

Upper KS2 units of study

Unit U2.2 Creation and science: conflicting or complementary? [Creation]

The principal aim of religious education is to explore what people believe and what difference this makes to how they live, so that pupils can gain the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to handle questions raised by religion and belief, reflecting on their own ideas and ways of living.

Learning outcomes (intended to enable pupils to achieve end of key stage outcomes):

Teachers will enable pupils to achieve these outcomes, as appropriate to their age and stage, so that they can:

Make sense of belief:

- Identify what type of text some Christians say Genesis 1 is, and its purpose
- Taking account of the context, suggest what Genesis 1 might mean, and compare their ideas with ways in which Christians interpret it, showing awareness of different interpretations

Understand the impact:

- Make clear connections between Genesis 1 and Christian belief about God as Creator
- Show understanding of why many Christians find science and faith go together

Make connections:

- Identify key ideas arising from their study of Genesis 1 and comment on how far these are helpful or inspiring, justifying their responses
- Weigh up how far the Genesis 1 creation narrative is in conflict, or is complementary, with a scientific account, giving good reasons for their views.

Ideas and some content for learning:

Teachers can select content from these examples, and add more of their own to enable pupils to achieve the outcomes.

- As preparation for this unit, revise work on genre with pupils. Give them a range of text types (e.g. newspaper, poem, prayer) and match them to the possible author and audience.
- Read Genesis 1:1–2:3 in creative and interactive ways. Talk about what the story means, how it makes them feel, and any surprising, interesting or puzzling moments.
- Suggest to pupils that this text is a detective story or a newspaper report. Ask them to find any evidence for or against these ideas. Ask them to suggest what type of writing/genre it is and why they think that. Think about the context of the story – it's at least 2,500 years old and written within an ancient society/culture.
- Look at *The Message* translation (Bible Gateway bit.ly/2m3tv6M). What clues are there to show that this is a poem? If it is, what effect does that have on the meaning? Note that people (including Christians) disagree about the genre, purpose and meaning of Genesis. Some say it is a literal account (the universe was created in six days), others that it is more a description of what God and creation are like rather than how creation actually happened.
- Explore the scientific account of cosmology (the beginning of the universe) and evolution (the development of living beings). Summarise them in a simplified diagram.
- Work out what difference it makes if someone interprets Genesis literally or poetically, when considering the connection between Genesis and science. (Literal readings lead to conflict with science; poetic do not necessarily.)
- Ask pupils to come up with as many questions as they can about the Genesis text and the beginnings of the universe and life. Sort them – are some better answered by science and some by the text? Recall work on genre and purpose: which purposes are more likely for Genesis (e.g. for a science textbook or a worship prayer; for worshippers of God or 'unbelievers'; to explain who God is, why the world is beautiful, who humans are, etc.). Reflect on why some might say science and belief in creation are in conflict or complementary.
- Find out about Christians who are also scientists (e.g. astrophysicist Jennifer Wiseman – see interview clips on www.faradayschools.com/library/video-gallery and <http://bit.ly/1V1o1G>) How do they reconcile their faith with their professional work? Invite some local Christians who are scientists (e.g. teachers, parents, a local vicar, vet, doctor or engineer). How do they make sense of believing in God and doing science? (Note links with Unit U2.11.)
- Set a homework where pupils gaze up at the night sky and record their feelings and sensations. Connect their response with the sense of awe a Christian might feel from thinking about a Creator of all this.
- Ask pupils to see how far they agree or disagree with the statement: '*Genesis explores why the universe and life exists. Science explores how the universe works the way it does.*' Come up with some questions that science definitely can answer (e.g. to do with properties and laws of nature) and ones that it cannot (e.g. to do with questions of personal meaning and value).
- Look at the key question: Creation and science: conflicting or complementary? Ask pupils to give a written response, giving good reasons, and a creative response to the ideas explored.

Unit U2.5 What do Christians believe Jesus did to ‘save’ people? [Salvation]

The principal aim of religious education is to explore what people believe and what difference this makes to how they live, so that pupils can gain the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to handle questions raised by religion and belief, reflecting on their own ideas and ways of living.

Learning outcomes (intended to enable pupils to achieve end of key stage outcomes):

Teachers will enable pupils to achieve these outcomes, as appropriate to their age and stage, so that they can:

Make sense of belief:

- Outline the ‘big story’ of the Bible, explaining how Incarnation and Salvation fit within it
- Explain what Christians mean when they say that Jesus’ death was a sacrifice

Understand the impact:

- Make clear connections between the Christian belief in Jesus’ death as a sacrifice and how Christians celebrate Holy Communion/Lord’s Supper
- Show how Christians put their beliefs into practice in different ways

Make connections:

- Weigh up the value and impact of ideas of sacrifice in their own lives and the world today
- Articulate their own responses to the idea of sacrifice, recognising different points of view.

Ideas and some content for learning:

Teachers can select content from these examples, and add more of their own to enable pupils to achieve the outcomes.

- Explore what happened in Holy Week. All four Gospels describe the events but Mark 14–15 offers the most succinct account. You could start by giving pairs of pupils some short extracts (e.g. Last Supper, Garden of Gethsemane, Judas’ betrayal and arrest, trial, Peter’s denial, Pilate, crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection), asking them to decide how they would portray this scene in art, or do a freeze frame. Hand out some examples of artwork of these scenes (see jesus-story.net/index.htm) and see what differences there are with their ideas; talk about why the artists presented the way they did. How have they communicated the events? Get pupils to order the extracts. Talk about their responses: key moments, feelings, surprises, puzzles? How would they sum up the meaning of the story?
- Consider who was responsible for Jesus’ death: e.g. the Romans, the crowd, Pilate, the Jewish authorities, God, Jesus himself. Remind pupils of the wider context of the ‘big story’ (see Guidance p.128). What difference does this make to their ideas? Many Christians say that Jesus willingly gave his life to repair the damage done between humans and God (see sin and ‘the Fall’ Unit L2.1).
- Explore the mainstream Christian belief that Jesus’s death was a sacrifice – a price he paid to save people from their sins and bring them back to God. Christians think of this in different ways, e.g. people deserve punishment for their sins but Jesus was punished in the place of everyone – he was a substitute; Jesus took everyone’s sins as he died, lifting the burden from the believer; Jesus’ example guides the lost back to God. How might Christians respond to the idea that Jesus sacrificed his life for their sake? Remember that Christians believe Jesus’ death was not the end.
- Christians remember Jesus’ death and resurrection throughout the year, particularly through the celebration of communion/the Lord’s Supper. Find out about how different Christian churches celebrate communion. Talk about what symbols are, and then explore the symbolism of the bread and wine, linking with the Passover celebration (see Unit L2.10) but also connecting with sacrifice – representing Jesus’ body and blood.
- Ask pupils for some suitable ideas that could be included in a ceremony for Christians to remember the salvation brought by Jesus. Ask pupils to say how the actions, words, music and symbols they have included are appropriate for such an important ceremony, and how they link with Jesus’ life, death and resurrection, and the idea of ‘Salvation’.
- Some Christians follow Jesus’ example even to the point of dying. Talk about what a martyr is and show images of the commemoration of twentieth-century martyrs at Westminster Abbey (bit.ly/2lrOQCP). Find out a bit about these people.
- Talk about what kinds of things people are prepared to die for. How much are pupils prepared to sacrifice for something they believe in? What would they sacrifice and for what? Find a good cause that would be worth putting some effort into supporting. www.givingwhatwecan.org/ indicate charities that make a big impact; www.toilettwinning.org is another worthwhile cause. What would your class be prepared to do to bring health and life to others in need? Connect this with a Christian understanding of Jesus’ sacrifice bringing salvation.
- Ask pupils to draft a short charter for the school, local community or the world (if they can get that far) to explain how far the idea of sacrifice is good and necessary for making the world a better place. They should make links with Christian ideas and Jesus’ teachings. It is perfectly fine for them to say that sacrifice is not good, but they must offer good reasons and alternatives that will make the world a better place!

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Unit U2.6 For Christians, what kind of king was Jesus? [Kingdom of God]

The principal aim of religious education is to explore what people believe and what difference this makes to how they live, so that pupils can gain the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to handle questions raised by religion and belief, reflecting on their own ideas and ways of living.

Learning outcomes (intended to enable pupils to achieve end of key stage outcomes):

Teachers will enable pupils to achieve these outcomes, as appropriate to their age and stage, so that they can:

Make sense of belief:

- Explain connections between biblical texts and the concept of the kingdom of God
- Consider different possible meanings for the biblical texts studied, showing awareness of different interpretations

Understand the impact:

- Make clear connections between belief in the kingdom of God and how Christians put their beliefs into practice
- Show how Christians put their beliefs into practice in different ways

Make connections:

- Relate the Christian 'kingdom of God' model (i.e. loving others, serving the needy) to issues, problems and opportunities in the world today
- Articulate their own responses to the idea of the importance of love and service in the world today.

Ideas and some content for learning:

Teachers can select content from these examples, and add more of their own to enable pupils to achieve the outcomes.

- This unit is about trying to transform the world. Talk about what a better world would be like. Gather ideas about some of the problems in the world (e.g. hunger, poverty, violence, lack of healthcare, etc.) and find out about some people who have made a difference to the world (e.g. have a look at winners of the Nobel Peace Prize or the Niwano Peace Prize). List ways in which people could make the world a better place in the next 50 years.
- Introduce the idea of Jesus as a different kind of king by reading about his 'temptation in the wilderness' in Luke 4:1–13. Specifically see verses 5–8 where Luke describes the devil offering Jesus a chance to be king of all nations on Earth. Jesus refuses. What does this say about Jesus' idea of kingship?
- Explore the idea that Christians believe Jesus came to Earth to get people into heaven but also to make the world more like heaven. Jesus told parables about the 'kingdom of God' or the 'kingdom of heaven' to explain this idea. For Christians, the kingdom of God is, in essence, where God rules – not a geographical territory, but in human hearts and minds, lives and communities. Remember Jesus' great commandments (love God and love your neighbour). Look at some of the 'kingdom parables' to find out what the 'kingdom of God' is meant to be like. Here are some examples:
 - **The Feast: Luke 14:12–24.** Explore, asking pupils for their comments, feelings, ideas and questions. Consider possible meanings: who was the audience for the story, and how might they have responded? Who do they think should be at the feast, and who does Jesus say will be included? How does Jesus want his followers then and now to behave?
 - **The Tenants in the Vineyard: Matthew 21:33–46.** Explore this story creatively. Use these clues to work out what it might mean. In the Old Testament, the people of God are compared to God's vineyard. In John's Gospel, Jesus is called the Son of God. The Old Testament called the Prophets 'Servants of the Lord'. The chief priests were Jesus' enemies – they were jealous because he was so popular, and disagreed with him about religion; they arrested Jesus and he was killed a few days later. If these are parables of the kingdom of God, for Christians, what kind of king is Jesus? (Some key teachings from these two parables are that God extends a gracious welcome to all humanity, but people don't always want it: selfishness or greed can get in the way of spiritual life and the coming of God's kingdom.)
- Compare pupils' ideas about a better world (above) to the picture they get from their studies about what kind of world Jesus wanted. Find out about how Christians try to make the world more like the kingdom of God and comment on why it is the kind of thing that Jesus would like, e.g. how a local church serves the needs of people who are left out (use a local church; also look at Trinity, Cheltenham trinitycheltenham.com; Oasis churches theoasischurch.com or the Salvation Army www.salvationarmy.org.uk/easterhouse; the work of Church Action on Poverty (www.church-poverty.org.uk/); find out about the Christian Prison Fellowship (www.prisonfellowship.org.uk/what-we-do); explain how Traidcraft's Christmas video shows their belief in the kingdom of God in action (www.youtube.com/watch?v=1YV2mCyafvQ).
- Address the key question: for Christians, what kind of king is Jesus? Jesus' idea of kingship seems to be that to be in his kingdom, a person has to serve others, particularly those who are most vulnerable and in need. Taking specific current examples, what would be different if all leaders followed this model? Talk about whether this is a good model of leadership and if there are good alternative models; talk about what gets in the way of people bringing justice; consider examples from other faiths and non-religious individuals/groups who work to bring justice and fairness.

Unit U2.7 Why do Hindus try to be good? [*Karma/dharma/samsara/moksha*]

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Learning outcomes (intended to enable pupils to achieve end of key stage outcomes):

Teachers will enable pupils to achieve these outcomes, as appropriate to their age and stage, so that they can:

Make sense of belief:

- Identify and explain Hindu beliefs, e.g. *dharma*, *karma*, *samsara*, *moksha*, using technical terms accurately
- Give meanings for the story of the man in the well and explain how it relates to Hindu beliefs about *samsara*, *moksha*, etc.

Understand the impact:

- Make clear connections between Hindu beliefs about *dharma*, *karma*, *samsara* and *moksha* and ways in which Hindus live
- Connect the four Hindu aims of life and the four stages of life with beliefs about *dharma*, *karma*, *moksha*, etc.
- Give evidence and examples to show how Hindus put their beliefs into practice in different ways

Make connections:

- Make connections between Hindu beliefs studied (e.g. *karma* and *dharma*), and explain how and why they are important to Hindus
- Reflect on and articulate what impact belief in *karma* and *dharma* might have on individuals and the world, recognising different points of view.

Ideas and some content for learning:

Teachers can select content from these examples, and add more of their own to enable pupils to achieve the outcomes.

- Recall learning about Brahman (God, Ultimate Reality) and *atman* (eternal self) in Unit L2.7. Remember that Hinduism is very diverse, and so there is hardly anything that we can say 'all Hindus believe ...' However, the ideas of *dharma*, *karma*, *samsara* and *moksha* are commonly held, although described in a range of ways.
- Explore the Hindu story from the Mahabharata, the 'man in the well' (www.indianetzone.com/50/man_well.htm) in a creative way; this presents one picture of the way the world is for a Hindu worldview: the *atman* is trapped in the physical body and wants to escape the terrible dangers, but the man is distracted by the trivial pleasures instead of trying to get out. This is a warning to Hindus that they should pay attention to finding the way to escape the cycle of life, death and rebirth. Use this to set the scene for learning about *karma*, *samsara*, etc. below.
- Explore Hindu ideas of *karma* – the law of cause and effect, and how actions bring good or bad *karma*. Connect this with Hindu beliefs about *samsara* – the cycle of life death and rebirth travelled by the *atman* through various reincarnations, to achieve *moksha* (release from the cycle of *samsara*, and union with Brahman). Find out how and why the game of 'snakes and ladders' links with Hindu ideas of *karma* and *moksha*. Reflect on how these beliefs offer reasons why a Hindu might try to be good – to gain good *karma* and a better reincarnation, and ultimately release from *samsara*.
- Explore Hindu ideas about the four aims of life (*purusharthas*): *dharma*: religious or moral duty; *artha*: economic development, providing for family and society by honest means; *kama*: regulated enjoyment of the pleasures and beauty of life; *moksha*: liberation from the cycle of birth and rebirth/reincarnation. Compare these with pupils' goals for living. Connect with the idea of *karma* – pursuing these aims contribute to good *karma*; doing things selfishly or in ways that harm others brings bad *karma*.
- Hindus might describe life as a journey towards *moksha*; Hindu life is also part of a journey through different stages (*ashramas*), each with different duties. Look at the different *dharma*/duties Hindus have at the four ashramas: student, householder, retired person, renouncer. How does the *dharma* for these stages help Hindus to be good? Compare with the duties pupils have now, and ones they think they will have at later stages of life.
- Consider some Hindu values and how they make a difference to Hindu life, individually and in community, e.g. *ahimsa* (non-violence) and *satya* (truthfulness). Connect these with ideas of *atman/karma* (all living beings have an eternal self/atman and so deserve to be treated well; learning the truth and speaking truthfully are ways of worshiping God).
- Find out about some ways in which Hindus make a difference in the world-wide community. How does a Hindu way of life guide them in how they live? E.g. Mahatma Gandhi, Pandurang Shastri Athavale.
- Consider the value of the idea of *karma* and reincarnation: what difference would it make to the way people live if everything they did carries good or bad *karma*, affecting future rebirths? If no one escapes from this law of justice, how does that change how we view injustice now? Talk about how different people respond to this idea, including non-religious responses and the ideas of pupils themselves. What difference would it make to how they live? Why?

Unit U2.11 Why do some people believe in God and some people not?

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Learning outcomes (intended to enable pupils to achieve end of key stage outcomes):

Teachers will enable pupils to achieve these outcomes, as appropriate to their age and stage, so that they can:

Make sense of belief:

- Define the terms 'theist', 'atheist' and 'agnostic' and give examples of statements that reflect these beliefs
- Identify and explain what religious and non-religious people believe about God, saying where they get their ideas from
- Give examples of reasons why people do or do not believe in God

Understand the impact:

- Make clear connections between what people believe about God and the impact of this belief on how they live
- Give evidence and examples to show how Christians sometimes disagree about what God is like (e.g. some differences in interpreting Genesis)

Make connections:

- Reflect on and articulate some ways in which believing in God is valuable in the lives of believers, and ways it can be challenging
- Consider and weigh up different views on theism, agnosticism and atheism, expressing insights of their own about why people believe in God or not
- Make connections between belief and behaviour in their own lives, in the light of their learning.

Ideas and some content for learning:

Teachers can select content from these examples, and add more of their own to enable pupils to achieve the outcomes.

During this unit, take the opportunity to find out what pupils already know from previous study, and build on that prior learning. Their understanding of what God is like as far as Christians, Jews and Muslims are concerned should be reasonably developed by now.

- Find out about how many people in the world and in your local area believe in God – using global statistics and the 2011 UK census (see Guidance p.146). Ask pupils why they think so many people believe in God. Collect these reasons. Find out about how many do not believe. Learn the words 'theist' (believes in God), 'agnostic' (cannot say if God exists or not) and 'atheist' (believes there is no god).
- To explore the key question, ask pupils to raise questions about the existence and nature of God. Focus on Christian ideas of God, in order to make this more manageable. Start by clarifying what Christians believe God is like and where they get their ideas from. Revisit some of the names of God and metaphors for God in the Bible (e.g. God as Father, Spirit, Son, eternal, almighty, holy, shepherd, rock, fortress, light). If this God exists, what difference would 'he' make to the way people live? Investigate a range of viewpoints on the question, from believers to atheists.
- Compare the sources of authority of Christians (e.g. Bible, Church teachings, religious leaders, individual conscience) with some non-religious sources (e.g. individual conscience, some philosophers and other thinkers).
- Explore some reasons why people do or do not believe in God. Consider some of the main reasons. These include: family background – many people believe (or don't believe) because of their home background; religious experience – many people say they have experienced a sense of 'the presence of God' or had prayer answered; many would argue that the Universe, the Earth and life are extraordinary and are best explained as the result of an all-powerful Creator. Many people who do not believe in God point to the existence of terrible suffering as a key reason. Many atheists argue that religions are all created by humans. Some argue that there is no need to use a Creator to explain the existence of the Universe and life; they argue that science provides reliable evidence and explanations, and that religion does not.
- Recall and build on learning from Unit U2.2 to explore how and why Christians still believe in God in an age of science. Many Christians would say that they want to find out more about the world and how it works – doing science is part of their response to belief in God as Creator. Find out about Christians who are also scientists (e.g. Jennifer Wiseman, John Polkinghorne, Denis Alexander, Russell Stannard, and local examples).
- Invite some Christians, agnostics and atheists in to answer questions about why they do or do not believe in God.
- Explore what impact believing in God might make on the way someone lives his or her everyday life. Is faith in God restricting or liberating? How do people respond to God? E.g. from personal responses in private prayer, study, worship; communal responses of worship and striving for justice.
- Talk about and reflect upon the possible benefits and challenges of believing or not believing in God in Britain today. Get pupils to reflect upon their own views and how they view people with different beliefs than their own.

Unit U2.12 How does faith help people when life gets hard?

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Learning outcomes (intended to enable pupils to achieve end of key stage outcomes):

Teachers will enable pupils to achieve some of these outcomes, as appropriate to their age and stage, so that they can:

Make sense of belief:

- Describe at least three examples of ways in which religions guide people in how to respond to good and hard times in life
- Identify beliefs about life after death in at least two religious traditions, comparing and explaining similarities and differences

Understand the impact:

- Make clear connections between what people believe about God and how they respond to challenges in life (e.g. suffering, bereavement)
- Give examples of ways in which beliefs about resurrection/judgement/heaven/karma/reincarnation make a difference to how someone lives

Make connections:

- Interpret a range of artistic expressions of afterlife, offering and explaining different ways of understanding these
- Offer a reasoned response to the unit question, with evidence and example, expressing insights of their own.

Ideas and some content for learning:

Teachers can select content from these examples, and add more of their own to enable pupils to achieve the outcomes.

- Use stimulus material to encourage pupils to ask questions about life, death, suffering, and what matters most in life. Analyse and evaluate pupils' questions, to recognise and reflect on how some 'big questions' do not have easy answers, and how people offer different answers to some of the big questions about life, death, suffering, etc.
- Explore how some people might thank God in good times, and how, more broadly, living a life of gratitude can lead to happier and healthier lives, whether religious or non-religious (see Psalm 103 and happierhuman.com/benefits-of-gratitude).
- Explore ways in which religions help people to live, even when times are tough, e.g. through prayer, giving a sense of purpose, a guide to deciding what is right and wrong, membership of a community who care for each other, opportunities to celebrate together. Ask some religious believers to explain how their faith has helped them in difficult times, and how it encourages them to enjoy life too. Use the story of Job in the Jewish and Christian scriptures.
- Introduce the idea that most religious traditions teach about some form of life after death, which can bring comfort to people as they face suffering, or if they are bereaved. Teach pupils that some people believe that death is the end of life, and that there is no afterlife.
- Learn some key concepts about life after death, comparing beliefs and sources of authority, and exploring whether these beliefs make a difference to people when facing death and bereavement.
 - Christianity:** Bible teaching on resurrection of the body, judgement by God, salvation through Jesus, heaven.
 - Hinduism:** law of *karma* affects the reincarnation of the individual *atman*, pinning it to *samsara*, the cycle of life death and rebirth, until it can escape (*moksha*) and be absorbed back to Brahman.
 - One **secular/non-religious** view about what happens after death, e.g. Humanism: i.e. nothing: we might continue in people's memories and through our achievements, but death is final.
- Compare ceremonies that mark death/passing away, noting similarities and differences, how these express different beliefs, and how they might be important to the living.
- Read and respond to prayers, liturgies, meditation texts and songs/hymns used when someone has died, and think about the questions and beliefs they address.
- Look at examples of 'art of heaven' in which religious believers imagine the afterlife; explore how these art works reflect Christian, Hindu and non-religious beliefs; get pupils to respond with art work of their own. How do ideas of life after death help people in difficult times?
- Respond to the question, 'How does religion help people when life gets hard?' Consider how important this role of religion is, in a country where religious belief is declining, but in a world where religious belief is growing.