of their faith and worship.

The [Hadith](#) are the written records of the Prophet Muhammad's words and teachings.

The [Sunnah](#) reveals the Prophet Muhammad's way of life, according to the hadith. Both are important but the Qur'an is the final authority for Muslims.

How do Muslims treat the Qur'an?

The Qur'an is treated with great respect by Muslims because it is believed to be the sacred word of God. While the Qur'an is recited aloud, Muslims should behave with reverence and refrain from speaking, eating or drinking, or making any distracting noise. It is kept on a high shelf above other books, and people must wash before handling it, to show their respect. The Qur'an is used more in personal than communal worship.

What does the Qur'an teach?

The Qur'an teaches about such things as the Oneness of Allah (Tawhid), worship and Devotion, compassion and Kindness, Universal Brotherhood.

Madrassah

Children (especially boys) study the Qur'an at the madrassah (school). In many Muslim communities, it is a common practice for both boys and girls to learn how to recite the entire Qur'an. This process is known as memorisation or 'Hifz' in Arabic. Memorising the entire Quran is a way to preserve the sacred text as well as a means of personal and spiritual development.

Judaism: the Sefer Torah (Sefer is the Hebrew word for book)

[The Torah](#) is the first five books of the Hebrew Bible, starting with Genesis. The written Torah is the first part of the Tanakh, the Jewish scriptures. 'Torah' means teaching, instruction and law. It is the central and most important document of Judaism. Jews believe that Moses received the Torah from G-d on Mount Sinai after the Jews had escaped from Egypt. The Torah is written in Hebrew.

How is the Sefer Torah scroll made?

The Torah scrolls come in all shapes and sizes and are entirely handwritten in Hebrew by a sofer (scribe) on parchment from a [kosher](#) animal, usually a cow. These scrolls contain 304,805 letters and it can take up to two years to complete the whole process. If unravelled a scroll would reach from one end to other of King Power stadium. There are no full stops or capital letters. Each one is about one hundred metres long and can take over a year to complete. Great accuracy is needed. If a mistake is made it can make the whole scroll invalid. When Torah scrolls become too worn to be used they are buried, like a person. This shows how special they are to Jewish people.

How is the Torah used?

The Torah scrolls are so special that people are not allowed to touch them. They are kept in a safe place in the synagogue called the [Aron Kodesh/Ha-Kodesh](#) or holy Ark which is positioned high up to remind Jews of Mount Sinai, where Moses received the Ten Commandments. It is always at the front of the synagogue, facing Jerusalem. The Torah scrolls are kept behind a curtain called a parochet. The scrolls are usually decorated with metal breastplates and other decorations and covered with an embroidered mantle to indicate how much they are valued. There are decorative finials on the top of the handles of the scrolls. These are decorated with bells which sound when the scroll is carried round the synagogue. Bells were used in the past to get people's attention to come to prayer, similar to the way a bell is used to call Hindus to worship (see year 3, autumn term). The Torah is divided into portions and read out during services. When people read from the Torah, they use a special pointer stick called a yad to avoid touching the actual parchment. The main reading of the Torah is on the morning of [Shabbat](#) (Sabbath) and during festivals, when the scrolls are taken out of the Ark and carried in a procession round the synagogue. During a year the whole Torah is read in sequence. The reading is sung rather than spoken.

How does the Torah guide Jewish people?

The Torah provides guidance for Jews in their everyday and spiritual life. It contains the Shema, regarded by many Jews as the most important prayer in Judaism. It reminds them of the key principle of their faith - there is only one G-d. This part of the Shema is taken from the Torah: *'Hear O Israel, the Lord our G-d, the Lord is One.* Deuteronomy 6:4.

Other sacred texts

The Nevi'im: the books of the Jewish prophets such as Joshua and Isaiah.

Ketuvim: a collection of other important writings such as Psalms.

The Talmud: a comprehensive written version of the Jewish oral law and commentaries on it. The word Talmud comes from the Hebrew verb 'to teach', which can also be expressed as the verb 'to learn'. It is where the code of Jewish Halakhah (law) comes from.

The Torah is interpreted differently by Orthodox and Progressive Jews. Orthodox Jews believe that the Torah is the literal word of G-d and should be followed very carefully. Progressive Jews do keep some traditions but adapt the faith to fit in with modern society. They believe that although the Torah was inspired by G-d, it should be understood as a document of its time and not taken literally.

Dharmic religions

Buddhism

There are many Buddhist texts. These are not regarded as revelations from God or the word of God because there is no God in Buddhism. However, many are claimed to be the word of the Buddha, so have the authority of his enlightenment. The teaching of the Buddha was not written down at the time but memorised by his close disciples, who met after his death to recite all that they remembered. The main Buddhist scriptures are known as the [Tripitaka](#), meaning 'three baskets'. This is because the original writings were made on palm

leaves and stored in baskets. These scriptures contain the teachings of the Buddha and others, explanations of teachings, as well as rules for Buddhist monks. Buddhists call the teachings of the Buddha 'dharma' or 'dhamma', which has links to some Hindu traditions.

Hinduism

There are many [Sacred texts](#) in Hinduism. Many Hindus believe that some of these were 'heard' by rishis (Hindu scholars who had studied and teach the scriptures).

The Vedas ('knowledge')

Many Hindus believe that these are the most important sacred texts. They were produced in their present form between 1200-200 BCE and were introduced to India by the Aryans. Hindus believe that the texts were received by scholars directly from God and passed on to the next generations by word of mouth. Vedic texts are sometimes called shruti, which means 'hearing'.

The Upanishads

The word means 'those who sat down' beside their teachers. These texts developed from the Vedas but include more changed aspects of philosophical knowledge (the search for truth). The major Upanishads were largely composed between 800-200 BCE and are made up of prose, and verse. Later Upanishads continued to be composed right down to the 16th century, originally in oral form. Central to these scriptures is the concept of [Brahman](#); the ultimate reality, the supreme God.

Bhagavad Gita or "Song of the Lord"

This is part of the Mahabharata, the world's longest poem. This is a central Hindu scripture and includes guidance for worshippers. It explains that Hindu worship should focus on God. It was composed between 500 BCE and 100 CE and is one of the most popular Hindu texts. It takes the form of a dialogue between prince Arjuna and [Krishna](#), his charioteer. This is a very popular text for many Hindus.

The Ramayana

The Ramayana is one of India's best-known stories. It tells the story behind Diwali (See Reception). This story is about good overcoming evil as well as [dharma](#) or duty.

The Mahabharata (includes the Bhagavad Gita)

This is one of the two major Sanskrit epics of ancient India, the other being the Ramayana. This includes an account of the famous battle of the Mahabharata.

What do Hindus learn from sacred texts?

All these texts are highly respected by Hindus. They reveal something about the nature of Brahman and reality, and they provide guidance about how to behave in this life in order to attain [moksha](#). Some Hindus follow the teachings of the [Vedic texts](#). Others identify with the tradition of '[Sanatana Dharma](#)'. This is an eternal order of conduct that goes beyond any sacred scriptures.

Sikhi: Guru Granth Sahib/Adi Granth

The tenth Guru, Guru Gobind Singh Ji, said that after him there would be no other living Gurus. Instead, the sacred scriptures became the one eternal Guru. The belief is that the word of God is contained in the Guru Granth Sahib therefore it is treated with the same respect as the Ten Gurus. The texts contain lessons from the ten gurus as well as Sikh, Hindu and Muslim saints. The first shabad (hymn or verse) of the text is the Mool Mantra. This is the statement of belief for Sikhism and outlines the belief in one God. The first line of the Guru Granth Sahib is 'Ik Onkar', meaning 'there is only One God'.

Who wrote the Guru Granth Sahib?

The Guru Granth Sahib Ji is written in Gurmukhi which is the script of the Punjabi language. Guru Arjan collected the sacred writings and teachings of the first four gurus, while also adding his own. He also included hymns written by Hindu and Muslim poets, showing his respect for other faiths. Later, Guru Gobind Singh added writings by his father, the ninth Guru, Tegh Bahadur. Every Guru Granth Sahib has 1,430 pages, and every copy is identical.

How do people show respect for the Guru Granth Sahib in the gurdwara (Sikh place of worship)?

As the Guru Granth Sahib is considered to be the Eternal Guru, Sikhs believe it should be treated in the same way the human Gurus were treated. This means it must be treated with the utmost respect, for example:

- Sikhs must remove their shoes and wash their hands before entering the gurdwara.
- Sikhs and visitors must wear head coverings inside the gurdwara in the presence of the Guru Granth Sahib.
- The scripture is placed under a beautifully decorated canopy, the Palki Sahib. This is covered by the chanani, which is a canopy made from decorated cloth.
- The Guru Granth Sahib is placed on the manji, which is a kind of bed which has pillows on it. This structure is on a raised platform called the takht. This is like a throne and is the most noticeable feature in the prayer hall.
- The sangat (worshippers) sit on the floor in the Darbar Sahib (prayer hall) to ensure their heads are not higher than the Guru Granth Sahib. When the scriptures are open, they are wrapped in beautiful cloths called rumalas.
- Sikhs must never turn their backs on the Guru Granth Sahib.
- The Guru Granth Sahib is placed in a separate room, the sach khand at night. This often resembles a bedroom.

A granthi is someone (can be male or female) appointed to read the Guru Granth Sahib. When it is being read, a chauri (or Chaur Sahib), which is a special fan made from yak hair, is waved above it. This is a sign of respect or honour. It was used in ancient times and was waved about the kings and queens of Indian courts, mainly to deter flies and keep the air cool.

In the home

Sikhs must keep the Guru Granth Sahib under a canopy in a separate room. As this is not possible for many Sikhs they may have a Gutka instead. This is a small book that contains extracts from the Guru Granth Sahib and is used in daily prayer.

Akand Path

This is the non-stop continuous reading of the Guru Granth Sahib from beginning to end. This reading is completed over 48 hours by many people. It lasts through the day and night until all 1,430 pages of the holy scripture have been read. There are many reasons to complete the Akand Path, including to honour important festivals or occasions such as marriage. The Akand Path is one way for Sikhs to perform sewa or service.

When are sacred texts used outside of places of worship and ceremonies?

There are occasions when people are required to take an oath, e.g. when giving evidence in court or being sworn into an important role. People who do not have religious beliefs take a non-religious oath. An oath is a solemn promise. The concept of a promise runs throughout this syllabus, e.g. through the idea of covenant, promises made through rites of passage ceremonies, etc.

The range of holy scriptures used by MPs for their oaths <https://religionmediacentre.org.uk/news/swearing-in-of-mps-on-sacred-oath/>

Visits to places of worship (See Appendix 4)

If possible, arrange a visit to a place of worship so that pupils can see sacred scriptures. For example:

Church: Lectern, pulpit

Gurdwara: central place of the Guru Granth Sahib

Mandir: sacred texts may not be so evident but pictures inside the mandir may serve to tell important stories from them.

Mosque: the Qur'an, the stand on which it is kept.

Synagogue: the Ark and Torah scrolls.

Resources

Mcfarlane, M. Sacred Stories. Simon & Schuster, 2012

Powell Smith, B. The Brick Bible. Skyhorse Publishing, 2011, 2012

Pai, R, The Gita for Children. Swift Press, 2022

Illustrated Myths from Around the World, Usborne, 2026

Links for teachers

General

Holy Books

<https://senecalearning.com/en-GB/revision-notes/gcse/religious-studies/aqa/a-religions/4-2-2-the-holy-books>

Range of scriptures used by MPs in oath of allegiance

<https://religionmediacentre.org.uk/news/swearing-in-of-mps-on-sacred-oath/>

Buddhism

What is Buddhism?

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zh4mrj6/articles/zdbvjhv>

Teachings of the Buddha

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zj4g4qt/revision/1>

Story of Prince Siddhartha

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p010xtz3>

Christianity

Video clip: What is the Christian holy Bible?

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/what-is-the-christian-holy-bible/zf4h382>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p01910px>

Video clip: God's word

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/z9b2p9q/articles/zvtmp9g>

Knowing God through religious texts

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zh296v4/revision/1>

Bible in the Protestant Church

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zbp7y9q/revision/6>

Authority of the Bible

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zbj48mn/revision/1>

Hinduism

Hindu sacred writings

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zkkck2p/revision/2>

What is Hinduism?

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zmpp92p>

Islam

Introduction to the Qur'an

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0110cm4>

The importance of the Qur'an

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0115flt>

The Prophet and the Qur'an

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p010xb84>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0113vpj>

The Qur'an

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/the-quran/z4p8mfr>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zj36gwx/revision/1>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0114bxh>

Judaism

What is the Jewish holy book?

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/znwhfg8/articles/zh77vk7>

My Life, My Religion: The Torah: video clip

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p02mxbj>

Reading the Torah

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/z3sf2nb/revision/2>

Sikhi

Video clip: Guru Granth Sahib

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/articles/zms2t39>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/znnmtv4/revision/6>

Teaching suggestions

Pupils could:

- Identify and name the sacred text from two Abrahamic and two Dharmic religions.
- Discuss why people believe that books can be special and/or sacred.
- Write about the way the sacred texts from two religions are used and treated in the place of worship.
- Make their own version of a Torah scroll or copy an extract from another sacred scripture alongside a picture to show its meaning.
- Make a chart to show connections between the three Abrahamic scriptures.
- Find quotes from Dharmic texts that express a believer's view of life.
- In a visit to a place of worship, identify the sacred scriptures and ask key questions, including what the sacred text means for individuals.

Year 2: Spring and Summer Terms

What do we mean by religion and worldviews?

What beliefs, values and practices are important within religions and worldviews?

Religions and Worldview

Compulsory

- Christianity
- Islam **OR** Judaism
- **One** Dharmic religion chosen from Buddhism, Hinduism or Sikhi.
- Humanism

Additional suggestions

Teach the above in some depth but refer to others as and when appropriate, e.g. Baha'i, Jainism.

Content overview

- Key beliefs of people in Abrahamic and Dharmic religions
- What connects these beliefs and communities.
- What makes them different.

Previous learning linked to this unit: what do pupils know and remember?

Reception

Importance of Jesus.

Year 1

What Bible stories teach about God.

Creation stories.

Year 2

Autumn term: sacred texts.

New learning objectives

Pupils should know and understand:

- What is meant by 'religion' and 'worldview.'
- The distinctive beliefs of people from Abrahamic and Dharmic traditions.
- How Rws connect with each other.
- What Rws say about peace.
- How diversity within religions can be seen through different groups.

Unit expectations and outcomes

Evidence for these should be demonstrated through a variety of ways, including pupils' work, conversations with pupils and assessment tasks. (See Appendix 2)

To achieve the learning objectives, pupils should be able to:

- Explain the meaning of 'religion' and 'worldview.'
- Distinguish between the key beliefs of people from Abrahamic and Dharmic traditions.
- Make connections between beliefs within and between worldviews.
- Identify areas of diversity within religions by naming two groups or denominations and explaining similarities and differences.
- Describe a non-religious view of the world



Key vocabulary and concepts

Abrahamic

Christian: Anglican, Creator, eternal, Golden Rule, Jesus, Messiah, omnipotent, Orthodox, Protestant, Roman Catholic, Saviour, Sermon on the Mount, transcendent, Trinity.

Islam: akhirah, Allah, Creator, eternal, Five Pillars, imam, omnipotent, Muhammed, shahadah, Shi'a, Sunni, tawid, transcendent.

Judaism: Abraham, Covenant, kashrut, kosher, mitzvot, Moses, Shema.

Dharmic

Buddhism: enlightenment, Four Noble Truths, nirvana, Noble Eightfold Path, Siddhartha Gautama.

Hinduism: ahimsa, atman, avatar, Brahma, Brahman, dharma, karma, moksha, murtis, reincarnation, samsara, Sanatan Dharma, satsang, Shiva, Trimurti, Vishnu.

Sikhi: Guru Nanak, Guru Nanak Dev Ji, Mool Mantra (Mul Mantar), mukti, Ik Onkar, reincarnation, sewa/seva, Waheguru.

Concepts central to Dharmic traditions: karma (the principle of cause and effect), reincarnation (the belief in the cycle of birth and death), and the pursuit of liberation or enlightenment. These traditions also often emphasise the importance of non-violence, compassion, self-discipline, and spiritual growth.

Teacher guidance: Context and introduction

Link to previous term: Ensure that pupils understand that everyone has a worldview: 'No-one stands nowhere'.^[23] See also the 2024 Religious Education paper on religion and worldviews.^[24] Having learnt about sacred texts the focus moves to what these mean within the context of peoples' beliefs. One of the most important things to stress is that **not all people who belong to the same religion believe the same thing**. This was touched upon in the previous term in relation to how people interpret texts, e.g. some Jewish people interpret the Torah literally, some do not. At this stage you can explore some examples so that pupils can deepen their understanding later.

Abrahamic religions

These are Christianity, Islam and Judaism. They share a common link with the Prophet Abraham (Ibrahim in Islam). They share a focus on key figures, including many prophets, as well as a common belief in one God, a reverence for sacred scriptures, and commitment to following these. While these religions share some things in common, they also have distinct beliefs, practices, and interpretations of the scriptures. Abrahamic faiths have some key Prophets and leaders in common, i.e. those in the Tanakh Hebrew scriptures, the Old Testament for Christians and some of the Prophets in Islam such as Abraham and Moses. 'Revelation' is final, and knowledge of God is fixed, as set out in the scriptures. While there might be discussions and interpretations within communities, there is a strong emphasis on a singular, revealed truth. The one main sacred scripture is usually considered to be the only valid source of wisdom.

Dharmic religions

These religious traditions originated in the Indian subcontinent and include Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhi. 'Dharma' is a Sanskrit term which means 'duty'. It also refers to generally refers to the cosmic order or law that governs the Universe. These traditions have their own unique beliefs, practices and scriptures but also share some common themes such as karma (the principle of cause and effect), reincarnation (the belief in the cycle of birth and death), and the pursuit of liberation or enlightenment. They also often emphasise the importance of non-violence, compassion, self-discipline, and spiritual growth. People who belong to Dharmic religions believe that it is possible for any person to connect with

[23] <https://www.theosthinktank.co.uk/comment/2021/05/12/worldviews-film>

[24] <https://religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/resource/religion-and-worldviews-approach-handbook/>

the Divine as everyone is an expression of the Divine. This means that no intermediary prophets or messengers are necessary. A key learning point is that Dharmic religions tend to see space and time as cyclical, rather than Abrahamic religions, which tend to take a linear view.

How to teach this unit

Begin with making links to the previous term and make the connection between sacred scriptures, authority and beliefs. Care must be taken to consider the things which connect religions. This will help pupils understand the concepts in more depth, rather than just learning facts about different religions. When pupils visit places of worship or speak to different people, we want them to recognise these connections, make comparisons and ask intelligent, well-informed questions.

Note: when teaching about Hinduism it is important to be clear that Hindus recognise Brahman as the one Ultimate Reality. Brahman is represented in many different forms, though thousands of gods and goddesses. Pupils should not be taught simply that 'Hindus have lots of gods'. The deities are different aspects of Brahman and each one shows Hindus a part of what Brahman is like. Many Hindus show devotion to a particular deity. This can be a personal choice or a family tradition.

Disciplinary Knowledge: ways of knowing

Lead the learning with disciplinary knowledge, which enables the pupils to focus upon **how** they are going to learn about this topic. This then leads to the substantive knowledge that pupils need to know and understand, i.e. **what** they need to know. In practice, the two types of knowledge should be integrated with the 'what' being taught alongside the 'how.' Disciplinary knowledge is initially set out in the form of questions. **You do not have to use every question:** some may be useful as a starter for enquiry, others for promoting deeper learning when you are looking at substantive knowledge.

How might pupils learn?

They could:

- Talk to people in school and from faith communities about what they believe.
- Read about beliefs and debate claims to truth.
- Analyse data and statistics about different RWs and understand how these are subject to change.

Theology is about what people believe. Theologians might ask:

What is a religion?

What is a worldview?

What is a religious belief?

What shared features would you expect to find in most RWs?

What does it mean to 'believe in' something?

What do we mean by 'religion'?

Where do religious beliefs come from?

Philosophy is about what people think. Philosophers might ask:

Why do people have different views about the idea of 'God'?

What is hard to understand about religion and belief?

Is it possible to believe in nothing at all?

What are the big ideas in religions?

Social Science is about how people live. Social Scientists might ask:

Does everyone have a worldview?

Do all people in a RW believe and practice the same thing?

What does it mean to belong to the religious communities we have studied?

What difference does being a Christian/Jew/Muslim

What connects religions?
What does the word 'God' mean to the people we have learnt about?
What beliefs and values are most important to different RWs and where do these come from?
What do Christians, Jews and Muslims say God is like?
God is sometimes described as a perfect being: What does this mean?
Christians, Jews and Muslims all believe in one God. Is this the same God?
What might Jews learn about God from the idea of the covenant?
What might Christians learn from the Sermon on the Mount?
What did Jesus do to save human beings?
What key concepts/ideas are shared by Dharmic religions?
Why do Hindus believe that there is truth in many sacred scriptures, not just one?
Why do Hindus give food and offerings to murtis?
Why is the Guru Granth Sahib so important to Sikhs?
Why do people within a religion not all believe the same things?
What do religions believe about peace?
What do Humanists believe?

What is the difference between believing and knowing?
Is seeing believing?
Is it reasonable to believe in something you can't see?
Who created the creator?
What does it mean to be human?
Are angels real?
Did key people in Abrahamic religions exist?
Can people come back to life?
Is it possible for a large group of people to all believe the same thing?
Does life have a purpose if you don't believe in God?
Can all religions be true?

make to daily life?
Does religion bring peace, conflict or both?
What does it mean to be part of a global religious/worldview community?
Do religions have to change have to change to meet people's needs in the 21st century?
Do RWs always stay the same?
Why is community so important to religious people?

Reflections: Personal knowledge

What is my worldview?
How do I know what to believe?
If things are true, how can they change?
What do I believe that makes this my worldview?
What do I know about the beliefs of others?
Have my beliefs changed since I was younger?

Substantive Knowledge: what pupils need to know

What is a religion?

This is usually used to describe a tradition that forms a part of a person's identity. This is often connected to belief in a higher power, sacred texts, certain practices. Within religions we also find connections to ideas, communities and family.

What is a worldview?

'Worldviews' covers a broader area, including religious and non-religious views of the world as well as ideas that may be considered as 'spiritual.'

<https://www.open.edu/openlearn/history-the-arts/religious-studies/religion-faith-spirituality-and-worldviews>

What are beliefs?

Different types of belief:

- Things we believe without question, e.g. the sun will rise, Saturday follows Sunday.
- Things we might not know or believe, but we can find out, e.g. the population of India, the author of a particular book.
- Things we cannot know for sure, but we still believe, e.g. whether God exists.

Religious beliefs

Religious belief is a different way of believing. Believing something in this context is about being faithful to a teaching or a practice or being and expressing this belief accordingly, for example, through expression and actions. In the previous term pupils have learn about sacred scriptures and the link to belief. But believing in something is much more than that. It affects the whole person and their identity, how they act, how they speak, how they feel. These things are all inter-related. Believing in something involves fully embracing the teachings and practices of that faith (see year 3, autumn term).

Where do beliefs come from?

Our beliefs are influenced by many things including families, friends, what we see/read. Increasingly people rely on social media to tell them what is 'true.' We have to use our judgement and often instinct to check things out, look for evidence, etc. Religious are largely influenced by oral and written ideas, some of which are thousands of years old (which is why some religions believe that they have to adapt their thinking to fit in with modern day life). These are powerful as they are believed to have come (directly or otherwise) from God. Within religions there are also people who are considered to have authority, e.g. priests, Imams, a leader such as the Pope.

Monotheism: Belief in one God.

Polytheism: Belief in many gods.

Abrahamic religions

What do Christians believe?

Christians believe in one God.

This may be interpreted in different ways but most Christians believe that God has different characteristics, e.g. Creator, omnipotent, eternal.

Christians believe in [the Trinity](#)

God who can be seen in three distinct persons: the Father (Creator), the Son (God incarnate) and the Holy Spirit (Sustainer).

What Christians believe about Jesus

Christians base their beliefs on the life, teachings, death (salvation and atonement), and resurrection of Jesus Christ, who they believe to be the Son of God and the promised Messiah. As Jesus was the Son of God, Christians believe He performed miracles and came back from the dead and is therefore still alive today, in a spiritual sense.

Baptism of Jesus

·Symbolism of the dove: Holy Spirit

·Symbolism of water: cleansing

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zvxtgwx/revision/7>

Other key beliefs and practices

- [Life after death](#)
- The Golden Rule (Matthew 7:12).
- Teachings of Jesus, e.g. through parables, the Sermon on the Mount, the Golden Rule.
- Belief in the power of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers.

What do Jewish people believe?

Jews believe in one G-d.

They believe He is the Creator of the Universe, the Lawgiver and the Judge. The Hebrew term is Hashem, meaning 'The Name'. It is never spoken and is sometimes written as G-d, missing out one letter. The [Shema](#) is the most important prayer in Judaism and expresses belief in one God. Some Jewish people have a [mezuzah](#) case on their doorposts. Inside is the actual mezuzah which is a small parchment scroll with the Shema inscribed on it.

Other key beliefs and practices

The Jewish covenant

Judaism began almost 4,000 years ago when Abraham received a vision from God. The religion is passed down through generations, i.e. by birth and parents are expected to bring their children up in the faith. Jews believe that there is only one God. Many Jewish people write his name as G-d to show respect. They have a special agreement with G-d called a covenant. This word means an agreement, such as a binding contract between two people. Jews see their relationship with God in this way. There are three main covenants:

- The covenant with Noah.
- The Abrahamic covenant.
- The Mosaic (Moses) covenant.

Covenant today

The Jewish covenants are still a vital part of Judaism today, e.g. [Brit Milah](#), following the commandments, celebrating Passover.

What do Muslims believe?

Muslims believe in one God (Tawhid).

The word 'Islam' in Arabic means submission to the will of God. Muslims believe there is one true God, Allah who has several characteristics, including Creator, transcendent, omnipotent and merciful.

Iman: faith

Ibadah: worship/belief in action

Shahadah: statement of faith

What Muslims believe about Muhammad

Muhammad is believed by Muslims to be the last prophet sent by God (Allah). They believe God sent prophets to mankind to teach them how to live according to His law. The Qur'an is formed from the revelations Muhammad received from God through the Angel Jibril.

What Muslims believe about Jesus

Muslims believe that Jesus ('Isa' in Arabic) was a prophet of God and was born to a virgin (Mary). They do not believe he was the Son of God.

Other key beliefs and practices

- Imam (faith): This is set out in the [Shahadah](#) (statement of faith) and expresses Muslims' belief in the oneness of God ([Tawhid](#)).
- Belief in angels
- Life after death ([Aakhirah](#))
- Food: [halal and haraam](#)
- [The Five Pillars of Islam](#)

These are the things that a Muslim must do so they can live a good and responsible life.

What do Christians believe about peace?

Generally speaking, Christianity is a religion of peace though Christians have fought in wars to defend their country. One group of Christians, [Quakers](#), is totally committed to non-violence. In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus said, 'Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.' Angels sang peace on earth when Jesus is born (Luke 2:14). Jesus refused to use violence at his arrest (Matthew 26:52-55) and forgave his enemies from the cross.

Do all Christians believe the same thing?

- All Christians share some basic beliefs, as set out above.
- Different denominations or groups have developed (and are still developing) over the years, for several reasons. Pupils can explore some differences through pictures, visits, etc.
- There are different branches or strands within Christianity called denominations, i.e. Roman Catholic, Orthodox (e.g. Greek Orthodox) and a range of Protestant or Reformed churches. Some such as Baptists and Methodists may also be described as non-conformists. Anglicans (Church of England) contain features of both Protestant and Catholic traditions.

The mitzvot or commandments

There are 613 mitzvot commandments (including the 10 commandments).

The Messiah ('Anointed One')

Many Jews believe that God will one day send a Messiah who will lead the world into an age of peace and understanding.

Life after death

Although Jewish sacred texts refer to a 'world to come', Jews have always placed greater emphasis on the present life than on life after death. As a result there are different understandings about the afterlife has dominated Jewish belief.

Food laws

These are based on the Kashrut laws, i.e. how to prepare '[kosher](#)' ('allowed') food. 'Traife' means 'not permitted'.

What do Jewish people believe about peace?

Judaism teaches that humans must not destroy life but preserve it. However, war is sometimes necessary and justified. God created life, and life therefore belongs to God. The Jewish greeting of 'Shalom' reflects the concept of peace and is found 220 times in the Jewish scriptures. 'Shabbat shalom' is a greeting used before or during Shabbat. It means 'May the peace of Shabbat be with you'. Do all Jewish people believe the same thing? There are different groups or branches of Judaism, mainly Orthodox and Progressive. These are mainly based on different interpretations of scripture.

1. Making the declaration of faith (Shahadah)
2. Praying five times a day (Salat)
3. Giving money to charity (Zakah)
4. Fasting during the month of Ramadan (Sawm)
5. Going on pilgrimage to Makkah at least once in a lifetime (Hajj)

What do Muslims believe about peace?

Muslims see their religion as one of peace but have sometimes found it necessary to defend themselves when they have been persecuted. When Muslims greet each other, they say, 'As-Salam-u-Alaikum, which means 'Peace be unto you.' The response back is 'Alaykum Salam (And Peace be to you.) The Prophet Muhammad was instrumental in beginning a faith where peace is rooted in just behaviour between people. Muslims believe that Allah is the God of mercy and compassion, not a God of war. The Arabic word for peace is Salaam and is related to the Jewish word for peace, Shalom. This means peace with justice, concern for the poor, harmony and unity.

Do all Muslims believe the same thing?

There are two main branches of Islam, Sunni and Shi'a. Sunni is the largest branch of Islam. Both groups agree on the basic principles of Islam and share the same holy book, the Qur'an.

What connects Abrahamic religions?

- They are all monotheistic, i.e. they believe in one God, though each religion refers to the deity using a distinct name.
- They all believe that God created the world and has absolute authority over the world and humanity.
- All believe in prophets as the link between God and humanity, where God reveals himself to a select few people to offer guidance and instructions.
- The city of Jerusalem is of great religious significance to all the religions, for differing reasons (see year 4, autumn term).
- All believe in some form of afterlife.
- All have some form of sacred scriptures or texts.

Dharmic religions

These religions may have multiple sacred texts. Revelation is continuous, not fixed, with more emphasis on the search for truth and enlightenment than following what is only written in sacred texts. Sikhi is an exception in having the sacred scripture at the centre of worship. This is because followers believe that the Guru Granth Sahib is the embodiment of truth and holds the key to enlightenment. However, the scripture was compiled by several gurus rather than being something that was revealed to just one individual.

What do Buddhists believe?

Buddhists do not believe in a personal God. It Buddhism teaches that everything depends on everything else: present events are caused by past events and become the cause of future events. Buddhists seek to reach a state of nirvana through [enlightenment](#), following the path of the Buddha, Siddhartha Gautama (6th BCE). They believe that life is both endless but also subject to impermanence (nothing lasts forever). Existence is endless because individuals are reincarnated repeatedly.

What Buddhists believe about Siddhartha Gautama, the Buddha

[Siddhartha Gautama](#) was born into a rich, royal family in present-day Nepal over 2500 years ago. One day, seated beneath the Bodhi tree, Siddhartha meditated and thought about his life until he became enlightened. As a result, he became known as the Buddha or 'enlightened one'. Buddhists call the teachings of the Buddha '[dharma](#)' or '[dhamma](#)'.

What do Hindus believe?

Hinduism, or Sanatan Dharma ('Eternal Way'), is the oldest of the six major world religions. It has no single founder but developed over a period of time. There is no single sacred scripture, and no commonly agreed set of teachings.

What do Hindus believe about God?

[Brahman](#)

Hindus believe that Brahman (Ultimate Reality) is present everywhere and there is a part of Brahman in everyone. Brahman is symbolised in diverse forms/formless, male and female and has different images and names. The thousands of gods and goddesses worshipped by Hindus are seen as a form of Brahman that can be understood. One way in which Hindus think of Brahman is as Nirguna Brahman, the idea that Ultimate Reality has no shape or form. One of the ways Nirguna Brahman is represented is by the Hindu aum/om symbol, which is used in meditation.

What do Sikhs believe?

What do Sikhs believe about God?

This religion was founded by Guru Nanak, the first Guru, around 500 years ago in the Punjab. Guru means 'Teacher.' Sikhi is still based on Guru Nanak's teachings and those of the nine Sikh Gurus who followed him. All members of the Sikh community are seen as equal, regardless of their gender, race, disability, class or wealth. Sikhs believe in One God who guides and protects them. Sikhs have many words to describe God. The name most widely used for God by Sikhs is Waheguru, which means 'wondrous enlightener'. Sikhs believe that Waheguru is the Creator, eternal, present in all creation, knowable to all.

Other names include:

- Sat Nam - True Name
- Ik Onkar - There Is Only One God
- Akal Purkh - Eternal Being

The ideals at the heart of Buddhism are known as the 'Three Jewels', or the 'Three Treasures'. These are the Buddha (the yellow jewel), the Dharma (the blue jewel), and the Sangha (the red jewel). It is by making these the central principles of their life that a person becomes a Buddhist.

The Four Noble Truths are central to the Buddha's teachings:

1. Dukkha (suffering)
2. Samudaya (the origin/Cause of Suffering):
3. Nirodha (how to end suffering): Suffering
4. Magga (the path to stop Suffering): This is a set of principles called the Eightfold Path, also known as the Middle Way.

The Noble Eightfold Path consists of:

- Right Understanding
- Right Intention
- Right Speech
- Right Action
- Right Livelihood
- Right Effort
- Right Mindfulness
- Right Concentration

Other beliefs and practices

Nirvana: this means to reach Enlightenment. Buddhists seek the path to Enlightenment through the practice and development of morality, meditation and wisdom.

Karma (or 'Action')

This concept is found in a number of Dharmic religions. For Buddhists, it means that bad actions in a previous life can follow a person into their next life and cause bad

The Trimurti

Brahman takes many forms and is often represented through three gods who are responsible for the creation, upkeep and destruction of the world:

- **Brahma**: the Creator of the Universe.
- **Vishnu**: the Preserver of the Universe.
- **Shiva**: the Destroyer of the Universe.

Other murtis/deities

Ganesha: Son of Lord Shiva.

Nandi: the vehicle of Lord Shiva.

Lakshmi: the goddess of wealth, wife of Lord Vishnu.

Lord Krishna: an avatar of Vishnu.

Rama and Sita: they demonstrate loyalty, bravery and a disregard for material possessions.

Hanuman: a god who is seen in the form of a monkey, recognised for his bravery and loyalty.

Shiva Nataraja: the Lord of the Dance.

Other beliefs and practices

Ahimsa: Many Hindus are vegetarian because they live by this principle which means not harming any living creature.

Atman: The soul, the part of the Ultimate reality in all living things.

Aum/Om: The most sacred symbol, first letter spoken by Lord Shiva.

Avatar: An appearance or an incarnation of a god or goddess on earth.

Dharma: In Hinduism this means 'duty'.

Karma: This Sanskrit word means 'action'. Hindus believe that good actions lead to good karma and bad actions lead to bad karma.

What do Sikhs believe?

What do Sikhs believe about God?

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The importance of Guru Nanak

Guru Nanak was born into a Hindu family in 1469. His most famous teaching is that there is only one God and that all human beings can have access to God, with no need for rituals or priests.

Other beliefs and practices

The Mool Mantra: The basic statement of belief that appears at the beginning and throughout the sacred scripture, the Guru Granth Sahib. The first line of the Mool Mantra is 'Ik Onkar', meaning 'there is only one God'.

Samsara and mukti

Sikhs believe in the cycle of samsara and believe that everyone has a chance to reach Waheguru through mukti or liberation.

effects. Karma determines where a person will be reborn after physical death and what their status will be in their next life.

Death, samsara and after-life

Death is very important in Buddhism as it is central to the concept of [samsara](#). This is the cycle in which all people are born, live, die and are reborn.

What do Buddhists believe about peace?

Non-violence is at the heart of Buddhist thinking and behaviour. The first of the Five Precepts that all Buddhists should follow is, 'Avoid killing, or harming any living thing.' Many Buddhists have refused to take up arms under any circumstances, even knowing that they would be killed as a result. Buddhists are forbidden to kill, even in self-defence.

Do all Buddhists believe the same thing?

There are different branches of Buddhism, including Theravada, Mahayana, and Vajrayana, each with their own interpretations and practices. Both Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism have a presence in the UK. Theravada Buddhism is commonly found in Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia.

Moksha: This is the release or liberation achieved by dharma during a lifetime. Actions or karma, help Hindus to achieve moksha.

Samsara: The process of reincarnation in which the soul is reborn repeatedly according to the law of action and reaction. The goal is to free people from this cycle, and from rebirth.

Satsang (togetherness): The importance of family and community.

What do Hindus believe about peace?

Hindu traditions include teachings that condemn violence and war but also has teachings that promote it as a moral duty. The parts that condemn violence are contained in the doctrine of ahimsa. All life shares the same atman, the same 'god-ness'. When people use the 'namaste' greeting to each other they are recognising the divine in each other. Gandhi's commitment to non-violence was reinforced by Jesus' teachings of 'love your enemies' in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew's gospel. A statue of Gandhi can be found just by the Brahma Samaj mandir at 15 Belgrave Road, Leicester LE4 6AR. Round the corner at 61 Dorset Street is Mahatma Gandhi House. Gandhi was born into a Gujarati family like many people in Leicester.

Do all Hindus believe the same thing?

Within Hindu traditions there are several groupings. Hindus share a belief in the main concepts in Hinduism but may worship different gods, e.g. Vaishnava Hindus focus their worship on Vishnu, Hindus who prefer to worship Shiva are called Shaivites. This is reflected in Leicester where there are several different communities, including Swaminarayan and Iskcon.

Reincarnation: This is often referred to as 'transmigration of the soul'. Sikhs believe that all beings have a soul (the atma) and are part of the cycle of reincarnation. The cycle repeats itself until the atma has been freed and is reunited with Waheguru in mukti.

Karma

Karma refers to the consequences of a person's actions and words and determines what happens to that individual's atma (soul) in the next life.

Death and the afterlife

At death, a Sikh's body is cremated and the atma or soul, is released from the body to be reborn in another life.

Sewa: Service

Sikhs believe in sewa or service. Many Sikhs perform sewa by volunteering in the langar within the gurdwara and offering their time to serve the wider community.

What do Sikhs believe about peace?

Sikhism allows Just War, which must be fought honourably. It is expected that military action may need to be taken against oppression, when all other means have failed. In Victoria Park, Leicester, there is a bronze statue of a Sikh soldier. This honours Sikhs who fought for the UK during the two World Wars and many other conflicts around the world. Although accounting for less than 2% of the population of British India at the time, Sikhs made up more than 20% of the British Indian Army at the outbreak of hostilities during the Great War.

Other RWs which could be referred to:

Baha'i

This is an all-embracing religion which draws other RWs together. It focuses on love and unity and seeks to unite all religions. There are very few dedicated places of worship in the UK. Many Baha'is meet in each other's homes.

<https://religionmediacentre.org.uk/factsheets/christianity-in-britain-factsheet/>

Humanism

In relation to peace

In deciding about war Humanists seek to use evidence, empathy, and a concern for the happiness and wellbeing of other humans. Some Humanists are pacifists and some think that sometimes war is a regrettable and necessary evil. Some have been conscientious objectors in war time, refusing to fight, others currently serve in the British armed forces. So there are thoughtful positions about war among Humanists but not a uniform position.

This is because humanists do not have a set of rules to follow, rather they believe in thinking about what the most moral thing to do is in each situation, carefully weighing up the evidence and the results of our actions.

Jainism

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/jainism/>

Paganism

This is an umbrella term which describes earth based religions which are based on the cycles of nature. Within this, some may practice Wicca, some may not. Some follow deities, some do not. Pagans can practice alone or as part of a group (a moot). There are approximately 1650 Pagans in Leicestershire and over 106,000 in the UK.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/paganism/>

What connects Dharmic religions?

- They share a number of concepts such as dharma, karma, reincarnation, samsara.
- The practice of meditation and mindfulness.
- A cyclical view of existence.
- A connection between spirituality and nature.
- Gender equality.

What most religions have in common

- Belief in a higher power or a world beyond this one, search for the Divine.
- The Golden Rule; although this is often quoted within the context of Christianity, the principle of 'do as you would be done by' applies to all religions.
- A sense of community.
- A way of expressing faith, e.g. through worship, meditation, prayer, rituals.
- Sacred scriptures and teachings.
- Festivals and ceremonies, rites of passage.
- The search for truth the desire to understand the meaning of life.
- A sacred space or space.
- Belief in an afterlife or re-birth.
- A moral and ethical framework which includes caring for others.

Members of religions and worldviews were asked, 'What is the most important thing to you about your faith or beliefs? And 'What is the key message of your religion or worldview?'

Baha'i

'The most important aspect of my faith is working for the unity of humanity. The key message is 'He Who is your Lord, the All-Merciful, cherisheth in His heart the desire of beholding the entire human race as one soul and one body. ' Bahá'u'lláh

Leicester SACRE member

Buddhism

'For me, the most important part of practising Buddhism is the understanding that I am responsible for my mind and thoughts. I cannot blame others for anything, and I need to work on my own mind to attain Enlightenment and then be able to benefit others.'

Buddhist

Nagarjuna Kadampa Meditation Centre, Northants

'The most important thing to me is that I have met a spiritual path and a Spiritual Guide that I really connect with, and that by putting Buddhist teachings into practice in daily life, as well as in meditation sessions, this makes me a better person and gives me a direction to take which goes far beyond the end of this life. '

Education Programme Co-coordinator

Nagarjuna Kadampa Meditation Centre, Leicester

Christianity

'That Jesus Christ is the son of God and that he died on the cross for our sins so that we can have a relationship with God the Father and eternal life. These two elements are really important to me and central to what I believe – Jesus didn't die just so that we could have eternal life (although that is amazing), it is also to positively impact your everyday life and ensure you are getting the most out of it. I believe I do this by having a really, lived relationship with God the Father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit.'

Anglican, Leicester

'The most important thing to me is knowing that God is present with us all the time, as God the Creator, God the Son (Jesus Christ) and God the Holy Spirit. The key message is that God loves everyone and there are no barriers or limits to God's love! This was shown to us in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.'

Methodist minister

Hinduism

'As a Hindu I believe that it is important to act in the right way and to make choices that are helpful to everyone. I do this by following my personal dharma and the dharma within Hinduism. This means that I can make the right choices that are morally correct'.

Hindu, Leicester

Islam

'The most important thing about being a Muslim is to always be aware of God's presence. Keeping God close means trying to live in a way that pleases God. At the centre of the five pillars of Islam is the remembrance of God. In fact, those rituals are meaningless in Islam without God. God is loving, forgiving and merciful. I know if I make a mistake I can always turn to God and ask for His forgiveness, the only condition is that it must be with sincerity. God knows our true intentions. Knowing God is forgiving and merciful is important to me as it gives me hope. In terms of the key message, The Prophet Mohammad said, 'I have been sent to perfect good character.' If this was the key purpose of the Prophet Mohammad then it has to be the key message of Islam. Muslims look to the example of the Prophet Mohammad as the ultimate example of good character. They are qualities such as being just, kind, gentle, generous, forgiving, merciful, truthful, helpful, patient and humble. By focussing on developing good character, good moral qualities would spread in the community, which would be of benefit to all. All good qualities are pleasing to God and all bad qualities such as lying, cheating, jealousy, pride, arrogance, slandering, harming others deliberately, being unjust, miserliness and being unkind are displeasing to God. By keeping God at the centre of our lives, we try to live in a way that pleases Him. This means spreading goodness wherever we are even if it's by small things such as a kind word, picking up litter or smiling. It also means trying to prevent harm. The Qur'an tells Muslims to "enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil," which reinforces living by good values that benefit society.'

Member of Leicester SACRE

'The most important think to me about being a Muslim is piety – knowing that piety is more than fulfilling the requirements of the five pillars of Islam. It is following God's instructions to the fullest in all aspects of your life, therefore having an excellent character, always conducting yourself in the best way, being a good human being by helping others, being kind to your family, friends, neighbours and community, looking after the environment and the planet and caring for animals. The key message for me is that Islam means peace, purity, submission and obedience to the will of God. Therefore we have been commanded to worship God alone without associating Him with any partners, to believe in His Angels, His holy books, His messengers, in the Last Day, and in life after death.'

Muslim, CEO of a Leicester based charity

Humanism

'Humanism means caring about the greater good of all humanity, behaving well towards others without expectation of rewards or punishment in an afterlife. We only have this life so we must live well.'

Humanists, Leicester

Judaism

'The most important thing to me is the sense of tradition and community. I may not attend shul regularly, but to me, the community is everything. Joining in fellowship and sharing the big events in life has real spiritual value for me. Wherever I am, I can find my family, my community.'

Member of Jewish community, Leicester

Sikhi

'I believe that all my actions are important and that I should try to lead a good life. I try to always keep God in my heart and mind. I believe in treating everyone equally and serving others whenever I can.'

Member of Sikh community, Leicester

Links for teachers

General

Respect for other religions

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/z32kqyc>

Abrahamic religions

Christianity

The Methodist Art Collection

This website is the result of the work of two Methodists who in the 1960s collected works of art to open up faith conversations, and then gave their collection to the British Methodist Church. There are over 50 works in the collection, including some by well-known artists such as Graham Sutherland, Elisabeth Frink, William Roberts, Patrick Heron. Most of the pictures depict scenes from the life and teaching of Christ: some artists were or are believing Christians, others not. Works are still being acquired to ensure that the ideas and concerns of today's artists are represented in the Collection.

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/faith/the-methodist-modern-art-collection/>

Jesus

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zkgmnk7/articles/zn2jxg8>

What did Jesus really look like?

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-35120965>

The nature of God

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zf626yc/revision/1>

Ten Commandments

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zf626yc/revision/3>

The Trinity

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zrpgmsg/revision/2>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zf9g4qt/revision/3>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zf626yc/revision/4>

Sermon on the Mount

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/z43f3k7/revision/4>

What is Christianity?

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/ztkxpv4/articles/zvfnkmn>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/subjects/zxwfrmn>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zvfnkmn>

<https://religionmediacentre.org.uk/factsheets/christianity-in-britain-factsheet/>

Islam

What is Islam?

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/znhjcgq>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zrxxgwx>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zfwhfg8/articles/znhjcgq>

What does it mean to be a Muslim?

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0110kt3>

Key beliefs and practices

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zdxdqhv/revision/1>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zj626yc/revision/1>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zdxdqhv/revision/5>

Five Pillars

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zj626yc/revision/1>

Muslim dress

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/religious-education-ks2-my-life-my-religion-hijab/zhdqct>

God and authority

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/z78g4qt/revision/1>

Diversity

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zdxdqhv/revision/1>

Judaism

What is Judaism?

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/znwhfg8/articles/zh77vk7>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/what-is-judaism/zfbhf4j>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p010x9p0>

The Covenant and mitzot

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zppnqhv/revision/2>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zfwr97h/revision/2>

Key beliefs

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zfn792p>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zjbyb82/revision/5>

Food laws

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zqk8v9q/revision/3>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zv626yc/revision/8>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p01156xq>

Rules

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p01kp7d9>

Clothing

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zns7y9q/revision/3>

10 Commandments

Video clip, Moses' Vlog

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/assemblies-ks1-ks2-moses-10-ten-commandments-vlog-1/zjqbf82>

Ten Commandments

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zf626yc/revision/3>

Identity

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/z2tpjty/revision/1>

Peace

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zysf2nb/revision/3>

Dharmic religions

Buddhism

Key facts about Buddhism

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zmcsmfr>

Beliefs

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zf8g4qt/video>

Practices in Buddhism

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zh67xfr/revision/7>

Video clips: What is Buddhism? What is Nirvana Day? What is Wesak?

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zh4mrj6>

What is Buddhism?

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zdbvjhv>

The Buddha and his teachings: video

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zr3sv9q/video>

Divisions of Buddhism

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zf8g4qt/revision/2>

Nirvana Day

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zh4mrj6/articles/zvtxgwx>

Hinduism

Introducing Hinduism

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p010xbsz>

Facts about Hinduism: video clip

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zjdbpg8>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zkkck2p/revision/1>

What is Hinduism? Video clip

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zh86n39/articles/zmpp92p>

Atman

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zmgny4j/revision/1>

Hindu Beliefs

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zmvhsrd/video>

Hindu beliefs about God

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p010xbb1>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p010xb3s>

Cycle of life, death and re-birth: video clip

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/religious-studies-ks2-my-life-my-religion-hinduism-cycle-of-birth-and-rebirth/zn68qp3>

Meet two British Hindus: video clip

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/religious-studies-ks2-my-life-my-religion-hinduism-meeting-two-british-hindus/zkghf4j>

Diversity within Hinduism

<https://www.reonline.org.uk/knowledge/hindu-worldview-traditions/diversity/>

Sikhi

Beginnings of Sikhi

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p01150rh>

What is Sikhism?

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zkjpgkmn>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/znwr97h/revision/1> Sikh beliefs

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p010xjz1>

The Mool Mantra

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zk3f3k7/revision/1>

The Afterlife

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zk3f3k7/revision/4>

Karma and re-birth

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/z4p7xfr/revision/4>

Who was Guru Nanak? Video clip.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zsjpyrd/articles/zr86cqt>

My Life, My Religion:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b05pc1c9>

Sikhism and peace

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zsq24qt/revision/3>

Other religions and worldviews

Baha'i

<https://www.bahai.org>

Jainism

<https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/jainism/>

Paganism

<https://www.paganfederation.org/what-is-paganism/>

Humanism and non-religious beliefs

<https://understandinghumanism.org.uk/area/what-is-humanism/>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/znk647h/articles/zmqpkmn>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zt2nmsg/revision/4>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zmqpkmn>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zfs2kmn>

Teaching suggestions

Abrahamic religions

Pupils could:

- Identify and list some common characteristics of God found in Abrahamic religions.
- Use texts from scriptures to describe God.
- Discuss some of the challenges for religions of following certain rules in the 21st century, e.g. 10 commandments, sermon on the mount, 5 Pillars of Islam.

Dharmic religions

Pupils could:

- Produce a visual representation of the Dharmic view of life, e.g. a Buddhist mandala.
- Put together a list of questions to ask someone from a Dharmic religion.
- Using photographs, show what places of worship tell us about Dharmic religions, e.g. images, symbols, etc.

ALL

Pupils could design a poster (using words and images) on the theme of 'Peace', incorporating the views of different religions and worldviews.

Other topics

Pupils could:

- Sequence (through a visual timeline) the dates of the religions they have studied.
- Find out about what Humanists believe.
- Put together some questions for a panel of people representing the RW s you have learnt about.
- In groups, design posters entitled, 'What we know', 'What we don't know but could find out' and 'What we might never know.'
- Imagine a world with no religion. Debate whether this would be good or bad.

LOWER KEY STAGE 2

YEAR 3

Year 3

Expression and experience



Overview

This builds upon learning in Year 2, when pupils were introduced to the concept of worldviews and the connections between them, particularly in relation to key beliefs. In this year pupils will focus upon how people express these beliefs through worship and caring for others. Pupils will also consider the sensory and emotional responses to worship. How do people feel when they engage in prayer and worship? What do they experience? This includes a consideration of the part played by music, art, etc. It is important to emphasise once again that not all people within the same religion worship (or experience worship) in the same way. Focusing on the idea of experience, in the spring term pupils consider religious experiences and encounters which cannot be easily explained.

Worldviews context

The need to come together to celebrate is a common feature of humanity, whether it has a religious meaning or not. Most people feel the need to share a special occasion with others. Worship is one way in which people come together to express their religion, though some may choose to do this alone. Our personal worldview includes our response to things that are not easily explained by reason or science and to a degree this shapes the way we view religion. It is also shaped by the way we experience things through our senses. This is why, for example, people who are sight or hearing impaired may have a different perspective of the world. Religious or spiritual experiences rely on these senses to a greater or lesser extent, but may also involve a transcendent dimension, i.e. they go beyond our understanding. People who are not religious may also believe in a spiritual dimension, i.e. there is more to being human than just experiencing physical things.

Autumn

How do people express their beliefs through worship and caring for others?

How do people use their senses in worship?

Worship – in the home and places of worship.

How the senses are used in worship.

How poetry, songs, literature, music and art might play a part in worship.

Objects and symbols used to enrich worship.

The significance of prayer.

The way people express their RW by caring for others.

Spring

What do we mean by religious and spiritual experiences?

Religious and spiritual experiences

Encounters with God, life -changing events, conversion experiences.

Experiences and feelings that cannot be easily explained, e.g. miracles, prayer.

Modern day examples of miracles.

Summer

**School designed unit
(See Appendix 3)**

Suggestions

- A study of a RW, group or denomination which is represented in Leicester but not covered in detail in the syllabus, e.g. Baha'i, Humanism, Jainism, Paganism, Quakers. This could include a visit to the associated place of worship if appropriate.
- Visit to a place of worship (real or virtual), with a focus upon the experience of worship. Schools could choose a sample or focus on one.
- Expression of belief and worship through picture and photographs.
- Global representations of religions.
- Care and charities: Case studies, e.g. One Roof, Leicester (See Appendix 3)
- Modern day examples of miracles.
- RWs and Peace

Progression Strands: concepts which pupils should understand

A: Belonging, Identity & Community

- How worship brings communities together and makes individuals feel that they belong.
- How religious or spiritual experiences can be shared by a community.
- How people within Abrahamic and Dharmic traditions express worship.
- How people care for those in their own communities and for others.

B: Beliefs, Influences & Values

- How worship reflects key beliefs.
- The ways in which beliefs and actions (in worship) are linked.
- How religious or spiritual experiences may strengthen a person's belief.

C: Expression, Expression & Sacred

- How people express their faith through prayer and worship, both as members of communities, families and individuals.
- How music, art and literature might enhance worship.
- Why experiencing the sacred and holy matters in worship and ceremonies.
- Which symbols, objects and artefacts aid worship.
- The ways in which sensory and emotional responses form part of worship and religious experience.
- How people express care for others, based on teaching within RW .
- The ways in which people encounter the sacred or 'unexplained' through religious and spiritual experiences.

D: Truth, Interpretation & Meaning

- What people from different Abrahamic and Dharmic traditions mean by worship, prayer and meditation.
- How beliefs and ideas can be demonstrated and understood in different ways, including through experiences.
- How religious/spiritual experiences such as miracles can be interpreted in different ways.
- How non-religious people might interpret religious experiences.

Year 3: Autumn Term

What do people do to express their beliefs through worship and caring for others?

Religions and Worldviews

Compulsory

- Christianity
- Islam **OR** Judaism
- **Two** Dharmic religion chosen from Buddhism, Hinduism or Sikhi.

Additional suggestions

Teach about two Abrahamic and two Dharmic religions in some depth, as directed above but refer to others as and when appropriate, e.g. Baha'i, Jainism.

Content overview

- How people express their beliefs through worship and by caring for others.
- The role of senses and emotions.
- The part played by objects, artefacts, songs, music and art in worship and prayer in some RWs.
- How people express their beliefs through caring for others

Previous learning: what do pupils know and remember from year 2?

Sacred texts.

Religions and worldviews.

Previous learning linked to this unit

Reception

Idea of sacred and special.

Year 1

How people come together for celebrations and festivals.

Year 2

Sacred texts, key beliefs of Abrahamic and Dharmic traditions.

New learning objectives

Pupils should know and understand:

- How people express their faith through worship, both individual and collectively.
- How sensory and emotional responses form part of worship and religious experience.
- The ways in which objects, symbols, words, music, art and literature enhance worship.
- What people from different Abrahamic and different Dharmic traditions mean by prayer and meditation.
- How people express their faith by caring for others.

Unit expectations and outcomes

Evidence for these should be demonstrated through a variety of ways, including pupils' work, conversations with pupils and assessment tasks. (Appendix 2)

To achieve the learning objectives, pupils should be able to:

- Describe how people express their faith through worship, both individually and collectively.
- Give examples of the ways in which symbols, objects and artefacts aid worship.
- Explain what people from at least two RWs mean by prayer and meditation.
- Identify ways in which people from different RWs care for others.



Key vocabulary and concepts

Buddhism: Buddha, Buddhist Wheel, chanting, dhamma, enlightenment, Gautama Siddhartha, incense, lotus flowers, mandala, mediation, shrine, stupa.

Christianity: altar, Bible, bread and wine, candle, chalice, choir, cross/crucifix, Eucharist, Golden Rule, Holy Communion, hymns, lectern, Last Supper, Lord's Supper, minister, priest, pulpit, sermon, Sermon on the Mount, stained glass window.

Hinduism: aarti, atman, bell, Brahman, incense, mandir, murtis, puja, shrine.

Islam: adhan, akhlaq, calligraphy, du'a, Five Pillars, masjid, Imam, Jumu'ah, mihrab, minaret, minbar, muezzin (mu'adhdhin), prayer mat, qibla, Qur'an, rak'as, salah, Shahadah, wudu.

Judaism: Aron Kodesh, bimah, cantor, havdalah, menorah, mitzvot, Ner Tamid, parochet, Rabbi, scrolls, Sefer Torah, Shabbat, Shema, synagogue/shul, Tenakh.

Sikhi: chauri, dirwan, Granthi Sahib, gurdwara, Gurmukhi, Guru Granth Sahib, Guru Nanak, Ik Onkar, Japji Sahib, karah parshad Khanda, kirtan, langar, Palki Sahib, ragis, Waheguru.

Teacher guidance

This unit builds on work in year 2 on sacred texts and beliefs in Abrahamic and Dharmic religions. Pupils need this foundation to make sense of the ways in which people express their RWs. They need to understand how religions are not simply about belief, but all the things included in our four progression strands, e.g. community, identity, expression. If pupils do NOT understand this, then religions and worldviews become one dimensional, reduced simply to a list of beliefs, sacred scriptures, etc. Whenever possible, enhance learning by visiting places of worship (See Appendix 3) and /or inviting visitors in. The essential part of this is to make the link between WHAT people believe and HOW they express it. How do people feel when they engage in prayer and worship? What do they experience? This also means considering the part played by music, art, etc.

Diversity

It is important to emphasise diversity once again, i.e. not all people within the same religion worship in the same way; a Hindu may worship in the home or in the mandir, Quaker worship is different to Pentecostal worship. Although pupils will learn mainly about worship in the principal world religions, you should make every effort to include smaller groups when links are appropriate in order to understand diversity. For example, within Christianity, worship is expressed in very different ways by, for example, Roman Catholics, Quakers and Baptists. The basic beliefs remain the same (though even these are sometimes interpreted differently) but the expression is different. This underlines the importance of prefacing any statement about RWs with 'some', e.g. 'Some Christians include singing, clapping and dancing in their worship.'

Added to this is the global dimension. When talking about worship, remind pupils that it might be expressed differently across the world (especially in the religion's country of origin).

You might ask questions like:

- What are Hindu temples like in India?
- What are Buddhist temples like in China?
- How is Christianity expressed in Africa?

Do people experience things in common when they worship? This includes considering the sensory and emotional responses to worship and the part played by music, art, etc.

People express their faith in other ways than worship, including the way they care for others. As well as focusing on worship, this unit looks at the way individuals and communities within RWs fulfil their responsibilities in relation to care. Work covered in both years 2 **and** 3 are important in providing pupils with a good knowledge and understanding of RWs so that they can apply this to 'Why Communities Matter' in Year 4.

How to teach this unit

Worship

It is likely that some pupils will have no experience of this. Introduce the idea through photographs or video clips. Explain that worship is any act that shows devotion or love for God. You might compare other events where large numbers of people gather, e.g. a football match or a music festival. Explore the similarities and differences. Pupils need to understand what people experience through prayer, meditation and worship, not the actions and rituals they might follow. For some people, music, story, poetry, art, etc. make significant contributions to these experiences. This can then link to the subject of broader religious experiences. You could play a piece of inspirational music or show the pupils an object that is very special to you and explain why. If possible, follow this by visiting a place of worship and observing worship (on a weekday this would be more likely to be in a mandir or gurdwara) OR you could visit any place that you consider to be inspirational. Use video clips of inspirational places around the world. You should also include a non-religious perspective, e.g. Do Humanists experience spiritual events that are not linked to belief in God? Outside of religion, is it possible to worship people or things? Remember, always start with where the pupils are. Choose some challenging questions from the disciplinary knowledge section to engage curiosity. Encourage pupils to find different ways of searching for answers as well as posing their own questions.

Caring for others

Expressing belief is not just about worship. It is also about a connection between belief and behaviour, especially towards others. Use texts from different RWs as a starting point to show how people demonstrate their faith through various actions. These actions may be related to the way people treat individuals or on a much larger scale, e.g. through charities. As for the above, you should include a non-religious perspective, e.g. how do Humanists decide how to care for others?

Disciplinary Knowledge: ways of knowing

Lead the learning with disciplinary knowledge, which enables the pupils to focus upon **how** they are going to learn about this topic. This then leads to the substantive knowledge that pupils need to know and understand, i.e. **what** they need to know. In practice, the two types of knowledge should be integrated with the 'what' being taught alongside the 'how.' Disciplinary knowledge is initially set out in the form of questions. **You do not have to use every question:** some may be useful as a starter for enquiry, others for promoting deeper learning when you are looking at substantive knowledge.

How might pupils learn?

They could:

- Interview people from the religions they have studied.
- Observe practices and ways of living, e.g. when visiting a place of worship or watching a video.
- Go beyond the facts about RWs and explore the emotional and sensory aspects of worship + religious and spiritual experiences.
- Read examples of sacred texts where appropriate.
- Listen to music, look at works of art and think about how these might help people to express worship.
- Find out about charities linked to RWs.

Theology is about what people believe. Theologians might ask:

How can buildings and objects/artefacts inside them help people to express their beliefs?
How might music and art help people to express their beliefs?
Could a believer worship anywhere?
Can you worship anything?
Why do some places/spaces bring about responses which people might describe as spiritual?
How do objects and symbols express belief?
Why does ritual matter?
Are prayers answered?
Are all religions praying to the same God?
Where do religious rules and laws come from?
Why is caring for others important in all RWs?

A musician or artist might ask

How do I want this piece of work to make people feel?
Why is music and art so powerful?
How does it make people connect with God?
How can it touch the emotions of people who are not religious?

Philosophy is about what people think. Philosophers might ask:

Why do people worship and pray to someone or a power they can't see?
Who are people praying to?
Is seeing believing?
Can you worship anything?
Why do people think that times or moments can be special or sacred?
Is 'positive thinking' the same thing as prayer?
Does caring for others make you a good person?
How should we act towards others? Who says?

Reflections: personal knowledge

What does worship mean to me?
What places are special or sacred to me? Why?
Do I always have to see something to know it's there?
What feelings do I experience when listening to music?
How do I feel when going into a place of worship or a sacred space?
Have I ever had an experience I cannot explain?
How do I treat others?
How do they treat me?
How do I expect to be treated?

Social Science is about how people live. Social Scientists might ask:

What do people do in places of worship?
How can buildings help people to express their faith?
How do music, hymns, chanting, etc, enrich peoples' experience of worship?
Why do people worship with others?
How do worship gatherings and ceremonies give believers a sense of identity and belonging?
Why do some people worship quietly while other prefer music, singing, etc?
Why do some people prefer to worship in a plain building while others prefer one with images, statues, etc?
What can we learn from the ways people worship?
Why should people care about others?
Might people care for others just to make themselves feel good?

Substantive Knowledge: what pupils need to know

It is important that pupils understand that belonging to a religion involves much more than believing 'in' something. Belonging to a RW may involve all aspects of life and be expressed in many ways.

Using the senses and emotions in worship

These need to be considered when thinking about worship. It is important not to simply focus on WHAT people do. People worship in different ways and experience different things. Worship may be carried out alone or with others, silently or with noise. What matters is the sense of connection with God. Worship is not about simply doing certain things. It is also about the feeling associated with these actions. There is an emotional aspect to worship because it is usually about a personal relationship between God and the worshipper. In terms of how the senses are used, this will of course vary between and within religions. Although 'hear' is one of the above categories, it is important to remember that silence in worship is also important. Also important is the fact that not all worship happens in a place of worship. In some RWs, e.g. Hinduism, worship often takes place within the home. Also, the experience may be different for men and women, e.g. in Islam, traditionally only men generally attend Friday prayers (Jummah).

Worship in Abrahamic traditions

Christianity

Christian churches are divided into various denominations or groups, each with their own interpretation of scriptures, worship, etc. Strictly speaking, the word 'church' refers to the community of Christians as well as the building, i.e. [koinonia](#), one body of faith, the worldwide fellowship. It can also bring communities together. In some churches such as Anglican and Roman Catholic, pictures and statues might help worshippers to focus upon God and the saints (holy people). Other denominations such as Methodist or Baptist avoid anything that they consider might distract the worshipper. Also, they believe that God is beyond our understanding so should not be represented through pictures, etc. This belief is shared by Judaism and Islam, whereas within the Hindu tradition, [murtis](#) are considered to aid worship.

How do Christians worship?

Christians believe that worship is any act that shows devotion to, or love for God. This means that worship may be expressed in many ways, including through prayer, reading from the Bible, attending the Eucharist/Holy Communion and singing songs and hymns. As well as worshipping with others, Christians can pray and worship privately anywhere.

Liturgical worship

This follows a structured service and may include singing hymns, praying and reciting set responses to readings. Roman Catholic, Church of England and Orthodox Christians worship in this way.

Non-liturgical worship

This is informal, less structured worship (see Evangelical and Charismatic worship below). It may take place outside a church and can attract hundreds of people, e.g. the [Keswick Convention](#), [Greenbelt Music Festival](#).

Evangelical and Charismatic worship

This is practised by Christians who believe that the Holy Spirit drives the worship rather than people or the printed word. Sometimes worship includes clapping, shouting and dancing.

Personal worship: Prayer

As well as worshipping with others at church, Christians can worship privately anywhere. Prayer is the main way that Christians communicate with God. In the New Testament Jesus taught His disciples to pray ([the Lord's Prayer](#)) and He encouraged them to address God as 'Father'.

Silent worship

[Quakers](#) worship in complete silence. The Sunday meeting usually lasts about an hour and people only speak if they are prompted by God or something within themselves to do so. This silence is a shared experience in which everyone is aware of each other as they seek to experience God for themselves. An Elder indicates when the session is over by shaking hands with the person next to them. Other members of the group then also shake hands as an expression of fellowship.

Key objects and symbols in some churches: how do these things link to belief?

Candle

This reminds Christians that Jesus is the light of the world, symbolically bringing light into darkness. Different candles are used at different times of year, e.g. Paschal candle at Easter and during baptisms.

Altar or Communion Table

This may act as a focal point for worship and is also the table upon which Holy Communion (Mass/Eucharist/Lord's Supper/Breaking of Bread) takes place, symbolising the Last Supper.

Cross/crucifix

A cross is usually plain whereas a crucifix has a figure of Christ's body. Christians are reminded about Jesus' sacrifice for them which led to salvation, redemption and forgiveness.

Pulpit

This, along with the lectern, reminds Christians of the importance of the Bible and its teaching. The pulpit is a raised platform from where a sermon is preached. Some non-conformist churches such as Baptists have large pulpits, emphasising the importance of preaching the gospel. Pulpits tend to be smaller in Anglican and Roman Catholic churches.

Lectern

A stand on which the Bible is placed, often in the shape of an eagle, symbolising the spreading of the Word of God.

Statues, pictures

In some churches such as Anglican and Roman Catholic, these help worshippers to focus upon God. They might include statues of the Virgin Mary and Jesus and pictures in stained glass windows.

Prayer

Christians believe [prayer](#) is the way they communicate with God. It can be silent or said out loud. It can use set words, or a person's own words. It can be done alone or with others. The Lord's Prayer uses words that Jesus taught.

How Christians use their senses in worship

They may:

Hear: hymns, songs, music, choir, Bible readings, sermon, prayers.

See: cross or crucifix, stained glass windows, statues and pictures, candles, colour (in some churches colours are used to represent different times of the Christian calendar).

Smell: incense

Taste: bread and wine

Touch: statues or pictures, chalice, during Holy Communion, shake hands.

How should a Christian care for others?

What does the Bible teach?

Creation story (see year 1, spring term)

People should take care of what God has created.

Ten Commandments: Exodus 20: 1-17, Deuteronomy 5: 6-21

Jesus' teaching

The Golden Rule

The Golden Rule tells Christians to treat other people as they would like to be treated. 'Do for others what you want them to do for you.' Matthew 7:12

Parables

Much of Jesus teaching comes through his parables such as [the Good Samaritan](#). This is an example of caring for people who may not naturally be our friends. Other parables such as The Prodigal Son (see year 1, autumn term) teach about the importance of forgiveness, showing that in the same way that God forgives humans, so humans have to forgive those around them.

The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7)

Jesus delivered this sermon (or talk) from a mountainside in front of a large crowd. He explained what God expects from human beings in order to be blessed by God. The main statements he made are known as the Beatitudes.

Churches often provide help and advice for those in need, and many Christians are involved in local charities. Many churches run food banks from their church halls. Some Christians volunteer as Street Pastors, going out onto the streets at night to care for those in need. One denomination, The Salvation Army, is a Christian church and charitable organisation. It runs food kitchens, organises toy collections at Christmas and offers an advice network. It also provides, for example, support for drug addicts and the homeless and is well known for its work on contacting missing people.

The Greatest Commandment

'Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. The second most important commandment is this, 'Love your neighbour as you love yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these two.' Mark 12: 30-31

Links for teachers

Worship

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zh296v4/revision/5>

Prayer

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zbp7y9q/revision/7>

<https://connectusfund.org/20-most-famous-prayers-of-all-time>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p02q88sl>

Lord's Prayer

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zf626yc/revision/2>

Music

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zbp7y9q/revision/10>

Worship

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/ztkxpv4/articles/zvfnkmn>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/z63pfcw/revision/1>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/articles/zvjv92p>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/znqck2p/revision/1>

Caring for others

10 Commandments

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/z8rxs82/articles/zxrb9ty>

How do Christians show care?

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zbjnp4j>

Forgiveness

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p010xt38>

Charities

Christian Aid, Tear Fund, CAFOD.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zdcbcj6/revision/12>

The role of the church world-wide

Salvation Army

<https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk>

Islam

The Muslim place of worship is a masjid (mosque) or 'place of prostration.' Muslims do not use statues or pictures to help them focus on worship as they believe that this can lead to worshipping idols. The Muslim word for worship is 'ibadah' and the congregation is Jummah. Jummah prayers take place on Fridays. Only men are obliged to attend. Women traditionally pray at home.

How do Muslims worship?

Prayer in Islam

One of the Five Pillars of Islam is Salah or prayer. It is compulsory for Muslims to pray five times a day. Ablutions, (ritual washing called wudu), are performed before prayer to ensure that Muslims are clean, literally and spiritually. Prayer often takes the form of cycles of movement, called **rak'ahs**. Each cycle involves saying 'Allahu akbar', which means 'God is great', multiple times. It also includes recitations of the first surah (verse) of the Qur'an.

Jummah

This is a communal prayer held on a Friday at the mosque, just after noon. The Imam (leader) gives two sermons and a series of rak'ahs are performed. Men are obliged to go to Friday midday prayers unless they are ill or too old to attend. Women do not have to go to Friday prayers at the mosque and instead may choose to pray at home.

Prayer in the home

Prayer is a big part of family life for many Muslims, especially women. Some have a room set aside especially for prayer. 'Du'a' refers to personal prayer that is done in addition to [Salah](#). This may take the form of quietly talking to God in one's head, reciting set prayers or asking Allah for help. Muslims may use tasbeeh or [prayer beads](#) which represent the names of God.

Key objects and symbols in a mosque: how do these things link to belief?

Clocks

There are six clocks, five of which show the daily prayer times. The sixth clock shows the time of Friday prayers (Jummah).

Mihrab

A niche in the wall showing the direction of the qiblah (the wall of the mosque that is closest to Makkah).

Minaret

A tower from which the muezzin calls the faithful to prayer (the adhan).

Minbar

A raised platform like a pulpit from where the Imam delivers his sermons.

Inscriptions from the Qur'an

Often found on the walls of mosques.

Prayer mats

To ensure that the area for prayer is kept clean.

Facilities for wudu

An ablution room when people wash to prepare for prayer (see below). This ensures that Muslims feel clean and pure when they pray.

How Muslims use their senses in worship

They may:

Hear: the call to prayer (adhan) and verses read from the Qur'an, 'Allahu akbar' (meaning 'God is great').

See: calligraphy and inscriptions, qibla, the [Shahadah](#) represents the inner spiritual sense of 'seeing'.

Touch: Muslims will wash parts of their body before prayer, then touch the floor when praying, using a prayer mat, tasbeeh (prayer beads).

How should a Muslim care for others?

[Zakah](#) (one of the Five Pillars) illustrates the importance of serving others and showing compassion. It helps to address disharmony in the world, i.e. some people have more than they need while others do not have enough. During Ramadan, it is common for Muslims to try their best to support charity, help their mosque and help other people in the community.

Akhlaq (character, moral conduct) is about making good choices, i.e. those which will keep creation in harmony, as God intended. **Sadaqah** is an act of kindness which is done voluntarily and can be about giving time or money.

Links for teachers

Worship

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zrxqgwx>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zfwhfg8/articles/znhjcqt>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zvm96v4/revision/6>

Prayer and worship

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zhnhsrd/revision/3>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p00y63vd/clips>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/articles/zjndxyc>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p013hf7m>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p01140gy>

The mosque

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/the-mosque/zmctvk7>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zfwphcw>

Caring for others

Examples of stories and teaching, e.g. Abdullah, the Servant of God.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p011410z>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p010xbny>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/z3jnp4j>

Islamic Aid

<https://islamicaid.com>

One Roof charity Leicester

<https://www.oneroof.org.uk>

Examples of stories and teaching, e.g. Abdullah, the Servant of God.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p011410z>

Judaism

A Jewish place of worship is called a synagogue or shul. Synagogue means 'bringing together' or 'assembly'. It is a place of worship and study. The symbol of the Star of David or a menorah candlestick is often seen on the outside of the building.

How do Jewish people worship?

Public worship

Synagogue services remind Jews that they belong to the worldwide Jewish community. There are three main public acts of worship that take place in the synagogue: daily services, Shabbat (Sabbath) services and festival services. These services are often led by a [rabbi](#) (teacher), although in some synagogues anyone can lead the service. Public worship allows Jews to show love for G-d, a requirement of the Torah.

Shabbat (the Sabbath)

The fourth of the Ten Commandments tells Jews that they must keep the Sabbath day holy (Exodus 20:8-10). This begins just before sunset on Friday and ends at sunset on Saturday and is the time Jews remember that G-d rested after creating the world. Orthodox traditions will not do anything considered to be work on this day.

Shabbat at the synagogue

On Friday evening, prayers are said at the synagogue. Shabbat is welcomed with hymns, prayers and psalms called Kabbalat Shabbat. On Saturday morning there is the main service of the week. Shabbat is a time for reflection, family and rejuvenation before the next week. As it ends, a candle with several wicks is lit and blessed. This brings light into the home to signify that Shabbat has ended.

Shabbat in the home

In many Jewish homes preparations are made before Shabbat, e.g. food preparation, cleaning the house. On the Friday evening, traditionally the mother of the family places her hands over her eyes and recites a blessing and lights the candles to welcome in Shabbat. There is a further blessing by the father, known as the Kiddush. Special plaited bread, known as challah, is eaten. Typically, the Shabbat meal lasts for a few hours. The rest of Shabbat may be spent relaxing, praying, reading the Torah, at the synagogue for worship. There is another meal to celebrate the end of Shabbat. At this meal, the [Havdalah](#) blessing is said.

Prayer

Formal and informal prayer may take place at home or in the synagogue. Formal prayers are set prayers found in the Siddur (Prayer Book). Informal or spontaneous prayers may be spoken by an individual to reflect their thoughts and feelings.

Private prayer in the home

Praying at home every day is regarded as important. Jewish people often pray as soon as they wake up and thank God for waking them. Before each meal, many will bless G-d and thank him for the food. Before going to sleep, Jews will often say the [Shema](#).

Key objects and symbols in the synagogue: how do these things link to worship?

It is important to note that Jewish people do not use objects, symbols, etc. in the synagogue to aid worship. They are not objects through which Jews worship compared to, for example, murtis in a mandir. Rather, they represent certain things, e.g. the Ner Tamid represents the eternal presence of G-d.

The Sefer Torah scrolls

The sacred scriptures which remind Jewish people of G-d's special relationship with them.

The Aron Kodesh/Ha-Kodesh or holy ark

A cupboard which contains the scrolls, positioned high up to remind Jews of Mount Sinai, where Moses received the Ten Commandments. It is always at the front of the synagogue, facing Jerusalem.

Bimah

A platform in middle of the synagogue from where the Torah is read.

Ner Tamid ('Eternal Light')

A light which hangs from the ceiling. It never goes out, reminding people of the constant presence of God.

Menorah or Chanukiah

The nine (Chanukiah) or seven (Menorah) branched candlestick lit at Hanukkah (Chanukah).

Pulpit:

From where the rabbi stands to address congregation, just as a priest or minister will do in a church or the Imam in a mosque.

Mezuzah case

This is on the doorpost of the synagogue (also found on doorposts of homes) and contains the [Shema](#) written on parchment.

How Jewish people use their senses in worship

They may:

See: Sefer Torah, kept in the Aron Kodesh (Ark), Ner Tamid: the everlasting light.

Hear: Cantor: an official who will stand at the front to lead prayers, which are said, sung or chanted, the Shema, which begins with the command to 'Hear!'

Taste/Smell: special food, including challah bread, drinking wine during Shabbat. During [Havdalah](#) on the evening of Shabbat, a box of sweet spices might be passed around. This reminds Jews that the sweet fragrance of Shabbat is taken into the following week.

How should Jewish people care for others?

As in many other RWs, the Golden Rule is followed. This involves loving other people as all were created in the image of G-d. (See year 2, spring term). There are 613 mitzvot, which are Jewish rules or commandments. Some of these explain how Jewish people should act when dealing with others. The Ten Commandments are important as they are the basis for moral behaviour. There are many practical ways for Jewish people to show they care for others. For example, some may put money into a collection box called a tzedakah box, found at home or at the synagogue. The money is donated to charity or a special cause. The term 'Tikkun olam' means 'repair the world'. Jewish people try to follow this to help people and make the world a better place. It can be done in different ways, for example by planting trees, recycling, or visiting people who are unwell or need help.

Links for teachers

Prayer

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/z4kg4qt/revision/2>

What is Judaism?

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/znwhfg8/articles/zh77vk7>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/what-is-judaism/zfbhf4j>

Worship

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/z4kg4qt/revision/1>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zqbw2hv/articles/zsdhtrd>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zv626yc/revision/2>

Introduction to Shabbat

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0114xpt>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0115hmy>

Caring for others

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zbnqf4j/revision/1>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zqbw2hv/articles/zc2fsk7>

<https://www.worldjewishrelief.org>

Worship in Dharmic traditions

Buddhism

In Buddhism there is no single place of worship. Although Buddhists show devotion at home, they may also use a temple because this links them to the community.

How do Buddhists worship?

Puja is the Buddhist term for worship, as in Hindu traditions. It enables Buddhists to show their thanks and respect to the Buddha for the lessons he has given them. Buddhists must follow his teachings if they are to reach enlightenment. Puja can be carried out at home and in the temple. Buddhists use many ways to show their devotion, including:

- **Mantras:** a sacred prayer or word which is often chanted or sung rather than spoken.
- **Chanting:** Buddhists may say or sing certain words repeatedly.
- **Mala:** Buddhists use these beads to help them focus during worship. They may carry the mala with them in their daily life. This enables them to mediate and focus wherever they are. Prayer beads are also used in other religions.
- **Meditation:** This is central to Buddhism. It helps to develop a calm and focused mind and have a better understanding of the teachings of the Buddha so that Buddhists can reach enlightenment.
- The aim of these practices is to enable Buddhists to become more deeply devoted to and to open themselves to understand the Buddha **Dhamma (Dharma)**. By carrying them out at home or in a place of worship, a Buddhist makes them part of their daily life and practice.

Key objects and symbols in a Buddhist temple/shrine: how do these things link to worship?

Buddhist temples are built so that they represent the five elements of wisdom, water, fire, wind and earth. The statues and images help Buddhists to focus their devotion and meditation and assist them in their search for enlightenment. Inside a shrine or temple there will be a **buddharupa** which is an image of the Buddha. There is also a gompa, which is a space where Buddhists can **meditate**. People also make offerings to thank the Buddha for the lessons he has given people and might include flowers (to symbolise that things are always changing). Incense (to represent the idea of purity of speech and behaviour) and candles, lit to represent the idea of light triumphing over darkness (a common theme in religions) and knowledge overcoming ignorance.

How Buddhists use their senses in worship

They may:

Hear: chanting

See: Lotus flowers, the Buddhist Wheel, representing the [Dhamma](#), lit candles, symbolising enlightenment, sacred mandala (a symbolic picture of the universe), statues of the Buddha ([Buddharupas](#)).

Smell: incense to represent the spread of the Buddha's teachings.

How should Buddhists care for others?

Buddhists try to practice [metta](#), which means loving-kindness. 'Dana' refers to sincere and selfless desire to give to others with no expectations. The temple is a place where Buddhists can learn to show care. They might do this by looking after the temple and its gardens, going to classes and community groups, helping at community events.

Links for teachers

Prayer and meditation

<https://slife.org/buddhist-prayers/>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/articles/zdt9f4j>

<https://www.wordsofbuddha.com/prayers>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/z4gny4j/revision/1>

Worship

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/z4gny4j/revision/3>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zh67xfr/revision/1>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zkdbcj6/revision/1>

Caring for others

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/z99q7yc/articles/z3wphcw>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/articles/zjs6qfr>

Hindu traditions

Hindu worship is individual rather than collective. Hindus can worship in the mandir (temple) or in the home. Many Hindu women worship in the home. Hindus believe that worship comes from within a person, as Brahman is within all living things. A priest looks after the deities in the temple, e.g. by washing them, clothing them and making offerings of food. Hindu temples are decorated elaborately as they represent the idea of a palace for the murtis, gods and goddesses.

How do Hindus worship?

The four most important concepts that Hindus use when worshipping:

1. **Havan (Fire):** the god of fire, Agni, is worshipped using fire. Hindus burn offerings such as rice while reciting prayers and mantras.
2. **Puja:** the general term for Hindu worship and devotion to gods and goddesses, the ritual of prayer and devotion. It may take place at home or in the mandir.
3. **Aarti:** receiving the blessing of the deities. Worshippers waft their hands over a flaming ghee lamp and then over their faces to invite the blessing into themselves.
4. **Darshan** ('to see'): Hindu worshippers believe they see and are seen by the deities during worship.

During worship Hindus sing hymns, called bhajans or kirtans, and repeat holy phrases and mantras. Like Buddhists, they might use prayer beads (known as japa mala in Hinduism) and meditation. Hindu worship engages all the senses. It is an individual rather than a communal act, involving making personal offerings to the deity. As a result, worship appears to be very informal compared to, for example, worship in a church or synagogue. People may arrive and leave as they wish. Worshippers repeat the names of their favourite gods and goddesses and repeat mantras. Water, fruit, flowers and incense are offered to the deities. A priest may read or recite the Vedas (sacred texts) to the worshippers.

Worship in the home

Many Hindu families have a [home shrine](#) dedicated to a particular god or goddesses. Worship may involve the whole family or be carried out alone. As with all worship, a daily puja ceremony in the home uses all five of the senses.

Key objects and symbols in a mandir: how do these things link to worship?

Bell

This is rung to summon believers to prayer. It reminds people that they are entering the holy and spiritual home of the gods, so allows them to focus their minds on worship. It also summons the gods.

Arti tray

This is to aid worship (arti is an act of worship). It may include a small pot of water with a spoon, incense within a holder, a lamp with ghee wicks, a bell, a pot of pure water, a small conch-shell on a three-legged stand, flowers on a plate.

The central shrine

The heart of the mandir and the focus of worship.

The tower, peak or dome or shikara

This represents the flight of the spirit to heaven and a reminder of the mountain (Mount Meru) where the gods themselves reside.

Kum-kum powder

Making a coloured mark on the worshipper's forehead shows honour to the deity and reminds them of their devotion throughout the day.

How Hindus use their senses during worship

They may:

Hear: a bell, to awaken the god or goddess and symbolise the beginning of the worship, chanting.

See: murtis, the image of the god or goddess being worshipped., Aum/Om symbol.

Smell: incense, symbolising the presence of the deity, flowers to honour the deity.

Taste: fruit or other food is offered to the deities, then often shared with worshippers.

Touch: Kum-kum powder, a coloured mark placed on the worshipper's forehead shows honour to the deity and reminds the worshipper of their devotion throughout the day.

How should Hindus care for others?

Hindus believe that they should show respect to all living beings because everyone has a part of Brahman in them (the atman). This might involve helping the community by sharing with others or volunteering to help those in need. Hindus also celebrate many religious festivals which brings people together to support each other. '[Dana](#)' and '[seva](#)' are actions which many Hindus believe and try to follow. Hindus are encouraged to always act with empathy, love and humility. They should consider how others are feeling and how they would

feel if they were in the same situation (much like the Golden Rule in Christianity). Good deeds should be done with humility. This is one example of how Hindus can gain good karma and achieve moksha.

Links for teachers

Facts about Hinduism

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zjdbpg8>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zh86n39/articles/zmpp92p>

Hindu forms of worship

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zjmqmsg/revision/1>

In the home

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zvrsv9q/revision/3>

Prayer

<https://www.learnreligions.com/hindu-prayers-for-all-occasions-1770540>

<https://slife.org/hindu-prayers/>

Inside a Hindu temple

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/religious-studies-ks2-ks3-my-life-my-religion-hinduism-inside-hindu-temple/zb2t39>

Puja: video clip

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0114z20>

Caring for others; video clip

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zwv8q6f/articles/zs9xm39>

Sikhi

The Sikh place of worship is called a gurdwara which means 'Gateway to the Guru'. A Gurdwara is any building where the Guru Granth Sahib (the sacred scripture) is kept. In the UK, Sikhs usually go to the gurdwara on Sundays. Sikhs have many words to describe God, who is eternal and without gender. The name most widely used for God by Sikhs is Waheguru, which means 'wondrous enlightener.' Sikhs believe that only Waheguru must be worshipped. It is forbidden to worship any images of Waheguru.

How do Sikhs worship?

Worship is part of a Sikh's daily life and routine. Before entering the prayer hall in the gurdwara, Sikhs remove their shoes, wash their hands and cover their heads. They then walk towards the Guru Granth Sahib, bow in front of it and touch the floor to show respect. All services start and end with the [Ardas prayer](#) which requests Waheguru to support and guide Sikhs in all that they do. An act of worship is called Diwan and may include:

- Listening to readings from the Guru Granth Sahib.
- Listening to the Gurbani (hymns).
- Meditating on Nam Japna (God's name).

- Listening to ragis (musicians).
- Chanting and saying prayers (Kirtan).

Worship in the home

Most Sikhs do not have a copy of the Guru Granth Sahib in their home. However, they may have:

- the [Japji Sahib](#), a compilation of prayers from the Guru Granth Sahib
- a prayer book known as a gutka.

At home, Sikhs meditate on God's name by repeating the Japji Sahib. They may also use a set of prayer beads (common to Buddhism, Hinduism and some Christians) known as a mala, which has 108 knots tied into it. Sikhs remember that God is with them throughout the day, from when they bathe in the morning to when they say evening prayers. Some Sikhs will use online apps.

Key objects and symbols in a gurdwara: how do these things link to beliefs?

The Guru Granth Sahib

The sacred scriptures of Sikhs which always takes central place in the gurdwara. This focuses people's minds on the importance of the teachings of the Gurus.

Granthi Sahib

A person who has sound knowledge of the Guru Granth Sahib, s/he sits behind and reads from the Guru Granth Sahib.

The Palki Sahib

A beautifully decorated canopy that covers the top of the Guru Granth Sahib.

Pictures of 10 gurus

To remind Sikhs of beliefs and teachings.

Ik Onkar symbol

To remind Sikhs that 'God is One'.

Khanda Sahib

This is the emblem of the Sikh faith. The central khanda (double edged sword) symbolises belief in the equality of humankind; two swords on either side symbolise the balance of political and religious affairs; the circle depicts the qualities of the Creator who has no beginning or end.

How Sikhs use their senses during worship

They may:

Hear: Sikhs believe that by listening to sacred hymns (Gurbani) and the teachings of the Guru Granth Sahib they can become closer to God.

See: the Guru Granth Sahib takes central place in the gurdwara, all worshippers focus on this, Chauri, pictures of 10 gurus, Ik Onkar symbol, Khanda Sahib (emblem of the Sikh faith).

Taste: eating Karah Parshad at the end of a service is an act of sharing food (langar) and symbolises equality, humility, selfless service and the idea that no-one should go hungry.

Touch: Sikhs will place an offering into a donation box.

How should Sikhs care for others?

Sikhs believe that Waheguru must always remain in the mind. Sikhism is a way of life a gift from Waheguru. Sikhs reflect upon their actions daily to bring them closer to Waheguru.

They try to live a God-centred life or [gurmukh](#). The path of life from birth to death gives Sikhs a chance to move from being self-centred to being God-centred. To do this, Sikhs must live according to the will of God (Hukam). Being God-centred means getting rid of selfishness, ego and pride.

The Langar

Sikh worship service ends with the langar (the meal and kitchen) which everyone is welcome to share. [Karah Parshad](#) is distributed to everyone at the end of services and symbolises the belief in equality, the oneness of humanity and the idea that no one should leave empty handed. The langar is run by volunteers, who can be male or female. It is seen as part of seva or [sewa](#). All the food is free, and it is offered to anyone who visits the gurdwara, regardless of their faith. 'The Langar or free community kitchen is a hallmark of the Sikh faith. It was established by Guru Nanak Dev Ji and is designed to express equality between all people, regardless of religion, caste, colour, creed, age, gender, or social status; to eliminate the extreme poverty in the world, and to bring about the birth of caring communities. In addition to the ideals of equality, the tradition of Langar expresses the ethics of sharing, community, inclusiveness, and oneness of all humankind. '...the Light of God is in all hearts.' (Guru Granth Sahib, 282)

The quote above is from the website of **The Midland Langar Seva Society** is built on the foundation of Sikh Ethos 'VandKeh Shakna' (Share what you have with others) where help and support is given to all, regardless of social status, race or background.

<https://midlandlangarseva.org>

Links for teachers

What is Sikhism?

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zkjpkmn>

Prayer

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zhp26yc/revision/2>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zm848mn/revision/4>

Worship in the gurdwara

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/znwr97h/revision/1>

[Worship in the home https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/znwr97h/revision/7](https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/znwr97h/revision/7)

Caring for others

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zbqsn9q>

<https://www.test.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zhp26yc/revision/5>

Langar and seva

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0115kh7> <https://midlandlangarseva.org>

Humanism

Humanist approach to caring for others

Caring for others is very important to many non-religious people and humanists, just as it is for many religious people. Humanists find ways to live happy lives and try to look after the world for everyone. Some ways they do this is by helping in the community, volunteering or supporting people in need. Many non-religious people follow the Golden Rule, i.e. treat others as you would like to be treated.

Links for teachers

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zkk72v4/articles/zg7fsk7>

<https://heritage.humanists.uk/article/history-of-humanist-care/>

Examples of how music may inspire worship and deepen faith

Christianity

Hymns, songs: how the words of hymns/songs reflect Christian belief and theology. How music is used in different denominations, e.g. Roman Catholic/Salvation Army.

Musicals and music: Godspell, Jesus Christ Superstar, Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat, Handel's Messiah, The Creation by Joseph Haydn, Vivaldi: Gloria, Bach: St Matthew Passion, Mozart: Requiem, Pärt: The Beatitudes.

Taizé worship and music

https://www.bbc.co.uk/tees/content/articles/2007/05/29/valgoldsack_feature.shtml

Worship in the Protestant Church

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zbp7y9q/revision/10>

Choirs: church, gospel: how do these inspire people?

Gospel choir, Leicester

<https://www.gtchoir.com/gospel-choir-leicester/>

<https://www.makingmusic.org.uk/group/emmanu-el-apostolic-gospel-academy-eaga>

Islam

Music of the Whirling Dervishes (note: this is regarded as being outside of mainstream Islam):

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p010xjq8>

<https://www.npr.org/2021/12/25/1068016227/whirling-dervishes-rumi>

Judaism

Music is important in different ways. For example, at the festival of Simchat Torah the Torah scrolls are carried round in a dance, going round in circles (hakafor). Songs are an important part of the Pesach meal. Singing does take place in the synagogue but it is unaccompanied. Music is an important element of Jewish weddings, including traditional

songs (known as a Hora). Orthodox Jews may play strictly Jewish music and Jewish themed music, while others will opt for a mixture of different sounds including Jewish music. What is Jewish music?

https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/what-is-jewish-music?utm_content=cmp-true

Sikhi: [Kirtan](#)

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p051dnd6>

Why is prayer important? What do people do when they pray?

It is clear that prayer is an important part of worship and is important because it makes believers feel closer to God. It may be a request for help or expression of gratitude directed to God, deities, saints, etc. It is common in all religions, though some (such as Buddhism, which has no God) may also use the words such as '[meditate](#)'. Believers say this practice brings them closer to God. Those who do not belong to an organised religions may talk about asking the Universe for help by using manifestations and affirmations.

How do people pray?

People may pray:

- alone or with others
- in a place of worship or at home
- in a formalised way or informally, e.g. in a church, while out on a walk, or watching a sunset
- through a Priest, for example, when making a confession
- silently or out loud
- by using aids such as prayer beads
- by using aids such as potions, e.g. Pagans, Wiccans

Links for teachers

General

Religion and the Senses

<https://www.reonline.org.uk/2016/06/21/a-religious-education-of-the-senses/>

How people express the spiritual through art, music and literature

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zkdk382/articles/zjqcf4j>

Teaching suggestions

Pupils could:

- Make a poster to illustrate the key aspects of two religions, showing connections.
- Write about the key features of worship in an Abrahamic and a Dharmic religion OR contrast two different groups/denominations within a religion.
- Discuss some of the possible practical difficulties in observing aspects of worship, e.g. prayer in Islam, observing Shabbat in Judaism.
- Where this is appropriate, role play aspects of worship in the classroom.
- Carry out an enquiry based around an object or artefact that would be found in a place of worship or a special place.
- Produce artwork or poetry based on the on the theme of prayer and meditation.
- Interview people from the religions you have studied and ask what worship means to them.
- Observe worship, either by visiting a place of worship or watching a video.
- Research charities in Leicester run and supported by different RWs.
- Discuss whether there are agreed ways to treat other people whether you have a religion or not.

Year 3: Spring Term

What do we mean by religious and spiritual experiences?

Religions and Worldviews

Compulsory

- Christianity
- At least **two** other RWs, ensuring a balance of Abrahamic and Dharmic traditions.
- Non-religious worldviews.

Content overview

- Religious experiences and encounters
- Concepts of mystery and transcendence

Previous learning: what do pupils know and remember?

Reception

Idea of sacred and special
Experiences of festivals.

Year 1

Story of Moses and the burning bush. Mystery of incarnation, creation, salvation.

Year 2

Concept of revelation, worldviews, beliefs.

New learning objectives

Pupils should know and understand:

- What RWs mean by unexplained encounters or experiences.
- How these experiences can be interpreted in different ways.

Unit expectations and outcomes

Evidence for these should be demonstrated through a variety of ways, including pupils' work, conversations with pupils and assessment tasks. (See Appendix 2)

To achieve the learning objectives, pupils should be able to:

- Describe the features of religious or spiritual experiences and suggest possible explanations or interpretations.
- Ask relevant questions about the meaning of 'unexplained.'



Key vocabulary and concepts

Humanism: evidence, evolution, natural world.

General: conscience, conversion, experience, miracles, revelation, spiritual, visions, worship.

Teacher guidance

In their lives, people may experience things that they cannot explain. This can include a sense of awe and wonder at aspects of the natural world or they may be associated with God, or more broadly, with a spiritual experience. There are countless examples, past and present, of miraculous experiences, along with revelations from a divine power, encounters with deities, saints, etc. This might suggest an unseen world that is beyond reasonable explanation. In this unit pupils should begin to interpret such experiences and encounters, taking

into account experiences of worship covered in the previous term. It needs to be remembered that not all 'unexplained' experiences are linked to a religious or spiritual explanation. Some, such as coincidences or time slips may simply be events or experiences that simply cannot be explained rationally, with no reference to spirituality or God. Religious beliefs, concepts and experiences are, by their nature, not easily explained. Many have elements of mystery which are connected to the idea of the transcendent. This is why having faith is an important component of religious belief, i.e. faith is based on spiritual conviction rather than proof.

How to teach this unit

Avoid becoming distracted by conversations about things like ghosts, hauntings, etc. Use an enquiry approach, e.g. with a thought-provoking clip/picture/video which requires pupils to ask, 'Could this be true?' Go on to unpick the characteristics of religious or spiritual experiences and suggest possible explanations or interpretations. Use the disciplinary knowledge questions to provoke interest, then consider the responses of different RWs through substantive knowledge.

Disciplinary Knowledge: ways of knowing

Lead the learning with disciplinary knowledge, which enables the pupils to focus upon how they are going to learn about this topic. This then leads to the substantive knowledge that pupils need to know and understand, i.e. what they need to know. In practice, the two types of knowledge should be integrated with the 'what' being taught alongside the 'how.' Disciplinary knowledge is initially set out in the form of questions. You do not have to use every question: some may be useful as a starter for enquiry, others for promoting deeper learning when you are looking at substantive knowledge.

How might pupils learn?

They could:

- Talk to people who claim to have had experiences that cannot be explained by reason alone.
- Research modern day miracles.
- Read examples of conversion experiences and interpret their meaning, i.e. what changes took place in the people's lives.

Theology is about what people believe. Theologians might ask:

Why do some places/spaces bring about responses which people might describe as spiritual?
How do people believe they experience God's presence?
What is puzzling about miracles?
What links faith and belief?
Do you have to prove something in order to believe it?

Philosophy is about what people think. Philosophers might ask:

What kind of experiences cannot be explained?
Do we need to be able to explain everything?
Why do people think that times or moments can be special or sacred?
Are there 'wow' experiences which everyone shares, e.g. looking at the moon, stars, sunsets, sunrises, waves, etc?
Can everything be explained by science and through evidence?
What is a coincidence?

Social Science is about how people live. Social Scientists might ask:

Can non-religious people experience things such as miracles?
How do people express their deepest experiences and beliefs?
How do people explain experiences of wonder?

Reflections: Personal knowledge

What is my worldview?

How do I know what to believe?

If things are true, how can they change?

What do I believe that makes this my worldview?

What do I know about the beliefs of others?

Have my beliefs changed since I was younger?

Substantive Knowledge: what pupils need to know

What do we mean by religious and spiritual experiences?

By these we generally refer to experiences that cannot be easily explained. A religious experience is when someone feels they have had a direct or personal experience of God (which could be through a saint or other holy person) which cannot be easily explained by logic or reason. It could be a dream or vision where God speaks to a person, or it could be a miraculous healing. If we describe something as a spiritual experience, we usually mean something that involves awe and wonder but is not necessarily to do with God. For example, someone may have had such an experience when watching a sunset or listening to a piece of music. Humanists would say that these are responses that we can explain without referring to anything spiritual. A piece of music may be inspiring simply because that is what the composer intended. It could be argued that all religious experience is in the mind which is so complex we do not fully understand it. Religious experiences could be explained away as simply coincidences. It might be that when a person is seeking a religious experience, they may create one in their mind. Or it could be that some people actually do have an actual encounter with God or a vision of a religious person.

Revelation

This may be directly to a group or an individual, e.g. when the Prophet Muhammad received the Qur'an. It is often used to describe the way God is revealed through:

- a dream
- a vision
- a miracle
- experience
- prophecy (a prediction of what will happen in the future)

Links for teachers

Revelation

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zh296v4/revision/7>

Some religious perspectives

Christianity

Some Christians believe that God meets with them directly, through worship or prayer. They might feel God's presence when they are praying, or have a prayer answered. Christians believe that these special revelations show that God communicates with them.

Visions and dreams

In the Bible God communicates with people through [visions and dreams](#) and some Christians believe that God still speaks to people in this way. Some Christians believe that God can be seen through visions to Saints and other holy people.

Miracles

Many Christians believe that God can reveal himself through miracles, prayer and worship. There are many miracles recorded in the Old and New Testament.

Links for teachers

Special revelation

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zh296v4/revision/8>

Miracles of Jesus

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zkrf8xs/revision/1>

Jesus' miracles, Credibility of miracles

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zkrf8xs/revision/10>

Miracles of Jesus and miracles today

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zj3jtcw#z7g7p9q>

Stigmata

<https://www.learnreligions.com/saints-and-the-stigmata-miracle-3963657>

Lourdes

<https://www.lourdes-france.org/en/the-miracles-of-lourdes/>

Walsingham

<https://www.walsinghamanglican.org.uk>

Hinduism

Visions and dreams

Some Hindus believe that dreams are another state of 'being' for the atman (soul) where Brahman is accessible to anyone. If dreams contain a prophecy, this may be seen as a special revelation which should be acted upon. Many Hindus believe that through personal experience and meditation they can gain knowledge of Brahman. Ways of experiencing include meditation, practising yoga, by chanting sacred verses, or by repeating the sacred syllable 'aum'.

Miracles

There are many examples of miracles and amazing events in Hindu scripture. For example, Lord Shiva bringing his beheaded son back to life with an elephant's head (Lord Ganesh).

Links for teachers

Visions and miracles

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zh296v4/revision/10>

Modern day Hindu miracles

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/magazine-38301718>

Judaism

Many miracles are recorded in the Torah including Moses' encounters with G-d, the ten plagues, the parting of the Red Sea.

Links for teachers

<https://bible-history.com/old-testament/miracles>

Islam

Muslims believe that Allah is all powerful and His signs are everywhere in creation for Muslims to reflect over. Some Muslims believe that Allah's presence can be felt through worship or prayer or when they are reading the Qur'an

Visions and dreams

The Qur'an emphasises the value of dreams and visions as special revelations. Some Muslims believe that their dreams can come directly from Allah as a teaching or message. They look to the Qur'an or the Hadith for interpretations of their dreams and visions.

Miracles

Miracles are important in Islam, mainly as signs to prove the truthfulness of prophets. There are many examples of miracles recorded in the Qur'an, for example when the Prophet Muhammad was taken through the heavens to meet Allah. The revelation of the Quran is considered by Muslims to be Muhammad's greatest miracle.

Link for teachers

Special revelation

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zh296v4/revision/12>

Sikhi

The story of Guru Nanak at the River

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p010xlmq>

<https://www.sikhnet.com/stories/audio/nanak-and-river>

How might non-religious people explain religious and spiritual experiences?

Non-religious people such as Humanists will say that there is very little evidence to support 'unexplained' religious experiences (which we sometimes refer to as 'direct revelation'). They are generally only experienced by one person, which means they are believed through faith, i.e. they can even be difficult for religious people to understand but they are accepted through faith. There are some types of experience which believers might see as revealing something of God but which non-religious people would explain without reference to God. These are sometimes referred to as general (or 'indirect') revelation. These might be explained by non-religious people in the following ways:

- **Dreams and visions:** science and psychology can partially explain these phenomena but if they can't it does not follow that they are revelations of God.
- **Miracles:** if there were any hard factual evidence for these, they would not be miracles but problems for science to solve. Non-believers argue that if we can't even know they happened, we certainly can't know that they are revelations of God.
- **Prophecies:** like any predictions, prophecies may or may not come true. If they come true, they reveal more about the mathematical laws of probability than they do about God.

Religious conversion experiences

A conversion experience is when a person changes their worldview, either through reason or because of a religious experience.

Christianity

Examples of Christian conversion experiences

- St Paul on the road to Damascus, Acts 9. Previously, St Paul had persecuted Christians.
- Constantine the Great: the first Roman emperor to convert to Christianity.
- St Augustine heard a voice tell him to read Paul's letter to the Romans. He did so and was converted.
- John Wesley was converted in 1738, following a religious meeting. [Methodism](#) is based largely on his teachings. He and his brother Charles wrote many famous Christian hymns.
- [John Newton](#), who wrote 'Amazing Grace, a well-known hymn.

Christian conversions have been witnessed at mass rallies such as the [Billy Graham Crusades](#) which began in the 1960s and during religious [revivals](#).

The conversion experience is often linked to evangelical churches, where spreading the gospel to the 'unsaved' is seen as important. Some Christians would say that a person is not saved unless they have accepted Jesus as their personal saviour. Others are brought up within the faith or it gradually develops over time and does not require an 'experience'.

Some Christians would say that the test of a genuine conversion is that the person shows a change in their life after the experience. These conversion experiences are not the same as when a person makes a choice to formally convert to a religion, see below.

Links for teachers

Buddhism

<https://www.learnreligions.com/reasons-to-convert-to-buddhism-449752>

Hinduism

<https://www.hinduismtoday.com/hindu-basics/how-to-formally-enter-hinduism/>

Islam

<https://www.learnreligions.com/how-to-convert-to-islam-2004198>

Judaism

https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/2972927/jewish/How-to-Convert-to-Judaism.htm

Sikhi

<https://wahegurunet.com/convert-to-sikhism/>

Teaching suggestions

Abrahamic religions

Pupils could:

- Talk to people about the meaning and significance of their religious and spiritual experiences.
- Listen to inspirational music from different traditions and write/talk about how it makes them feel.
- Read accounts of and identify problems relating to religious and spiritual experiences, including miracles. Debate claims to truth.
- Reflect upon how people might believe in or experience something they cannot see or explain through reason.
- Re-tell a conversion story and write about how the person changed after the experience.
- Research modern day miracles, focusing on what is actually known about the experience and the evidence to back it up.
- Reflect upon the meaning of truth, experience and faith.
- Imagine that podcasts existed 2000 years ago. In a small group write and present one on the subject of Jesus' miracles.

YEAR 4

Year 4

Why Communities Matter



Overview

Pupils build on learning in the previous year about how people express the things they believe. Pupils now know that this expression can be seen through worship, caring for others and religious experiences and encounters. This unit develops this further by looking at how beliefs are expressed through pilgrimage. How do special journeys and pilgrimages bring communities together? What experiences do people expect to have during a pilgrimage? In the spring term the learning moves to RWs in the community and why they matter. Pupils will consider, for example, how communities close to their school have changed over time, and what they bring to the locality. The School Designed Unit in the summer term provides an opportunity to pursue these topics further, e.g. through case studies.

Worldviews context

For everyone, certain places have special meanings. These meanings may be associated with a significant event, a special occasion or something more emotional. The meaning we attach to these places help form the way we see the world. Children of this age are at the early stages of making memories and developing their worldviews, but they will have clear ideas about the places that have made them happy or sad. Pilgrimage is largely, but not exclusively, associated with religious worldviews. The journey of life could be seen as a pilgrimage that everyone embarks upon. Pilgrimages are mainly made with other people and include a collective and individual experience. Studying local communities will help pupils understand why, to some degree, RWs develop through the way people live together and how this works in a diverse city such as Leicester.

Autumn

What does pilgrimage mean to individuals and communities?

The idea of a special journey

Places and journeys that people consider to be special.

Sacred places and journeys

The experience of pilgrimage for individuals and communities.

Spiritual experiences associated with pilgrimage.

Diversity in practice.

Local places of significance

Religious and non-religious.

Spring

Which RW communities can we find in our neighbourhood?

RWs communities in the neighbourhood

RWs communities across Leicester and close to school.

Links between schools and communities.

Diversity within communities.

Changes over time – migration accounts.

The influence of communities upon the wider community.

Events that bring communities together.

Summer 1

**School designed unit
(See Appendix 3)**

Suggestions

- Pilgrimage or special and sacred spaces in a RW not yet studied.
- Study of a story which uses the metaphor of a journey, e.g. Pilgrim's Progress, The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe.
- Visit to a sacred place/space in Leicester.
- Pilgrimage and the Media, e.g. BBC series
- Festivals in Leicester: the role of communities.
- Case study consisting of: One community in the neighbourhood; a person who lives in the neighbourhood, a leader of a local community.

Progression Strands: concepts which pupils should understand

A: Belonging, Identity & Community

- Why pilgrimage has special meaning for communities.
- How going on a pilgrimage can strengthen a person's religious identity.
- What it means to a person to be part of local RW communities.
- How there is diversity within the same RW community.
- What RWs contribute to the wider community.
- How communities are represented in school and in the neighbourhood.

B: Beliefs, Ideas and Values

- How pilgrimage reflects key beliefs, e.g. Makkah and the 5 Pillars of Islam.
- What values hold communities together.
- How people may belong to more than one RW community.

C: Expression, Experience & Sacred

- What people experience during pilgrimages and how this might be life changing.
- What religious and non-religious pilgrimages have in common.
- What actions and rituals take place during pilgrimages.
- How communities in Leicester express their faith in everyday life and at special times.

D: Truth, Interpretation & Meaning

- Why the experience of pilgrimage may have a different meaning for people.
- How communities in an area change over time.
- Why belonging to a community matters to people.

Year 4: Autumn

What does pilgrimage mean to individuals and communities?

Religions and Worldviews

Compulsory

- Christianity
- **Either** Judaism **OR** Islam
- Hinduism

Note

It is not necessary to cover every example of pilgrimage for each RW. Teachers should choose whichever they consider most appropriate.

Additional suggestions

Aspects of other Dharmic traditions.

Non-religious pilgrimages

Previous learning: what do pupils know and remember from year 3?

Expression of faith.

Religious experiences.

Previous learning linked to this unit

Reception

Journey to Bethlehem, journey of Rama and Sita

Idea of special/sacred.

Year 1

Passover – the Exodus.

Year 2

Worldviews: beliefs.

New learning objectives

Pupils should know and understand:

- How going on a pilgrimage can strengthen the identity of individuals and communities.
- How pilgrimage reflects key beliefs, e.g. Makkah and the 5 Pillars of Islam.
- What actions and rituals take place during pilgrimages.
- What people experience during pilgrimages and how this might be life changing.
- Why the experience of pilgrimage may have a different meaning for different people.

Content overview

Places and journeys that people consider to be special.

How places become sacred.

What happens during a pilgrimage: The experience for individuals and communities and diversity in practice.

Local places of significance, religious and non-religious.

Unit expectations and outcomes

Evidence for these should be demonstrated through a variety of ways, including pupils' work, conversations with pupils and assessment tasks. (Appendix 2)

To achieve the learning objectives, pupils should be able to:

- Interpret the significance of a special journey and the way 'journey' can be used a metaphor for life.
- Explain what meaning pilgrimage has for different individual and communities.
- Make connections between pilgrimage and key beliefs.
- Describe the actions and rituals that take place during pilgrimages.
- Ask relevant questions about peoples' experiences during pilgrimages.



Key vocabulary and concepts

General: journey, pilgrimage.

Buddhism: Bodhi Tree, Bodhisattva, Boya Gaya, retreats, Sarnath Deer Park, Siddhartha Gautama.

Christianity: Bethlehem, Gethsemane, Holy Island, Jerusalem, Lourdes, Rome, Walsingham.

Hinduism: Kumbh Mela, Lord Shiva, River Ganges, Varanasi.

Islam: Eid-ul-Adha, Hajj, Jerusalem, Makkah, Umrah.

Judaism: Jerusalem, Western Wall, Yad Vashem.

Sikhi: Adi Granth, Amritsar, Harmandir Sahib.

Teacher guidance

A pilgrimage is a significant journey carried out for a special reason. It is one of the many ways people express their religion or worldview. Pilgrimages may have a religious or non-religious meaning; it is the significance of the place that matters. Places could include a sacred site, a football ground, a war grave, the place where someone famous was born, the house of an important person, etc. It might include a physical journey, but an individual's journey of faith is a symbolic pilgrimage. People may make religious pilgrimages for several reasons, including the desire to:

- deepen their connection with God
- feel connected to a worldwide community
- learn more about the history of their faith
- see sites where miracles happened and receive special blessings
- seek healing or acceptance of ailments

The National Trust describes a pilgrimage in the following way: *'A pilgrimage....is an inherently transient experience, removing the participant from his or her home environment and identity. The means or motivations in undertaking a pilgrimage might vary, but the act, however performed, blends the physical and the spiritual into a unified experience.'* [25]

How to teach this unit

Begin with the pupils' own experiences. Encourage them to share their thoughts about places that have a special meaning for them, whether religious or not. Ensure that pupils understand the concept of sacred space or place and that non-religious people might have similar experiences linked to, for example, sport or the birthplace of a famous person. You could also include extracts from books that involve journeys (See resources at the end of this unit). You can then go on to look at specific pilgrimage sites. Include key features of the chosen pilgrimage and the ways in which these practices relate to beliefs about God, the world and human beings. Engage pupils in thinking about the sensory and emotional aspects of special journeys as the spiritual experiences people claim to have.

Disciplinary Knowledge: ways of knowing

Lead the learning with disciplinary knowledge, which enables the pupils to focus upon **how** they are going to learn about this topic. This then leads to the substantive knowledge that pupils need to know and understand, i.e. **what** they need to know. In practice, the two types of knowledge should be integrated with the 'what' being taught alongside the 'how.' Disciplinary knowledge is initially set out in the form of questions. **You do not have to use every question:** some may be useful as a starter for enquiry, others for promoting deeper learning when you are looking at substantive knowledge.

How might pupils learn?

They could:

- Interview people from different RWs who have been on a pilgrimage.
- Use TV programmes to compare aspects of pilgrimage (see under 'Resources').
- Read accounts of pilgrimages and look for threads of commonality.
- Visit a local place of interest, ideally connected with a person.
- Explore the emotional and sensory aspects of pilgrimage.
- Analyse data and statistics, e.g. to show the numbers of people visiting various sites, how these fluctuate, etc.

Theology is about what people believe. Theologians might ask:

Theology is about what people believe. Theologians might ask:

What make a place special or sacred?

How might the experience of pilgrimage deepen religious faith?

How does being in a sacred place help believers to connect with God?

What is the meaning of rituals associated with pilgrimage?

What do people remember during pilgrimages?

How are pilgrimages linked to history?

How do pilgrims express their beliefs on pilgrimages?

Could anywhere be considered a pilgrimage site?

Do religious pilgrimages have deeper meaning than those associated with, for example, famous people or sport?

What miraculous things do people believe happen during pilgrimages?

Philosophy is about what people think.

Philosophers might ask:

How can a place be sacred?

How are the senses involved in pilgrimage?

What special journeys might a non-religious person make?

How is 'journey' a metaphor for life?

How does a place become a pilgrimage site?

Are visions real?

Is it possible to have a non-religious pilgrimage?

Social Science is about how people live.

Social Scientists might ask:

Why do pilgrimages matter to people?

How do they bring people together and give them a sense of identity?

Why do people feel the need to make special journeys, including to space?

What spiritual experiences do people have on pilgrimages?

Should people respect special and sacred experiences, even if they do not mean anything to them?

How might the experiences of individuals differ?

Reflections: Personal knowledge

Have I ever made a special journey or a pilgrimage?

Where would I like to visit? Why?

Is there anywhere I go that makes me feel happy?

Would I like to go to the moon? Why?

Would I like to make a journey back in time? Why?

Substantive Knowledge: what pupils need to know

The meaning of pilgrimage

Pilgrimage is a significant journey carried out for a special reason. There are many examples of religious and non-religious pilgrimages (e.g. pilgrimage to a particular football ground or site of significance for a family, to war graves, to the place of birth of an important person, etc.) Many children's books have the idea of journey as central to the narrative. 'Journey' is also used a metaphor for life.

Religious pilgrimages

Some places are regarded as sacred for all members of a religion, e.g. Makkah, where Muslims are expected to visit at least once in their life- time. Others are places visited predominantly by one denomination, e.g. Roman Catholics and Lourdes or sites associated with various Saints. Some places have significance for more than one religion, e.g. Jerusalem, which is a place of pilgrimage for Jews, Christians and Muslims. It is worth discussing the impact of pilgrimage on the natural world and the way in which this challenges the value religious believers place on the environment and their duty to protect it. (See year 6)

Abrahamic traditions

Christianity

It is not a duty but optional for Christians to go on pilgrimage.

Bethlehem

The most important site in Bethlehem is the Church of the Nativity in Manger Square. Inside is an area called the Grotto of the Nativity where there is a 14-pointed star, which marks the traditional site of the birthplace of Jesus Christ. Many different Christian denominations are represented in Bethlehem, including both Western churches and Eastern churches. Christians pray and focus their attention on the incarnation as this has great spiritual significance.

Jerusalem

Christians believe that Jesus visited Jerusalem at Passover time and was there during the week leading up to his death. Pilgrims remember key events in Jesus' final week, known as Holy Week. They might visit the Garden of Gethsemane, believed to be where Jesus prayed before he was arrested by the Romans and put to death, the Via Dolorosa, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and the Church of the Ascension. Many Christians believe that undertaking a pilgrimage to Jerusalem can bring them closer to what Jesus experienced as he approached his death.

Lourdes

Lourdes is near the Pyrenees in France. Every year, it is visited by millions of pilgrims, particularly Roman Catholics. They come to see the site of a famous vision experienced by a young girl called Bernadette Soubirous. Pilgrims may visit to be cleansed of their sins and to be cured of their illnesses. The International Medical Committee of Lourdes began in 1947 and passes judgement about whether any of the healings that take place in Lourdes are miracles. By 2018, 70 cases had been recognised as official miracles by the Roman Catholic Church.

Rome

The Vatican is the home of the Pope, the spiritual head of the Roman Catholic Church. Roman Catholics believe that Jesus appointed Peter as the leader of his disciples. He is seen as the first Bishop of Rome (the Pope) and many Christians believe that he was executed and buried on Vatican Hill.

The Shrine of Our Lady, Walsingham

Walsingham is where an important vision of Mary took place in 1601. It is claimed that Richeldis de Faverches, a Saxon noblewoman, who lived there had a vision in which she was taken by Mary to her home in Nazareth. This was the house where the Angel Gabriel promised Mary that she would give birth to Jesus. In this vision Mary asked Richeldis to build an exact copy of this house, which is why Walsingham is often called the Nazareth of England. Today, this copy of Mary's home is called the Holy House and is found in the Anglican National Shrine Church in Walsingham. The Catholic National Shrine is located at the Slipper Chapel, where pilgrims would remove their shoes to walk the last mile into the village.

August 2024

<https://www.cbcew.org.uk/relic-of-gods-influencer-coming-to-walsingham/>

Examples of other Christian pilgrimage sites: See links for teachers below

Islam

The Hajj

It is a duty for Muslims to go on pilgrimage to [Makkah](#) at least once in their lifetime, provided that they are physically able and can afford it. The pilgrimage is the fifth Pillar of Islam (see year 2, spring/summer terms). Muslims try to go to Makkah during Dhu al-Hijjah, the twelfth month of the Islamic calendar. They must follow several important rituals whilst on Hajj including wearing special clothes and performing symbolic actions at different sites.

Eid ul-Adha is celebrated at the end of the pilgrimage (see year 1, summer term). This festival reminds them of Ibrahim's obedience when he was told by Allah to sacrifice his son, Ismail. Muslims may sacrifice a sheep or a goat to symbolise the lamb provided by Allah for Ibrahim to sacrifice in place of Ismail.

Umrah

This is the non-mandatory, lesser pilgrimage to Makkah that can be carried out at any time.

Jerusalem

This is the third most holy site for Muslims and is also a holy place for Christians and Jews. It is where the Dome of the Rock and the al-Asqa mosque are situated, believed to be where the Prophet Muhammed travelled during the Night of Power. It is the place from which Muslims believe the Prophet Muhammed ascended to heaven.

Judaism

Jerusalem

According to Jewish tradition, key events are believed to have happened in this city, including when Abraham showed he was prepared to sacrifice his son, Isaac. It was also here that Jacob dreamed of a ladder that went up to Heaven. King David captured Jerusalem and made it the capital of the ancient Jewish people. King Solomon built the first Temple in Jerusalem. The Ark of the Covenant is believed to have been kept in the most sacred part of the Temple, the Holy of Holies, the place where it was believed G-d himself was present. The first Temple was destroyed around 587 BCE, when a large proportion of the Jewish people were expelled from Jerusalem by the Babylonians and exiled to Babylonia. The Second Temple was built by the Jews after their return from Babylonia and completed in 515 BCE. It was destroyed in 70 CE by the Romans.

The Western Wall (Kotel)

This is thought to be the only remaining part of the Second Temple therefore visiting the Western Wall reminds Jewish people of their history. It symbolises the hope to Jewish

people that they too will remain forever. There are many rituals that take place here, e.g. people write prayers on small pieces of paper and push them in the cracks of the wall. It is believed that the wall is a symbol of G-d's presence, therefore many believe that G-d can see what has been written. The prayers are collected twice every year and then buried on the Mount of Olives. Jewish people also pray facing the Western Wall and some boys have their Bar Mitzvah ceremonies in the square facing the wall. Synagogues traditionally face towards Jerusalem. At the end of every Passover Seder celebration, Jewish people raise their glass in the hope that they will celebrate the festival 'next year in Jerusalem'.

Yad Vashem

Yad Vashem means 'a memorial and a name' and it is a museum and a memorial to the victims of the Holocaust or Shoah. It is a source of information and education for future generations, not just a place to remember those who died in the Holocaust. Visiting Yad Vashem is a sign of respect and remembrance. Educating others is an important part of remembrance, so that future genocides can be avoided.

Pilgrim festivals

Sukkot, Pesach and Shavuot and are known as the three pilgrim festivals in Judaism. This is because traditionally, Jews used to travel to the Temple in Jerusalem to celebrate them.

Dharmic religions

Buddhism

Bodh Gaya

This is one of the most significant sites of pilgrimage to Buddhists. It is believed that Siddhartha Gautama attained enlightenment under a Bodhi Tree in Bodh Gaya ('place of enlightenment'). The Mahabodhi Temple marks this place. It was built around 250 years after the Buddha's death by a Buddhist emperor. Pilgrims pay their respects to the Buddha, make offerings, chant and meditate to renew their commitment to the path to enlightenment.

Sarnath Deer Park

This park is north of the holy city of Varanasi in India. Here the Buddha gave the first of his teachings, which would become the Dhamma, seven weeks after attaining enlightenment. The name originates from an old Buddhist story in which a [Bodhisattva](#), in the shape of a deer, persuaded a king to protect deer and a deer sanctuary was created.

Retreats

Retreats are important to Buddhists when time is taken to develop spiritual growth. These take place throughout the year in both isolated and communal settings.

Hinduism

Rivers are popular places of [pilgrimage for Hindus](#) but temples, mountains, and other sacred sites in India are also significant as they are sites where the gods may have appeared.

The Kumbh Mela

These events take place by rotation at one of four different pilgrimage sites. Millions of people share in ritual bathing at the Kumbh Mela festival at four different riverside locations. Hindus take part in ritual bathing, believing that their sins will be washed away. This is followed by spiritual purification and a ceremony to ask for the blessings of the deity.

River Ganges

The river Ganges is the holiest river for Hindus. Some Hindus believe that it flowed from heaven to purify humans. Sometimes the river is represented in female form because many Hindus refer to it as 'Mother Gangaa' or 'she'. Different locations along the River Ganges attract millions of pilgrims. Many Hindus believe water from anywhere on the River Ganges is purifying and holy. People may also take away small containers of water from the river to give to friends and family who are not able to go there. Some Hindus visit the Gangotri

Temple in the Himalayas near the source of the River Ganges, where the water is believed to be purest.

Varanasi

Varanasi is an ancient city on the banks of the River Ganges in Northern India. It is one of the most sacred sites in India because it is believed to have been the home of Lord Shiva. Millions of pilgrims visit Varanasi to purify themselves by bathing in the River Ganges at sunrise. Some Hindus believe that if they die at Varanasi, they might be able to attain [moksha](#) sooner.

Meenakshi Amman Temple, Madurai, Tamil Nadu, India

This temple is dedicated to the goddess Meenakshi, the incarnation of the Hindu goddess Parvati. It is one of the few religious monuments in India devoted to a female deity.

Sikhi

Pilgrimage is not compulsory for [Sikhs](#) though it is important for some. Guru Nanak visited many places on his journeys but in general, Sikhs believe that faith should be in their hearts rather than linked to a physical place. Many also believe that the money spent on pilgrimage could be used to help others. However, some Sikhs may visit important sites in India and the Punjab, where Sikhism began.

The Harmandir Sahib

Many Sikhs make a pilgrimage to the Harmandir Sahib in Amritsar, North India, sometimes known as the Golden Temple. Harmandir means 'The Temple of God' and 'Sahib' is a sign of respect. The temple is surrounded by a pool of clear water that is sacred to Sikhs and believed to have healing powers. The temple contains the original Adi Granth, the first version of the Guru Granth Sahib, which was compiled by Guru Arjan.

Other places of pilgrimage (could be chosen as a School Designed Unit)

- [Avebury Stone Circle](#), Wiltshire (Pagan)
- [Castlerigg Stone Circle](#) (Pagan)
- [Glastonbury Tor](#) and town (Christian and Pagan)

Pagan sites:

- <https://horizonguides.com/journal/pagan-uk>
- [Stonehenge](#) (Druids)
- [Whitby Abbey](#) (Goth)
- Places connected with a famous birthplace, e.g. Elvis Presley/Graceland, Shakespeare/Stratford-Upon-Avon, Nelson Mandela/South Africa, Princess Diana/Althorp, Northamptonshire, Karl Marx/ Highgate Cemetery.
- [Places commemorated with a Blue Plaque.](#)
- <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/national-blue-plaque-scheme/>
- Places associated with sporting events

Examples of other religious journeys in texts and stories

- The Exodus: Judaism and Christianity
- Jesus' journey at Easter in the Gospels.
- Journey of St Paul in the Acts of the Apostles.
- Pilgrim's Progress, John Bunyan.
- The Arrival, Shaun Tan.
- The Journey, James Norbury
- The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe, C S Lewis

Links for teachers

General

Ten sites of religious pilgrimage

<https://www.bbc.com/travel/article/20120119-travelwise-10-sites-of-religious-pilgrimage>

National Trust

<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/discover/history/what-is-a-pilgrimage>

Christianity

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zdcbcj6/revision/5>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zffxh39/revision/6>

<https://www.walsinghamanglican.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/The-Walsingham-Story.pdf>

<https://www.walsinghamanglican.org.uk/youngpilgrims/schools-department/resources/>

TV Programmes

BBC iplayer: Pilgrimage: The Road Through North Wales: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m001vvdk/episodes/player>

BBC 2 Pilgrimage, Santiago de Compostela, Spain: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b09w7lc8>

BBC iplayer: The Road to the Scottish Isles: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episodes/b09w7lc0/pilgrimage>

BBC iplayer: The Road through Portugal: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/p0dz05zy/pilgrimage-the-road-through-portugal-episode-1>

Holy Island, Lindisfarne: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-tyne-35900211>

Islam

Introduction to Hajj

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p010xdbd>

Makkah

<https://muslimmatters.org/2010/04/22/reflections-from-mecca-and-madina/>

Hajj

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/articles/zndfcqt>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p010x9ts>

Hinduism

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/religious-studies-ks2-my-life-my-religion-hinduism-pilgrimage-hinduism/z4ghf4j>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/articles/zndfcqt>

Varanasi

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p010x9qx>

Judaism

Pilgrim festivals

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/z4kg4qt/revision/9>

<https://www.yadvashem.org>

Visiting Jerusalem

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/articles/z76d7nb>

Sikhi

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/znwr97h/revision/12>

Teaching suggestions

Pupils could:

- Use pictures and photographs to talk about special journeys and how these might have different meanings for people.
- Design a poster to illustrate how 'journey' can be used a metaphor for life, e.g. starting points and events that happen along the way.
- Design a postcard to send to someone from a special or sacred place. Write a blog about why it is special or holy to you and what you did there.
- For at least two religions, explain what happens during a pilgrimage and why this has significance for individuals and communities.
- Talk to people who have been on a pilgrimage and ask them about their experiences. Present as a TV interview/podcast/radio programme.
- Use TV programmes to compare aspects of pilgrimage (see under Links for teachers – TV programmes).
- Visit a local place of interest, ideally connected with a person.
- Explore the emotional and sensory aspects of pilgrimage.

Year 4: Spring Term

Which RW communities can we find in our neighbourhood?

Religions and Worldviews

This will depend on the religions in the locality, therefore no one particular RW is compulsory, though it is likely that many schools will choose the local church. Teachers should include as many communities as they wish but must not to compromise depth of learning by trying to cover too many. There should be a balance of Abrahamic and Dharmic communities.

Content overview

RW communities in the class, school, locality.

What it means to be a member of these communities.

The visibility of communities: how do we know they are there?

What RW communities bring to a neighbourhood.

Previous learning: what do pupils know and remember?

Reception

Visit to a church or mandir.

Year 1

Communities and celebrations.

Year 2

Religions and Worldviews.

Year 3

Expression of beliefs.

Year 4

Pilgrimage and communities.

New learning objectives

Pupils should know and understand:

- What it means to be part of a community.
- Which RWs are represented in the class, the school and Leicester.
- What RWs contribute to the wider community.
- How communities in Leicester express their beliefs and values in everyday life and at special times.
- How to research historical events associated with communities – how communities change over time.

Unit expectations and outcomes

Evidence for these should be demonstrated through a variety of ways, including pupils' work, conversations with pupils and assessment tasks. (See Appendix 2)

To achieve the learning objectives, pupils should be able to:

- Present an analysis of the RWs that are represented in the class, the school and Leicester.
- Explain why people might belong to more than one RW community.
- Provide examples of the contribution communities make to the wider community.
- Describe the ways in which communities in Leicester are express their beliefs and values through everyday life and at festival times.
- Carry out research into the history of local areas associated with different communities – how have these changed over time?



Key vocabulary and concepts

These will vary depending on the communities studied. It may help to use the list in year 2, summer term.

Teacher guidance: Context and Introduction

Up to this point pupils have learnt about how beliefs are expressed through worship, caring for others and pilgrimage. This is important as it provides a foundation on which to build knowledge and understanding of 'real' communities, specifically those in the locality. Leicester is a very diverse city, and this makes it possible to enrich learning by digging deeper and finding out what belonging to a RW community means in practice. Most people belong to more than one community, e.g. family, friendship group, religion, etc. Pupils might consider how they adjust their behaviour depending on which community they happen to be in at any one time. This brings in aspects of culture as well as religion, e.g. dress, diet, rules. Think about how RW communities can be seen in the area, e.g. places of worship, shops, dress, food, festivals, stories.

How to teach this unit

Go back to ideas introduced in Reception. What is a community? Which communities do pupils belong to? Remind pupils of the key beliefs covered in year 2 and explain that this term you will be exploring how we can see these reflected through local communities. Be mindful of two key things:

1. While many pupils may identify with a particular community, this does not mean they are necessarily experts on that religion. Avoid using pupils as though they are some kind of quaint artefact, placed at the front of the classroom to tell everyone all the details about a particular religion. It would be far better to ask adults from the communities to come and talk to the class. This could include parents, local business owners and school staff. This brings RWs to life because pupils will learn about the lived experience of faith, including its challenges. That is not to say you should NEVER allow pupils to talk about their faith. Teachers should always check beforehand about how confident pupils feel and if they wish to share personal information.
2. Do not assume that everyone in the class will identify with an organised RW. Although we have established that everyone has a worldview, this may be difficult to articulate. Time should be taken to return to the discussion about what is meant by a religion or worldview. Pupils may need help in expressing what they feel but this is an important aspect of personal knowledge.
3. Teachers should be mindful that due to family situations some pupils might identify with more than one RWs.

Disciplinary Knowledge: ways of knowing

Lead the learning with disciplinary knowledge, which enables the pupils to focus upon **how** they are going to learn about this topic. This then leads to the substantive knowledge that pupils need to know and understand, i.e. **what** they need to know. In practice, the two types of knowledge should be integrated with the 'what' being taught alongside the 'how.' Disciplinary knowledge is initially set out in the form of questions. **You do not have to use every question:** some may be useful as a starter for enquiry, others for promoting deeper learning when you are looking at substantive knowledge.

How might pupils learn?

They could:

- Use census data to find out about RWs in the locality.
- Interview key people from local communities, e.g. parents, teachers, local business owners, faith leaders.
- Visit places where communities meet.
- Study historical pictures and documents to help us understand more about communities and how they might have changed over time.
- Visit any museum exhibitions relating to local communities.

Theology is about what people believe. Theologians might ask:

What do people in my class believe?
Is it possible for everyone in a community to believe the same thing?
How do beliefs bring people together?
Where do beliefs come from?
Can you be friends with someone who doesn't share the same beliefs as you?
Does 'community' mean the same thing to all RWs?

Philosophy is about what people think. Philosophers might ask:

Do we need other people?
Why do people need communities?
Are all people basically the same?
Why do people generally want to help each other?
Are all communities good?
What is meant by identity?

Social Science is about how people live. Social Scientists might ask:

Why are there so many RW communities?
Do other people matter? Would it be possible to live entirely alone?
Can people from different communities live in harmony together?
How do communities come together to help others?
Why do communities need rules?
How do different communities manage to live side by side?
Does religion affect everyone's life to some degree?
Could a person belong to more than one religious community?

Reflections: Personal knowledge

What does community mean to me?
Which communities do I belong to?
How do I show that I belong to a community?
What do I know about communities near my school?
Do I have friends from communities different from my own?

Substantive Knowledge: what pupils need to know

This will obviously depend on the communities you choose to study. The following guidelines may help. Refer to Appendix 3 for information about local places of worship.

The concept of community in RWs

Buddhism: Sangha

This Sanskrit word can refer to Buddhist monks and nuns or to anyone in the Buddhist community. On Sangha Day Buddhists celebrate both the ideal of the spiritual community as well as the one they are trying to create. The sangha is precious in Buddhism because people need others to aspire to and with whom they can share aspirations. Without this, a solitary spiritual life would be very challenging for most people. As a community, Buddhists come together to celebrate two main festivals, [Wesak](#) and Parinirvana/[Nirvana](#) Day. Buddhists also place great importance on joining together for retreats. These strengthen communities and enrich people's spiritual development.

Christianity

The word '[koinonia](#)' is used to express the idea of fellowship among Christians. Christians of all denominations meet on Sundays for worship and some will meet during the week for Bible study, prayer meetings, etc. In addition, Christians get together at festival times such as Christmas and Easter. Many will also be involved in activities for the wider community and to support charities

Hinduism

The Sanatana Dharma, or 'Eternal Way' unites Hindus as a community. This shows a way through life and duty known as [dharma](#). Hindus come together as a community for celebrations such as Diwali, Navrati and Holi. These are usually shared with the wider community, as frequently seen in Leicester.

Islam

The worldwide community of Muslims is known as [Ummah](#), within which all are considered to be equal. The community has a common language, Arabic, which all Muslims try to learn to read the Qur'an. Ummah is regarded as one large family, united by Allah, which is why Muslims often refer to each other as brother or sister.

Judaism

The community of Jewish people is united by the Torah, the covenant and key beliefs. It is held together in the way Jews keep the mitzvot or commandments, one of which is to keep Shabbat holy. A family might invite members of the wider Jewish community to the Shabbat meal so that no-one feels isolated. Various festivals are celebrated by the community including Hanukkah, Yom Kippur, Rosh Hashanah.

Sikhi

The Sikhi community is referred to as the sangat, meaning 'true congregation'. It is formed by people coming together in the presence of the Guru Granth Sahib. When the sangat gather in the gurdwara, they sing hymns together (kirtan), meditate on God's name (Naam Japna) and listen to musicians. Sikhs also gather together for gurburbs, which are festivals that celebrate the anniversary of births or deaths of Gurus. These allow Sikhs to celebrate the history of the faith and remember their key beliefs and values. In addition, they enable Sikhs to share their faith with the wider community. Another well-known festival is Vaisakhi, a harvest festival and celebration of the formation of the Khalsa.

Non-religious worldviews

There is not one unified community but different groups exist, e.g. Humanists UK, the Secular Society. Within these groups people meet for certain ceremonies (e.g. Humanist naming ceremony), for social or educational events. Some groups are involved in lobbying for change.

Links for teachers

What is a community?

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zpywqfr/articles/zpcqwnb>

What events bring communities together?

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/subjects/zh3rkqt>

Links: See Appendix 4, 'Religion and Worldviews in Leicester' and links for teachers in year 2, autumn term.

Teaching suggestions

Pupils could:

- Produce a map/chart to show which RWs are practised in the local community and the associated names of their places of worship.
- Carry out a census and draw up a chart to show which RWVs are represented in the class and the school.
- Discuss how religious places are different to other places.
- Visit local places of worship/meeting places and interview people to find out about the contribution they make to the wider community, how they celebrate their faith, etc.
- Design posters (which include visual and written content) based on key RW events and festivals in Leicester.
- Carry out research into the locality to show how communities have changed over time.
- Suggest reasons why people might belong to more than one RW community and give examples.

UPPER KEY STAGE 2

YEAR 5

Year 5

Commitment, Promises and Meaning



Overview

This builds upon learning in year 3, when pupils looked at the way people express their beliefs through worship and caring for others. In this year's work they will focus upon how people express these beliefs through special ceremonies which mark important milestones in life, i.e. birth, commitment ceremonies, marriage and death. The symbolism attached to these commitment ceremonies is profound, both in terms of personal faith and a sense of community. They demonstrate not only a person's commitment to a religion but also a deep emotional response. To show that they belong to a religion or worldview people may take part in a particular ceremony to demonstrate an outward sign of commitment. Promises are a key part of these ceremonies, as they are in marriage. The concept of a promise links to that of covenant which runs through the syllabus. The promise of an afterlife is explored in the summer term.

Worldviews context

Whatever our worldview, we are likely to mark significant milestones (sometimes called 'rites of passage') from birth to death. Obviously, people's worldviews include beliefs about the purpose of life and ultimately, about death. These present important questions such as 'Why are we here?' and 'What happens when we die?' The way we answer these questions contributes to how we develop a particular worldview.

<p>Autumn How do people welcome new life into the world? How do people show their commitment to a religion?</p> <p>Birth and commitment ceremonies. Clothing, symbols associated with ceremonies.</p>	<p>Spring How do people celebrate marriage?</p> <p>The meaning of marriage. Commitment and promises. Wedding ceremonies.</p>	<p>Summer 1 What do people believe about the afterlife? How is this expressed in funeral practices?</p> <p>Religious and non-religious beliefs about life after death. Funeral rituals. The meaning of immortality.</p>
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Progression Strands: concepts which pupils should understand

A: Belonging, Identity & Community

- How different ceremonies marking important steps in life bring communities together, symbolising a sense of belonging and identity.
- How clothing and symbols contribute to a sense of identity.
- How promises made are strengthened by the presence of the community.

B: Beliefs, Ideas and Values

- How promises made in commitment ceremonies strengthen belief.
- How ceremonies reflect key beliefs about the purpose of life and death.
- How promises are connected to beliefs about death.

C: Expression, Experience & the Sacred

- What rituals and symbolism characterise ceremonies.
- How the sacred is a key component of religious ceremonies, e.g. promises made to God.

D: Truth, Interpretation and Meaning

- How people interpret the meaning of life and death.
- How commitment ceremonies may have different meanings for different people.

Year 5: Autumn

How do people welcome new life into the world?

How do people show their commitment to a religion?

Religions and Worldviews

Compulsory

- Christianity
- Judaism **OR** Islam
- Hinduism **OR** Sikhi
-

Other RWs should be covered as and when appropriate, e.g. Humanist ceremonies.

Content overview

Birth and commitment ceremonies

Symbols and clothing associated with these ceremonies.

Previous learning: what do pupils know and remember from year 4?

What pilgrimage means to individuals and communities.

Which RW communities can be found in the neighbourhood.

Previous learning linked to this unit

Reception

Why babies are special.

Year 2

Sacred texts.

Year 3

Expression through worship.

Year 4

Why communities matter

New learning objectives

Pupils should know and understand:

- How different ceremonies, clothing and symbols contribute to a sense of belonging and identity.
- What promises say about belief and may be strengthened by the presence of the community.
- Which rituals and actions characterise ceremonies.
- How 'sacred and holy' are key components of religious ceremonies, e.g. promises made to God.
- How commitment ceremonies may have different meanings for different people.

Unit expectations and outcomes

Evidence for these should be demonstrated through a variety of ways, including pupils' work, conversations with pupils and assessment tasks. (Appendix 2)

To achieve the learning objectives, pupils should be able to:

- Describe a) the ways in which people welcome new life into the world and b) what happens during commitment ceremonies.
- Explain how clothing and symbols contribute to a sense of identity.
- Compare promises and actions made during different ceremonies.
- Explain the difference between religious and non-religious ceremonies.



Key vocabulary and concepts

Christianity: baptism, baptistry, believers' baptism, candles, confirmation, dedication, font, Godparents, Holy Communion, immersion, purity, oil, ring, sacrament, vows, water.

Hinduism: agni, ashrama, ghee, jatakarma, Raksha Bandham, sanskaras, Upanayana/Sacred thread.

Islam: Adhan, aqiqah, Qur'an.

Judaism: Brit Milah, Bimah, Bar Mitzvah, Bat Mitzvah, kippah, mohel, phylacteries/tefillin, Shema, tallith, Torah.

Sikhi: amrit, Amrit Sanskar, Five Ks, Granthi, Kaur, Khalsa, Mool Mantra, Naam Karan, Singh.

Teacher guidance

Having focused upon the ways in which people express belief through worship and care for others, this unit looks at the ways people express their beliefs through commitment ceremonies. In birth ceremonies adults generally make promises on behalf of babies. Commitment ceremonies take place later, when people are old enough to make their own decisions. Some are part of growing up within a religion and happen at a specific age, for example, Bar Mitzvah. Others, such as believers' baptism, may happen at any age, provided that the person is old enough to make the decision for themselves. Pupils will learn about what happens to people during these ceremonies and what is symbolised by certain words, actions, clothes, etc. Teachers need to be sensitive to individual circumstances and not make assumptions about which ceremonies a pupil may or may not have experienced.

How to teach this unit

Begin by discussing the importance of belonging, e.g. the different ways in which people belong; reasons why most people want to belong, some of the challenges of belonging (or not feeling like you belong). Refer to previous years when pupils have learnt about the special things that people do together with families and friends. Go on to explain that within RWs it is common practice to celebrate a sense of belonging, for example, bringing a child into the Christian community or making the decision later, as in adult or believers' baptism. People who do not belong to a religion may also take part in special ceremonies to welcome new life into the world. It is possible that pupils will be able to share their own experiences, for example, by bringing in baptism/confirmation certificates, etc. It may be possible to visit a church and ask the priest/minister to re-enact a baptism ceremony. Remember that practices vary in different denominations, e.g. Baptists would never baptise babies. Within Judaism you might want to explore the differences between Bar and Bat Mitzvah and go on to look at broader issues around gender. A key concept running through these ceremonies is that of a **promise**. Explore what this might mean in everyday life as well as within the context of RWs. Make links with the idea of covenant, covered in year 2. Do not just teach about what happens, in terms of substantive knowledge, but also explore people's sensory and emotional responses to these ceremonies.

Disciplinary Knowledge: ways of knowing

Lead the learning with disciplinary knowledge, which enables the pupils to focus upon **how** they are going to learn about this topic. This then leads to the substantive knowledge that pupils need to know and understand, i.e. **what** they need to know. In practice, the two types of knowledge should be integrated with the 'what' being taught alongside the 'how.' Disciplinary knowledge is initially set out in the form of questions. **You do not have to use every question:** some may be useful as a starter for enquiry, others for promoting deeper learning when you are looking at substantive knowledge.

How might pupils learn?

They could:

- Talk to members of faith communities or families about different ceremonies.
- Observe or act out a ceremony such as a baptism.
- Look at some symbolic artefacts (through objects or pictures) such as the 5 Ks, a cross, a candle and ask questions about them.
- Find out how many people in the class have had a birth ceremony (but this needs to be handled with sensitivity).

Theology is about what people believe.

Theologians might ask:

Could these ceremonies take place anywhere or does it have to be a sacred space?
What beliefs are linked to special clothes or objects worn/used during commitment ceremonies?
How do certain actions and rituals show what people believe?
Why do many people believe that joining a religion must be marked by a special ceremony?
What do people mean when they say that a baby is a gift from God?
Can a baby believe something?
Can you believe something at one age then change your beliefs later?

Philosophy is about what people think. Philosophers might ask:

How can a place or an object be special or sacred?
What do we mean by 'special'? How is that different to sacred?
Are some things special for everyone?
Are certain objects sacred just to the people who belong to the religions? Should everyone show respect for them?
Is it right for someone to make promises on behalf of another person?
Does wearing special clothes or symbolic objects make you into a better person?
Do you remain the same person inside, no matter how old you get?
Can you belong to a religion without going through a ceremony?
When is a person old enough to believe something?
Should promises always be kept?
Can you make a promise on behalf of someone else?
Is belonging to a group always a good thing?
Is it possible to belong to no groups at all?

Social Science is about how people live.

Social Scientists might ask:

Why do people associate special clothes or objects with special days, e.g. birthdays, weddings?
What are non-religious people celebrating at a birth ceremony?
Why does belonging to a community matter?
What kind of things are people expected to do to show that they belong to a community? For example, how does a person show that they belong to a family or school?
Is the community in one school different to another?
Why might individuals or families belong to more than one RW?

Reflections: Personal knowledge

Did I have a birth ceremony? If so, what can I remember about it?

What group(s) do I belong to?

How do I show that I belong?

Why are some groups more important to me than others?

Can I be friends with people who belong to groups that are different to mine?

Substantive Knowledge: what pupils need to know

Introduce the idea of celebrating important events in life. Talk about how people may wear badges or symbols to show which groups they belong to, e.g. cross/crucifix, ichthus (fish), 5 Ks, Om symbol.

Christianity

Birth ceremonies

Many Christians welcome a baby into their faith through baptism. Baptism, which can also be called Christening, is a sacrament in the Church of England. This is an outward sign of spirituality. The Roman Catholic Church believes there are seven sacraments, whereas most Protestant churches believe there are just two – baptism and Holy Communion. There are different beliefs about this in Protestant groups, for example, the Baptist Church prefers to call sacraments ‘ordinances’. This simply means an act of obedience to a command of Jesus. Baptists (and some other denominations) do not baptise babies, instead, they have a service of dedication or thanksgiving.

Baptism (also called Christening)

Christian denominations have different beliefs about baptism. Some believe that babies should be baptised, others believe that people should be baptised when they are old enough to make up their own minds. Symbolically, baptism removes from the baby the original sin that was brought into the world through Adam and Eve (see Year 1, Spring 1). The ceremony allows parents and godparents to make a promise before God to bring the baby up within the Christian faith, supported by the church community.

What happens during the ceremony?

The following order of service is based on Church of England practices:

- The service begins with words of welcome from the priest, a Bible reading and a brief explanation of what the ceremony means.
- The Godparents make promises to encourage the baby to grow in the faith and reject evil.
- The priest asks the congregation, ‘People of God, will you welcome this child and uphold them in their new life in Christ?’ The people reply, ‘With the help of God, we will.’
- The parents and Godparents stand near the font (the bowl holding the water). The priest makes the sign of the cross (with oil or water) on the baby’s forehead and says, ‘Christ claims you as his own. Receive the sign of the cross.’
- Blessed water (which has been blessed beforehand) from the font is poured over the baby’s head by the priest. This is a sign of a new beginning and becoming part of God’s family. The priest says to the baby, using his or her name, ‘I baptise you in the name of the Father, Son and Holy spirit.’
- A prayer is then said for the baby and all those who will support him/her in their religious journey.

A candle may be given to the parents for the baby, along with the words, 'Shine as a light in the world to the glory of God.'

- The baby may be dressed in a white robe or clothes. Sometimes this may be a special gown that has sentimental value to the family.

Symbolism

Water: symbolises cleansing and new life, i.e. washes away the child's original sin. The water in the font is blessed by a priest.

Oil: in some baptismal ceremonies, oil is used to symbolise that each child has been chosen by God.

Wearing of white: symbolises purity.

Candle: To carry the light of Christ in a dark world.

Commitment ceremonies

Adult baptism

For any number of reasons, a person may not have been baptised as a baby so may want to have the service as an adult. This is very similar to infant baptism in terms of the promises made to God and signifying membership of the church. Jesus himself was baptised as an adult (Matthew 3: 13-17).

Believers' baptism

In the Baptist Church (and some other non-conformist churches) believers are baptised by full immersion in water. Baptists would say that this is based on Biblical teachings. Jesus was baptised in this way and there are references to the practice in the New Testament.

What happens during the ceremony?

Believers are baptised by full immersion in water. This usually takes place during a service during which several people may be baptised. The service will include hymns, prayers and readings from the Bible. There is often a sermon when the minister will explain what the church teaches on baptism. After this the candidates come forward and are prayed for. They are asked three questions: 'Do you confess Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour?', 'Do you turn from sin, renounce evil and intend to follow Christ?' and 'Will you seek to live within the fellowship of his Church, and to serve him in the world?' After making these promises the person steps into the water to be baptised. Before the immersion the minister will say, 'On profession of your faith in Christ Jesus, and at your own request, I now baptise you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.' The person is then baptised and a hymn is sung to conclude the service.

Symbolism

Believers' baptism signifies the end of the old life and the start of the new life as a Christian believer. In the New Testament Paul wrote about baptism and used the symbolic image of death, burial and resurrection (Romans 6: 3-4). Total immersion symbolises Christ's death and shows that the person being baptised has 'died' to their former sinful way of life. The Resurrection is symbolised by the candidate coming up out of the water. S/he now has a new life with Christ. The person wears white to symbolise purity. The water is not considered to be holy, it is the symbolism of cleansing that matters.

Confirmation

Confirmation is practised by several Christian denominations including the Church of England. The word 'confirmation' means to strengthen or deepen one's relationship with God and builds upon promises made at baptism. It is also a sign of deepening commitment to the Christian community. A Bishop carries out the confirmation and there are variations in practice. Confirmation may be held at any age.

Ceremony and symbolism

Laying on of hands

During the ceremony, the Bishop will lay his hands on the head of the confirmed person, calling on the Holy Spirit to bless them with strength and courage to live out their faith.

The sign of the cross (also used in baptism)

This is a symbolic action that involves the tracing of the shape of the cross in water or holy oil on the body as a way of reaffirming faith and commitment to Christ.

Hinduism

Birth ceremonies

There is a great deal of variation within Hindu ceremonies. It should not be assumed that ALL families carry out the following rituals.

Hindu rituals (sanskaras) begin before a child is born. After birth, there many further practices associated with birth. The timings may vary considerably, and ceremonies are often combined and performed simultaneously. Pupils are not required to be familiar with all the Hindu terms for ceremonies – teachers should use their judgement and discretion.

What happens during the ceremonies?

Jatakarma is performed on the day of birth and welcomes the baby into the world. After the baby is cleaned and bathed s/he is placed on the father's lap. He places a small amount of ghee and honey under his/her tongue using his little finger or a golden spoon. He whispers a name of God into the baby's ear.

Nam Samskara (name giving ceremony). On about the eleventh or twelfth day after birth, parents celebrate the name-giving ceremony, dressing the baby in new clothes.

Traditionally one of the child's names is chosen based on his/her horoscope. The baby is sometimes named after one of the family deities. Sometimes a havan (fire sacrifice), accompanies these rites. Traditionally, the ears are also pierced on this day.

Symbolism

Ghee and honey: represents the sweetness of the Divine.

Fire: fire, or 'Agni,' holds profound symbolic significance, representing various aspects of life, spirituality, and cosmic order.

Ear piercing: Ear piercing is an ancient Indian practice, also known as Karna Vedha. It is often used in rituals to mark the various stages of human life and to signify cultural heritage and upbringing.

Commitment ceremonies

Upanayana: the sacred thread ceremony

Traditionally, this is performed when a child reaches school-going age but it may be later but not all Hindus practice this ceremony. For boys, in some Hindu communities, this confirms that they are of an age to take on religious responsibility. Girls are sometimes honoured in the same way, but it is rare for them to receive and wear the thread. The Janoi (the sacred thread) is made up of three strands, representing purity of thought, words and actions. Janoi wearers may chant a special mantra when putting on and taking off their sacred thread. Vows are made to obey all aspects of the first ashrama (life stages). Some males undertake this ceremony before marriage.

Symbolism

In some Hindu communities, the male participant's head is shaved for the ceremony, symbolising a cleansing from their old ways of living.

Islam

Birth ceremonies

The first words a newborn Muslim baby should hear is the Muslim call to prayer or adhaan ('God is great, there is no God but Allah. Muhammad is the messenger of Allah. Come to prayer'). The father whispers these words into the baby's right ear. After seven days the baby's head is shaved (a tradition also carried out by Hindus). This is to show that the child is the servant of Allah. The hair is weighed and the equivalent weight in money is given to charity. The aqeeqah or aqiqah ceremony is also traditionally carried out on the seventh day. Traditionally, this was when sheep were sacrificed but in Britain the meat is ordered at the halal butchers. This is distributed to relatives, neighbours and the poor. Sometimes money is donated instead. This is to help bring about harmony in the world, i.e. to re-balance those who have more than they need and those who do not have enough. This is also when babies are given a name. Often they are named after Prophets or other important Muslim figures. Ideally, Muslim baby boys are circumcised (See Brit Milah, below) when they are seven days old although it can take place any time before puberty.

Commitment ceremonies

There is no equivalent of commitment ceremonies in Islam, such as confirmation or adult baptism. However, Muslims are expected to carry out certain rituals during their lifetime, e.g. Prayer, Hajj (Pilgrimage).

Symbolism of birth ceremonies

- The shaving of the head symbolises the cleansing of the baby from impurities and the start of its life afresh in the presence of Allah.
- The baby is given a taste of honey to reflect the tradition of the Prophet Mohammad.

Judaism

Birth ceremonies

People are Jewish through birth. Brit Milah (circumcision) is an important initiation ceremony for Jewish boys, originating from the covenant that God made with Abraham. This is when boys are given their official Hebrew name. It usually takes place when the baby is eight days old and can take place in the home or synagogue. The circumcision is performed by a mohel (a person specially trained to do this procedure) who recites a blessing and then circumcises the baby.

Commitment ceremonies

Bar Mitzvah and Bat Mitzvah

These are coming of age ceremonies meaning 'son/daughter of the commandment'. Bar Mitzvah happens at age thirteen for a boy and Bat Mitzvah at twelve for a girl which is when boys and girls become responsible for living by the Jewish Law.

Bar Mitzvah

A boy becomes Bar Mitzvah on the Shabbat nearest to his 13th birthday. Before this he will prepare by studying and reading from the Torah.

What happens during the ceremony?

During the actual ceremony the boy puts on the tefillin (see below) for the first time and will read aloud part of the Torah or a section of the Prophets. Both the Rabbi and the boy will give a talk, addressing the family and to the rest of the community. It is traditional for the father to recite a prayer of thanks to God for bringing his son to maturity. The boy receives

gifts and there is a celebratory meal.

Bat Mitzvah

The Bat Mitzvah is only practised by Progressive Jewish communities. A girl will prepare for her Bat Mitzvah in a similar way to a boy preparing for his Bar Mitzvah, but she will do this around the time of her 12th birthday. However, during the Bat Mitzvah ceremony itself, the girl will not wear the tefillin. The ceremony follows a similar pattern to the Bar Mitzvah. Traditionally, within Orthodox Judaism, males and females are not thought to have the same responsibilities, therefore some rules are less strict for girls than they are for boys. Orthodox Jewish families may celebrate Bat Mitzvah with a family gathering where the girl may give a speech.

Symbolic objects and clothing

Tallith

This is a prayer shawl traditionally worn by Jewish men during morning prayer services, festivals and on Shabbat. Many Progressive Jewish women choose to wear a tallith. It has 613 fringes known as 'tzitzits' which represent the 613 commandments or mitzvot that Jews must follow. After death, the tallith is often wrapped around the body.

Tefillin

Tefillin are worn mainly by Orthodox Jewish men during morning prayer. They consist of two leather boxes which contain words from the Shema. One of the boxes is tied onto the arm with the leather strap it is attached to, and the other box is tied to the head. This signifies that God must be served with thoughts and with the heart. When the tefillin is put on, a special prayer is said: 'Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the Universe, who has sanctified us with His commandments as to wear tefillin.'

Kippah

The kippah, often referred to as a skull cap, is a sign of Jewish identity. In Orthodox Judaism it is always worn by Jewish men, apart from when they are sleeping or washing. In Progressive Judaism some women choose to wear the kippah. Unlike the wearing of the tallith and tefillin, there is no commandment for Jews to wear the kippah, however it is believed to be a sign of respect to God to cover the head. In some Orthodox communities married women cover their heads with scarves, hats or wigs.

Sikhi

Birth ceremonies

Sikhs believe that the birth of an individual is a special gift from God and should therefore be celebrated. They believe that a person has many reincarnations and that the birth of someone as a human is special as it provides the opportunity for an individual to become closer to God.

What happens during the ceremony?

Naam karan takes place in the gurdwara around two weeks after the birth of the child. It is held at the gurdwara and has the following stages:

- The Granthi opens the Guru Granth Sahib at random. Sikhs believe that the page that is revealed will be determined by Hukam or God's will.
- The Granthi reads the first line of the page. The first letter of the first word on that page decides the first letter of the child's name, which the parents choose.
- The Granthi then announces the name to the congregation or some time may be taken to make the decision.
- During the service, the baby is given a spoonful of amrit mixture (sanctified liquid made from sugar and water) which is made and stirred with a double-edged sword.
- The parents make karah parshad or make a donation. The food is offered to the sangat (congregation) at the end of the service.

Although many Sikhs use their family name, some decide to use the names Kaur and Singh. This is to follow Guru Gobind Singh's practice of calling all men Singh, meaning 'Lion', and

all women 'Kaur', meaning 'Princess.' The naming ceremony is an important rite for Sikhs. It means that the child has been officially welcomed into the sangat and has been blessed by God.

Symbolism

Amrit: a mixture of water and sugar, also often used in other Dharmic ceremonies, represents the sweetness of God.

Kaur: Princess

Singh: Lion

Random opening of the Guru Granth Sahib: to allow God to make the choice.

Commitment ceremony: Amrit ceremony (or Amrit Sanskar)

Sikhs who have been through this ceremony become initiated Sikhs, take new names, and wear the 5 Ks (See 'Symbolism' below). This is the initiation rite introduced by Guru Gobind Singh when he founded the Khalsa in 1699. Sikhs may go through this initiation as soon as they are old enough to fully understand its meaning.

What happens during the ceremony?

The ceremony takes place in a Gurdwara, before the Guru Granth Sahib, and in the presence of 5 initiated Sikhs (who represent the Panj Piyaras, the first 5 Sikhs to be initiated). During the ceremony, hymns are recited from the Sikh scripture, prayers are said, and people are reminded of the principles of Sikhism. Amrit is prepared, a mixture of sugar and water that has been stirred with a double-edged sword. The Sikhs being initiated drink some of this from the same bowl, and have it sprinkled on their eyes and hair. Each then recites the Mool Mantra (the basic beliefs of Sikhism). There are readings from the Guru Granth Sahib and an explanation of rules of Sikhism. The ceremony ends with the eating of the ceremonial food, karah parshad.

Symbolism

The Five K's

The 5 Ks are 5 symbols worn by Sikhs who have been initiated into the Khalsa. The Guru introduced these for these reasons:

- Adopting these symbols would identify members of the Khalsa.
- Wearing them binds the community close together.

Each 'K' has a particular significance.

1. Kesh (uncut hair)
2. Kara (a steel bracelet)
3. Kanga (a wooden comb)
4. Kaccha - also spelt, Kachh, Kachera (cotton underwear)
5. Kirpan (steel sword)

Why Sikhs wear turbans

Sikhs wear turbans as a symbol of their faith and identity. The turban, known as 'dastar' or 'pagri' in Punjabi, holds significant cultural and religious importance in Sikhi.

Humanist naming ceremony

As we have seen, most religions have ceremonies to celebrate the birth of a baby. Many non-religious people such as Humanists also wish to celebrate this event with their families, friends, and community. These may be performed by Humanist celebrants. These are joyful occasions that express hopes for the child to have a happy and fulfilling life. There is no set format for these occasions. Often the baby's parents will choose symbols, readings, and songs which have a personal meaning. During the ceremony, there is no assumption that the child will go on to be a Humanist. The focus is on promising to support them to decide for themselves what they believe and how they want to live. There is no set format for a baby naming ceremony. The baby's parents will choose symbols, readings, and songs which hold personal meaning. During the ceremony, there is no sense of the child being labelled as a Humanist. The focus is on promising to support them to decide for themselves what they believe and how they want to live.

Links For Teachers

Christianity

What is baptism? Video clip

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p01149v1>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0115dlq>

A Christian baptism story: video clip

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0115hmj>

Adult baptism

<https://baptism.org.uk/2020/05/27/getting-baptised-in-the-church-of-england/>

Believer's Baptism

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zfwg7nb/revision/4>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/religious-studies-ks2-baptism/zm32nrd>

Confirmation

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zfwg7nb/revision/7>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/z4wg7nb/revision/3>

Hinduism

Ceremonies

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p010xyj2>

Hindu name giving ceremony

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/z9fxk2p/revision/2>

Video clip

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p02npp3n>

Sacred Thread Ceremony

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/z9fxk2p/revision/3>

Islam

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zkf2vk7/revision/2>

Judaism

Brit milah

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/z2tpjty/revision/2>

Bar and Bat Mitzvah

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/z2tpjty/revision/3>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zv626yc/revision/7>

Sikhi

Sikh traditions

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0114ndn>

Birth and naming ceremonies

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zhp26yc/revision/8>

Taking Amrit: video clip

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/what-is-the-special-sikh-ceremony-taking-amrit/zj6d7nb>

Five K's

Video clips

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/religious-studies-ks2-five-ks-of-sikhism/znbhf4j>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zkjpkmn>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0113ln8>

Humanism

<https://humanists.uk/ceremonies/humanist-namings/>

Resources

New Arrivals: Non-religious baby namings: Wynne Willson, J & Ashby, R, BHA, 2002

Non-Religious Readings for Naming Ceremonies: Morrison, H, Montpelier Publishing, 2015

Teaching suggestions

Pupils could:

- Compare promises and actions made during at least two different ceremonies.
- Describe at least two ways in which people welcome new life into the world and explain why this is important to them.
- Explain (by writing or drawing) the importance of symbolic clothes and objects associated with commitment ceremonies.
- Discuss about how wearing a religious symbol in everyday life might cause problems.
- Talk to members of faith communities or families about different ceremonies.
- Observe or act out a ceremony such as a baptism.
- Compare promises and actions made during different ceremonies.
- Explain who is involved in different ceremonies and what their roles are.

Year 5: Spring Term

How do people celebrate marriage?

RWs that must be referred to

Compulsory

- Christianity
- **Either** Judaism **OR** Islam
- **Either** Hinduism **OR** Sikhi

To ensure continuity, schools should bear in mind which religions were covered in the previous term.

Other RWs should be covered as and when appropriate, e.g. Humanist ceremony, Pagan ceremony.

Content overview

Marriage: beliefs and ceremonies

Symbols and clothing associated with these ceremonies.

Previous learning: what do pupils know and remember?

Year 2

Sacred texts.

Year 3

Expression through worship.

Year 4

Why communities matter.

Year 5

Birth and commitment ceremonies

New learning objectives

Pupils should know and understand:

- How marriage is linked to belonging.
- How promises made during a wedding ceremony reflect belief and are strengthened by the presence of the community.
- Which rituals and symbols characterise marriage ceremonies.
- How the sacred is a key component of wedding ceremonies, e.g. promises made to God.
- How marriage may have different meanings for different people.

Unit expectations and outcomes

Evidence for these should be demonstrated through a variety of ways, including pupils' work, conversations with pupils and assessment tasks. (See Appendix 2)

To achieve the learning objectives, pupils should be able to:

- Compare and contrast at least two types of wedding ceremonies, including promises and actions.
- Recognise how promises are an important part of marriage.
- Explain the meaning of rituals and symbols in marriage ceremonies.
- Give reasons for the differences between religious and non-religious ceremonies.



Key vocabulary and concepts

General: covenant, marriage, promise, rings, vows, wedding.

Christianity: bride, groom, hymns, vows, white.

Buddhism: Five Moral Precepts, Noble Eightfold Path.

Hinduism: ashramas, fire, henna, mandap.

Islam: Aqd Nikah, mahr, Nikah khutba, ummah, walimah.

Judaism: chuppah, glass, ketubah, mazel tov, rabbi, Sheva Brachot.

Pagan: altar, broomstick, four elements, handfasting.

Sikhi: Anand Karaj, Anand Sahib, granthi, Guru Granth Sahib, karah prashad, Lavan.

Teacher guidance

Many people see marriage as having two key purposes:

1. To bring two people together to share their lives until death.
2. To provide a secure environment for the birth and upbringing of children.

However, some people would say that both those things can be achieved without the need for a marriage ceremony. Marriage is a civil contract between two people. A couple can choose to have the ceremony in a Register Office, or any other place licensed to conduct marriages. They may also choose to have it as part of a religious ceremony in a place of worship licensed to conduct marriages. In 2014, the UK parliament introduced the Marriage (Same Sex) Couples Act 2014. This allowed couples of the same sex to get married in England, Scotland and Wales, but excluded same-sex couples getting married in church. Any couple may choose to live together before deciding whether to marry or they may live together without ever getting married. This does not have the stigma attached to it that existed in the past. In general, religions do not favour living together without marriage, teaching instead that it has a special meaning before God. This gives extra weight to the promises made as they are not just made before people but before God. However, no-one can be forced to get married if they do not want to. In 2023 the legal age for marriage and Civil Partnership was raised to eighteen in England and Wales.

How to teach this unit

Marriage is very much about adults, meaning that pupils' understanding is limited to some extent. Begin with their experience of attending a wedding and encourage them to bring in photographs, wedding invitations, etc. You should focus upon:

- the promises made
- actions, objects/artefacts and symbolism
- similarities and differences
- the strong links between marriage and the idea of covenant in some traditions.
- differences in procedures such as the length of a ceremony, e.g. a Register Office service may last only minutes whereas a Hindu wedding may last days or weeks.

You should also include a Humanist ceremony so that pupils understand that it is not only people who belong to religious traditions that want to be married.

Note

Covering this topic requires some sensitivity. Avoid making assumptions and consider the fact that some pupils' parents:

- may not be married
- could be divorced
- could be same sex

Some pupils may be brought up by a single parent as the result of divorce or bereavement. They might also be part of a blended family. Others might be being brought up by grandparents or other family members. It is not necessary to cover the topic of divorce at this stage.

Disciplinary Knowledge: ways of knowing

Lead the learning with disciplinary knowledge, which enables the pupils to focus upon **how** they are going to learn about this topic. This then leads to the substantive knowledge that pupils need to know and understand, i.e. **what** they need to know. In practice, the two types of knowledge should be integrated with the 'what' being taught alongside the 'how.' Disciplinary knowledge is initially set out in the form of questions. **You do not have to use every question:** some may be useful as a starter for enquiry, others for promoting deeper learning when you are looking at substantive knowledge.

How might pupils learn?

They could:

- Interview people we know about their wedding and ask them questions about why it was an important day for them.
- Look at pictures and video clips of wedding from different RWs and around the world. Identify similarities and differences.
- Analyse data and statistics about marriage in the UK. What can we learn from this?
- Research ceremonies around the world and explore religious and cultural differences.

Theology is about what people believe. Theologians might ask:

In general, why do religions say that marriage is a good thing?

What do religions believe in common about marriage?

Why do people of faith believe that marriage should be celebrated in a sacred place?

Why do promises made during marriage ceremonies matter?

What do Humanists believe about marriage?

Philosophy is about what people think. Philosophers might ask:

Why should (or shouldn't) people get married?

Why do marriages end?

Can a promise last forever?

What does marriage mean?

Do people become different after a marriage ceremony?

Social Science is about how people live. Social Scientists might ask:

Why do people want to get married?

Why do people celebrate a marriage?

How have attitudes to marriage changed over time?

Why might some people choose not to get married?

Why do some religions not agree with same sex marriages?

Why do people wear special clothes at weddings?

Should same sex couples be allowed to marry in a religious building?

Reflections: Personal knowledge

Have I attended a wedding? If so, what was it like?

Where do I think would be the best place to hold a wedding and why?

What do I mean if I make a promise?

Substantive Knowledge: what pupils need to know

Terminology: arranged marriages

In some religious traditions marriages are arranged by the young person's family. Parents regard it as a serious responsibility to find a suitable partner for their son or daughter. An arranged marriage is not the same as a forced marriage. The final choice is usually made by the person concerned, who is free to reject as many of the potential marriage partners as they wish until they meet someone who they are happy to marry. Some families may come from a tradition of arranged marriages, but they now adopt a more western world way of finding a suitable partner.

Marriage in Abrahamic traditions

Christianity

Purpose of Christian marriage

Marriage is mentioned in the Bible many times. Jesus said, *'But in the beginning, at the time of creation, God made them male and female, as the scripture says. And for this reason, a man will leave his father and mother and unite with his wife, and the two will become one. So they are no longer two, but one. No human being then must separate what God has joined together'*. Mark 10:6-9

Most Christians believe marriage is an important part of life. They believe the purpose of marriage includes the following:

- to be with someone they love for the rest of their lives
- to have children who can also be part of the Christian faith (see autumn term) and provide a secure environment for the family.
- To make a covenant or promise (see references to covenant in previous years) before God through their marriage vows.

The marriage ceremony

This may vary between different groups or denominations. The congregation sing hymns and say prayers to ask God for his blessing on the couple. The priest or minister gives a sermon on the theme of marriage. Rings are exchanged, symbolising eternal love, i.e. that marriage is a lifelong commitment. The couple make important promises, called vows, to stay committed to each other. Finally, they sign the marriage register, which is required by law in the UK.

Symbolism

Covenant

Christian marriage is a covenant relationship. Many traditional wedding customs have their roots in the covenant God made with Abraham.

White wedding dress

This is a traditional symbol of the wife's purity in heart and life, as well as her reverence to God.

Exchanging of rings

The wedding ring is a symbol of the couple's inward bond, signifying, through an unending circle, the eternal aspect of love.

Throwing of rice

This tradition is linked to fertility as some people believe that one of the primary purposes of marriage is to create a family.

Islam

Islam teaches that the family should be a key part of Islamic society, providing security for all its members. Some see the extended family as part of the ummah (community), therefore, different generations of families may live together. Others may encourage living in a nuclear family. Muslims are encouraged to keep a strong relationship with their extended family. According to the Qur'an, Allah made male and female to complete each other. Many Muslims believe this to mean that heterosexual relationships are part of Allah's plan.

The marriage ceremony

The actual Muslim wedding is known as a Aqd Nikah (solemn contract). There are readings from the Qur'an, and the exchange of vows in front of witnesses for both partners. No special religious official is necessary, but often the Imam is present, and he will perform the ceremony. Marriages must be declared publicly. This usually takes the place of a large feast, or walimah. The wedding ceremony can vary in practice but there are some common points:

- It takes place within the home or the mosque.
- There must be a minimum of two witnesses.
- The groom gives his wife mahr - a pre-agreed dowry that may include a gift of money or jewellery.
- The bride and groom repeat the word 'Qubool' (I accept) three times.
- The Aqd Nikah (solemn contract) is signed. This is a compulsory part of the wedding. It must be said and written down.
- The imam recites verses from the Qur'an and the Nikah Khutba (wedding sermon).
- The guests enjoy a Walimah (marriage banquet).

Judaism

Many Jewish people see marriage as a gift from G-d and a promise between G-d and the couple. 'G-d said, "It is not good for the man to live alone. I will make a suitable companion to help him.'" (Genesis 2:18). According to teachings in The Talmud, marriage is a commitment of love and companionship. For many Jews the principal purpose of marriage is to have children. The family is very important within Judaism, but it may take many forms, including traditional nuclear families, extended families, etc. Much of Judaism is focused on marriage and family life, therefore the marriage ritual has great significance.

The marriage ceremony

- The ketubah or marriage contract, is signed.
- The couple stand under the chuppah (canopy representing the home), blessings are given and the groom places the wedding ring on the bride's finger. In some traditions, the bride also gives the groom a ring.
- The rabbi or guests recite seven blessings known as Sheva Brachot. The bride and groom drink a cup of wine.

- The rabbi may say some words about the couple before blessing them.
- At the end of the ceremony, the groom will break a glass with his right foot and the guests shout 'mazel tov', which means 'congratulations'. This tradition symbolises the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem. It also reminds Jews that in life there is sometimes great sadness as well as great joy.

All the elements of the ceremony link in some way to Jewish beliefs about covenant.

Symbolism

The chuppah or canopy

This represents the home that the couple will build together as husband and wife.

The ketubah

The marriage contract, representing the promises made by the groom to his new wife.

The broken glass

Jews have various interpretations of the meaning of this. Some believe it symbolises the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem whereas others believe it shows that love needs to be protected.

Hair

Many Orthodox and Hasidic Jewish women make the choice to cover all or part of their hair following marriage, either with a scarf (called a tichel), hat or wig (known as a sheitel). This may be worn all the time, when out of the home or just when praying in the synagogue, when in the presence of men who are neither their husband or a close relative. The practice has its roots in symbolising modesty rules. Today, many Jewish women cover their head to display their married identity. Some Hasidic women will shave their head entirely.

Marriage in Dharmic traditions

Buddhism

Buddhism does not involve the worship of a creator or God who blesses or requires marriage. For that reason, Buddhist marriage is often seen as a legal agreement between partners, instead of a religious duty. However, many Buddhists may see their marriage as a significant social and spiritual life event. Buddhist families vary according to the customs of the country they live in, and include nuclear families, extended families and same-sex parents, as well as couples without children. The Five Moral Precepts and the Noble Eightfold Path provide guidance for the Buddhist family and other areas of life. Early Buddhist scriptures teach that husbands and wives should respect and honour, show love and trust, and remain faithful to each other. Some Buddhist parents educate their children about the teachings of the Buddha, including how to meditate. Other parents prefer to let their children decide for themselves, later in life, as to whether they want to live by the Buddha's teachings.

Hinduism

Hinduism teaches that family is the foundation of society. Marriage is celebrated as a spiritual stage of life, achieved as a Hindu moves through ashramas. Hinduism teaches that sexual relationships should only occur in marriage between a man and a woman but within the tradition there are different views about same sex relationships. Ideally, a couple should produce children to make their family complete. A parent's role is to guide their children towards a spiritual way of life, e.g. by worshipping together and completing the Sacred Thread ceremony (see previous term).

The marriage ceremony

The Hindu marriage ceremony is considered sacred, binding a man and woman together for life. It takes the Hindu couple into the second ashrama. Traditionally, the day before the marriage, the bride has her hands and feet decorated with beautiful henna design. In some Hindu communities the bride and groom fast until the wedding ceremony is complete. Most weddings take place in a mandap which contains a sacred fire at its centre. The groom traditionally waits for the bride in the mandap with the priest and family members.

During the ceremony:

- Prayers and offerings are made.
- The bride and groom place flower garlands around each other's necks. The priest then ties the bride's sari to a scarf worn by the groom.
- The bride and groom throw offerings of grains into the sacred fire in the hope of fertility regarding both food supplies and children. They walk several times around the sacred fire with each circuit representing different aspects of marriage.
- The bride and groom take seven steps and make seven promises to each other, including to respect each other, to have children, to be together for life and to protect each other.
- The groom puts red powder into the bride's hair to show that she is now a married woman.
- The parents, family members and friends give their blessing to the couple using rice as a symbol of fertility.
- There are also many different traditions linked to particular families and cultures, e.g. customs which take place after ceremonies.

Symbolism

- On the morning of the marriage, the bride and groom take baths and put on perfumed oils to symbolise being pure and ready to commit themselves to each other.
- Flower garlands symbolise an unbroken circle to show eternal union.
- Tying the bride's sari to a scarf worn by the groom, symbolises the couple's physical and spiritual union.

Sikhi

For Sikhs, marriage is the uniting of two people in love and commitment. Two people become one soul. A Sikh marriage ceremony is called Anand Karaj. It is a ceremony of equals as the husband and wife have equal status, though their traditional roles may differ. Most Sikhs see marriage as a sanskara and an important part of life. In addition to the actual ceremony, a Sikh marriage involves several preliminary rituals which may last for several weeks. For example, at the bride's parents' home, people may gather for several evenings to sing traditional wedding songs. These practices have more cultural than religious meaning.

The marriage ceremony

- The groom enters the gurdwara while hymns are being sung. The bride enters later with her family and sits next to the groom.
- The granthi or the person officiating will ask the bride and groom if they consent to marriage. The granthi then gives a talk about the nature of marriage.
- The father of the bride places one end of the scarf worn by the groom in the hand of his daughter.
- The four verses of the Lavan (wedding) hymn are read out or sung. At the end of each verse the groom leads the bride in a circle round the Guru Granth Sahib.
- The Anand Sahib ('Song of Bliss') is sung.
- A prayer of thanks for the marriage ceremony is made.
- Karah Parshad is distributed.

Marriage in other RWs

Pagan

Pagan wedding ceremonies are called handfastings and mark the coming together of two people in a formal, loving and equal partnership.

Pagans take the swearing of oaths very seriously indeed and believe it important that they express articulate the wishes of the individuals concerned rather than repeating a standard formula. With this in mind, the vows will be carefully discussed and decided upon beforehand, in consultation with the priestess and/or priest who will officiate at the ceremony. A couple may choose to handfast for the traditional period of a year and a day or longer. They may renew their vows after each year and a day has passed so that neither comes to take the other for granted. Others vow to handfast for life while a few, in accordance with Pagan beliefs in reincarnation, do so for all their future lives as well. As with all other Pagan ceremonies, there is considerable variation in the precise form an individual handfasting rite will take, but some parts are all but universal.

- The ceremony will be held outdoors if possible and will begin with the marking out of sacred space (usually in the form of a circle), the honouring of the Four Elements, and a welcome to all.
- The space will be blessed by the officiant, usually a priest, priestess, or close friend. S/he will light incense or sage, call to the gods, goddesses, or spirits, and create a spiritual circle to surround the physical circle.
- An altar filled with meaningful items, such candles, incense, or ceremonial wine might be placed near the officiant. These might be used by the couple as part of the ritual or offered to the gods.
- The gods and goddesses will be called upon to bless the future life of the couple. Pagan faiths embrace many different gods and goddesses, spirits, and even the elements.
- The couples' right hands will be bound together (hence 'handfasting'), they will swear the oaths that will define their relationship, and their hands will then be unbound in token that they remain together of their own free will.
- Rings will be exchanged, and the ceremony will conclude with 'jumping the broomstick' - the couple leaping hand in hand over a broom held horizontally before them. This symbolises the crossing of the symbolic boundary between the old and new life.
- As with most Pagan rituals, a handfasting will be followed by feasting and celebration by the company.

Non-religious religious wedding ceremonies

Wedding ceremonies are important for some couples who are not religious but wish to express love and commitment towards one another in front of their family, friends, and community. While many religious couples may choose to have their wedding ceremony in a place of worship, someone who does not believe in God will not wish to refer to religious ideas, texts, or deities. These days non-religious couples have great flexibility in deciding on the structure of the wedding and the vows (promises) that are exchanged. A Humanist wedding is an example of a non-religious ceremony.

Humanist marriage

A Humanist wedding is a non-religious ceremony that is welcoming, inclusive, and personally tailored to the couple. It is led by a trained Humanist celebrant and focuses on the couple and the things that are important to them. It can be as traditional or non-traditional, formal or informal. It can include whatever the couple feels is right for them. It can include vows, readings, poems, music, rituals (such as handfasting).

How is a Humanist wedding different from a civil ceremony?

A humanist wedding is different from a civil ceremony or register office wedding because in that it is entirely personalised. It can take place anywhere that is significant to the couple. In England, Wales and the Isle of Man it is possible to have a Humanist wedding but it needs to be registered at a Register Office just before or after the ceremony.

Links For Teachers

Christianity

Marriage in different cultures

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/z37nvj6>

Buddhism

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/ztss46f/articles/z62t3qt#znc4239>

Christianity

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zrn6ywx>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zrr7y9q/revision/1>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zypxfdm#znc4239>

Judaism

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zbnng2p#z2fgdnb>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/z4kg4qt/revision/6>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zbnng2p#znc4239>

Hinduism

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zgp3g7h/articles/zbvrjfr>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/z9fxk2p/revision/4>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/articles/zmqrkmn>

Islam

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zynvkhv#z9k2s82>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zkf2vk7/revision/4>

Sikhi

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/z4fr4xs/articles/zcg9239>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/ztq24qt/revision/1>

Pagan

<https://theamm.org/articles/664-when-pagans-wed-modern-paganism-the-wedding-ritual>

Humanism

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zjgvt39/articles/zv3tjhw>

<https://humanists.uk/ceremonies/weddings/blog/what-is-a-humanist-wedding/>

Teaching suggestions

Pupils could:

- Interview people we know about their wedding and ask them questions about why it was an important day for them.
- Look at pictures and video clips of wedding from different RWs and around the world. Identify similarities and differences.
- Analyse data and statistics about marriage in the UK. What can we learn from this?
- Compare and contrast at least two types of wedding ceremonies, including promises and actions.
- Recognise how 'covenant' or promise is a part of marriage.
- Explain the meaning of rituals and symbols in marriage ceremonies.
- Design a wedding invitation representing one religion or worldview.
- Research the different places people marry. Present through data and pictures. Make use of the local newspaper, radio, media.

Year 5: Summer Term

What do people believe about the afterlife?

How is this expressed in the funeral practices?

RWs that must be referred to

Compulsory

- Christianity
- **Either** Judaism **OR** Islam
- **Either** Hinduism **OR** Sikhi

To ensure continuity, schools should consider which religions were covered in the previous terms.

If teachers are using the 'alternative' approach ([see p. 192](#)) teachers should make their own choices about which RWs they include.

Content overview

The meaning of life and death

Religious and philosophical traditions.

Death

Belief and funeral practices.

OR

The idea of immortality ([See p. 207](#))

Previous learning linked to this topic:

what do pupils know and remember?

Year 2

Spring and summer term: worldviews and beliefs.

Year 5

Autumn and spring terms: birth and commitment ceremonies: part of the journey of life.



New learning objectives

Pupils should know and understand:

- How ritual plays a part in funeral ceremonies and how this brings people together.
- How people interpret the meaning of life and death.
- What is meant by immortality.



Unit expectations and outcomes

Evidence for these should be demonstrated through a variety of ways, including pupils' work, conversations with pupils and assessment tasks. See Appendix 2).

To achieve the learning objectives, pupils should be able to:

- Describe some funeral rituals and explain how they might bring communities together.
- Compare and present balanced arguments about the purpose of life and death.
- Interpret the meaning and significance of living forever.



Key vocabulary and concepts

Buddhism: Powa, shrine.

Christianity: eternal, heaven, hell, resurrection.

Hinduism: Brahman, dharma, karma, moksha, pyre, reincarnation, River Ganges, samsara.

Islam: Akirah, Day of Judgement, Paradise.

Judaism: kaddish, Sheol, stone-setting, tallith.

Sikhi: Ardas, langar, mukti, reincarnation, samsara.

General: burial, cremation, funeral, gravestones, immortality, mourning.

Teacher guidance

In this unit pupils re-visit the main beliefs held by different RWs. It may be helpful to refer to teacher guidance for year 2.

Abrahamic traditions

Abrahamic religions show reverence for key prophets and leaders such as Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and the Prophet Muhammad. 'Revelation' is final, and knowledge of God is fixed, as set out in the scriptures. While there might be discussions and interpretations within communities, there is a strong emphasis on a singular, revealed truth. At death it is believed that the soul or spirit leaves the physical body. There are differing beliefs about the detail of the afterlife within Abrahamic religions, but all believe in some form of eternal life.

Dharmic traditions

'Dharma' is a Sanskrit term which means 'duty' as well as describing the cosmic order or law that governs the universe. Each tradition has its own unique beliefs, practices and scriptures but also shares common themes such as karma (the principle of cause and effect), reincarnation (the belief in the cycle of birth and death), and the pursuit of liberation or enlightenment. People who belong to Dharmic traditions believe that it is possible for any person to connect with the Divine as everyone is an expression of the Divine. This means that no intermediary prophets or messengers are necessary.

A key learning point is that Dharmic traditions tend to see space and time as cyclical. Abrahamic traditions take a linear view.

How to teach this unit

Recap on earlier learning about different beliefs in RWs. Remind pupils what characterises Abrahamic and Dharmic traditions. Emphasise the point that even within RWs, people do not necessarily share the same beliefs. Views about the meaning of life and how it should be lived are obviously connected to beliefs in the afterlife. This unit is also linked to the previous terms where pupils looked at the life journey in terms of birth, commitment and marriage ceremonies.

Encourage pupils to think more carefully about their own worldviews – this will be followed up in year 6. Use sensitivity when discussing beliefs about death as some pupils may have experienced bereavement, especially of grandparents who may have played a very important role in their lives. On the other hand, some may wish to share their experiences of attending a funeral, though it is possible that many will not have attended one. Remember to include the non-religious dimension by covering the Humanist perspective. It is because Humanists do not believe in God or an afterlife that they believe that we should live our best lives in the present.

NOTE: An alternative approach

If you feel that teaching about beliefs and practices related to death and the afterlife is inappropriate for your class, focus on beliefs about the purpose of life and include more details about philosophical viewpoints. It is suggested that you use 'How to Live Forever' by Colin Thompson as the focus (See Substantive knowledge). This book raises many questions which could be used to discuss religious and non-religious beliefs about life, death and immortality.

Disciplinary Knowledge: ways of knowing

Lead the learning with disciplinary knowledge, which enables the pupils to focus upon **how** they are going to learn about this topic. This then leads to the substantive knowledge that pupils need to know and understand, i.e. **what** they need to know. In practice, the two types of knowledge should be integrated with the 'what' being taught alongside the 'how.' Disciplinary knowledge is initially set out in the form of questions. **You do not have to use every question:** some may be useful as a starter for enquiry, others for promoting deeper learning when you are looking at substantive knowledge.

How might pupils learn?

They could:

- Talk to people from different RW communities about the meaning of life and death.
- Visit a graveyard or cemetery and see what we can learn from gravestones and inscriptions.
- Read and interpret what sacred scriptures say about life and death.
- Explore the different feelings associated with death.
- Research obituaries in the press.

Theology is about what people believe. Theologians might ask:

What do RWs believe about the purpose of life and death?
What does ritual have to do with beliefs?
Does everyone believe that life has a purpose?
What do RWs believe about the soul or spirit?
What is puzzling about death?
What is immortality?
Is the body or spirit immortal?
How do we know what to believe?
How do beliefs set out in sacred texts help people deal with death?

Philosophy is about what people think. Philosophers might ask:

Why are we here?
Is it reasonable to believe in life after death?
Do animals have souls?
What would it like to never grow old?
When are you old?
Is the soul or spirit the same as the mind?
Does life have to have a purpose?
Is it reasonable to believe in life after death?
Can people live on in memories?
What is 'out there'?
Why might someone want to live forever?

Social Science is about how people live. Social Scientists might ask:

How do people find meaning in life?
Why do some people try to stay young?
Why are funerals important?
Why do families and friends come together after someone has died?
How do people remember those who have died?

Reflections: Personal knowledge

What is the most important thing in my life?

How might this change as I get older?

If I could make one change in the world, what would it be?

Might this change as I get older?

When will I be old?

Would I like to live forever?

What do I find puzzling about death?

Substantive Knowledge: what pupils need to know

Life after death is a fundamental belief in most religions but what form this takes varies between and within religions. Some people who are not religious also believe in life after death, while others believe that there is no existence after death. For most religious people, belief in life after death is based on teachings in their scriptures or traditions.

Abrahamic traditions

Christianity

Christian beliefs about the hope of eternal life are based on the resurrection of Jesus Christ at Easter. Due to this they have the hope of eternal life in the presence of God.

Heaven

Most Christians interpret the teachings of the Bible to mean that humans will have a spiritual existence after death. They reject the idea of reincarnation, believing instead that when life is over on earth, a person will continue to have eternal life in another realm (heaven) rather than coming back to earth in a different body.

Hell

Christians believe that God has given human beings free will, therefore there must be an opportunity for people to reject Him. This is the basis of the idea of hell. Hell has traditionally been depicted as a place of eternal fire that symbolises pain and suffering, but many would define it as being in a state of existence far from God.

Christian funerals

Jesus said, *'I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me will live, even though they die.'* John 11:25 For this reason, Christian funerals are often seen as a celebration of life because this person is believed to be with God in heaven. Christian funerals differ according to the denomination and interpretation of the afterlife. Some Christians believe in the resurrection of the body, so they prefer burial over cremation, which destroys the body. This is because the Apostles' Creed says: 'I believe in ... the resurrection of the body'. However, other Christians believe that afterlife will be spiritual so would find both cremation and burial to be acceptable. During a funeral people might sing hymns and say prayers, decorate the coffin and church with flowers, light candles and pray for the dead person. A sermon will be made which will include teaching about the afterlife as well as a tribute to the life and character of the person who has died.

Islam

Life after death is known as Akhirah. Most Muslims believe that when they die, they will stay in their graves until the Day of Judgement. They will then be brought before Allah and judged on how they lived their earthly lives and then go to either Paradise or hell. Those who have performed more bad deeds than good will enter hell.

Muslim funerals

As soon as possible after death, the body is washed three times by relatives of the same gender as the deceased, then wrapped in white. The body is then taken to the cemetery where Muslims will stand and pray for the forgiveness of the dead person and that they may find peace and happiness in the world to come. Traditionally, only men attend the funeral. People are buried facing Makkah and never cremated.

Judaism

Jewish sacred texts refer to a 'world to come' (olam ha-ba) but Jews tend to place greater emphasis on the present life than the one to come. A common Jewish greeting is, 'I wish you a long life.' There is no single understanding of the afterlife and there are variations between Orthodox and Progressive traditions. The Torah refers to an afterlife where people will reunite with family members who have died. Other parts of the Tenakh refer to a place called Sheol, where the souls of the dead wait for purification.

Jewish funerals

Straight after death the body is washed and dressed in a tachrichim (white shroud). Men are also wrapped in a tallith (prayer shawl). Fringes are cut off the tallith to show freedom from religious laws. Funerals take place as soon as possible after death. Orthodox traditions do not usually allow cremation, but Progressive Jews sometimes do. No flowers are given at a Jewish funeral and the service is short. After burial a blessing is said and the family return home to sit Shiva, a seven-day mourning ritual. For the next seven days a candle is kept burning and the mirrors in the house are covered. The mourners stay at home. They may not shave or cut their hair and they may sit on low stools. A prayer known as Kaddish, is said three times a day. Shiva is broken only by Shabbat or a Jewish festival. For the next 11 months Kaddish is said every day. From then on, the dead person is remembered each year on the anniversary of their death by the lighting of a Yahrzeit candle and by reciting Kaddish. Just before the first anniversary a tombstone will be placed at the grave.

Stone setting

It is usual for the grave marker to be put in place and for an unveiling ceremony to be held after the period of mourning is over, no later than one year after the death. The unveiling ceremony consists of the readings, prayers and eulogies. A small stone is placed on the gravesite to indicate that someone has visited the grave. This tradition may also reflect the biblical practice of marking graves with a pile of stones. Or it may connect to the custom of writing notes to the deceased and pushing them into crevices into the Western Wall in Jerusalem. When no crevice could be found, the note was weighted down with a stone.

Dharmic traditions

Buddhism

Buddhists believe that:

- life is a cycle of death and rebirth called samsara
- this cycle is something to escape from
- when someone dies their energy passes into another form
- the escape from samsara is called nirvana or enlightenment
- once Nirvana is achieved, and the enlightened individual physically dies, they will no longer be reborn

When a person is dying, words are read to them which act as a reminder of the teachings of the Buddha. There is no set funeral service. A powa ceremony may be carried out. This is to help people experience peace of mind after death. Different types of Buddhist groups and communities have different ways of carrying out funeral ceremonies, e.g. they may have a shrine with the dead person's picture and an image of the Buddha surrounded by candles, flowers and incense. A monk may lead the funeral service, which involves giving a talk and carrying out important rituals. The person is either buried or cremated.

Hinduism

Hindus believe that everything connects to beliefs about Brahman (Ultimate Reality), atman (soul), samsara (cycle of life), dharma (duty) and karma (actions). Humans are part of the cycle of death and rebirth. When a person dies, their atman (soul) is reborn in a different body. Hindus believe in karma which means that good or bad actions in life determine the atman's rebirth. Living a good life will eventually lead to moksha. Some Hindu scriptures describe moksha as the atman becoming absorbed with Brahman, from where each atman is believed to originate. Other Hindu scriptures describe moksha as living in the realm of a personal God.

Hindu funerals

Rituals vary depending on the type of Hindu tradition being followed or where a family comes from. Relatives may wash the body and clothe it in white garments. Drops of water from the River Ganges may be placed into the mouth of the deceased to symbolise purification. In India, the corpse may be carried to the funeral pyre near a river (ideally the Ganges) before the next sunrise or sunset and traditionally, the eldest son lights the funeral pyre (a wooden structure used for cremation). In the UK, many Hindu families have the body cremated as soon as they possibly can. Traditionally ashes are placed in a river either in India or at permitted places in this country. During the ceremony, the priest and the mourners may recite verses from scriptures. Many Hindus would say they are remembering the person they knew as the atman will be reincarnated. Offerings are made to family gods and goddesses to help the atman to move on.

Sikhi

Like most Dharmic religions, Sikhs believe in samsara, the cycle of birth, death and rebirth. This includes a belief in reincarnation. Sikhi teaches that all beings, including animals and humans, have a soul (the atma) and are part of the cycle of reincarnation. Sikhs believe they can learn to become closer to God by having many chances of living (the soul moves from one life to another). This idea is often referred to as 'transmigration of the soul'. Sikhs have a chance to move from being self-centred to being God-centred. This is how they can escape the cycle of samsara and achieve liberation known as mukti.

Sikh funerals

After death a Sikh's body is cremated. The ashes of the deceased are immersed in a river either in India or in another country where they were living. Sikhs believe that the soul has moved on and if God wills, people will be reunited with him. Many Sikhs believe that death is just a short sleep before rebirth. In India the funeral often occurs on the day of death or on the following day. In western countries there is a longer period before cremation. Before taking the body to the crematorium, it is ritually bathed and clothed. Verses of scripture are sung and the Ardas is said. In the crematorium tributes are paid to the deceased and the Kirtan Sohila (late evening prayer) and Ardas are recited. Family and friends will then often go to the gurdwara. Here passages of the Guru Granth Sahib are read, followed by langar. During the ten days after a death the complete Guru Granth Sahib is read at the family's house or in the gurdwara.

Humanism

Humanists believe that there is just one life, therefore people need to make the most of it. For Humanists, there is no single 'ultimate' meaning of life. Instead, it is up to people to

make their own lives meaningful. Humanists believe that people should be free to decide how they live (as long as they do not cause harm to others), seeking happiness and supporting others to do the same.

Quotes from Humanists

'I don't believe in an afterlife, so this life is precious. We should find what makes us happy and make the most of our lives. We should also try to help other people do the same.'

'For me, one of the most important things in life is forming good friendships and relationships with others. Community is also important. But we should remember that all human beings around the world are part of one extended family.'

As Humanists do not believe in an afterlife a religious funeral would not be appropriate. A humanist funeral acknowledges that it is a time for sadness but also a time to celebrate a person's life. Humanists believe that they live on through others, in people's memories, and through the contributions they have made to society.

Natural Funerals

Woodland burial, also known as green burial or natural burial, is an eco-friendly funeral option. It is an environmentally friendly alternative to a traditional burial and cremation. It usually takes place in natural burial grounds, or designated woodland burial sites in larger cemeteries. Usually, a biodegradable coffin or casket is used, made from recycled paper, wicker or willow. Rather than marking the grave with a headstone it may be identified by a tree or flowers which blends in with the woodland. Prestwold Natural Burial Ground is a natural burial site in Leicestershire. There are other sites near Scraftoft and Markfield.

Alternative approach to teaching about death (See Teacher Guidance above)

'How to live Forever', by Colin Thompson, Red Fox, 1998

Questions based on the book:

- What kind of things do people do to stay young? Why?
- What does 'old' mean?
- When are you 'old'?
- What is immortality?
- Would it be good or bad to be immortal?
- Why did the Ancient Child say the book would drive Peter mad?
- What would 'endless tomorrows' be like?
- Why did the Ancient Child say, 'To live forever is not to live at all'?
- Was Peter wise not to read the book?
- What do you think was written in the book?
- Why did the Ancient Child tell Peter he was wise?

Resources

the little book of humanist funerals: Copson, A & Roberts, A, Piatkus, 2023

Links For Teachers

Buddhism

Beliefs and practices

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zyhmk2p/revision/1>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zh67xfr/revision/6>

Christianity

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zgqjgdm/revision/1>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/z683rwx/revision/3>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zdhmtv4/revision/7>

In Roman Catholicism

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zc4cng8/revision/5>

Hinduism

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zmvhsrd/revision/1>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/articles/zn68qp3>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zmgny4j/revision/3>

Death in Hinduism: video clips

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p010xcsz>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p010xbkq>

Funerals

<https://www.funeralguide.co.uk/help-resources/arranging-a-funeral/religious-funerals/hindu-funerals>

Islam

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zkf2vk7/revision/5>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zddbqp3/revision/8>

In Leicester

<https://storyofleicester.info/a-place-to-live/saffron-hill-cemetery/>

Judaism

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zcbgh39/revision/5>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zv626yc/revision/6>

Life after death

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zvbsv9q/revision/5>

In Leicester

<https://jewish-gilroes.org.uk>

Sikhi

Belief in life after death

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zjq9dxs/revision/2>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zx4ky4j/revision/3>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zk3f3k7/revision/4>

Funerals and mourning

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/ztq24qt/revision/3>

Humanism

What is Humanism?

<https://understandinghumanism.org.uk/area/what-is-humanism/>

Humanist funerals

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zt2nmsg/revision/7>

Natural funerals

Prestwold Natural Burial Ground

<https://www.thenaturalburialcompany.co.uk/site-locations/prestwold/>

General

<https://www.childbereavementuk.org>

<https://www.annafreud.org/search/?term=bereavement>

Teaching suggestions

Pupils could:

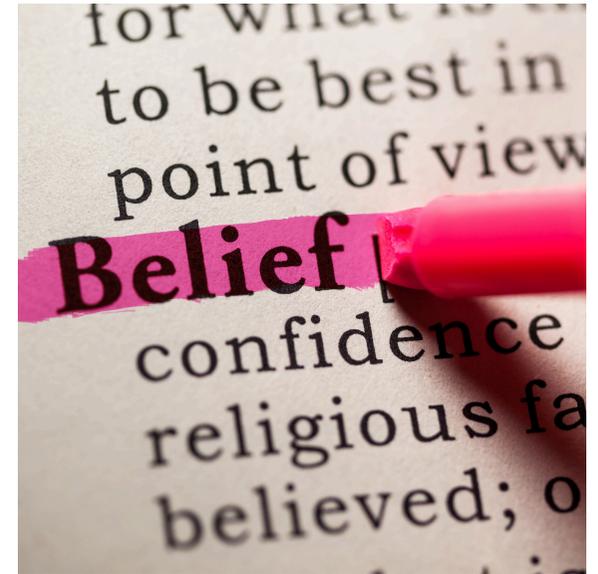
- Describe some funeral rituals, along with the symbolism involved and explain how they might bring communities together.
- Visit a graveyard or cemetery and see what you can learn from gravestones and inscriptions.
- Talk to people from different RW communities about the meaning of life and death.
- Read and interpret what sacred scriptures say about life and death.
- Compare beliefs about the purpose of life and death, looking at similarities and differences. How do beliefs link with rituals?
- Interpret the meaning and significance of living forever.
- Write an obituary or an eulogy about someone famous.
- What is the message of 'How to live Forever'? Produce art-work, a piece of writing or a poem to express what the story is about.

YEAR 6

Year 6

Big Questions:

What Do People Believe?



Overview

Pupils begin by exploring the ways in which people's beliefs are formed by many influences, e.g. what they read, what they see in the media, what others tell them. They then consider belief in the existence of God from religious, non-religious and philosophical perspectives. The focus in the second half of the autumn term is upon the concept of good/evil and the things which influence moral and ethical viewpoints. Pupils will consider how these viewpoints can be open to change and interpretation. They then consider religious and non-religious beliefs about a) caring for the world and b) the concept of peace. Finally, in the summer term pupils address the question, 'What is my worldview?', drawing on learning from Reception onwards.

Worldviews context

Beliefs are at the core of worldviews. Our own personal worldview is shaped by what we believe about things such as religion, politics, morality, the environment. Worldviews may change over time due to the influence of different people, life events and so on. Our worldview affects the way we relate to others and find our way through life. This takes us right back to 'No-one stands nowhere', discussed in year 2.

Autumn and Spring terms

How do people know who to believe?

What do people believe about the existence of God?

What do people believe about good, evil and suffering?

How do people choose between right and wrong?

What do people believe about caring for the world and others?

What do people believe about peace?

Wise words and inspirational people

How people decide who or what to believe and what is true: authority, influence and inspiration.

What do people believe about God?

Religious, non-religious, philosophical views.

What do people believe about good and evil, right and wrong?

Abrahamic and Dharmic traditions.

Philosophical thinking.

Morality and ethics.

What do people believe about the environment?

Religious and non-religious viewpoints.

Interpretation of sacred texts and other writings.

The inter-connectedness of humans and the natural world.

Stewardship, conservation.

What do people believe about peace?

Right relationships in the family, between people and the world.

People of Peace.

Leicester context.

Summer

Consolidation of previous learning.

Building up a personal worldview.

Progression Strands: concepts which pupils should understand

A: Belonging, Identity & Community

- How beliefs are linked to a sense of identity.
- How communities come together to care for the planet, work for peace.

B: Beliefs, Ideas and Values

- How different types of authority and influence determine people's beliefs and actions.
- How values are reflected in the lives of inspirational people.
- What religious and philosophical thinkers say about the existence of God.
- What people believe about good and evil and how this may or may not be linked to religion.
- How people decide about right and wrong.
- How people believe they should treat each other and the world around them.
- What sacred scriptures say about peace.
- How key thinkers and activists have influenced the peace narrative.

C: Expression, Experience & the Sacred

- How people express 'big questions' in everyday life.
- How inspiration may have a religious or non-religious source.
- How people express their beliefs in the way they behave and through the values they hold, e.g. about the environment.

D: Truth, Interpretation and Meaning

- Why some sources of truth are trusted more than others.
- How influence and authority may be interpreted in different ways.
- Why people do not always agree on what makes a person inspirational.
- How beliefs about the existence of God are open to interpretation and may change over time.
- How people decide what is good or bad, right or wrong.

How 'peace' can be interpreted in different ways.

Year 6

Big Questions: What do people believe?

Religions and Worldviews to be referred to during the autumn and spring terms

- Christianity
- Judaism **OR** Islam
- At least one tradition from Buddhism, Hinduism or Sikhi
- Humanism

Additional suggestions

Include philosophical viewpoints.

Content overview

Beliefs about:

- the existence of God
- concepts of good and evil, right and wrong
- caring for the world
- peace

Personal worldview

Previous learning: what do pupils know and remember from year 5?

How do people welcome new life into the world?

How do people celebrate marriage?

Linked to this topic

Year 1

Creation stories, good and evil

Year 2

Sacred texts, beliefs

Year 3

Religious experiences

Year 4

Why communities matter



New learning objectives

Pupils should know and understand:

- How different types of authority determine people's beliefs and actions and why some are trusted more than others.
- How values are reflected in the lives of religious and non-religious inspirational people.
- What religious and philosophical thinkers say about the existence of God.
- How beliefs about the existence of God are open to interpretation.
- How people decide what is good or bad, right or wrong.
- How people believe we should treat each other and the world around us.



Unit expectations and outcomes

Evidence for these should be demonstrated through a variety of ways, including pupils' work, conversations with pupils and assessment tasks. (Appendix 2)

To achieve the learning objectives, pupils should be able to:

- Give examples of different sources of authority for people's beliefs and actions, giving reasons why some are trusted more than others.
- Explain how beliefs about the existence of God are open to interpretation.
- Present balanced arguments about moral and ethical issues.
- Find out what sacred scriptures say about peace and human responsibility to care for the world.
- Provide examples of key thinkers and activists who have influenced the peace narrative.
- Summer term
- Reflect upon the things that impact their own personal worldview.



Key vocabulary and concepts

General: agnostic, atheist, authority, beliefs, Big Bang theory, Charles Darwin, design argument, dominion, environment, evil, evolution, first cause argument, free will, Global Citizenship, Golden Rule, inspiration, moral argument, moral codes, Pacifism, philosophy, religious experience argument, suffering, stewardship, sustainability, wisdom.

Buddhism: Four Noble Truths.

Christianity: Adam and Eve, original sin, parables, Quakers.

Hinduism: atman, ahimsa, Brahman, dharma, karma.

Islam: Iblis, Qur'an, zakat.

Judaism: Adam and Eve, Shoah.

Sikhi: Waheguru, hukam.

Teacher guidance

This year's work is based on the concept of belief, in relation to the existence of God, morality, responsibility for caring for the world and beliefs about peace. These topics link to previous units but examine concepts in more depth. For example, in years 1 and 2 pupils consider sacred texts. In year 6 they consider these through the concept of authority and interpretation. In year 2 pupils also learn about what people believe about God. In year 6 they look more deeply into religious and philosophical arguments for the existence of God. They also develop their ideas about religious and philosophical arguments about good and evil, (linked to creation stories in year 1), morality and ethics. In the spring term the focus is upon beliefs about caring for the world. Finally, in the summer term pupils consider their own personal worldviews.

How to teach these units

Teachers may plan and adapt the content for the autumn and spring terms as they see fit. This provides flexibility and allows pupils to pursue some ideas in more depth.

Refer to year 2, spring term, 'What are beliefs?' Discuss who or what influences pupils. Think about some inspirational people and why people take notice of them. What have they achieved? The power of the media must not be underestimated, including the positive and negative aspects. For instance, the internet and social media may be used to convey positive aspects of RWs but it also includes many negative messages. These messages influence what pupils believe and they need to develop skills to navigate them. Pupils need to know that some sources are unreliable and/or biased. They also need to consider that their beliefs may change over time due to age (do pupils believe the same things now that they did when they were much younger?) and experience. Consider where beliefs come from, the reliability of sources of authority, etc. Ask pupils to think about who they find inspirational and why. The inspiration may be rooted in a religion, but it might not. Explore how the person's inspiration is linked to their worldview. Begin each unit with an initial challenging question related to disciplinary knowledge. Dig deeper by asking further questions by asking questions such as:

Why do you say that?

What evidence do you have for that view?

What do you mean? Say more.

What if everyone held that view?

Is that point of view reasonable?

Note

The section on the existence of God is intended to be a gentle introduction to the way pupils will be expected to think and argue in KS3. Although this contains elements of GCSE

work, at this stage the concepts are obviously simplified. This sets a high level of challenge to which pupils will respond. Introducing philosophical thinking has been a successful approach in some Leicester primary schools, especially within the context of Philosophy for Children^[26]. For example, in one school year 1 pupils grappled with questions such as 'If God is invisible, how can he be real?' and in another pupils in year 5 were introduced to existentialism. The series 'Big Ideas for Little Philosophers'^[27] is introduced in Nursery/Reception! The content about beliefs includes religious and philosophical arguments about the existence of God. **You do not have to cover every single one.** This idea is to select whichever you think will lead to a good discussion and help develop critical thinking. Use pictures, photographs, video clips, media clips, to engage pupils. All this will give depth to the substantive knowledge.

During the summer term, pupils should think about their own personal worldview. This will involve consolidating knowledge about work covered in previous years, e.g. key beliefs, practices, etc. Refer to the four progression strands/concepts and ask questions relating to each, e.g. which communities they belong to, what they believe and who influences them, what they consider to be 'big questions.' (See teaching suggestions at the end of the unit).

Disciplinary Knowledge: ways of knowing

Lead the learning with disciplinary knowledge, which enables the pupils to focus upon how they are going to learn about this topic. This then leads to the substantive knowledge that pupils need to know and understand, i.e. what they need to know. In practice, the two types of knowledge should be integrated with the 'what' being taught alongside the 'how.' Disciplinary knowledge is initially set out in the form of questions. You do not have to use every question: some may be useful as a starter for enquiry, others for promoting deeper learning when you are looking at substantive knowledge.

How might pupils learn

They could:

- Interview people (e.g. other pupils, teachers, parents, representatives of RWs) and ask them what they believe about God and theories about how the universe began.
- Read different sources of influence and debate claims to truth.
- Analyse data and statistics, e.g. census data about beliefs, linked to views on different moral issues.
- Research information about Leicester's links to the peace movement.

[26] <https://www.sapere.org.uk>

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[27] <https://www.penguin.co.uk/series/Big-Ideas-for-Little-Philosophers>

Theology is about what people believe. Theologians might ask:

How do we know who or what to believe?
How do we know if something is true or false?
Some people believe that God is a perfect being. What does this mean?
Why are there so many beliefs about the existence of God?
If God is good, how can evil exist?
Could a scientist believe in God?
Who says what is right or wrong?
From where do Humanists get their moral code? What do they believe?
Why should we care about the environment?
Are humans worth more than animals?
Is world peace possible?

Philosophy is about what people think. Philosophers might ask:

What do we mean by 'belief'?
Is there any proof of God's existence?
Do we need to believe in a god or gods to explain why the world exists, or why it is the way it is?
Why might a Humanist find wonder in the science?
Could a good God allow evil and suffering?
Why do people suffer?
Do we have to understand everything?
Are some things always wrong?
Should we always tell the truth?
Do rules that come from God have more authority than those that come from people?
Why do many people feel the need to care for the environment?
What does 'peace' mean?

Social Science is about how people live. Social Scientists might ask:

Why do some individuals inspire others?
Why might someone find a person inspirational, and another might not?
How can groups of people all believe the same thing?
How do people know what is the right thing to do?
Do most people want to live a good life?
How do RWs help people to decide about right and wrong?
Why do people sometimes do bad things to others?
Why do some people follow a religion, and others do not?
Why do some individuals inspire others?
Why might someone find a person inspirational, and another might not?
Why do people start wars?

Reflections: Personal knowledge

Who inspires me?
Who is my role model?
Who or what has the greatest influence on me? Might this change over time?
What do I believe about God?
Who do I believe?
How do I decide what is true?
How do I decide what is right and wrong?
How do I feel about the world at the moment?
Can there ever be peace?

Substantive Knowledge: what pupils need to know

How do people know who or what to believe?

Refer to year 2, spring term, 'What are beliefs?'

When people want to find something out, understand something or make decisions about what to do, they often turn to different sources of authority (i.e. things they can trust) for guidance and help. These sources might include friends, family, their own personal experience, social media, rational thinking and conscience. People from religious traditions also have other sources of guidance and help available to them. These might include sacred texts, founders of the faith, religious rules or guidelines, faith community leaders and other people in the faith community. People who belong to a particular RW might also find guidance from the teachings and practices of other RWs. Some may see God at work in the world through the lives of others. The words and actions from inspirational people from the past and present may also contribute to the way a person views a situation. This can be subjective, i.e. one person might be considered inspirational by some but not others. Why might this be? Families, religious or otherwise, tell children are told stories about people who set a good example.

Examples of inspirational people: remember to explore how the inspiration is linked to a person's religion or worldview

From the past: Carlo Acutis (see below), Gladys Aylward, Boudicca, Jo Cox, Anne Frank, Mahatma Gandhi, Stephen Hawking, Eric Liddell, Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela, Mother Teresa, Nelson Mandela, Rosa Parks, Oscar Romero, Mary Seacole, Suffragettes (statue of Alice Hawkins in Leicester), Corrie Ten Boom, Harriet Tubman, Desmond Tutu.

From the present: Maya Angelou, Mo Farah, Nadiya Hussain, Yusaf Islam, Helena Kennedy, Amir Khan, Dalai Lama, Zayn Malik, Julia Neuberger, Marcus Rashford, Marcus Smith, Stormzy, Greta Thunberg, Malala Yousafzai.

From Leicester: Attenboroughs, William Carey, Thomas Cook, Maggie Aderin-Pocock, William Carey, Alice Hawkins, Lillian Lenton, Sue Townsend.

Carlo Acutis

2,000 visit Walsingham to see relic of 15-year-old boy about to be made a Saint

The [Times reports](#) that around 2,000 Catholics visited Walsingham last week to see a holy relic of Carlo Acutis, a London born teenager who died aged 15 from leukaemia. In his short life he became known as "God's Influencer" through spreading Christian messages through his website and over social media. He is about to be made a Saint, after stories that people have been healed by asking him to intercede. The relic is a sliver of the sac that surrounded his heart and is displayed within a glass case which is being taken on a tour of the world. The article says people travelled to Walsingham from all over England and as far away as New Zealand.

<https://religionmediacentre.org.uk/news/religion-news-12-august-2024/>

Resources

[Halligan, K. Herstory: 30 Women and Girls Who Shaped the World, Nosy Crow Ltd; 2018](#)

Links for teachers

Mother Theresa, Martin Luther King

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zh296v4/revision/4>

Eric Lidell

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zjysb7h>

Inspirational people of the world (audio)

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p03vz7x7>

The Attenboroughs, Leicester

<https://le.ac.uk/about/history/attenboroughs>

The Bible and other sources of authority

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zxcrpbk/revision/7>

Oscar Romero video clip

<https://cafod.org.uk/education/primary-teaching-resources/romero-primary-resources>

Sport and religion

<https://www.ruck.co.uk/i-believe-strongly-marcus-smith-opens-up-on-his-new-religious-beliefs/>

What do people believe about the existence of God?

When we consider this question, it is important to take into account the points made above about influence, authority, etc.

Most (but not all) religions are based around a belief in God or gods. In year 2 pupils looked at different beliefs about God held by several RWs. Remind them what different religions believe about the characteristics of God. This unit considers some philosophical arguments. Philosophy poses questions such as, 'Can we prove that God exists/does not exist?' This involves thinking about the concept of God and what this means to different people.

Beliefs about the existence of God

Religious beliefs

There are three important terms to remember.

Theist

A theist is a person who believes in the existence of a god or gods - for example a Christian or a Muslim. Theists often define God as a perfect being.

Atheist

An atheist is a person who does not believe in the existence of a god or gods.

Agnostic

An agnostic is a person who does not believe that it is possible to know for sure whether a god exists.

Arguments to support the existence of God

First Cause argument

This argument was first put forward by a monk called St Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) and is based around cause and effect. This means that everything that exists must have been caused by something, i.e. nothing in the world came from nothing. Aquinas therefore argued that someone or something must have caused the world to exist. The cause is God, the effect is the world.

Problems with this argument

This theory presents the question, 'Who caused (created) God?' If everything requires a cause this should also apply to God.

The Design argument

This suggests that because the world works so well it must have been designed in a specific way, i.e. by someone or something. William Paley (1743-1805) compared the design of the universe to finding a watch. He argued that if a person found a watch for the first time and recognised its complexity, they would assume that someone had designed and made it. Paley suggested that in the same way, someone looking at the universe must conclude that there is a designer. The scientist Isaac Newton (1642-1727) used the thumb print as evidence of the existence of God because each print is individual and unique.

Problems with this argument

- Things happen in the world that do not work well, e.g. natural disasters.
- Even if the world was designed, the designer does not necessarily have to be God. If it were, why does God allow evil and suffering to exist?
- For some people, [the theory of evolution](#) offers a better explanation.

Religious experience argument

This is based on claims of a direct or personal experience of God (see year 3, spring term). This means that if someone feels they have experienced God, this is proof of God's existence. This is not based on logic or reason, but how convincing the experience may be to the person. It might be more credible if the life of the person who experiences God is dramatically changed, e.g. as a result of a conversion experience such as [John Newton](#) (see year 3, spring term) or examples from sacred scriptures.

Problems with this argument

- It is impossible to prove that these experiences are real.
- The experiences may be just coincidences, or tricks of the mind.
- Science might be able to explain some of these experiences without any reference to God.

The moral argument

Morality is to do with what people believe about right and wrong. This argument states that all people have an instinctive sense of what is right and wrong which must come from someone or something outside ourselves, i.e. God.

Problems with this argument

- Morality is something we learn through experience and upbringing.
- Some people have no sense of morality.
- Morality might have nothing to do with God, e.g. [conscience](#). If conscience is believed to come from God, why do people have different opinions about moral issues? (see following section).
- People who do not believe in God still understand the difference between right and wrong and lead good lives.

Arguments against the existence of God

The Big Bang Theory

This is a scientific approach to answering the question of how the world began. According to this theory, about 13.8 billion years ago the whole universe was a very small, hot and dense region. It gradually expanded outwards to what exists today. This expansion was the beginning of time and has continued ever since. Most scientists believe in some form of the Big Bang theory.

Christian view

For some Christians the theory is incompatible with the creation story in Genesis because it describes a world that developed over many billions of years rather than six days. Others interpret the Genesis account story of creation in a symbolic rather than literal way, so do not see a contradiction between evolution and the idea of a creator.

Hindu view

Many Hindus believe that the Big Bang theory offers no challenge to their beliefs. It does not deny the position of Brahman (the Creator) nor the belief in the continual cycle of creation, preservation and destruction.

Jewish view

Some Orthodox Jews believe that the Torah contains literal truth, i.e. the world was created in six days. They believe that G-d is omnipotent (all powerful), so could have created the universe, almost instantly. This does not necessarily dismiss the evidence for the Big Bang theory. Other Jewish people might describe the references to days of creation as an allegory or refer to stages of time which lasted millions of years. Most Progressive Jews may not believe the creation story to be literally true in every detail but would acknowledge G-d's active role in creation.

Muslim view

Muslims regard the existence of the universe as proof of the existence of Allah, the Creator. They believe that the Qur'an is a divine revelation from Allah and so cannot be questioned, though different interpretations are possible. Some Muslims say that the Big Bang theory can be seen as additional evidence of Allah's creation and can be accepted as scientific truth. However, the theory does not include any reference to a designer and/or creator, therefore it is incomplete because it only describes the process that Allah used in creation.

Sikh view

Sikhs believe that Waheguru created the universe and every life form within it. They believe that before the universe existed, there was only Waheguru, and it was because of 'the will of God' or 'hukam' that the universe was created. There is little detail about the creation of the universe in Sikhi (there are no actual creation stories). The Guru Granth Sahib focuses more on the wonder of God's creation rather than its possible origins.

Theory of Evolution

In 1859 Charles Darwin published a book called *On the Origin of Species*, based on his studies of creatures he had encountered on his travels to many overseas locations, including the Galapagos Islands. He put forward the theory that all living creatures that exist today, including human beings, have evolved from primitive life forms over a period of millions of years.

A non-religious worldview: Humanism

Humanists believe that the world is a natural place. They do not believe in a god or that human beings were created. They look for natural explanations and believe that science provides the best way to answer questions about where people originated. Humanists believe in scientific theories described above because this approach is based on evidence. They accept that we don't know exactly how the universe or life began but we should keep looking for a natural explanation. For humanists, a natural explanation can be a source of wonder.

Links For Teachers

Big Bang theory

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zv2fgwx/revision/10>

Evolution: Christian

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zv2fgwx/revision/11>

Evolution: Judaism

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zw9ky4j/revision/3>

Evolution: Hinduism and Islam

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zv2fgwx/revision/12>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/z99vxfr/revision/4>

Evolution: Sikhi

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zxc9fcw/revision/6>

Humanism

<https://understandinghumanism.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Human-beings-where-do-we-come-from-11.pdf>

Teaching suggestions

Pupils could:

- Hold a debate about the good/bad aspects of social media, especially in relation to 'truth.'
- Produce a podcast in which you discuss influential figures in the present day.
- Hot seating: interview influential people from the past.
- Carry out an enquiry, using religious and philosophical arguments, about the existence of God.
- Following the above, produce a piece of extended writing summarising the arguments.

What do people believe about good and evil?

Within religions, God is generally described as being good and kind. This implies that God would never do bad things or let bad things happen. But bad things happen all the time.

How can God allow this? This issue is known as **the problem of evil**. There are two types of evil:

- **moral evil**: the acts of humans which are thought to be morally wrong, e.g. murder, theft.
- **natural evil**: natural disasters, e.g. earthquakes or tsunamis, which humans have no control over.

RWs have different teachings about the origins of evil, e.g. some believe evil forces have been present in the world from the beginning, others believe that evil is part of God's creation and may have a purpose that humans cannot understand.

Where does suffering fit in?

Most people experience suffering at some time in their life. Religions try to explain suffering to help people to cope with it and to learn from it. For some people it raises difficult

questions about why God allows this to happen. [The Four Noble Truths](#) in Buddhism are a summary of the Buddha's teachings and are focused upon suffering. Buddhists believe that suffering is a key part of life.

Challenging questions

If someone is not religious, they will accept that evil is just part of the world and must be accepted. There is nothing that can be done about it apart from live in a way that minimises suffering for others. Within religious traditions, the existence of evil and suffering presents significant questions, such as:

- If God created everything, did he also create evil and suffering?
- What does the existence of evil and suffering say about God's love, power and purpose?
- What is the purpose of suffering?
- If God is good, why does he allow evil and suffering to exist?
- If evil exists can God exist?
- Does religion cause suffering?

What does Buddhism say about evil?

Many Buddhists believe that evil is caused by the negative characteristics of human beings such as greed, anger and ignorance. These things stop Buddhists from reaching enlightenment. Buddhism teaches that suffering is a natural part of life. When Siddhartha left the palace in which he lived, the three people he saw were an old man, an ill man and a dead person. This taught him that people suffer in life. [The Four Noble Truths](#) are a summary of the Buddha's teachings.

Buddhism and the origin of evil

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zg7297h/revision/2>

What does Christianity say about evil?

Many Christians believe that evil is the result of Adam and Eve's disobedience to God, known as the Fall (see year 1, spring 1). This belief is called '[original sin](#)'. Most Christians also believe that as well as a power for good there is also a power for evil. They sometimes refer to the power for evil as 'Satan' or 'the Devil'. The devil is traditionally thought to have been an archangel who was thrown out of Heaven for disobeying God. For Christians, evil and suffering are related to free will, which means that humans can make decisions for themselves. In the book of Genesis Adam and Eve chose to eat the forbidden fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. It is up to human beings to decide whether to follow God's instructions. Evil and suffering raise questions about God's attributes, in particular, his [omnipotence, omnibenevolence and omniscience](#). Christians believe that God is with them throughout their life and beyond. This includes experiencing times of suffering as well as happiness.

Origins of evil and purpose of suffering

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zhsjscw/revision/2>

Evil and suffering

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zf626yc/revision/9>

Why do people suffer?

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/z6twrj6>

What does Hinduism say about evil?

Hindus believe that evil happens because of the law of karma (the law of cause and effect). This means that much suffering results because of a person's own actions, therefore they should learn from experiences and not repeat mistakes. However, sometimes things happen, e.g. natural disasters which do not seem to be the result of any particular action. Some Hindus believe these events have a purpose but are beyond human understanding. Others believe natural disasters are necessary for the balance of life. Also, a person's atman (soul) could benefit through helping victims of natural disasters. Humans must do as little harm and as much good as possible to escape the life cycle, acting with kindness and showing non-violence to all living things. This belief is called 'ahimsa'.

Hinduism and the origins of evil

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zhsjscw/revision/5>

What does Islam say about evil?

The Qur'an teaches that evil originates from the refusal of Shaytan, also called Iblis (Satan/the Devil) to bow down to Adam when ordered to by Allah. As a result, Iblis was thrown out of Heaven by Allah and in revenge he said he would spend eternity trying to tempt humans to do evil. Islam expects people to know which actions are evil and will contribute to the suffering of others, and which actions are good. Most Muslims believe they have free will. However, this may not be absolute because Allah could intervene at any time. Muslims believe that much suffering is caused by the selfishness and bad behaviour of human beings. They can ease the suffering of others by following Allah's path which is set out in the Qur'an and in the Sunnah.

Islam and the origins of evil

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zhsjscw/revision/6>

What does Judaism say about evil?

Many Jewish people, like Christians, believe that evil originates from the actions of Adam and Eve (See year 1, spring 1). This means that humans suffered because they were disobedient and so became separated from G-d. Jews see Satan as something that exists which tempts people to do wrong. Jewish people believe that people should accept both good and bad things in their lives because both come from G-d and therefore have a purpose. Suffering can never be fully understood by humans. This has significance when thinking about the suffering Jewish people endured during the Holocaust or Shoah.

Judaism and the origins of evil

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zqjqrwx/revision/2>

What does Sikhi say about evil?

Sikhi teaches that suffering is allowed by God as a test of courage and faith. This is based upon the belief is that God gave humans free will, therefore evil exists as a choice. Sikhs are encouraged to do good to avoid the consequences of evil. Suffering can draw a person closer to God as people tend to turn to God in bad times. Suffering is valued for the good that it often brings out in humans ,e.g. compassion and empathy.

Sikhi and the origins of evil

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/z24ky4j/revision/2>

Connections

What do these beliefs have in common?

Are there any significant differences?

What do people believe about morality? How do they choose between right and wrong?

Children initially learn about right and wrong from their families. As they get older, they are increasingly influenced by their peers and, for example, by 'celebrities' on social media, etc. If they belong to a religion, this will have its own moral code, but this is sometimes open to interpretation. As pupils have learnt, the decisions people make are based on several things, including religious teachings, the law, books they read, social media, the views of friends and family, the circumstances, etc. People make moral decisions all the time, from minor things to others that may have huge significance. These decisions are based on moral codes. Some people think these are fixed because they come from God while others think they depend on context and circumstance. Generally, people make decisions based on what the outcome will be. In other words, they weigh up the consequences. 'Ethics' is a word used by philosophers to describe the ways in which these moral codes are examined and what they mean. Ethics are to do with values, such as rights and duties and ways in which people can make the world a better place. Most people try to do the right thing, at least for some of the time. Carrying out 'good deeds' raises interesting points. For example, some philosophers argue that there is always a selfish motive behind a caring act. A person might give a great deal of money to charity just so that they can be well thought of. Does this mean that the act is still morally good? Ideas about right and wrong change over time, e.g. in Victorian times it was thought acceptable to send young children out to work. Most religions provide their followers with a set of rules to follow. As we have seen in year 2, many believe that these moral teachings were revealed by God.

Example of moral codes (see also learning activities)

Keeping a promise

Suppose someone promises a friend that they will do something with them at the weekend and then finds they must or want to do something different. Should they keep the first promise? They might keep the promise because a promise is part of a moral code. They might decide it depends on the circumstances. For example, they may have to go and visit a sick grandparent.

Telling the truth

A father has spent all afternoon baking his daughter a special cake. The daughter tastes it and it is horrible. The father asks, 'Do you like it?'

The daughter could tell the truth because it is part of a moral code. On the other hand, she might tell a lie to avoid hurting her father's feelings.

These situations illustrate the fact that having a moral code helps a person to make decisions, but it does not always provide a clear answer about what to do. People need to think

about the situation(s) what might happen as a result of the decision made, e.g. if the daughter lies about the cake to avoid hurting her father's feelings, he might make that cake repeatedly. Obviously, all lies are not the same – some can do great harm. Is there such a thing as a 'white lie'?

Relative morality

Some philosophers suggest that people make decisions about right and wrong depending on the situation or the community you belong to. This means there is no single clear answer to a moral dilemma. However, there are some actions that seem wrong no matter who you are, or what the situation is, e.g. torturing people.

Absolute morality

This is the idea that moral beliefs are either true or false, regardless of circumstance, etc.

Resources

Tomley S, Weeks M, Children's Book of Philosophy. Dorling Kindersley, 2015

Akpojaro, J, Firth, R, Lacey, M. Philosophy for Beginners. Usborne, 2020

What is Philosophy? Noodle Juice Ltd, 2023

Religion and morality: choose which to study in more detail

Most sacred scriptures contain rules to live by, e.g. the Sermon on the Mount, the Golden Rule, the Ten commandments, Sharia law.

Buddhism: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zkdbcj6/revision/5>

Christianity: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zwxm97h/revision/1>

Hinduism: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zmgny4j/revision/4>

Islam: <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2013/04/30/the-worlds-muslims-religion-politics-society-morality/>

Judaism: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zyvymsg/revision/1>

Sikhism: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zjq9dxs/revision/5>

Teaching suggestions

Pupils could:

- Use examples from the media (words and images) to design posters illustrating the concepts of good and evil in the world today.
- In groups, summarise beliefs from RWs on good and evil, using sacred texts and quotations from key people. These should represent religious and non-religious viewpoints.
- Carry out an enquiry based around a moral dilemma. Summarise the enquiry in a visual form.
- Debate the following (or a topic the pupils choose): 'There is no such thing as right and wrong' OR 'Religion is the cause of most conflict in the world today.'

What do people believe about caring for the world and others?

Environmental responsibility

This means that humans should look after the world so that future generations can enjoy it too. It involves not using up the world's natural resources and ensuring that the planet is cared for and preserved. Many religions, including Christianity, teach that people are stewards of God's creation, so have a responsibility towards the environment. In general, people can care for the environment by acting sustainably, for example:

- making sure they only buy the food they need and not wasting things
- recycling whenever they can
- using and promoting renewable energy
- reducing their carbon footprint
- raising awareness of these issues

Sustainability

Sustainability is about not using up the world's natural resources, such as gas, oil and coal. These things should be used sparingly so that, future generations will be able to meet their own needs.

Global citizenship

People have a responsibility to the rest of humanity. Global citizenship refers to the ways in which people work as a community to look after the world. They might contribute to this by doing things such as picking up litter, only using lights when necessary and walking when possible, rather than taking the car.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zkdk382/articles/z729vk7>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/newsbeat-67581447>

Buddhism

Buddhists generally take environmental responsibility very seriously. They should abstain from taking any form of life. This is linked to the idea of rebirth which includes the possibility of being reborn as an animal. Buddhists are encouraged to show compassion to all creatures and believe that all life-forms are special. This relates to the concept of ahimsa (see Hinduism below). "As people alive today, we must consider future generations: a clean environment is a human right like any other. It is therefore part of our responsibility toward others to ensure that the world we pass on is as healthy, if not healthier, than we found it." (**Dalai Lama, speaking at the Global Environmental Forum for the Next Generation in Tokyo.**)

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zc9bh39/revision/3>

Christianity

Christians believe that they should take care of what God has given them. They believe that the harmony of creation glorifies God. This means that humans should protect all created things. [The Christian Declaration on Nature](#) drawn up at Assisi in 1986 sets Christian responsibilities out very clearly. The Church of England has made many statements about

environmental issues, e.g. 'Christianity is first and foremost a concern for the whole of the created order – biodiversity and business; politics and pollution; rivers, religion and rainforests...If Christians believe in Jesus they must recognise that concern for climate change is not an optional extra but a core matter of faith.' **(Anglican Communion Environmental Network). For the Roman Catholic church, Laudato Si, On Care for Our Common Home, by Pope Francis is hugely significant.**

Dominion

This term means to rule over nature, meaning that humans oversee the world on behalf of God. Some Christians who have a literal interpretation of the Bible believe that this gives humans the right to use the world's natural resources for their own benefit. See Genesis 1:26-31 where God creates humans and gives them the Earth to care for.

Stewardship

This means that people should look after the interests of the planet and all life on it. This belief is about living in harmony with nature. Christians believe that when God gave humans dominion over the land, he gave them responsibility too. Humans were created to be stewards of the land, therefore they should use it, look after it and protect it.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zqphw6f/revision/4>

Hinduism

Hindus believe that Brahman created the world and this makes it sacred. They also believe that Brahman is present in everything, so doing harm to the world is doing harm to Brahman as well. This means people must care for the world and take responsibility for its future. Rivers, mountains, plants, and animals are shown respect, even worshipped, and the earth is seen as holy. Hindus believe that all things are connected. Ahimsa is a core principle of Hinduism which promotes non-violence and respect for all forms of life. Hindus also believe in the concept of dharma, which includes taking care of the environment and living in harmony with nature. Hindu scriptures emphasise the importance of environmental preservation and sustainable living.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/z99vxfr/revision/5>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p010x9w3>

Islam

The Qur'an speaks of humans being made viceroys of the earth, i.e. someone appointed to rule on behalf of a leader. This clearly shows that the world belongs to God, not to humankind, and that humans will be answerable to God for how well they have cared for the planet: *'It is He who has appointed you viceroys in the earth ... that He may try you in what He has given you'*. **Surah 6:165**

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/newsbeat-67581447>

<https://muslimhands.org.uk/latest/2021/10/protection-of-environment-in-islam-quran-and-hadith>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p03gj38v>

Judaism

The creation account in Genesis shows how G-d put humans in charge of the planet. This is often called **dominion** (see Christianity, above). *'God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.'* **Genesis 1:28**

Humans were also given the duty of stewardship: *'The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.'* **Genesis 2:15** Tikkun olam **refers to healing or repairing the world. This includes the environment.**

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zw9ky4j/revision/4>

Sikhi

Sikhs believe that Waheguru (God) created the world and is present in it, and this also motivates them to care for the planet. Sikhs believe that caring for the planet and doing their best to avoid damaging it is an important part of the duty of **sewa/seva (service)**, by which they live their lives.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zxc9fcw/revision/7>

<https://www.sikhnet.com/news/sikhisms-call-eco-consciousness-upholding-environmental-values>

Non-religious views

Many non-religious people are very concerned for the future of the planet and some are **environmental activists**. Atheists do not believe the world was created by a god and do not believe that the world is sacred. They take action to ensure the future of the planet, not to honour a higher being, nor to follow any sort of commandment or avoid punishment in a next life, but because they see a situation which people need to respond to.

Humanism

Many humanists are supporters of **Humanist Climate Action**, which aims to

- promote environmental policies
- support the work of other environmental campaigning groups
- challenge beliefs that are not evidence-based
- encourage humanists to adopt greener lifestyles, following the best available scientific evidence.

'Humanists, by definition, are guided by science and recognise a moral duty towards the welfare of our fellow beings and the natural world. This leads many humanists to believe they have a duty to protect nature's diversity and beauty in a secure and sustainable manner.' ([Humanist Climate Action](#))

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zt2nmsg/revision/5>

https://understandinghumanism.org.uk/res_films/protecting-the-environment/

https://understandinghumanism.org.uk/res_films/caring-for-the-environment-lori-marriott/

What do people believe about peace?

Detailed information for this unit can be found in Appendix 3 and 6.

Links can be made with year 2 where pupils looked at what different religions believe about peace.

Key Questions:

What do I believe about caring for the world and others?

What do I believe about peace?

The Golden Rule

It is sometimes claimed that religion causes conflict and war but for many people religion can be a power for peace. The Golden Rule is the principle that you should treat others as you would like to be treated yourself, and it is found in one form or another in every major religion.

Pacifism

This word means non-violence and non-harm. Pacifists are found within all RW groups, Quakers being one of the best known. The Christian preacher, Dr Martin Luther King, found inspiration in the non-violent struggle of Gandhi. Dr King believed that Jesus preached a message of love everyone, even towards enemies.

Examples of quotes from RWs

Buddhism

'Hatred will not cease by hatred, but by love alone. This is the ancient law.' Dhammapada Verse 5

Christianity

Jesus said, *'Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.'* Matthew 5:44

'If anyone strikes you on your right cheek, turn to him the other also.' Matthew 5:39

Hinduism

'I object to violence because when it appears to do good, the good is only temporary; the evil it does is permanent.' Mahatma Gandhi

'May your weapons be strong to drive away the attackers, let your army be glorious, not the evil-doer.' Rig Veda 1-39:2

Humanism

'Either man will abolish war, or war will abolish man.' Bertrand Russell

'The folly of war is that it can have no natural end except in the extinction of an entire people.' Joyce Carol Oates

Islam

The Prophet Muhammad said, *'Do you know what is better than charity and fasting and prayer? It is keeping peace and good relations between people, as quarrels and bad feelings destroy mankind.'* Hadith

'Fight in the way of Allah against those who fight against you, but do not go beyond limits. Allah does not love aggressors.' Qur'an 2:190

Judaism

'Defend the rights of the poor and orphans; be fair to the needy and helpless. Rescue them from the power of evil men.' Psalm 82

Sikhi

'When all efforts to restore peace prove useless and no words avail, lawful is the flash of steel. It is right to draw the sword.' Guru Gobind Singh

Links for teachers

Religion and conflict

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zkdk382/articles/zhpq47h>

Buddhism

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zc7297h/revision/1>

Christianity

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/z2b36yc/revision/3>

Hinduism

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/ztmd3k7/revision/1>

Islam

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/islam/islamethics/war.shtml>

Judaism

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zysf2nb/revision/3>

Sikhi

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zsq24qt/revision/1>

Humanism

<https://understandinghumanism.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/War-and-peace-humanist-perspective.pdf>

Peace activists

The founders of Jainism (Mahavira), Buddhism (Siddhartha Gautama), Christianity (Jesus), and reformer and innovator in Hinduism (Gandhi).

The Prophet Muhammad was instrumental in beginning a faith where peace is rooted in just behaviour between people. Abdul Ghaffār Khān is an example of a Muslim committed to non-violent liberation from British colonial days.

The philosopher Bertrand Russell was a Humanist peace activist over many years.

Martin Luther King Jr (1929-1968): King was a young Black Baptist minister in Montgomery, Alabama in 1955 when Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat to a white man. At that time King became a spokesman for the black community. His house was bombed, but the boycott was successful and segregation was ruled as unconstitutional. This began the American Civil Rights movement resulting in major changes of laws and people's racist behaviour. King was a brilliant speaker and a good strategist who used civil disobedience and non-violent protest. He was arrested twenty-nine times. King gave many famous speeches including, 'I have a Dream' speech in Washington DC in 1963. He won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964 and later spoke out against America's involvement in the Vietnam War. King was tragically murdered by a sniper's bullet in 1968.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zjkj382/articles/zknmrj6>

The video clip is aimed at younger pupils but has an excellent short introduction.

Nelson Mandela (1918-2013): successfully worked in to end apartheid and introduce democracy for all people in South Africa. To begin with he used peaceful methods of protest, but when this did not work quickly enough he used sabotage. He was imprisoned in 1962 and then released unconditionally in 1990. He helped prevent a civil war working with white

president Frederik Willem de Klerk towards a fully democratic South Africa in which both black and white people could vote. Together they won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1993.
Mandela

served as the first President democratically elected in the new South Africa, 1994-1999, and then retired. He established under Archbishop Desmond Tutu the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to investigate human rights abuses under apartheid. A new constitution was drawn up and he worked for reconciliation between all races.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zjkj382/articles/zj3p8xs>

The video clip is aimed at younger pupils but has an excellent short introduction.

Malala Yousafzai (1997-): was nearly killed in 2012 by gunmen when on a bus going to school in Pakistan. She was targeted because of her public support for girls' education in Pakistan. She was taken to a hospital in Birmingham and for safety reasons she stayed in Britain. In 2014 at the age of 17 she received the Nobel Peace Prize for her courage, the youngest person ever to do so. After doing A-levels at a Birmingham school she studied at Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford to study Philosophy, Politics and Economics. When interviewed on the BBC she said that the Taliban should engage in dialogue, tell people what they want but that 'killing people and slaughtering people and flogging people and blasting schools is totally against Islam. They are misusing the name of Islam. Islam tells us to be peaceful. Islam tells us about brotherhood. This is not the true Islam which the terrorists are showing us.'

Further information:

Yousafzai, M and McCormick P. Malala: My Story of Standing Up for Girls' Rights. Illustrated Edition for Younger Readers, Wren and Rook, 2018

Leicester's connections to peace

- George Fox, founder of the Quakers.
- The Attenborough Family: See Appendices 3 and 6

Teaching suggestions

Pupils could:

- Compare texts and quotes from different RWs to show the similarities and difference between view about a) Environmental issues and b) Peace.
- Design a poster based on one quote.
- Carry out a Case Study on: a) A peace activist or group b) Peace in Leicester.
- Debate, through hot seating and role play, 'Is peace possible?' or 'Religion is the major cause of conflict in the world.'
- Take part in the Leicester University Peace Tour: <https://le.ac.uk/study/schools-and-colleges/peace-project>
- Watch the beginning of Gandhi's time in South Africa in Richard Attenborough's film on Gandhi. This part, about 40 minutes long, captures the essential message of Gandhi and would provoke good questions, comments and discussion.

Year 6: Summer Term

What is my religion or worldview?

This draws on disciplinary and substantive knowledge from Reception to this term. The focus is very much on personal knowledge and positionality. The main learning objective is to consider what has been learnt about RWs and to come up with a personal statement.

Note: This is not about indoctrinating pupils or making them 'join' a RW.

Consolidation of previous learning

Begin by summarising what has been covered from R-year 6. **Use the overview on p. 13-14.**

Ask pupils to think about the Progression Strands and concepts and discuss the following questions with others. How might pupils frame their worldviews in term of A, B, C and D? For example:

Strand A: Belonging, Identity and Community

- What communities do I belong to?
- What makes them different?
- Are these the same as when in was in Reception?
- What makes me 'me'?

Strand B: Beliefs, Influences and Values

- What are my key beliefs?
- Do I believe /not believe something now that I didn't when I was younger?
- How big a part does religion play in my life?
- Are my beliefs likely to change?
- Who influences me the most and how has this changed since Reception?
- Where do my values come from? Are they the same as those of my family? My friends?

Strand C

- How do I express the things I believe in?
- Have I ever had a spiritual or religious experience?
- What is special to me?
- What is sacred or holy to me?

Strand D: Truth, interpretation and Meaning

- How do I know what is true?
- How do I know how to make moral choices?
- What would I consider to be the meaning of life?

These are additional questions which might help pupils in this task. Pupils might then produce their own further reflections and questions, based on all the things they have learnt in RE.

1. What makes me feel hopeful for the future?
2. What worries me about things that are happening in the world?
3. What would I like people to say about me at a celebration of my life?
4. If it was possible to choose the exact time of my death, would I?
5. What advice would I give to pupils in year 1?
6. What ambitions do I have? How have these changed since I was younger?
7. If I could change one thing in your life, what would it be?
8. How are things likely to change for me during the next ten years?
9. How would I like the world to have improved 50 years from now?
10. What am I worried or frightened about?
11. What would my ideal life be like?
12. What one thing in the world would I like to change?
13. In what ways am I the same or different to older generations?
14. Does religion matter to me?
15. If I ever have children, what will I tell them about happiness?
16. Do I have any worries about the future?
17. How would I make the world a better place?
18. What will my life be like when I am old?
19. What dreams would I like to follow?
20. What gives meaning to my life?
21. How am I different to other people?
22. Who inspires me?
23. What belief is the most important to me?
24. What have I achieved that I am proud of?
25. What do other people think about me?
26. How am I different to when I was five?
27. What makes me happy?
28. What family traditions make me happy?
29. What would my perfect day look like?
30. What things cannot be explained?

Pupils should come up with statements about their present worldview, linked to the four Progression Strands and any of the above questions. They should spend some time discussing these in groups or as a whole class. They should then:

1. In groups, give a PowerPoint presentation summarising a worldview they have learnt about (teacher to allocate these at random), outlining its key beliefs and presence in Leicester.
2. Write a summary and produce a poster/collage illustrating the main elements of their own worldviews. These could be presented to the rest of the class.

KEY STAGES 3 & 4

Key Stage 3

Approach to the curriculum

This syllabus takes a Worldviews approach to the teaching of RE. The 'Teacher-led Framework' of the Religious Education Council's report, 'Developing a Religion and Worldviews Approach (2024)'^[28] characterises a Worldviews approach as one which 'starts with people: people who think about, talk about, write about and live out religious and non-religious beliefs and values....It sharpens focus on the ways in which context affects ways of believing, living and thinking, so that we avoid the sorts of generalisations about groups of people we often see in RE classrooms.'^[29]

Christine Counsell describes the curriculum as:

- A narrative^[30] – the content is structured over time. This syllabus has carefully constructed content from Reception – Year 6 to ensure that the narrative is clear and sets up a firm foundation for learning by the time pupils enter secondary school.
- A hinterland^[31] – this nurtures and sustains a city. Creativity and critical thinking rely on extensive and wide-ranging knowledge which means that teaching requires a context. Providing that context can be seen in many ways, including through disciplinary knowledge (see below). By choosing from the suggested questions, teachers can explore the methods used by these disciplines to deepen understanding and enable pupils to see RWs within a broader context.

Disciplinary and substantive knowledge (See p. 17)

If substantive knowledge is about **what** is taught, disciplinary knowledge is about **how** it is taught. This should drive the learning, which is why it is placed first on the plans. It is about the methods that establish the substantive facts. This raises learning about facts to scholarly understanding. When exploring disciplinary knowledge in RE, pupils should be encouraged to understand that topics and issues in RE can be investigated through different disciplines. These influence each other, allowing knowledge to be presented in an interconnected way, reflecting the complexities of the world. In this syllabus disciplinary knowledge is developed primarily through the lens of Theology, Philosophy and Social Science, but teachers could also include others such as art, literature and music. To summarise, this is about the way pupils handle substantive knowledge appropriately, i.e. the methods and tools used. In practice, meaning that pupils might, for example:

- Interview representatives of different religions and worldviews.
- Observe practices and ways of living, e.g. when visiting a place of worship.
- Read sources of wisdom and debate claims to truth, for example, through hermeneutics.
- Go beyond 'the facts' of religions and worldviews by exploring the emotional and sensory world of religion.
- Analyse data and statistics, e.g. to find out about different communities locally, nationally and globally and understand how these are subject to change.

[28] <https://religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/rwapproach/>

[29] <https://religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/rec/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/24-25756-REC-Teacher-Led-Framework-Final-Report-DIGITAL-PAGES.pdf>

[30] <https://thedignityofthethingblog.wordpress.com/author/christinecounsell/>

[31] <https://teacherhead.com/2019/09/27/signposting-the-hinterland-practical-ways-to-enrich-your-core-curriculum/>

Personal knowledge

This is part of disciplinary knowledge. It recognises the assumptions and perspectives pupils bring to the study of RWs. As they try to make sense of what they are being taught, they do so from a position. Key questions must enable pupils to think about how they see the world through their own personal lens.

Assessment

Evidence should be demonstrated through learning activities, conversations with pupils and assessment tasks. It may have to be planned within a whole school assessment process but needs to be kept simple as possible. No-one is asking for complex spreadsheets or charts. Ofsted inspectors are unlikely to ask to see internal data. They are more interested in what any data shows and how teachers use information to move pupils on in their learning. Ofsted's report, 'Deep and Meaningful: The Religious education Subject report' (2024)^[32] states that schools should 'develop manageable assessment methods that move beyond the simple recall of factual information. They should check that pupils recall and understand the intended curriculum over time and that the domain of their knowledge is expanding.' It is recommended that teachers take the taxonomy approach set out in Barbara Wintersgill's 'Big Ideas' project.^[33] This can only be a recommendation because assessment in RE may have to fit into an established school system and teachers may be required to present data in a specific way. Assessment in Key Stage 3 may also be influenced, especially in year 9, by examination requirements.

Formative assessment (Assessment for Learning)

This is ongoing and may include retrieval activities (low stakes quizzes, Odd One Out games, whole class feedback, etc.). It is granular, providing feedback, 'in the moment' so that teaching can be adapted responsively. It informs decisions about next steps needed to make progress. It should not be used for accountability. On its own it is not valid or reliable enough to show evidence of progress, but it can help teachers to identify gaps in knowledge and misconceptions.

Summative assessment (Assessment of learning)

This is about summarising and reporting learning. A variety of tasks may be used which draw on a range of subject knowledge, including extended writing, presentations, spoken and visual accounts. It is about how much of the curriculum pupils know and remember. Summative assessment is primarily about identifying the performance of individuals.

Planning structure for KS3

Teaching and learning are driven by four main conceptual strands or threads from Reception onwards. These are:

1. Belonging, Identity & Community
2. Beliefs, Influences and Values
3. Expression, Experience and the Sacred
4. Truth, Interpretation and Meaning.

For each year there are three different Pathways (for three terms). These Pathways are linked directly to the above first three strands and the fourth is embedded throughout. Teachers may choose to teach the Pathways in any order and may decide how they approach each one. They may choose to cover all the content or focus on selected areas in more depth. By giving this degree of choice, it is hoped that it will be possible to blend in any content from previous plans that teachers wish to retain. There are compulsory elements which ensure that statutory requirements are being met, but these should only make up part of the content.^[34] Christianity must be taught explicitly during each year and in addition schools must cover aspects of other RWs, ensuring a balance of Abrahamic, Dharmic and non-religious perspectives.

[32] <https://religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/rwapproach/>

[33] <https://religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/rec/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/24-25756-REC-Teacher-Led-Framework-Final-Report-DIGITAL-PAGES.pdf>

[34] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/281929/Collective_worship_in_schools.pdf

Preparing for GCSE

Teachers need to make their own decisions about when preparation begins. Obviously, this will include building up concepts from Year 7 but in terms of introducing actual GCSE content, this will depend on several factors, including the time allocation for RE in KS4. To reflect this, there is flexibility in the way the units for years 7-9 are taught. Decisions about GCSE will also impact on assessment.

YEAR 7

Regardless of which order in which the following pathways are followed, year 7 could begin with consolidation of previous learning.

Pathway 1: Belonging, Identity & Community

Pathway 2: Beliefs, Influences and Values

Pathway 3: Expression, Experience and the Sacred

Disciplinary Knowledge

You do not have to use all the questions: some may be useful as a starter for enquiry, others for promoting deeper learning or to bring ideas together at the end.

Theological questions

Is it possible for everyone in a RW community to believe the same thing?
Why are there so many interpretations of religions?
How can people who share the same religious beliefs have a different interpretation of texts, practices, etc?
How reliable are sources of authority for religious believers?
In what ways might beliefs adapt over time, i.e. to fit in with current thinking in the wider society?
Should some beliefs or values never change? How do RWs help people decide what is right and wrong?
What do religious say about following rules?
What do different RWs say about the origin of the universe?
Does belief have to be supported by experience?
What does it mean to 'experience God'?
What is meant by sacred or holy?
What should we believe about supernatural or miraculous events?
What do people believe about after death?

Philosophical questions

Do we need people?
What gives something or someone authority?
What is 'inspirational'?
Why are some people considered to be inspirational by some but not by others?
Why follow rules?
Do rules have more authority if they are linked to a religion?
Why do rules sometimes change?
What does it mean to 'change your mind'?
What might be 'out there'?
Can you be spiritual without being religious?
Does it make sense to worship someone/something you can't see?
Is praying a reasonable thing to do?
Does life have to have a purpose?
What is a miracle?
Can anything be known for certain?
How do we decide if something is true or false?
Should we only believe things for which there is evidence?
How do people understand the purpose of life?

Social Science questions

Strand A

Why is there so much diversity between and within are RW communities?
How can people who share the same religious beliefs have a different interpretation of texts, practices, etc?
Do other people matter? Would it be possible to live entirely alone?
Can people from different faiths live in harmony together?
Can people from different faiths worship in harmony together?
Why do inequalities exist, between and within groups?
Why are there misconceptions about certain groups (often based on stereotypes)?
How has social media influenced the way people think about RWs?
How does religion bring people together?
Why do people need rules?
Why do people come together to experience God?
Can people be spiritual but not religious?

Reflections: Personal knowledge

- What does community mean to me?
- How do I show that I belong to a community?
- Does what I believe make me who I am?
- How do I know who or what to believe?
- Who inspires me?
- Whose rules do I follow?
- How can I understand religious and spiritual experiences?
- What would I define as a miracle?
- What does prayer mean to me?
- What things do I find hard to explain?
- Have I ever had a religious or spiritual experience?

Substantive Knowledge

Pathway 1: Belonging, Identity & Community

Community

- The meaning of 'community' within different RWs, e.g. Ummah, Sangat.
- Belonging to more than one RW community, e.g. Christian might practice Buddhist meditation.
- What brings communities together, locally and globally, e.g. worship, celebrations – history, diversity, cohesion.
- Diversity within communities in terms of beliefs and practice, e.g. Diverse Hindu groups in Leicester, Jewish groups: Ashkenazi, Sephardi, Hasidim, Reform, Liberal, Progressive; Christian groups and denominations.
- The implications of belonging to a member of a local and worldwide community – responsibilities, expectations.
- Misconceptions and stereotypes.

Pathway 2: Beliefs, Influences and Values

The origin of beliefs and influences

- Origins and reliability of authority for beliefs and actions, e.g. British values, Sharia law, sacred texts, social media.
- How beliefs adapt over time.
- Deciding what to believe: influences, inspirational people and how values are reflected in the lives of inspirational people.
- The concept of Prophethood in Abrahamic religions.

Rules/guidance

Focus here is upon where rules and guidance originate.

Morality and ethics is followed up in year 8.

- Abrahamic traditions: how ideas such as covenant, the Golden Rule, 10 commandments can be interpreted in the 21st century.
- Dharmic traditions: how ideas about good and bad deeds are lined to concepts of karma and reincarnation.

Pathway 3: Expression, Experience and the Sacred

Worship, experience and spirituality

- Meaning of sacred and holy.
- Diversity in the ways in which people experience God through worship and prayer, as individuals and collectively
- Different types of worship across denominations and groups.
- Global expression of worship.
- Supernatural beings such as angels, saints, deities, demons, jinn and spirits, e.g. Gabriel/Jibreel with Daniel, the Annunciation, appearances of the Virgin Mary at Lourdes, Satan and Eve in the Garden of Eden.
- Examples of spiritual experiences during worship, e.g. healing, speaking in tongues.
- Unity with nature as in Paganism.
- Mysticism in Dharmic religions.
- The idea of the transcendent and numinous: miracles, visions, mystery.
- Non-religious perspectives on the above.
- Ideas about death and the afterlife.

Compulsory

- Christian communities in Leicester: study of two denominations.

- One Abrahamic religion **and** one Dharmic religion. Humanism.

- Christianity
- At least two other RWs, including Abrahamic **and** Dharmic.
- Non-religious perspectives.

Truth, Interpretation and Meaning

Teachers must identify the following points for each Pathway.

- How sacred texts are used to express beliefs, values, commitments and identities.
- Interpretations of religions within different groups, denominations, etc.
- Why certain texts and symbols are subject to a wide range of interpretation.
- What makes a person inspirational: how this is open to interpretation: hero/rebel.
- Different explanations of stories about revelations from supernatural beings.
- How religious and spiritual experiences can be interpreted: taking a critical approach to unexplained events, i.e. how people decide what to believe; how one person's experience may be interpreted in many ways, e.g. healing, psychic experiences.

YEAR 8

Pathway 1: Belonging, Identity & Community

Pathway 2: Beliefs, Influences and Values

Pathway 3: Expression, Experience and the Sacred

Disciplinary Knowledge

You do not have to use all the questions: some may be useful as a starter for enquiry, others for promoting deeper learning or to bring ideas together at the end.

Theological questions

Do all religious movements have something in common?
Why is there an increase in the number of people in this country who identify as having no religious beliefs?
How do RWs help people decide what is right and wrong?
What do narratives in sacred texts tell believers about the nature of God?
What do different RWs say about the origin of the universe?
Why do people from religious traditions believe we are here?
How do religious believers make sense of the world?
Why are there so many religions?
Will religions be around in 100 years' time?

Philosophical questions

Where do new religious and spiritual groups come from?
Why do things change?
Why is philosophy described as the love of wisdom?
How do we know what we know?
Can anything be known for certain?
What is meant by the sanctity of life?
How valid are arguments about the existence of God?
Are humans worth more than animals?
How do different RWs explain the nature of right and wrong?
Who says what is right or wrong?
What is our conscience?
Does life have to have a purpose?
What is 'free will'?
If God gives people free will, is it still a sin if they disobey him?
Are scientific arguments about the beginning of the world more reasonable than religious ones?
What is a 'good life'?
Is world peace possible?
Can you be good if you're not religious?
Can science be spiritual?

Social Science questions

Strand A

Why are RW communities so diverse?
How have historical events impacted on the practice of religion and belief?
From where do Humanists get their moral code?
Why do people need rules about morality?
Why should people care for the world?
Why do people often choose war over peace?
How do communities come together to help others?
How does religion bring people together?
How does it divide people?
How might different people interpret 'a good life'?
How might peace mean different things to different people? For example, a peace campaigner and a war veteran.

Reflections: Personal knowledge

- Do I identify with any RWs in my locality?
- Does what I believe make me who I am?
- How do I decide what is right and wrong?
- Why do I sometimes find it hard to know what is the 'right' thing to do?
- Do I have a conscience?
- What do I believe about God?
- How do I treat other people?
- How do I expect to be treated?
- Do I believe peace is possible in the world?

Substantive Knowledge

Pathway 1: Belonging, Identity & Community

'Other' RW communities

- Alternative and new religious movements.
- Ancient traditions.
- Indigenous traditions and spiritualities.
- RWs outside the ones usually studied, e.g. Amish, Baha'i, Black African Churches, Bruderhof, charismatic churches, Church of Latter Day Saints (Mormon), Jainism, Paganism, Rastafarianism, Shintoism, Taoism, Wicca.
- Leicester: How RW communities have changed and/or adapted: influence of time, migration, social influences, changing profile of certain areas such as Highfields, Narborough Road, Belgrave.
- Compare data for religious and non-religious groups, variations between national figures, Europe, the rest of the world.

Pathway 2: Beliefs, Influences and Values

Beliefs, concepts and interpretation

- The ways in which sacred texts, religious and philosophical thinkers frame ideas about God, e.g. first cause, design arguments.
- Concepts of God in Abrahamic and Dharmic traditions.
- What Christians and Jewish people believe about the concept of Messiah.

Interpreting beliefs about God and the purpose of life.

- Creation, sin, free will.
- Abrahamic 'linear' view of life compared to Dharmic 'cyclical' view.
- Non-religious perspectives.

Pathway 3: Expression, Experience and the Sacred

Living a good life

Caring for the world

- What is meant by 'living a good life': what RWs teach.
- What people believe about how they should treat each other and care for the world.
- RWs interpretation of the concept of peace. How the peace narrative links with the idea of national identity.

Morality and ethics

- How people make moral decisions.
- Absolute and relative morality.
- How moral questions are different to other kinds of questions.
- How RWs guide people about morality.
- Utilitarianism.
- Sanctity of life
- Conservative and liberal approaches to the interpretation of sacred texts.
- Humanist perspective.

Compulsory

- RWs communities in Leicester

- Christianity
- Either Islam and Judaism
- At least one Dharmic tradition.

- Christianity
- One Dharmic tradition
- Humanism

Truth, Interpretation and Meaning

Teachers must identify the following points for each Pathway:

- How different RW groups interpret truth and meaning.
- Interpretations of the meaning of 'Messiah.'
- The ways in which RWs interpret morality, including through sacred texts; conservative and liberal approaches and how these lead to contrasting answers to moral questions.
- How RWs view sacred texts, Hermeneutics, different interpretations of truth.
- Absolute and relative morality.
- Interpretations of 'a good life' and peace.

YEAR 9

Pathway 1: Belonging, Identity & Community

Pathway 2: Beliefs, Influences and Values

Pathway 3: Expression, Experience and the Sacred

Disciplinary Knowledge

You do not have to use all the questions: some may be useful as a starter for enquiry, others for promoting deeper learning or to bring ideas together at the end.

Theological questions

In what ways do beliefs bring people together in terms of identity?
Why do RWs have differing beliefs about the role of women?
Do beliefs have to adapt over time, i.e. to fit in with current thinking, e.g. in regard to the role of women, beliefs about sexuality?
How does music and art help to enhance beliefs and ideas?

Philosophical questions

How do we know who we are?
How do we know if we are the same/ or different to other people?
Are there some things that everyone believes?
Can anything be known for certain?
Is the mind the same as the brain?
Which part of us experiences spiritual things?
What is reality?
How do people come to find meaning in their lives?
What is 'spiritual'?

Social Science questions

Why are RW communities so diverse?
What happens when religious identity conflicts with another identity, e.g. national?
How have historical events impacted on relationships between certain communities?
Why is [name of religion] the way it is today?
How has it changed?
Why do women sometimes appear to be treated as less equal to men? How can this be seen in some RWs?
How can we find out about people's spiritual experiences?

Reflections: Personal knowledge

- Who am I?
- Am I a different person at different times?
- Do I identify with one or more RW?
- What do I believe about gender equality?
- What kind of music and art inspires me?
- What does inspiration feel like?
- Have I ever had a religious or spiritual experience?

Substantive Knowledge

Pathway 1: Belonging, Identity & Community

Self and Identity

- How beliefs are inter-connected with identity: philosophical explanations about the world and the sense of self.
- National and religious identity.
- How identity may involve accepting aspects of more than one RW.
- Links between religious and national identity: how these might conflict.
- Events that bring religious and non-religious communities together and what this says about human beings.
- The wearing of clothing and symbols as part of identity: the concept of modesty.

Pathway 2: Beliefs, Influences and Values

Diversity and change

- Diversity within one RW: exploring in depth differences in belief and practice.
- The ways in which countries are influenced to a greater or lesser extent, by RWs.
- How global migration has affected the religious traditions of European countries.

Gender

- Different beliefs about gender in RWs. Examples of equality in RWs.
- Contrasting concepts, e.g. Eve and the Virgin Mary.
- Attitudes to leadership in RWs: diverse beliefs in Christian denominations, equal roles in Buddhism, Paganism, Sikhi, differences between Orthodox and Progressive Judaism.
- Communities of women: convents, goddess worship, Wicca.
- Judaism: role of women, mother, symbolism of mikveh.
- Difference between cultural and religious attitudes.
- Women in sacred scriptures and within different traditions, e.g. Mary and Eve in Christianity, Khadija in Islam.

Pathway 3: Expression, Experience and the Sacred

Expression through the senses and experience

- How music, the arts and literature contribute to peoples' religious and spiritual experiences.
- Examples from RWs: Mystery Plays, Shiva, the Lord of the Dance, kathak dance, Muslim calligraphy.
- How sensory and emotional responses form part of worship and religious experiences.
- How beliefs and ideas can be popularised and continued through the arts.
- Experiencing the sacred through direct encounters with God, e.g. the Buddha's Enlightenment, Moses' encounter with G-d, Jesus' baptism, Prophet Muhammad and the Night of Power, Guru Nanak at the river, Krishna revealing his true form to Arjuna in the Bhagavad Gita.

Compulsory

- Christianity or Islam
- Non-religious worldview

- Christianity or Islam
- Non-religious worldview

Abrahamic and one Dharmic faith

Truth, Interpretation and Meaning

Teachers must identify the following points for each Pathway.

- How people develop their own sense of identity, e.g. religious, national.
- What meaning is given to diversity and change.
- How women are represented in different RWs, depending upon interpretation, and how this impacts upon their role.
- How people interpret works of art in terms of religion and spirituality.
- How people find meaning and inspiration through the arts.
- How people interpret claims of encounters with God and other spiritual experiences.

Links for teachers

Community and festivals

What about the others?

This video clip, made by Seema Ahmad from Leicester SACRE, reflects upon Ramadan and considers the ways in which some people can feel left out of special religious occasions and rituals because of their health or circumstances. She makes the point about how important it is to try and include them.

<https://youtu.be/rlymSzvKfAQ?si=1wMadnastpkxf13z>

Census 2021 breakdown

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/religion/bulletins/religionenglandandwales/census2021>

TV programmes

Passover UK: A Jewish Story, ITV 1/ITV X

<https://www.itv.com/news/2024-05-02/passover-uk-an-ancient-jewish-festival-in-modern-britain>

Ramadan: A Journey Across Britain, ITV 1

<https://www.itv.com/watch/ramadan:-a-journey-across-britain/10a5684a0001B/10a5684a0001>

Inspirational people

Inspiring stories from young people

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zvgb2sg>

Oscar Romero

<https://cafod.org.uk/education/secondary-and-youth-resources/romero-secondary-resources>

TV Programme

Big Zuu Goes to Mecca, BBC2

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/m001ycf7/big-zuu-goes-to-mecca>

Miracles

Prill, S.E. 'Except the True Name, I have no miracle': Modern Sikh Understandings of the Miraculous' in Pashaura Singh (ed.) Sikhism in Global Context, OUP (2011).

Modern day miracles

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-45679730>

Women

Women of the Bible: Rose Publishing, 2023

Divine Women

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/articles/z73vwtj>

Morality and Ethics

What success looks like

https://youtu.be/SMFaZC3V_CM?si=YtaJyeHzlCnWwi5T

This video clip by Seema Ahmad talks about success within the context of aspiring to live by higher values which is what she believes her Muslim faith wants her to do. Some of the things she mentions are actually inspired by the Qur'an and Hadith but Seema makes the point that they can be seen as a generally acceptable honourable way to be for all people.

Morality

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zwxm97h/revision/1>

Exemplification of planning

In this example, just one aspect of the Pathway has been chosen.

YEAR: 7

Pathway 1: Belonging, Identity & Community: The meaning of 'community' within different RWs.

Previous learning: what do pupils know and remember?

What knowledge do pupils bring with them from primary school?

Learning objectives

Pupils should know and understand

- The meaning of 'community' within different RWs.
- How it is possible to belong to more than one RW community.
- What brings communities together, locally and globally.
- The diversity within communities in terms of beliefs and practice.
- The origin and possible impact of misconceptions and stereotypes.

Learning outcomes: Pupils should be able to develop some or all of these (subject specific) skills/cognitive processes within the context of the core question:

- Remembering
- Understanding
- Applying
- Analysing
- Evaluating
- Creating

Disciplinary Knowledge

How might pupils learn more about this core question? They could:

- Interview representatives of different RWs about beliefs.
- Observe practices and ways of living relating to community, including in the locality and globally.
- Go beyond 'the facts' and explore the emotional, experiential aspects of communities, e.g. what do people experience as groups during worship, key events.
- Analyse data and statistics about different communities locally, nationally and globally and understand how these are subject to change.

Theology

Is it possible for everyone in a RW community to believe the same thing?

Why are there so many interpretations of religions?

How can people who share the same religious beliefs have a different interpretation of texts, practices, etc?

Philosophy

- How do we know who we are?
- How do we know if we are the same/different from other people?
- What is a community?
- How do we know we belong?

Social Science

- Do RWs bring communities together or divide them?
- Why are there misconceptions about certain groups (often based on stereotypes)?
- How have historical events impacted on certain communities?
- Why are RW communities so diverse?
- Do other people matter? Would it be possible to live entirely alone?

Substantive Knowledge: The concept of community in RWs

Christianity: Church – the body of Christ, a living community,ekklesia' (assembly, or a gathering), church and local community (social responsibility).

Buddhism: the Sangha - meaning 'company' or 'community'; communities of monks and nuns; has provided inspiration and guidance on how to live a good Buddhist life; part of the Three Jewels, also the lay Sangha (non-ordained Buddhists).

Hinduism: celebrations which bring the community together, charities, role of mandir.

Islam: Ummah – worldwide community, promotes welfare of all Muslims, emphasises taking care of one another, local/global.

Judaism: historical background, covenant, family, key role of shul, charitable organisations, mikveh, community as obligation.

Sikhi: the Sangat: means 'true congregation', those who meet and worship in the gurdwara in the presence of the Guru Granth Sahib; sing hymns together (kirtan), meditate on God's name (Nam Japna) and listen to musicians (ragis); key role of Guru Nanak; everyone seen as equal, community is a vital part of a personal journey.

More detailed notes for key stage 3 will be made available as extra resources: see Appendix 7

Key Stage 4

If schools are not following a GCSE examination course, they are still required to follow a course of study for RE. It is suggested that these are based on choices taken from the examination syllabuses, but not followed in as much depth. There is a range of religious and ethical topics to choose from on the examination board sites and many have correlating schemes of learning, which may help non-specialists. As with KS3, Christianity must be included as well as a balance of other RWs. An alternative would be to use Barbara Wintergill's 'Big Ideas' topic (see below). Schools must ensure that legal requirements are being met.

In key stages 4, the Agreed Syllabus does not specify the number of religions and worldviews to be included in addition to Christianity, recognising that schools will need to consider both the requirements of public examination syllabuses and the need for more flexible programmes for those pupils not entered for these officially accredited courses.

Useful links

AQA: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/examspecs/zjgx47h>

CCEA: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/examspecs/zm2s8xs>

Edexcel: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/examspecs/zm9pd6f>

Eduqas: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/examspecs/z68sjhv>

OCR: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/examspecs/zhwy7nb>

WJEC: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/examspecs/z3xvfcw>

Alternative approaches

Putting Big Ideas Into Practice In Religious Education [35]

RE days

This is not the most desirable approach but can be used to ensure that time is allocated to RE at Key Stage 4. Speakers could be invited in to support a day planned around 'Religion and Worldviews', a debate about morality and ethics, etc. These days can enhance RE throughout the year but are not a replacement for regular teaching.

[35] <https://www.reonline.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Putting-big-ideas-into-Practice.pdf>

APPENDICES

CONTENTS

Appendix 1: Progression Strands

Appendix 2: Assessment

Appendix 3: School Designed units

Appendix 4: Religion and Worldviews in Leicester

Appendix 5: Special Schools

Appendix 6: Leicester Schools Peace Project

Appendix 7: Resources

Appendix 1: Progression Strands

This shows how each progression strand builds up from Reception onwards. If teachers are designing their own subject content they must use these to inform the learning objectives, outcomes, etc. The strands must be used when designing assessment tasks (See Appendix 2).

Reception – year 6

If you are designing your own subject content you must use these to inform the learning objectives, outcomes, etc.

Strand A: Belonging, Identity & community

Reception

- What it means and how it feels to belong to different groups.
- What some people and groups are special.
- How people come together to celebrate special events, e.g. birth.
- How schools celebrate special events.

Year 1

- How stories of all kinds give communities a shared identity.
- The ways in which festivals and celebrations bring people together through a sense of belonging.

Year 2

- How religions and worldviews connect people, e.g. to families, local and national communities, globally.
- How sacred scriptures are used in worship and ceremonies to bring communities together.
- How worldviews connect with each other.

Year 3

- How worship brings communities together and makes individuals feel that they belong.
- How religious/spiritual experiences can be shared by a community.
- How people within Abrahamic and Dharmic traditions express worship.
- How people care for those in their own communities and for others.
- How religious/spiritual experiences can be shared by a community.

Year 4

- Why pilgrimage has special meaning for communities.
- How going on a pilgrimage can strengthen a person's religious identity.
- What it means to a person to be part of local RW communities.
- How there is diversity within the same RW community.
- What RWs contribute to the wider community.
- How communities are represented in school and in the neighbourhood.

Year 5

- How different ceremonies marking important steps in life bring communities together, symbolising a sense of belonging and identity.
- How clothing and symbols contribute to a sense of identity.
- How promises made are strengthened by the presence of the community.

Year 6

- How beliefs are linked to a sense of identity.
- How communities come together to care for the planet, work for peace.

Strand B: Beliefs, Influences and Values

Reception

- Why Christmas and Easter are special for Christians.
- Why Diwali and Holi are special for Hindus.
- Why people might not belong to a religion.

Year 1

- How stories form part of religious and non-religious beliefs and help people understand the world.
- What stories from the Bible teach people about God and the way they should lead their lives.
- How stories relating to key festivals reflect religious beliefs and concepts, e.g. Christmas and Incarnation.
- Why Easter is so important to Christians.
- Why Passover is so important to Jews.
- How festivals reflect the idea of peace.

Year 2

- What people in different RWs believe about revelation and sacred scriptures.
- What people from Abrahamic and Dharmic traditions hold as key beliefs.
- What Humanists believe.
- What RWs believe about peace.
- What shared beliefs exist within and between worldviews.

Year 3

- How worship reflects key beliefs.
- The ways in which beliefs and actions (in worship) are linked.
- How religious or spiritual experiences may strengthen a person's belief.

Year 4

- How pilgrimage reflects key beliefs, e.g. Makkah and the 5 Pillars of Islam.
- What values hold communities together.
- How people may belong to more than one RW community.

Year 5

- How promises made in commitment ceremonies strengthen belief.
- How ceremonies reflect key beliefs about the purpose of life and death.
- How promises are connected to beliefs about death.

Year 6

- How different types of authority and influence determine people's beliefs and actions.
- How values are reflected in the lives of inspirational people.
- What religious and philosophical thinkers say about the existence of God.
- What people believe about good and evil and how this may or may not be linked to religion.
- How people decide about right and wrong.
- How people believe they should treat each other and the world around them.
- What sacred scriptures say about peace.
- How key thinkers and activists have influenced the peace narrative.

Strand C: Expression, Experience and the Sacred

Reception

- How people celebrate festivals.
- How stories are expressed through festivals.
- Why places of worship matter to people.
- What makes some places, and the things inside them, sacred or holy.
- How being inside special and sacred places makes people feel.

Year 1

- How stories inform what happens during festivals, e.g. lighting candles at Hanukkah.
- How stories are used as part of observance of festivals, e.g. telling the story of the Exodus at Passover.
- How some stories are considered to be special and/or sacred.

Year 2

- Why some texts are considered to be sacred.
- How sacred texts are used in personal and communal worship and other ceremonies.

- How people show respect for sacred scriptures.

Year 3

- How people express their faith through prayer and worship, both as members of communities and as individuals.
- How music, art and literature might enhance worship.
- Why experiencing the sacred and holy matters in worship and ceremonies.
- Which symbols, objects and artefacts aid worship.
- The ways in which sensory and emotional responses form part of worship and religious experience.
- How people express care for others, based on teaching within religions and worldviews .
- The ways in which people encounter the sacred or 'unexplained' through religious and spiritual experiences.

Year 4

- What people experience during pilgrimages and how this might be life-changing.
- What religious and non-religious pilgrimages have in common.
- What actions and rituals take place during pilgrimages.
- How communities in Leicester express their faith in everyday life and at special times.

Year 5

- What rituals and symbolism characterise ceremonies.
- How the sacred is a key component of religious ceremonies, e.g. promises made to God.

Year 6

- How people express 'big questions' in everyday life.
- How inspiration may have a religious or non-religious source.
- How people express their beliefs in the way they behave and through the values they hold, e.g. about the environment.

Strand D: Truth, Interpretation and Meaning

Reception

- Why stories are important to Christians and Hindus.
- What meaning is given to these stories.
- How symbols and artefacts in places of worship have special meaning for believers

Year 1

- How stories can mean different things to different people.
- How different stories may contain 'truth' and what this means to different people.
- Why people have different views about how the world began.

Year 2

- What believers mean by 'truth' in sacred scriptures and how this can be interpreted in different ways.
- Why the concept of revelation is central to understanding some sacred scriptures.
- How 'peace' may be interpreted in different ways.

Year 3

- What people from Abrahamic and Dharmic traditions mean by worship, prayer and meditation.
- How beliefs and ideas can be demonstrated and understood in different ways, including through experiences.
- How religious/spiritual experiences such as miracles can be interpreted in different ways.
- How non-religious people might interpret religious experiences.

Year 4

- Why the experience of pilgrimage may have a different meaning for people.
- How communities in an area change over time.
- Why belonging to a community matters to people.

Year 5

- How people interpret the meaning of life and death.
- How commitment ceremonies may have different meanings for different people.

Year 6

- Why some sources of truth are trusted more than others.
- How influence and authority may be interpreted in different ways.
- Why people do not always agree on what makes a person inspirational.
- How beliefs about the existence of God are open to interpretation and may change over time.
- How people decide what is good or bad, right or wrong.
- How 'peace' can be interpreted in different ways.

Note: Key stage 3

At Key Stage 3 the progression strands are directly linked to the teaching content.

Appendix 2: Assessment

Carrying out and recording summative assessment

Years 1-6

This should be read within the context of the section on assessment in Section 3.5, p.13. As stated, it is important to remember that assessment is built into learning, not used as a bolt-on activity. The tracking of progression is ongoing, driven by the way the curriculum is structured. It may be seen through formative and summative processes, through formal structures or through a simple nod, word, smile or mark on a piece of work. However, at the end of a unit (or year) a teacher make decide to check what individual pupils know and remember by setting summative assessment tasks. There are no set rules about how often summative assessment tasks should be carried out. This is left to teachers' judgement (and may depend upon what the school requires in line with its own assessment systems).

There are three things to consider:

1. The key question at the beginning of the unit: this is what is being assessed.
2. How the assessment task links to the progression strands and learning outcomes.
3. What will happen as a result of the assessment. How will it help to move pupils on in their learning?

Tasks must be adapted to meet the needs of individual pupils, e.g. some may be written, some spoken, some modified in terms of language.

Year 1, term 1: Example of a summative assessment task

1. What is being assessed? The key question is: What do stories from religious traditions (in this case, Judaism) teach about God?
2. How does this link with the Progression Strands? These outline the key concepts that pupils need to learn. In terms of assessment they are sometimes referred to as 'threshold concepts'. In other words, pupils must understand the concept(s) at one level before they can move on to the next. These are set out on Appendix 1. Teachers should choose which ones are appropriate for the task, in this case:

Beliefs, influences and values

- What stories from the Bible teach people about God and the way they should lead their lives.

Experience, expression and the sacred

- What makes some places, and the things inside them, sacred or holy.
- How being inside special and sacred places makes people feel.

Truth, interpretation and meaning

- How different stories may contain 'truth' and what this means to different people.

Year 1, term 1 assessment task

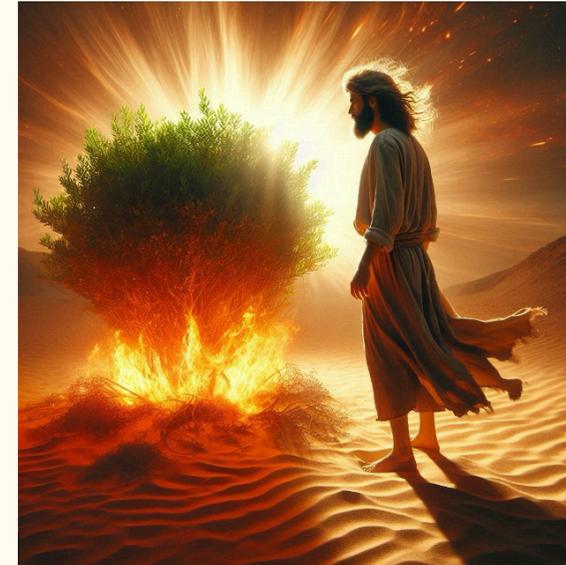
What do stories from Judaism teach about G-d?



Key questions: responses could be written or spoken.

Picture 1

1. Who is the baby and how did he come to get there?
2. What links might he have with the Nativity story?
3. What happened next?



Picture 2

1. How does this picture connect with the first one?
2. What is the person looking at? How does he feel and why?
3. Why is the person not wearing any shoes?
4. Why is this person very important to Jewish people?
5. What do they teach Jewish people about G-d?

Not all pupils will be able to respond to all questions. However, the key element of this assessment is about the concept of belief in G-d, i.e. Jewish people believe that G-d caused Moses to be saved so that he could go on to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. He can communicate with people as he appeared to Moses later and told him what he had to do.

How to record tasks: Traffic Lights

This needs to be kept as simple as possible (it is a best fit) so that outcomes can be seen immediately. Teachers may have their own ways of recording the outcomes of assessment tasks. A simple traffic light system, used alongside the actual task, can be very effective, for example:

Pupils' Name	Year 1: Autumn term summative assessment task		
	Beliefs, Influences and Values	Experience, Expression & the Sacred	Truth, Interpretation and Meaning.
Pupil A	Red	Red	Amber
Pupil B	Green	Amber	Green
Pupil C	Green	Green	Green
Pupil D	Green	Amber	Red
Pupil E	Green	Green	Green
Pupil F	Green	Amber	Red

This way of assessing can be managed on whatever way is best for teachers, e.g. a record might be kept for each pupil as well as a class overview as shown above.

Green= Expectations (in line with the progression strands) all met. Check that tasks are sufficiently challenging.

Amber = Expectations almost met. Identify which part of the task the pupils found difficult, work on this until the concept has been understood (remember, pupils may understand a concept at different levels).

Red = Expectations have not been met. Pupils has not grasped concept at any level. Go back and see where the problems began.

For the system to work teachers must be clear about their expectations (which should be based on learning outcomes) for different pupils. As well as for summative assessment, the traffic light system can also be used when marking work or as any part of formative assessment. In these cases, the colours give a direct message to pupils (whereas the above is for teachers). Over time, patterns will emerge. If red appears frequently and /or for pupils where you would not expect it, check that the teaching is pitched at the right level. If green appears too often it may be that the pupils are not being sufficiently challenged. Teachers should know their pupils and be aware when the learning is not at the right level.

Assessment for secondary schools

This is set out in the Key Stage 3 section.

Appendix 3: School Designed Units (SDUs)

Schools must study one SDU upon which to focus during the summer term of years 3 and 4. While it is entirely up to schools to decide on the content in this unit the following planning template must be used, to ensure continuity with previous terms. Suggestions are provided in the unit plans. Deciding about which SDUs to use requires whole school planning to avoid repetition.

Summer Term Year: School Designed Unit:		
Religions/Worldviews to be covered		Content overview
Links to progression strands		
Strand A: Belonging, Identity and Community Strand B: Beliefs, influences and Values Strand C: Expression, Experience and Sacred Strand D: Truth, Interpretation and Meaning		
How does this unit link to earlier learning?	New learning objectives Pupils should know and understand:	Unit expectations and outcomes Evidence for these should be demonstrated through learning activities, conversations with pupils and assessment tasks (See Appendix 2) To achieve the learning objectives, pupils should be able to:
Key vocabulary and concepts		

Disciplinary knowledge: ways of knowing		
Theology: what people believe	Philosophy: What people think	Social Science: How people live
Personal Knowledge		
Substantive knowledge: what pupils need to know		
Learning activities		
Possible cross curricular links		

Examples of topics which could be covered

1. Visit to a place of worship close to school.
2. Comparison of two denominations or groups.
3. Jain temple, Leicester.
4. Buddhist Centre, Leicester.
5. Leicester Cathedral.
6. Other groups in Leicester, e.g. Baha'i, Quakers, Pagans, Humanism.
7. Study of a religion or worldview not already covered.
8. Expressing religions and spirituality through art, music, drama, photographs and videos.
9. Symbolism of light and dark.
10. Justice and poverty.
11. Philosophy for Children: enquiry-based topic, e.g. moral and ethical dilemmas
12. Stories and meaning: examples of stories from other religions, or stories that have a particular message or meaning.
13. Christmas traditions from different cultures and around the world.
14. Creation stories from different worldviews, cultures and traditions.
15. Story based unit, e.g. The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe.
16. Festivals in Leicester.
17. Peace, linked to Leicester University.
18. Inspirational people.
19. Global representations of a religion.
20. Diversity in Leicester.
21. Religion and the media.
22. Introduction to Philosophy.
23. Faith walks.
24. Expression through clothing and symbols.

Case Studies

Example of Case Study based on a Leicester organisation

One Roof, Leicester

CEO: Salma Ravat

One Roof Leicester (ORL) started as a networking forum in 2011. The forum was aimed at small independent charities and community & faith groups working with people who were homeless. The forum was an opportunity for these groups to discuss their concerns, share their challenges and formulate solutions. In 2012 the forum conducted a survey amongst their clients to identify common problems and issues they were facing. The most common problem identified was the lack of accommodation and support especially for individuals who had no recourse to public funds and for those excluded from existing services. In 2013 the forum explored different housing solutions set up by faith and community groups in other parts of the country. In 2014 the forum members decided to register ORL as a charity to enable it to develop and deliver a new accommodation project. Since 2015 ORL has been providing accommodation and support to single people who are homeless, including British nationals, destitute refugees, Asylum Seekers, EU migrants, and other people from abroad.

Our mission is to support single people who are homeless in Leicester, to recover, reset and rebuild their lives in a safe and stable home. We aim to do this by:

- Increasing the provision of high-quality, temporary accommodation
- Improving access to permanent accommodation
- Enabling integration into the community for people with housing issues
- Reducing the number of single people rough sleeping in Leicester

ORL Homes is an alternative to local authority housing provision. It is vital for those who find themselves rough sleeping and can be a lifeline when all commissioned services are full. As an independent charity we can offer accommodation to those that may be excluded from other services or where these are not suitable for them. We are the only charity in Leicester providing accommodation and support to individuals with limited eligibility/no benefits. A room in an ORL Home is offered to people with a genuine need. We work closely with our partners, including the Local Authority, Homeless Health and Mental Health services, day centres and other charities who identify and refer individual who are ready to move into the accommodation we provide. Whilst in the home, each resident is supported by a key worker to help them to apply for benefits, housing, employment, training and eventually to move-on. If a resident is eligible for local authority housing, they are supported to make an application and helped to bid on properties. Where a resident has is ineligible for benefits or has no income ORL provides a room for free in an ORL Home, we provide a weekly subsistence payment and a food and toiletry parcel to the resident. They also benefit from the same level of intensive support as our other residents.

The homes we utilise are either owned by ORL or bought using the by individual from local faith, community groups and other ethical investors. These ORL Homes also creates the opportunity for faith and community groups to come together to support the people living in these houses. Volunteers from local faith and community groups offer befriending and practical support to the residents in our homes. They regularly collect food and toiletries, donate furniture, help residents with learning new skills and provide emotional support.

Salma Ravat, CEO

Salma is one of the co-founders of ORL. As a founding member she has helped to develop One Roof Leicester (ORL) from a networking forum to a charity that provides accommodation and support to people who are homeless and destitute in the city of Leicester. In her 14 years with ORL she has designed and delivered a wide range of projects, inspired people from across Leicester's diverse communities to support our work and successfully secured funding from the local and central government, trusts and foundations, national charities, local communities, businesses and individuals. In her current role as CEO she is responsible for strategy development, operational management, finance, staffing and resource management, collaboration and partnerships and networking.

<https://www.oneroof.org.uk>

Khalsa Toy Store

This is an online toy store run by a Midlands business, pioneering Sikh representative toys and collectibles and introducing the World's 1st Sikh action figure collection. They specialise in creating toys that instil a sense of pride in children for their image and identity whilst celebrating diversity and heritage. These are a great visual aid and learning tool to recognise and normalise unique physical characteristics from different faiths and cultures. The journey began to bring to life Sikh representation in an industry where 'different' faces didn't seem to fit. The company recognised that most children have superheroes and heroines they feel drawn to and inspired by. But they also recognised that action figures, childrens toys or magical characters do not necessarily represent attributes from their own culture, from where there will be a rich and iconic history of truly inspiring people. Believing that it is imperative for young children to learn the tales of their forefathers and mothers and feel proud of their heritage the business developed this range of toys. Find out more from www.khalsatoystore.com

The story of the business and a focus on the Sikh figure could be a case study in itself or could like to other aspects of Sikh traditions.

Example of a SDU based around Peace

Links to RWs

Jainism (Jain Temple in Leicester)

Jainism is an ancient Indian religion. At the heart of Jainism is compassion and non-violence to all living things Truthfulness is also very important. Jains and their ideas were a big influence upon Gandhi who brought compassion, non-violence and truthfulness into politics during the Indian Independence Movement. His work influenced Dr Martin Luther King and the American Civil Rights Movement as well as Nelson Mandela and the peaceful transition from apartheid to democracy in South Africa. Ahimsa' is the word used for non-violence. Since 2002 Jainism in the UK has celebrated Ahimsa Day. The day is near the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi on October 2, which is a national holiday in India and marks Global Non-violence Day. The day also hosts the giving of an annual Ahimsa Award to a person whose work and activities demonstrate Jain principles of compassion and nonviolence.

The first European Jain Temple is in Leicester. It serves the Leicester Jain community and is a very interesting sacred space to visit. It has wonderful artwork and statues created by Indian sculptors and artists.

Further information
Institute of Jainology

Leicester Temple, 32 Oxford Street, LE1 5XU
info@jaincentreleicester.com

For possible visits:

Ushaben President jitubhai. Mobile 07440 056701. rajniusha@hotmail.co.uk

Buddhism: Buddha and Peace

Statues portray the Buddha sitting in a very serene, peaceful, calm position. He has no weapons. The following Five Precepts are taught to ordinary (lay) Buddhists to follow and they include 'Not to destroy life'.

Further Information

World Peace Cafe and Nagarjuna Kadampa Meditation Centre, 17 Guildhall Lane, Leicester, LE1 5FQ

Email: info@meditateinleicester.org

Admin enquiries: ad@meditateinleicester.org

Education enquiries: epc@meditateinleicester.org

Telephone: 0116 262 0317

Possible Resources for pupils (5-12 year olds)

Christine H. Huynh, My First Dharma Book: A Children's Book on The Five Precepts and Five Mindfulness Trainings in Buddhism. Second edition, Dharma Wisdom, LLC, 2021

Christine H. Huynh, The Four Noble Truths, Dharma Wisdom, LLC, 2023

Christine H. Huynh, My Middle Path, Dharma Wisdom, LLC, 2021.

Quakers

The Society of Friends or Quakers began in Leicestershire. George Fox, the founder, was born in 1624 in Fenny Drayton. As a young person he grew up through the English Civil War (1642-1651) with King Charles and the Cavaliers on one side and Oliver Cromwell and the Round Heads on the other. In this terrible war many people were killed. Leicester was attacked in 1645 by King Charles I's army. Early Quakers, inspired by George Fox, believed Jesus Christ had come to teach people personally through an inner light in each person. Priests and teachers of religion were therefore not necessary, nor were Bishops or church buildings needed. Quakers initially met outdoors, in homes, and also built 'meeting houses' rather than churches. In 1652 the Quaker movement really took off following George Fox's visionary experience on Pendle Hill in Lancashire. From the beginning men and women were equal. Margaret Fell was an important early leader. Women were also missionaries. Quakers were persecuted, imprisoned and sometimes killed. George Fox preached in Leicester at St Martins (now the Cathedral) and was put in the town jail for doing so. Leicester Quakers began building a meeting house in 1680. The present Quaker Meeting House is on Queens Road, Clarendon Park.

Quakers are committed to human equality and dignity. They have played a leading part in the abolition of slavery, prison reform and so on. They were involved in beginning the human rights organisation, Amnesty International, the environmental organisation, Green Peace, and the famine relief and advocacy for the poor organisation, Oxfam. Quakers have from the beginning been against war and committed to non-violence. In World War I and World War II many were conscientious objectors. In 1947 Quakers received the Nobel Peace Prize for their international peace work. They are the only religion in the world to receive this peace award. Two famous Leicester Quakers were brothers Corder and Jack Catchpool. Both were born in Leicester and lived in Saxby Street close to the Quaker meeting house then in Prebend Street. In World War I there were over 250 conscientious objectors from Leicester and Leicestershire. There is a marker to these men on Peace Walk down from the Arch of Remembrance war memorial on Victoria Park.

For further information about Leicester Quakers, see Appendix 4

Peace Tour (Leicester University)

See https://drive.google.com/file/d/1lkyFX-vNrxWRZNeROCaJsaXKIKhaD5Fy/view?usp=share_link

This tour introduces children to the solemnity and tragedy of war from a Leicester viewpoint. It begins with the story of the 12,000 men from Leicester and county who died in World War I. It includes the stories of the founding of the University of Leicester as a peace university in 1921 as the city's first war memorial, followed by the Arch of Remembrance in 1925. Protests against war, questions about the bombing of civilians and the use of nuclear weapons (Hiroshima and Nagasaki), racism and issues of colonialism are also covered. The contributions of members of the Attenborough family as "citizens of change" are also discussed.

Booking a School Peace Walk

Guided school tours, adapted for age and led by a trained student ambassador, tell the story of the founding of the University Leicester as a peace university in 1921, the history of the Arch of Remembrance, Peace Walk and other memorials.

Book a school tour by emailing schools@le.ac.uk

Appendix 4: Religions and Worldviews in Leicester

Whenever possible, pupils should be provided with the opportunity to visit places of worship. Although there may sometimes be practical issues around arranging visits, the benefits cannot be over-estimated. Holding conversations with leaders and members of faith communities enriches learning and helps to make pupils aware of people's lived experiences. Visits should always have a clear focus, with direct links to the syllabus. This needs careful planning across all years. In terms of choosing which places to visit, the best starting point would be those close to school. Most schools have at least a church nearby. Always make it clear to the host what is expected from the visit, e.g. it is an educational visit, therefore pupils should not be asked to worship. This also needs setting out to parents.

The list below is a sample of places that might be visited. For further advice and guidance, contact St Philips Centre:

Phone: [0116 2733459](tel:01162733459)

General Enquiries: admin@stphilipscentre.co.uk

Buddhism

Nagarjuna Kadampa Meditation Centre

17 Guildhall Lane

Leicester

LE1 5FQ

Tel: 0116 262 0317

Email: epc@meditateinleicester.org

<https://meditateinleicester.org/contact-us/>

Christianity

Leicester Cathedral

Details of Leicester Cathedral's programme are established packages, but they are open to dialogue around any other ideas teachers may have. Some of our activities have to be experienced in person but others can very easily be delivered to you online, notably Godly Play and The Big Questions.

For bookings and any questions: CathedralBookings@LeicesterCofE.org or <https://leicestercathedral.org>

Leicester Quakers

16 Queen's Rd

Leicester

LE2 1WP

Tel: 0116 2705003

Booking form online <https://leicester.quakermeeting.org/contact-us/>

Hinduism

ISKCON Hindus Leicester

31 Granby Street

Leicester

LE1 6EJ

Tel: 07597 786 676

Email: info@iskconleicester.org

<https://www.iskconleicester.org/contact>

Shree Hindu Temple & Community Centre

34 St. Barnabas Road

Leicester

LE5 4BD

UK

Tel: 0116 246 4590

Email: online form

<https://www.shreehindutemple.net>

Swaminarayan mandir, Gipsy Lane

BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir

135 Gipsy Lane

Leicester

LE4 6RH

Tel: 0116 2623791

E-mail: info.leicester@uk.baps.org

<https://www.baps.org/Global-Network/UK-and-Europe/Leicester/Mandir-info.aspx>

<https://www.baps.org/Global-Network/UK-and-Europe/Leicester.aspx>

Islam

Central mosque

Conduit St

Leicester

LE2 0JN

Tel: 0116 2544459

Booking form online: <https://islamiccentre.org/contact-us-topmenu-18/1-the-leicester-central-mosque>

Madani School, Leicester

77 Evington Valley Rd

Leicester

LE5 5LL

The school has a mosque and welcomes school visits. For more information contact ralima@madani.leicester.sch.uk

Tel: 0116 2498080.

Masjid Umar

1-3 Evington Drive

Leicester

LE5 5PF

Tel: 0116 2735529

Email: info@masjid-umar.org

<https://masjid-umar.org/contact/>

Jainism

Jain Temple

32 Oxford Street

Leicester

LE1 5XU

Tel: 0116 2541150

Email: info@jaincentreleicester.com

<https://www.jaincentreleicester.com>

Ushaben President jitubhai. Mobile 07440 056701. rajniusha@hotmail.co.uk

Judaism

Leicester Hebrew Congregation (Orthodox Synagogue)

Highfield Street

Leicester

LE2 1AD

Email: centremanager@lhcong.com, visits@lhcong.com

Bookings: <https://jewish-leicester.co.uk/education-leicester-2/>

Note: virtual visits available online

Leicester Progressive Jewish Congregation: Neve Shalom

24 Avenue Road

Leicester

LE2 3EA

<https://www.jewishgen.org/JCR-UK/Community/leices/index.htm>

Sikhi

Guru Tegh Bahadur Gurdwara

106 East Park Rd

Leicester

LE5 4QB

Tel: 0116 2742453

Email: gtb_gurdwara@hotmail.co.uk

<https://gtbgurdwara.com>

Holy Bones gurdwara

Guru Nanak Gurdwara

9 Holy Bones

Leicester

Tel: 0116 2517460

Email: leicestergng@gmail.com

https://www.facebook.com/GNGLeicester/?checkpoint_src=any

Gurdwara Sahib

2 Sri Guru Ramdas Way
Hamilton Leicester
LE5 1GN
Off Colin Grundy Drive
LE5 1FY
Tel: (0)116 303 2268
Email: info@rbluk.com
<https://www.rbluk.com>

Other places and contacts

Baha'i

<https://www.bahai.org>

Leicester Council of Faiths: summary of faiths: beliefs, practices, etc. and presence in Leicester

<https://www.lcof.org.uk/faiths/>

Leicester Humanists

Email: leicester@humanistbranches.uk

<https://humanists.uk/local-group/leicester/contact/>

For further information:

Contact Nicole Shasha. Nicole is a humanist celebrant living in Leicester, co-ordinates Leicester Humanists and Young Humanists nationally, and is available as a resource for Leicester schools, either as a contact or to conduct a visit schools.

Email: coordinator-leicester@humanistbranches.uk

Pagan

<https://www.paganfed.org/districts/east-midlands/>

Secular Hall

75 Humberstone Gate
Leicester
LE1 1WB
Tel: 07722 782727
Email: contact@leicestersecularsociety.org.uk
<http://leicestersecularsociety.org.uk/contact.php#contact>

Appendix 5: Special Schools

Ofsted's Research Review 2021 states that, 'A high-quality curriculum is ambitious and designed to give all learners the knowledge they need to succeed in life. This is particularly important for the most disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). All pupils are entitled to be taught RE. Leaders and teachers may, of course, need to adapt the curriculum depending on the specific needs of individual pupils.'^[36] This syllabus is designed to be inclusive. Teachers in Special Schools are experienced in reducing any barriers that their pupils face in accessing the RE curriculum. This will involve using the same structure that is set out for all schools and adapting the content to meet pupils' needs, for example, in relation to the four progression strands. Teachers should also consider appropriate accessibility for educational trips and visits related to RE. All pupils are entitled to a well thought out RE curriculum which contributes to the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in life. For pupils with more complex needs, aspects of RE learning should be addressed in a way that is meaningful and accessible. This might be through the modelling and sharing of values associated with belief systems, sensory experiences which are linked to religious themes or festivals, or through 'collective worship' that involves sharing appropriate activities and space whilst demonstrating tolerance and respect.

Legal requirements

All maintained schools in England must provide Religious Education (RE) for all registered pupils, including those in the sixth form and reception classes, unless withdrawn by their parents [*School Standards and Framework Act, 1998, Schedule 19; Education Act 2002, Section 80*]^[37]. This requirement does not apply to children below compulsory school age in nursery schools or classes. The locally agreed syllabus must be consistent with *Section 375 (3) of the Education Act 1996, School Standards and Framework Act, 1998, Schedule 19*^[38] which states that it must 'reflect that the religious traditions of Great Britain are in the main Christian, whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain.'^[39] RE should be provided for all registered pupils except for those withdrawn at the request of parents/carers [*School Standards and Framework Act, 1998, Section 71*]^[40]. Parents are entitled to consultation on their child's RE curriculum offer and the process of 'right to withdraw' should be made clear.

Separate legislative provision for RE in maintained special schools requires them to ensure that, as far as practicable, pupils receive RE [*Regulations 5A, Education, Regulations 2001*]. Under the National Curriculum guidelines 2014, schools have the flexibility to provide more coherent and integrated cross-curricular learning experiences to complement discrete subject teaching tailored to the needs of their pupils and community. In practice this means RE might be taught discretely but also linked to other areas of the curriculum.

[36] <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/research-review-series-religious-education/research-review-series-religious-education#ambition-for-all>

[37] <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/31/schedule/19>

[38] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/281929/Collective_worship_in_schools.pdf

[39] <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/section/375>

[40] <https://www.education-uk.org/documents/acts/1998-school-standards-framework-act.html>

How does this apply to the Leicester syllabus?

Although Special Schools will adapt the syllabus to meet their needs, all must ensure that Christianity is taught across the key stages. In addition, a balance should be achieved between other Abrahamic (Islam and Judaism) and Dharmic (e.g. Buddhist, Hindu and Sikhi) traditions. Schools are also encouraged to include non-religious perspectives and where possible, include religions and worldviews outside of the main traditions, e.g. Baha'i, Jainism, Paganism.

Schools should base their planning around the four main Progression Strands. These are conceptual strands which run from Reception to the end of KS3, ensuring progression. They are based on key concepts common to all religions and inform the learning objectives, learning outcomes and assessment. Appendix 1 shows how each is developed across years. Linking to these makes planning the curriculum more coherent and help pupils make sense of the content. The content topic headings for each year may also be useful when thinking about continuity.

How might this work in practice?

Schools should:

- Look at their present RE curriculum and decide how it might be organised using the progression strands.
- Consider how the subject headings (See below) for each year might be built in.

Subject headings for each year

Reception: special and sacred

Key Stage 1

Year 1 - Special and sacred stories

Year 2 - Sacred texts, beliefs and connections

Key Stage 2

Year 3 - Expression and experience

Year 4 - Communities in our neighbourhood

Year 5 - Commitment, promises and meaning

Year 6 - Big questions: what do people believe?

Key Stage 3

Year 7 - Community; the origins of beliefs, influences; worship and spirituality

Year 8 - 'Other' religions and worldview communities; beliefs, concepts and interpretation; living a good life.

Year 9 - Self and identity; diversity and change; expression through the senses and experience.

Examples from Leicester schools

Westgate School

The Preparations Pathway delivers Faith Days throughout the year which focuses on RE. There are at least four Faith Days each year and learners will access six different sessions each Faith Day. Faith Days allow learners to explore and learn about different religions, their traditions, beliefs, teachings and celebrations. They also explore wider areas such as world views and inspirations. Religious events and festivals are discussed and celebrated when they occur in classes and during assembly.

An example of how the school will use the 4 progression strands and content in planning:

	Autumn term 1		Autumn term 2	
	Concepts	Content	Concepts	Content
Year 1	<p>What meaning is given to these stories and how they can mean different things to different people.</p> <p>How different types of stories may contain truth and what this means to different people.</p> <p>How stories form part of religious beliefs such as creation.</p> <p>What Bible stories teach people about God and how they should lead their lives.</p> <p>How stories relating to key festivals reflect religious beliefs and concepts. E.g. Christmas and incarnation.</p> <p>What it means to belong to different groups.</p> <p>What some people and groups are special.</p> <p>How people come together to celebrate special events, e.g. birth.</p> <p>How schools celebrate special events.</p> <p>How stories of all kinds give communities a shared identity.</p>	<p>What do religious stories teach us? Exploring religious stories</p> <p>How stories are passed on and help people understand the world.</p> <p>What makes these stories special. Sacred texts Stories from the Old and New Testament.</p> <p>Examples from other religions and worldviews.</p> <p>Creation stories: Christianity and Judaism + Islam</p> <p>Humanist viewpoint.</p>	<p>Why Christmas and Easter are special for Christians.</p> <p>How festivals reflect the idea of peace.</p> <p>How stories relating to key festivals reflect religious beliefs and concepts. E.g. Christmas and incarnation.</p>	<p>Which people, stories and events are special?</p> <p>Advent and Christmas Why is it special for Christians.</p> <p>Why Christians think that Jesus was a special baby: Nativity story.</p> <p>How the nativity story is celebrated in school.</p> <p>New life: How families (Christian and Hindu) might celebrate the birth of babies</p>

Spring term		Summer term		
	Concepts	Content	Concepts	Content
Year 1	<p>Why stories are important to Christians and Hindus.</p> <p>What meaning is given to these stories and how they can mean different things to different people.</p> <p>How people celebrate festivals.</p> <p>How stories are expressed through festivals. E.g. lighting the candles and Hanukkah and telling the story of the Exodus at Passover.</p> <p>Why some stories are considered special and sacred.</p> <p>Why Passover is important to Jewish people.</p> <p>How stories relating to key festivals reflect religious beliefs and concepts. E.g. Christmas and incarnation.</p>	<p>What do I know about Easter, Passover and Holi?</p> <p>Easter How we can see Easter around us Signs and symbols What Christians remember at this time The Easter story Holi The story of Krishna, Holika and Prahlad.</p> <p>How Hindus Celebrate Holi in Leicester</p> <p>Easter Salvation Forgiveness Symbolism of peace</p> <p>Passover Freedom Identity Family and community</p>	<p>How symbols and artefacts in places of worship have special meaning for believers.</p> <p>Why places of worship matter to people.</p> <p>What makes some places, and the things inside them, sacred or holy.</p> <p>How being inside special and sacred places makes people feel.</p> <p>How stories relating to key festivals reflect religious beliefs and concepts. E.g. Christmas and incarnation.</p>	<p>Why are some places and objects special or sacred?</p> <p>The idea of special and sacred/holy What makes something special.</p> <p>What makes objects and places special.</p> <p>Why some are considered sacred/holy.</p>

Oaklands School

Suggested links to the school's core learning objectives are written in italics:

- Awareness/ Understanding of kindness and that how we behave affects others – *belonging, identity and community*.
- Awareness/ Understanding of being part of a family and the school and the wider community – *belonging, identity and community*.
- Awareness/ Understanding of the idea of values and beliefs and how shared beliefs/ actions & practices can make us a community or faith group – *beliefs, influence and values*.
- Awareness/ Understanding and acceptance of our own strengths and differences from others – *belonging, identity and community*.
- Awareness/ Understanding that we may have differences in how we think, celebrate and show our faith/values – *expression, experience and the sacred*.
- Awareness/ Understanding that we can learn about others' faith/ values and still keep true to our own: *beliefs, influence and values*.
- Awareness/ Understanding that we all celebrate special occasions & time passing: *expression, experience and the sacred*.
- Awareness/ Understanding that we have special food/ clothes/ decorations when people come together to celebrate: *expression, experience and the sacred*.
- Awareness/ Knowledge of key UK religions (names; key figures/ deities; festivals; places of worship etc.): *beliefs, influence and values; expression, experience and the sacred*.
- Awareness/ Knowledge of our shared human values – *beliefs, influence and values*.

Appendix 6: Leicester Schools Peace Project

These notes reflect the work of the above initiative and may be used to support teachings about peace in the syllabus, e.g. year 2: beliefs about peace, year 6: what people believe about peace, School Designed Units.

Introduction

Aspects of peace education can be found throughout the RE syllabus. This is intended to help primary and secondary pupils understand what makes for Shalom/Salaam/Namaste/Peace in families, neighbourhoods, schools, city and world. All faiths/world views have histories that have not been peaceful or just. So, it is important that pupils are equipped with critical thinking skills to enable them to question whether a belief, value, skill, practice or action makes for harmony and fairness in the city, the country, and the world. At the same time there is diversity within religions and worldviews.



Aim 1: Develop knowledge, understanding and ability to critically evaluate Beliefs, Values and Ethics that make for justice and peace

For example:

- Common ethics across faiths, for example, the Golden Rule.
- 'Love God and Love your neighbour as yourself.'
- Ten Commandments
- Ahimsa
- Jihad as struggle for justice and right actions - in personal actions and as just war.
- Positions on violence: Holy War, Just War, Pacifism, Nonviolent Activism.
- Key figures who are significant advocates for peace and who model beliefs and values, e.g. Buddha, Jesus, Guru Nanak, Gandhi, etc.

Aim 2: Develop skills of justice and peacemaking

For example:

- listening, communicating, empathising, standing with, consulting, mediating, organising, protesting, advocating, debating, petitioning, lobbying, negotiating, etc.

Aim 3: Able to understand and evaluate practices and actions that make for justice and peace

For example:

- Alms giving and generosity
- Diet: Vegetarianism, Veganism etc.
- Ramadan - fasting in solidarity with the hungry, zakat
- Langer in the Gurdwara - food for anyone hungry
- Teachings and practice of reconciliation and building/making peace

Models of Peace

How do we define peace? It is helpful for teachers to understand clearly what peace is as they teach it through RE, including through School Designed Units. Peace in English is a weak word. It is stronger when we say peace and justice - this is closer to the holistic vision of peace in, for instance, shalom or salaam. As part of the Leicester Schools Peace Project, teacher groups came up with these two models of holistic peace. The first, for Key Stage 1 and Lower Key Stage 2. The second model is for upper Key Stage 2 - Key Stage 4.

Four Kinds of Peace - (Key Stage 1 and Lower Key Stage 2)

Four Kinds of Peace - (Key Stage 1 and Lower Key Stage 2)

<p>Peace for Me What does peace for me feel like?</p>	<p>Peace for Us What does peace for us look like?</p>	<p>Peace begins with me How can I persue peace for me and others?</p>	<p>Peace in family and relationships What makes peace in family and relationships?</p>	<p>Working together for peace? How can young people work together for peace?</p>	<p>Learning about peace making How do people work for peace?</p>
<p>Peace for Everyone What does 'peace for everyone' look like?</p>	<p>On Earth Peace What is 'peace for the earth? How do we look after the earth?</p>	<p>Peace in and between communities How can communitites work for peace?</p>	<p>Peace and Care for the Earth How can people look after the earth?</p>	<p>Peace on Earth How can there be peace on earth?</p>	<p>Economic and Social Justice To what extent is peace possible without economic and social justice?</p>

Eight Dimensions of Peace **(with key questions)**

(Upper Key Stage 2 – Key Stage 4)

1. Peace begins with me

How can I pursue peace for me and others?

How can I strive for peace?

What are my responsibilities for myself and others?

Where do I get my inner peace from?

2. Peace in family & relationships

What makes for peace in family and relationships?

What are the issues and challenges in family and relationships in all their diversity?

How is forgiveness important?

How do we say sorry?

3. Working together for peace (Collaborating for peace)

How can young people work together for peace?

How can students organise to work together for peace and justice? For example, learning about and from, e.g. Greta Thunberg, Malala Yousafzai, etc.

4. Learning about peace making

How do people work for peace?

What stories and examples can we learn from?

What inspires and motivates people to work for peace?

How does protest against injustice lead to authentic peace?

5. Peace in and between communities

How can communities work for peace?

How can people in faith communities work for peace when there is conflict within and/or between?

Can human rights for all help make peace in communities?

6. Peace and Care for the Earth

How can people look after the earth?

How can we work for earth's peace?

7. Peace on Earth

How can there be peace on earth?

Is it possible to overcome violence and war?

What stories and strategies give us hope?

8. Economic and Social Justice

To what extent is peace possible without economic and social justice?

Is equity and fairness necessary for peace?

Appendix 7: Resources

Links and resources for teachers and pupils are included in the syllabus at the end of each unit. This following may also be of use.

Culham St Gabriel's Short Courses

<https://courses.cstg.org.uk>

Jewish-Christian glossary

https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/___data/assets/pdf_file/0007/108745/ocr23-01_a-jewish-christian-glossary_a4_v4.pdf

National Association of Teachers of Religious Education (NATRE)

<https://www.natre.org.uk>

Open University Religion, Belief and Worldviews hub

<https://www.open.edu/openlearn/religionandworldviews>

RE Hubs: general

<https://www.re-hubs.uk/>

RE Hubs: East Midlands

<https://www.re-hubs.uk/hubs/east-midlands/>

reonline

<https://www.reonline.org.uk/leadership/resource-of-the-month/>

RE Today

<https://www.retoday.org.uk/school-support/resources/>

SHAP Audio glossary

<http://www.shapcalendar.org.uk/glossary.html>

CPD and Resources for primary schools to support the teaching of the syllabus

These will be available to purchase and over time will include:

- PowerPoints for primary schools, tied closely to the syllabus including retrieval activities, lesson plans, learning activities.
- Collections of digital images relating to key content, including places, symbols and artefacts.
- Assessment tasks for years 1-6.
- Support for School Designed units.
- Webinars, including termly 'RE Surgery' sessions which will support teachers in the implementation of the new syllabus.

These resources will be developed year on year as the syllabus becomes embedded in schools. Details will be sent out to schools about subscription details and offers. It will be possible to purchase the above as MATs or groups of schools.

CPD

There will be face to face as well as online training days to support schools in implementing and embedding with the new syllabus.

Secondary schools

Schools should contact Wendy Harrison for CPD and support.

For information contact Wendy Harrison: wendyanneh@aol.com

Website: www.wendy-harrison.co.uk