

How do people express their spirituality through the creative arts? Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism and Islam – Year 8

About the unit

This unit suggests activities that can be used in teaching and learning about spirituality and the creative arts. It can be adapted to local circumstances and for different age groups. It illustrates the provision of the non-statutory national framework for religious education (RE) and can be used or adapted to deliver an agreed syllabus or other guidelines.

This unit is about how people from different religious traditions express their spirituality through the creative arts. Using examples from Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism and Islam, this unit allows pupils to compare and contrast forms of expression within and between these religions. By exploring the use of poetry, music and imagery, pupils consider the themes of beliefs and concepts, authority, expressions of spirituality and ethics and relationships. Pupils have opportunities to discuss, question and evaluate the significance of these forms of expression to believers and to reflect on and evaluate their own beliefs and values. They use a range of forms of expression and explore the connection between religious education and the creative arts.

This unit can be adapted for other religions and communities, according to your agreed syllabus or other guidelines.

This unit should take six to seven hours.

Prior learning

It is helpful if pupils have:

- studied the lives of Buddha, Jesus¹ and Muhammad² and know why they are figures of inspiration to some people
- studied Christian, Hindu and Muslim beliefs about God and worship
- an awareness of different Christian denominations
- an understanding that symbols can express beliefs and commitment.

¹Christians refer to Jesus as 'Lord', and believe he is the Son of God.

² Muslims refer to Muhammad as 'the Prophet', and use the phrase 'Peace be upon him' after his name.

Future learning

Pupils could go on to:

- make a detailed study of spirituality in one art form, *eg Russian Orthodox icons*
- investigate why some religious traditions choose not to use creative arts and spiritualities associated with them.

Where the unit fits in

This unit links with the following key stage 3 guidelines in the non-statutory national framework for RE:

- Learning about religion: 1a, 1b, 1c, 1e, 1f, 1g, 1h
- Learning from religion: 2b, 2d, 2e
- Religions and beliefs: 3a, 3b
- Themes: 3e, 3f, 3h, 3i
- Experiences and opportunities: 3o, 3p, 3q, 3r.

This unit could build on what pupils might have learnt about symbols and religious expression or on units that develop pupils' knowledge of inspirational figures in order to understand the use of sacred images in worship.

Attitudes in the unit

This unit helps pupils develop the following four attitudes outlined in the non-statutory national framework for RE.

Self-awareness

- developing a realistic and positive sense of their own religious, moral and spiritual ideas, *eg when creating their own piece of artwork in response to a religious perspective on a theme*

Respect for all

- being prepared to recognise and acknowledge their own bias, *eg when considering the question 'What does it mean to be human?'*
- being sensitive to the feelings and ideas of others, *eg when sharing their responses to film or television excerpts about the natural world in a class discussion*

Open-mindedness

- being willing to learn and gain new understanding, *eg when evaluating the extent to which a person's religious and spiritual needs can be met by the internet*
- being willing to go beyond surface impression, *eg when comparing and contrasting artistic sources reflecting different religious traditions*

Appreciation and wonder

- developing their imagination and curiosity, *eg when following a short tutorial on how an artist might draw the historical Buddha's face.*

Differentiated outcomes

During this unit pupils have opportunities to show their knowledge, understanding and skills.

When working at the differentiated levels, pupils could give the following evidence.

Pupils working at level 4 could:

- suggest meanings for the term 'spiritual'
- use religious vocabulary to describe similarities and differences in the way in which creative arts can express religious and spiritual ideas
- describe the possible impact of religious art or music on a believer's life
- describe something they find uplifting or inspiring, or provoking of serious thought or contemplation.

Pupils working at level 5 could:

- recognise differences in ways of defining the term 'spiritual'
- use an increasingly wide religious vocabulary to suggest reasons for the similarities and differences in the way in which creative arts can express religious and spiritual ideas
- explain the possible impact of the religious art or music on a believer's life
- describe and explain what they find uplifting or inspiring, or provoking of serious thought or contemplation.

Pupils working at level 6 could:

- interpret the significance of different meanings for the term 'spiritual'
- use a religious and philosophical vocabulary to interpret the significances of similarities and differences in the way in which creative arts can express religious and spiritual ideas
- explain why the impact of religious art or music on a believer's life may vary
- express insights into their own and others' views on what they find uplifting or provoking of serious thought or contemplation.

Vocabulary

In this unit pupils have an opportunity to use words and phrases related to:

- religion in general, *eg adoration, contemplation, devotion, meditation, prostration, veneration*
- Buddhism, *eg Buddharupa, icon*

- Hinduism, *eg murti*
- religious and human experience, *eg awe, despair, hope, justice, liberation, oppression, reverence.*

Resources

Alternativeworship.org – dedicated to ‘alternative worship’, this website includes ‘God’s iPod’, a list of songs that have provoked spiritual responses among members of a related listserv.

Articles of faith – suppliers of pictures of sacred images/representations used in Buddhist, Christian, and Hindu worship.

Artworks – paintings, sculpture, poetry and other examples of artworks from different religious traditions, including examples that reflect contemporary Latin American ideas about Jesus.

Audio recordings – recordings of different styles of church music, *eg choral music, gospel music, Gregorian chant, hymns and plainsong.*

Blessings on the net – this website provides services and products related to religion and spirituality for, particularly, Hindus.

Buddhanet – this website contains various Buddhist chants and devotional songs.

Concept-mapping software – these include software such as ‘Inspiration’ or ‘MindManager’ and can help pupils to brainstorm.

Cumbria and Lancashire education online – the ‘Resources’ section of this website includes ‘Keyhole 3’ and a lesson in traditional Tibetan art and how to draw the face of the Buddha.

Embody – this website is a virtual tour of a cathedral and includes a pathway mapped out on the floor and places to pause and listen to music and meditation.

Leading in learning – the secondary strategy materials, this contains exemplification of the use of a range of thinking skills strategies for religious education.

Literacy and learning in RE – this resource contains a range of techniques for promoting literacy in RE, including the use of talk and scaffolding writing.

National Association of Advisers and Inspectors in Design and Technology – this association's website includes a 'Curriculum resources' section, which contains ideas for classroom projects related to design and technology.

National Gallery – the National Gallery has images of Christ in art.

'Pedagogy and practice, unit 7: questioning' – from the secondary strategy training material, this resource includes information to help teachers use questioning to promote higher-order thinking skills.

'Pedagogy and practice, unit 5: starters and plenaries' – includes practical strategies that teachers may use during interactive whole-class teaching sessions.

Religion in evidence – suppliers of pictures of sacred images / representations used in Buddhist, Christian and Hindu worship.

United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel – this charity's website includes a 'Resources' section, which contains materials such as 'The Christ We Share' (a study pack of images of Jesus from around the world).

'Using web-based resources in secondary RE' – published by the British Educational Communications and Technology Agency, this leaflet includes guidance on appropriate uses of the internet to support the aims of religious education and refers to an activity on the Blessings on the net website.

Videos – recordings of people using art forms, such as music, in worship, including 'Belief file' and 'Worlds of faith'.

Vurch.com – this website offers prayers and discussion boards, including a discussion on the role of music in worship.

Complete website addresses are available from the RE pages on the QCA website (www.qca.org.uk/re/). QCA monitors and updates these website addresses, but accepts no responsibility for their content.

Syllabus writers and teachers have responsibility for checking the relevance, accessibility and suitability of any web-based material that they or their pupils access.

Teaching and learning activities

1. What does the term 'spiritual' mean?			
Learning objectives	Teaching and learning	Learning outcomes	Points to note
<p>Pupils should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> know that the term 'spiritual' has a range of meanings understand some of the important differences in the ways in which people express their spirituality between and within religious traditions reflect on the view that spirituality is a central aspect of what it means to be human. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask the pupils to think about the question 'What does it mean to be human?' by creating a mind-map. In the next activity pupils make a table to organise possible arguments in support of or against the following two statements 'human beings are a species of animal' and 'human beings are different from animals'. Ask the pupils to compare their arguments with those of their peers. Use the pupils' responses as a vehicle for a class discussion about spirituality and whether it is a central aspect of what it means to be human. Give the pupils a set of words that define aspects of a person, eg arms, brain, body character, conscience, emotions, legs or soul. Ask them to divide the words into two categories – essential and non-essential aspects of being human – and give reasons for their choices. Ask the pupils to work on their own to consider the following questions. What meanings might we give to the term 'spiritual'? Can we use this term in relation to all people or only to 'religious' people? Then ask the pupils to work in pairs and then in groups of four to compare their 	<p>Pupils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ask questions and suggest answers to questions concerning interpretations of the term 'spiritual' compare and contrast ideas about spirituality from a range of sources evaluate the view that spirituality is a central aspect of what it means to be human. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are various commercially available visual learning or concept-mapping software (see 'Resources'). There are various publications that include information about mind mapping and brainstorming (see 'Resources'). Consider using contrasting quotations that express ideas about spirituality included in your agreed syllabus. There are various websites that include ideas for exploring the internet and spirituality (see 'Resources').

	<p>ideas about the meaning of the term spiritual. Use questioning techniques to draw out desired learning outcomes from a class discussion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask the pupils to analyse a variety of quotations or statements that express ideas about spirituality, including those from a variety of religious traditions as well as secular sources. Ask the pupils to compare and contrast ideas expressed in the statements to their own ideas about spirituality. Pupils could group the statements together under headings, or rank the statements according to their own preferences.• Ask the pupils to explore a website that aims to encourage spirituality and reflection and consider the extent to which a person's religious and spiritual needs can be met outside a worshipping community, eg on the internet.		
--	--	--	--

2. What can we learn from the creative arts about spiritual responses to the natural world?			
Learning objectives	Teaching and learning	Learning outcomes	Points to note
<p>Pupils should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> know that the creative arts are used to communicate beliefs in similar and different ways understand that the natural world has inspired spiritual experiences, which have been expressed using artistic media reflect on their own and others' responses to the natural world and the universe. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show film or television programme excerpts about the natural world, and ask the pupils to record the feelings they inspire and the questions they raise. Ask the pupils to share their responses in a class discussion. Ask the pupils to analyse, compare and contrast two or more artistic sources such as painting, poetry or sculpture. These sources should reflect different religious traditions and explore ideas and beliefs about the natural world. Ask the pupils to suggest connections between the ideas and beliefs of the religious traditions they have studied and the artworks they are exploring. Ask them to make a written response to the work studied. They should first compose a series of questions they would like to ask the artist and then describe how the work made them feel and what ideas, including religious ideas, it brought to mind. Ask the pupils to classify the artistic sources in terms of the ideas, themes and beliefs they seem to express. Depending on the examples used, consider exploring: God as creator, the interconnectedness of 	<p>Pupils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> explain differences and similarities between these artistic sources, making links between the art and the beliefs and religious traditions they have studied interpret and evaluate a range of artistic sources that express beliefs about the natural world express their own feelings about and insights into the natural world and the universe. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider using Edward de Bono's technique of 'Six Thinking Hats' to promote different types of thinking. Guidance for the use of this technique can be found in the Secondary Strategy materials. There are various websites that include ideas for exploring the internet and spirituality and text-marking activities to help analysis (see 'Resources'). There are various publications that promote higher-order questioning skills and offer guidance on developing interactive lessons (see 'Resources'). An online image search on 'creation' yields many examples for pupils to use, including an image of William Morris' 'Creation' window. The addition of the artistic medium such as sculpture, dance or 'stained glass' will make the search more specific and find images. Link to English: poetry, such as

	<p>the universe, the universal human family or ecology and the natural world. The pupils might analyse sources in the light of sacred texts, which may have inspired these works.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• For homework, ask the pupils to visit a website to explore the work of a Buddhist artist, Andy Weber, and follow a short tutorial on how he draws Buddha's face. The pupils should then use a template to produce their own design.		<p>'The Created Universe' by Joseph Addison, 'Prelude' by Wordsworth, poems by Gerard Manley Hopkins, and lyrics to songs such as Marvin Gaye's 'Ecology Song' or the hymn 'How Great Thou Art'.</p>
--	---	--	--

3. How can images of Jesus inspire hope in the lives of the oppressed?			
Learning objectives	Teaching and learning	Learning outcomes	Points to note
<p>Pupils should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • know some Christian teachings that express ideas about hope, justice, liberation and oppression • understand that the creative arts have been used to express different interpretations of the life and work of Jesus and that these are influenced by social, historical and cultural contexts • reflect on the ways in which images of Jesus may be inspirational to some Christians • reflect on their own ideas about the concept of hope in general and hopes for the future in particular. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead pupils in a game of word association as a way of exploring the concept of and their ideas about hope. • Alternatively, give the pupils a set of cards defining the terms despair, 'hope', 'injustice' 'liberation' and 'oppression'. Ask the pupils to work in groups, taking turns choosing a card and explaining the term on it without using any of the words or phrases in the given definition. The others in the group should guess the word being described. • Ask the pupils to consider: Who are the oppressed? Discuss reasons for their views. • Ask the pupils to examine images of Jesus from Latin America. They might begin by speculating about to whom a particular image might appeal to, and the reasons, connecting its relevance to the lives of the people. • Ask the pupils to read about the social and political background of, or a statement by, the artist who created the particular image. Then ask the pupils to think about what might have motivated the artist to depict 	<p>Pupils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ask questions and suggest answers to questions about injustice, oppression, hope and liberation • make links between the beliefs expressed in the artwork and the social, historical and cultural context from which it arose • suggest how and why art forms might make a difference to the lives of Christian individuals and communities • express their hopes for the future. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liberation theology began in Latin America in the 1960s. It is a Christian – mainly Roman Catholic – response to what liberation theologians perceive as oppression and social injustice. • There are various image packs that might be useful for this activity (see 'Resources'). • Activities that develop pupils' written work at the word and sentence level will help them with explanatory and comparative language. Planning strategies can be used to teach the pupils how to structure their written work cohesively and coherently. Writing frames can be used to help less-able pupils build their work. • There are various publications that might be useful for this activity (see 'Resources'). • Link to Speaking and Listening: Literacy across the curriculum, module 8 'listening'.

	<p>Jesus in this way.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask the pupils to read biblical texts that express ideas about liberation from oppression and about hope and salvation (eg Isaiah 61:1–2, Luke 1:39–55) to make links with the message of the artist. You might also ask pupils to read a text about liberation theology.• Ask the pupils to write an explanation of why and how the image might inspire hope in Latin American Christians who are living in situations where they are victims of injustice or oppression.• Ask the pupils to think of six analogies for the concept of hope, considering what hope would be if it were an animal, building, colour, season, sound and symbol. Then ask the pupils to use their analogies to create an artwork expressing their hopes for the future.		
--	---	--	--

4. How can music inspire Christian spirituality?			
Learning objectives	Teaching and learning	Learning outcomes	Points to note
<p>Pupils should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • know that different types of music are used in various ways within Christianity • understand how music can be a powerful vehicle for worship • reflect on their own and others' views about the value of different types of music in worship. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask the pupils to come up with a list of reasons for listening to music, eg to relax, dance, keep up with the latest hits, be comforted or cheer up. Ask them to provide examples of the types of music they would select for each reason identified and explain their selections. • Use the above activity to introduce the idea that music can inspire certain emotions that are sometimes very powerful. Explain that this is one reason why some people, including some members of some religious traditions, eg some Muslims, regard music as a potentially negative force. The pupils might wish to share experiences of having felt moved by music. • Play a range of music reflecting various Christian traditions, such as African American spirituals, Christian country music, choir music, gospel, modern chorus music, Gregorian chant, organ music, plainsong, Salvation Army band music or Taize. Ask the pupils to record their responses to the musical selections, asking questions including: How does this music make you feel? What mood does it suggest to you, and why? 	<p>Pupils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describe some different types of music and how they are used as vehicles for worship within different Christian traditions • use religious language, eg adoration, celebration, contemplation, devotion or praise, to explain how the use of this music might help believers develop their spirituality • express insights into their own and others' views about the advantages and disadvantages of music in worship. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link to music: use of specific musical terminology.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead the pupils in a card-matching activity. One set of cards should include terms relating to mood or feeling, eg calm, jolly or repetitive, and another set should include terms relating to purpose, eg adoration, contemplation, meditation, devotion or praise. Ask the pupils to speculate: can they match the mood of the music to its purpose in worship? What do they think the worshippers are doing physically during the music? Can they match the music to the Christian tradition from which it comes? Ask them to explain their responses. Note that worshippers' preferences might relate to their personality and lifestyle as well as theology. • Consider showing the pupils video excerpts that show Christians of different traditions using music in worship. Ask them to note the key aspects of worship and how music is being used. The pupils could access online worship websites. • Ask the pupils to draw up a table of the potential advantages and disadvantages of using music in worship for individual believers and for religious communities. • Alternatively, ask the pupils to investigate why silence is central to Quaker worship. Ask them to consider how the Quaker understanding of worship as implied by silence differs from the Pentecostal understanding of worship as implied by 		
--	--	--	--

	gospel music. If possible, arrange for the pupils to ask members of these two congregations why they value silence or gospel music in their worship.		
--	--	--	--

5. Why do some people value the use of sacred images in worship?			
Learning objectives	Teaching and learning	Learning outcomes	Points to note
<p>Pupils should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> know that sacred images are an important aspect of worship within certain religious traditions and understand how they are used understand why using sacred images is meaningful for some believers reflect on their own and others' views about the value of images in worship. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin by asking the pupils to consider: Is anything sacred to me? Present a range of artefacts or pictures of sacred images used in Buddhism, Christianity and Hinduism, eg Buddharupas, icons, statues of saints or murti. Ideally, these should reflect different traditions within each religion. You might introduce the pupils to these images or artefacts using the 'collective memory' method from the secondary strategy. The pupils should then decide who might use these images or artefacts and how they might use them. Ask the pupils to investigate why and how certain images are used in worship. The pupils should draw a table outlining which religion and, if appropriate, which group within the religion, uses them, and use religious vocabulary such as prostration, meditation, reverence, veneration to explain how they are used in corporate worship and by individual believers. This could be done as a group activity, with each group sending an 'envoy' to another to share their findings. Show the pupils video excerpts of 	<p>Pupils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> use religious language and gestures, eg contemplation, devotion, intercession, prostration and veneration, to compare and contrast the use of sacred images in two religions make links between the use of sacred images in worship, the feelings they are intended to inspire in believers and the beliefs they reflect express their own insights into the value of using sacred images and symbols in worship express insights into their own and others' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are various websites that include activities and devices that can be used for this activity. Link to history: religious changes and the study of Puritanism. The 'plus/minus/interesting' (PMI) strategy encourages pupils to note down two positive points (plus), two negative points (minus) and two ideas that raise interesting ideas (I).

	<p>worshippers using artefacts or images for meditation or contemplation and showing veneration and devotion to them. You might ask the pupils to read quotes from believers explaining why a particular artefact or image helps nurture their faith or commitment. Ask the pupils to discuss and record their personal reactions to the videos and/or quotes, and the issues or questions they raise for them, using the PMI strategy. Discuss the pupils' reactions, encouraging them to give sensitive and empathetic responses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using available resources, eg a range of textbooks organised as a book box, specific websites, a visiting speaker, ask the pupils to identify reasons why some religious traditions, for example most of the Free Churches and Muslims, reject the use of such images. Some pupils might also research historical context for these ideas such as Islam pre-Islamic Arabia and Christianity and Puritanism. • Ask the pupils to work in pairs or groups to create PowerPoint presentations about the different attitudes within and/or between religions towards the use of images in worship. Ask the pupils to account for the differing beliefs. 	<p>views about the advantages and disadvantages of using images in worship.</p>	
--	--	---	--

Assessment activity

6. What are the benefits for believers and others of expressing religious beliefs and commitments through the creative arts?			
There are opportunities for assessment for learning throughout this unit. However, in this activity, there are particular opportunities to collect evidence of what children know, understand and can do, using the learning objectives and outcomes and relating them to the level descriptions as appropriate.			
Learning objectives	Teaching and learning	Learning outcomes	Points to note
<p>Pupils should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> know some of the ways in which different art forms, such as music and sacred images, have been used to express belief within, and express belief shared between, religious traditions understand the potential of art, in different religious traditions, to promote understanding between communities reflect on their personal insights into a religious or spiritual theme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain that a national arts festival, titled 'Unity and diversity', aims to showcase the work of artists from a range of religious traditions. A member of the royal family will launch the festival, which aims to promote understanding of the creative arts and the religious traditions represented in Britain, in a grand opening ceremony. <p>Task A</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask the pupils to write a keynote speech, explaining how the creative arts could help give people insights into spirituality. Ask the pupils to suggest reasons why such an event is so important for interfaith understanding. <p>Task B</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask the pupils to play the role of an artist, creating two artworks, eg paintings, poems or songs, which explore a theme. One piece should express pupils' personal insights, and the other should express a different religious 	<p>Pupils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> describe, using examples, how different art forms are used by religious believers to express their faiths explain how learning about the use of art in different religious traditions might help promote understanding between communities explain how their own beliefs are reflected in their artwork. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider requesting support for some aspects of this assessment task from other subject areas, eg art, drama, English and music. It may also be possible to plan the unit of work collaboratively, so that learning objectives of both RE and another subject area are met and timetable time and facilities are shared.

	<p>perspective chosen from one of the religious tradition studied. The theme could be one explored earlier in this unit, eg God as creator, the interconnectedness of the universe, the universal human family or ecology and the natural world.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask the pupils to write a brief synopsis explaining the beliefs, values or practices that are reflected in their artworks and saying why these are important. You might use prompts such as the following to ask the pupils to explain their work: <p>My work relates to... because... These works of art are spiritual in several ways... Christian/Hindu/Buddhist/Muslim belief is shown in my art... My interpretation of the significance of... is....</p>		
<p>Differentiated outcomes</p>			
<p>Note that the following level descriptions relate to this assessment activity only. For level descriptions relating to the unit as a whole, see 'Differentiated outcomes'.</p> <p>Pupils working at level 4 can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> make a statement in support of the view that learning about the creative arts in different religious traditions might help promote understanding between religious communities use religious vocabulary to describe some forms of expression that might help express religious and spiritual ideas express their own beliefs and ideas about a religious or spiritual theme using an art form 			

- describe religious views or ideas about a religious or spiritual theme using an art form.

Pupils working at level 5 can:

- give reasons to support the view that learning about the creative arts in different religious traditions might help promote understanding between religious communities
- use an increasingly wide religious vocabulary to explain how the creative arts may help express religious and spiritual ideas
- explain how their own beliefs and ideas about a religious or spiritual theme are reflected in their artwork
- explain how religious beliefs and ideas about a religious or spiritual theme are reflected in their artwork.

Pupils working at level 6 can:

- give reasons and examples to support the view that learning about the creative arts in different religious traditions might help promote understanding between communities
- use an increasingly wide religious vocabulary to explain why people may choose to express religious and spiritual ideas through the creative arts
- express insights into the significance of their choice of theme and art form in expressing their own beliefs and ideas
- express insights into the beliefs, values and commitments of others in their choice of approach.