

Worcestershire Agreed Syllabus 2025 sample long-term plan: Model 1

	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4	Unit 5	Unit 6
FS2	F4 Being special: where do we belong?	F2 Why is Christmas special for Christians?	F1 Why is the word 'God' so important to Christians?	F3 Why is Easter special to Christians?	F5 What places are special and why?	F6 What times/stories are special and why?
Year 1	1.10 What does it mean to belong to a faith community?	1.1 What do Christians believe God is like?	1.7 Who is Jewish and how do they live?		1.2 Who do Christians say made the world?	1.9 How should we care for the world and for others, and why does it matter? (C, J, NR)
Year 2	1.6 Who is a Muslim and how do they live?	1.3 Why does Christmas matter to Christians?	1.6 Who is a Muslim and how do they live? Part 2.	1.5 Why does Easter matter to Christians?	1.4 What is the 'good news' Christians believe Jesus brings?	1.8 What makes some places sacred to believers? (C,M)
Year 3	L2.1 What do Christians learn from the Creation story? L2.2 What is it like for someone to follow God?		L2.9 How do festivals and worship show what matters to a Muslim?	L2.10 How do festivals and family life show what matters to Jewish people?	L2.4 What kind of world did Jesus want?	L2.12 How and why do people try to make the world a better place? (C, M/J, NR)
Year 4	L2.3 What is the 'Trinity' and why is it important for Christians?	L2.7 What do Hindus believe God is like?	L2.8 What does it mean to be Hindu in Britain today?	L2.5 Why do Christians call the day Jesus died 'Good Friday'?	L2.6 For Christians, when Jesus left, what was the impact of Pentecost?	L2.11 How and why do people mark the significant events of life? (C, H, NR)
Year 5	U2.1 What does it mean if Christians believe God is holy and loving?	U2.8 What does it mean to be a Muslim in Britain today?	U2.3 Why do Christians believe Jesus was the Messiah?	U2.9 Why is the Torah so important to Jewish people?	U2.4 Christians and how to live: 'What would Jesus do?'	U2.10 What matters most to Humanists and Christians? (C, M/J, NR)
Year 6	U2.2 Creation and science: conflicting or complementary?	U2.11 What does it mean to be a Humanist in Britain today? (NR)	U2.7 Why do Hindus want to be good?	U2.5 What do Christians believe Jesus did to 'save' people?	U2.6 For Christians, what kind of king is Jesus?	U2.12 How does faith help people when life gets hard?

Note: this model allows systematic religion units to lead into the thematic units, where pupils can make some comparisons between beliefs, at the end of each year. This model keeps the study of Christmas and Easter close to the appropriate time of year.

Unit 1.3 Why does Christmas matter to Christians? [Incarnation]

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 worldviews, reflecting on their own ideas and ways of living.

Learning outcomes (intended to enable pupils to achieve end of key stage outcomes):	Ways of knowing e.g.	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.
Teachers will enable pupils to achieve these outcomes, as appropriate to their age and stage, so that they can: Make sense of belief: - Recognise that stories of Jesus' life come from the Gospels - Give a clear, simple account of the story of Jesus' birth and why Jesus is important for Christians Understand the impact: - Give examples of ways in which Christians use the story of the Nativity to guide their beliefs and actions at Christmas Make connections: - Think, talk and ask questions about Christmas for people who are Christians and for people who are not - Decide what they personally have to be thankful for, giving a reason for their ideas.	    	Introduce this unit by looking for signs that Christmas is coming – signs of winter, decorations, adverts. Ask pupils why they think Christmas is important for Christians. - Tell some familiar stories about a character who appears to be someone he/she is not (e.g. <i>Beauty and the Beast</i>). Look at a picture of baby Jesus from Christian tradition. What can pupils tell about him from the picture? Most Christians believe he was very special – not an ordinary baby but God on Earth! Note that the word 'incarnation' means 'God in the flesh'. Christmas celebrates the Incarnation. - Talk about getting a bedroom ready for a new baby. What would families do to prepare? Imagine the new baby is 'God come to Earth' – what kind of room do the pupils expect would be suitable for this baby? Who might come and visit? - Tell the story of the Nativity from the Gospel of Luke, chapters 1 and 2. You could use a Christmas story trail (e.g. Experience Christmas from Jumping Fish). Set up some stations: Gabriel visits Mary; journey to Bethlehem; Jesus born and placed in manger; angels appear to shepherds; shepherds visit Mary. Pupils hear the story at each station then go back to their places and draw pictures/write sentences to retell the story. - Talk about Jesus' birth in the outhouse/stable – what were conditions like, and who visited? Luke's story talks about Jesus' birth being 'good news'. Talk about who it might be good news for and why, and why Christmas is important for Christians. - Look at a selection of Christmas cards: which ones have got a clear link to the story in Luke? Ask pupils to explain the links. Either visit a church to find out what will be happening around Christmas, or get a local Christian leader to bring photos. Find out about the colours the vicar/priest might wear; what other signs will there be about Jesus' birthday and that this is important to Christians? - Introduce the word 'advent', when Christians prepare for Jesus' arrival. Find out about some Advent traditions (e.g. Advent wreath, candle, calendar; making a crib scene, etc.) - Make connections with the kinds of decorations people put up for birthdays with those put up by Christians for Jesus' birthday. What decorations would connect with the story in Luke? Which ones are not connected to the Bible, but to other secular (non-religious) Christmas traditions? - People give gifts and they also say 'thank you' at Christmas. Ask pupils to create the 'thank you' prayers of all the characters in the Nativity story in Luke. Think about all the people pupils would like to thank at Christmas time. Ask pupils to create some of their own 'thank you' statements and give them out. [NB: This unit focuses on Luke's Gospel, so that if your school does Christmas in each year group, the other class(es) could use Matthew's account (chapters 1 and 2), including the wise men and gifts, Christmas carols linking to giving and Incarnation, ways in which people help and support others at Christmas.]

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Unit 1.4 What is the 'good news' Christians say Jesus brings? [Gospel]

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 worldviews, reflecting on their own ideas and ways of living.

Learning outcomes (intended to enable pupils to achieve end of key stage outcomes):	Ways of knowing e.g.	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.
Teachers will enable pupils to achieve these outcomes, as appropriate to their age and stage, so that they can: Make sense of belief: - Tell stories from the Bible and recognise a link with the concept of 'Gospel' or 'good news' - Give clear, simple accounts of what Bible texts (such as the story of Matthew the tax collector) mean to Christians - Recognise that Jesus gives instructions to people about how to behave Understand the impact: - Give at least two examples of ways in which Christians follow the teachings studied about forgiveness and peace, and bringing good news to the friendless - Give at least two examples of how Christians put these beliefs into practice in the Church community and their own lives (for example: charity, confession) Make connections: - Think, talk and ask questions about whether Jesus' 'good news' is only good news for Christians, or if there are things for anyone to learn about how to live, giving a good reason for their ideas.	       	- Ask pupils to come up with a list of 12 people (or professions) to change the world: who would they choose and why? The New Testament describes the 12 people Jesus chose – they were not necessarily the kinds of people pupils might expect. Read, dramatise and illustrate the following story about one of Jesus' 'world-changers', Matthew the tax collector (Matthew 9:9–13). Tax collectors were reviled by the Jewish people because they worked for the occupying Roman forces. Explore how and why Matthew's life was changed by his encounter with Jesus, 'friend of the friendless'. (Compare with story of Zacchaeus, Luke 19:1–10; Matthew becomes one of Jesus' 12 disciples.) These accounts are part of the 'Gospel' of Jesus, meaning 'good news'. What was the 'good news' that Jesus brought? - Forgiveness: Luke 6:37–38. Jesus teaches his followers that God forgives them, but they need to forgive others too. Talk about who needs forgiveness and how people might feel if they are forgiven. Pupils can talk about real life examples if appropriate. Talk about why forgiveness from God is good news for Christians and why forgiveness from people is important for all of us. What happens if someone does not forgive, compared with if they do? - Peace: In John 14:27 Jesus promises his followers peace. Talk about things that stop us having peace (e.g. worry, illness, conflict, fear). Talk about and try out some ways in which people get peace (music, laughter, being quiet, exercise, saying sorry and being forgiven, a hug). How do Christians receive peace from Jesus? If they believe Jesus loves them and forgives them, how does that bring them peace? How is that 'good news' for Christians? - Explore some ways in which Christians try to bring Jesus' 'good news' to others. For example, just like Jesus was 'friend to the friendless', Christians try to help people in need, e.g. local food bank; working with homeless people – look at Trinity Church, Cheltenham (trinitycheltenham.com) or St George's Crypt, Leeds (www.stgeorgescrypt.org.uk/charity). The Trussell Trust food banks are based on Christian principles (www.trusselltrust.org/); All Saints, Worcester founded the Worcester Foodbank as part of the Trussell Trust network (www.allsaintsworcester.org.uk/foodbank). - Find out how Christians say sorry to God, and receive forgiveness. Sometimes they say sorry in public (see some examples here: bit.ly/2ISR2Vo), sometimes in private (remember the 'saying "sorry"' prayers in Unit 1.1). Sometimes Christians say confession to a priest or vicar. Talk to a Christian to ask about why they say sorry, and what difference it makes to them, believing that God forgives them. Build on earlier learning about forgiveness as part of Jesus' 'good news' for Christians. - Ask pupils to investigate a church building and find out how it helps Christians remember the ways in which Jesus' life and teaching offers them 'good news': where can Christians find friendship, peace and forgiveness in this place? E.g. how is prayer encouraged? (E.g. candles.); does it feel peaceful? Are there groups who promote friendship in this church? (Note that this leads well into Unit 1.8, which talks about what makes some places sacred to believers.) - Explore the idea that offering friendship to others (especially the friendless), finding ways of being at peace and bringing peace, such as through forgiveness – these are all good things for people, not only Christians. Note that Christians believe they receive these things especially (but not exclusively) through Jesus.

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Unit 1.5 Why does Easter matter to Christians? [Salvation]

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Learning outcomes (intended to enable pupils to achieve end of key stage outcomes):	Ways of knowing e.g.	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.
Teachers will enable pupils to achieve these outcomes, as appropriate to their age and stage, so that they can: Make sense of belief: - Recognise that Incarnation and Salvation are part of a 'big story' of the Bible - Tell stories of Holy Week and Easter from the Bible and recognise a link with the idea of Salvation (Jesus rescuing people) - Recognise that Jesus gives instructions about how to behave Understand the impact: - Give at least three examples of how Christians show their beliefs about Jesus' death and resurrection in church worship at Easter Make connections: - Think, talk and ask questions about whether the story of Easter only has something to say to Christians, or if it has anything to say to pupils about sadness, hope or heaven, exploring different ideas and giving a good reason for their ideas.	      	- If you are doing this unit in the Spring Term (although this is not compulsory timing), you might introduce it by looking around for examples of the new life that comes in the spring. The story for Christians leads to the idea of new life. - Introduce the story of Holy Week. (Note that pupils should understand that this story takes place about 33 years after the events of the Nativity, even though pupils have only celebrated Christmas a few weeks ago.) - Set up an Easter labyrinth or outdoor trail for pupils, including 1) The entry into Jerusalem e.g. John 12:12–15; 2) Jesus' betrayal and arrest at the Mount of Olives e.g. Luke 22:47–53; 3) Jesus dies on the cross e.g. Luke 23:26–56; 4) The empty tomb e.g. Luke 24:1–12; 5) Jesus' appearance to Mary Magdalene and the disciples: John 20:11–23. At each stop on the labyrinth, pupils should hear part of the story and have a chance to discuss and reflect on it, expressing their thoughts, feelings and questions. Make the labyrinth as sensory as possible: for example, have palm leaves to feel (and wave) for the entry into Jerusalem, and vinegar to smell for the crucifixion. Use a variety of active strategies to get pupils to become familiar with the story (e.g. simple role play, freeze-framing, simple diary entries for different characters, story-boarding, putting images in chronological order, retelling events to each other). - Talk about the emotions of Jesus' followers during the week. Match the emotions to different characters at different times (e.g. being angry, sad, excited, worried, scared, surprised, happy, puzzled, overjoyed, etc.) Note the big change from Friday (sad) to Sunday (puzzled and overjoyed). - Connect the idea of eggs, new life and the belief in Jesus' resurrection. Look at decorated Easter eggs – make some model eggs and decorate with scenes from Easter Sunday. Talk about the Christian belief that Jesus rises from death (resurrection) on the Sunday after his death, and how this shows Christians that Jesus has opened up a way for them to have a new life after they die – a life with God in heaven. This is part of the idea of 'salvation' – for Christians, Jesus offers to save them from death. Talk about why this is important for Christians – talk about the hope Christians have that heaven is a place without pain or suffering – a place of joy. - Find out about how churches celebrate different parts of Holy Week, e.g. Palm Sunday crosses; Good Friday (church services, hot cross buns, Stations of the Cross); Easter Sunday (joyful songs, decorating crosses in church, giving and eating eggs). Connect these practices with the events in the story. Make up some simple actions that help them to remember the story – and that could be used in Christian celebrations. - Ask pupils why people find it helpful to believe that there is life in heaven after death. Make a link with the idea that, for Christians, Jesus brings good news (see Unit 1.4). Give pupils time to reflect on the way the story changes from sadness to happiness, or from darkness to light. Give them a chance to paint some dark marks on a page, perhaps listening to some quiet music, then to paint some bright colours, with joyous music accompanying. Ask them to talk about what it might feel like when something good happens after something sad.

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Unit 1.6 Who is Muslim and how do they live? [God/Tawhid/ibadah/iman] [double unit]

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 worldviews, reflecting on their own ideas and ways of living.

Learning outcomes (intended to enable pupils to achieve end of key stage outcomes):	Ways of knowing e.g.	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.
Teachers will enable pupils to achieve these outcomes, appropriate to their age and stage, so that they can: Make sense of belief: - Recognise the words of the <i>Shahadah</i> and that it is very important for Muslims - Identify some of the key Muslim beliefs about God found in the <i>Shahadah</i> and the 99 names of Allah, and give a simple description of what some of them mean - Give examples of how stories about the Prophet show what Muslims believe about Muhammad Understand the impact: - Give examples of how Muslims use the <i>Shahadah</i> to show what matters to them - Give examples of how Muslims use stories about the Prophet to guide their beliefs and actions (e.g. care for creation, fast in Ramadan) - Give examples of how Muslims put their beliefs about prayer into action Make connections: - Think, talk about and ask questions about Muslim beliefs and ways of living - Talk about what they think is good for Muslims about prayer, respect, celebration and self-control, giving a good reason for their ideas - Give a good reason for their ideas about whether prayer, respect, celebration and self-control have something to say to them too.	      	- Introduce the idea that Muslims believe in Allah as the one true God ('Allah' is the word for 'God' in Arabic, not a name. In Islam, the central belief that there is only one God is referred to as 'Tawhid'). Iman means belief, and it is expressed in the words of the <i>Shahadah</i> ('There is no God but God; Muhammad is the messenger of God'). Find out about the <i>Shahadah</i>, and how this is the most important belief for Muslims. It is part of Muslims' daily prayers, and also part of the Call to Prayer; its words are incorporated into the <i>adhan</i>, seen as the best first words for a baby to hear, whispered into their ear soon after birth. Talk about why it is used these ways, and how it shows what is most important to Muslims. To be a Muslim is to submit willingly to God – to allow Allah to guide them through life. - Muslims believe it is impossible to capture fully what God is like, but they use 99 Names for Allah to help them understand Allah better. Explore some of the names and what they mean; look at some of them written in beautiful calligraphy. Ask the pupils to choose one of the names, think about what the name means and how this quality might be seen in their life or the lives of others. Respond to the sentence starters: <i>One beautiful name found in the Qur'an for Allah is... If I was... I would... If other people were... they would...</i> Ask the pupils to create some calligraphy around a 'beautiful name' of Allah; ask them to explain why this characteristic of God might be important to a Muslim. - Remind pupils that the <i>Shahadah</i> says Muhammad is God's messenger (many Muslims say 'Peace be upon him' after his name – or write PBUH). Examine the idea that stories of the Prophet are very important in Islam. They say a lot about what the Prophet Muhammad said and did, and these stories often teach Muslims an inspiring lesson. Muslims follow Allah (God), but they learn a lot from the Prophet's example. Give examples of some stories of the Prophet Muhammad e.g. The Prophet cared for all Allah's creation (the story of the tiny ants); Muhammad forbade cruelty to any animal, and cared for animals himself to show others how to do it (the camel); he was considered very wise (Prophet Muhammad and the black stone); Muhammad believed in fairness and justice for all (Bilal the first muezzin was a slave to a cruel master. The Prophet's close companion, Abu Bakr, freed him, and made him the first prayer caller of Islam; see www.natre.org.uk/primary/good-learning-in-re-films). Talk about how these stories might inspire people today. - Revisit the <i>Shahadah</i> – it says Muhammad is God's messenger. Now find out about the message given to Muhammad by exploring the story of the first revelation he received of the Holy Qur'an on the 'Night of Power'. Find out about how, where, when and why Muslims read the Qur'an, and work out why Muslims treat it as they do (wrapped up, put on a stand, etc.). Note that there is diversity of practice here (e.g. Muslims will not always place the Qur'an on a stand to read it). - Introduce the idea of the Five Pillars as examples of 'ibadah', or 'worship'. Reciting the <i>Shahadah</i> is one Pillar. Another is prayer, '<i>salah</i>'. Look at how Muslims try to pray regularly (five times a day). Find out what they do and say, and why this is so important to Muslims. What difference does it make to how they live every day? (Note that Units L2.9 and U2.8 will go into other Pillars in more depth, so only introduce the others at this point.) - Reflect on what lessons there might be from how Muslims live: how do they set a good example to others? Consider whether prayer, respect, celebration and self-control are valuable practices and virtues for all people to develop, not only Muslims.

Unit 1.8 What makes some places sacred to believers?

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Learning outcomes (intended to enable pupils to achieve end of key stage outcomes):	Ways of knowing	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.
Teachers will enable pupils to achieve these outcomes, as appropriate to their age and stage, so that they can: Make sense of belief: - Recognise that there are special places where people go to worship, and talk about what people do there - Identify at least three objects used in worship in two religions and give a simple account of how they are used and something about what they mean - Identify a belief about worship and a belief about God, connecting these beliefs simply to a place of worship Understand the impact: - Give examples of stories, objects, symbols and actions used in churches, mosques and/or synagogues which show what people believe - Give simple examples of how people worship at a church, mosque or synagogue - Talk about why some people like to belong to a sacred building or a community Make connections: - Think, talk and ask good questions about what happens in a church, synagogue or mosque, saying what they think about these questions, giving good reasons for their ideas - Talk about what makes some places special to people, and what the difference is between religious and non-religious special places.	      	Throughout this unit, make connections with pupils' prior learning from earlier in the year: how do places of worship connect with Christian and Muslims/Jewish beliefs and practices studied? E.g. key stories of Jesus are shown in a church, including clear links to Easter; the mosque is used as a place of prayer, and often contains calligraphy; many Jewish symbols are seen in synagogues and in the home. - Talk about how the words 'sacred' and 'holy' are used; what makes some places and things special, sacred or holy; consider what things and places are special to pupils and their families, and why. Do they have any things that are holy and sacred? You might also like to think about places in nature, for example, the Malvern Hills. - Look at photos of different holy buildings and objects found inside them: can pupils work out which objects might go inside which building, and talk about what the objects are for? Match photos to buildings, and some keywords. - Talk about why it is important to show respect for other people's precious or sacred belongings (e.g. the importance of having clean hands; treating objects in certain ways, or dressing in certain ways). - Explore the main features of places of worship in Christianity and at least one other religion, ideally by visiting some places of worship. While visiting, ask questions, handle artefacts, take photos, listen to a story, sing a song; explore the unusual things they see, do some drawings of details and collect some keywords. For example, Worcester Cathedral, www.worcestercathedral.org.uk/learning/educational-visits; Tallow Hill Mosque (www.wmwa.co.uk/visits-and-tours.html) and Redditch Mosque (www.redditchmasjid.org/). - Find out how the place of worship is used and talk to some Christians, Muslims and/or Jewish people about how and why it is important in their lives. Look carefully at objects found and used in a sacred building, drawing them carefully and adding labels, lists and captions. Talk about different objects with other learners. - Notice some similarities and differences between places of worship and how they are used, talking about why people go there: to be friendly, to be thoughtful, to find peace, to feel close to God. - Explore the meanings of signs, symbols, artefacts and actions and how they help in worship e.g. church: altar, cross, crucifix, font, lectern, candles and the symbol of light; plus specific features from different denominations as appropriate: vestments and colours, icons, Stations of the Cross, baptismal pool, pulpit; synagogue: ark, <i>Ner Tamid</i>, Torah scroll, <i>tzitzit</i> (tassels), <i>tefillin</i>, <i>tallit</i> (prayer shawl) and <i>kippah</i> (skullcap), <i>chanukiah</i>, <i>bimah</i>; mosque/masjid: <i>wudu</i>, calligraphy, prayer mat, prayer beads, <i>minbar</i>, <i>mihrab</i>, <i>muezzin</i>. - Explore how religious believers sometimes use music to help them in worship e.g. Christians and Jewish people sing Psalms, hymns and prayers. These may be traditional or contemporary, with varied instruments and voices. Music can be used to praise God, thank God, say 'sorry' and to prepare for prayer. Muslims do not use music so freely, but still use the human voice for the Prayer Call and to recite the Qur'an in beautiful ways. - Listen to some songs, prayers or recitations that are used in a holy building, and talk about whether these songs are about peace, friendliness, looking for God, thanking God or thinking about God. How do the songs make people feel? Emotions of worship include feeling excited, calm, peaceful, secure, hopeful. - Use the idea of community: a group of people, who look after each other and do things together. Are holy buildings for God or for a community or both? Talk about other community buildings, and what makes religious buildings different from, say, a library or school.

excellent progress or falling behind. Summative assessment is important, but it should take second place to what is going on in the classroom between pupil and teacher.

Teachers and pupils should not assume that summative assessment will always indicate upward progress, e.g., showing that a pupil has moved up a grade or step, etc. Consider the effect of pupils encountering a completely new unit, encountering knowledge about Hindu ways of living for the first time, at the age of 8 or 9. It would be inappropriate to expect the same depth of learning in this as we do in an aspect of Christianity, where learning may have been built up over several years. At the very least, unfamiliar vocabulary may mean learning is slower. Conversely, it may also be the case that a pupil studying their own religion or worldview can demonstrate learning that exceeds expectations, and which is not typical of what they know, understand or can do in relation to other elements of the syllabus.

It is clear, therefore, that when creating a summative assessment system, careful thought needs to be given as to what is being assessed and how often. One important point to consider when planning summative assessment is to have a realistic expectation of how much time is being spent on assessment. In most schools, RE will have no more than one fifth of the curriculum time of, say, English, and should only require a commensurate amount of time for summative assessment.

When planning for assessment in RE, key questions to consider are:

- How often is summative assessment really required?
- How will the resulting information be used?
- With whom is it shared? Is it meaningful to them?
- Is it worth the time?

Assessment in primary RE

The purpose of assessment in primary RE is to ensure that pupils improve what they know, understand and can do regarding the different aspects of RE they are studying. There are different ways of achieving this depending on whether you are teaching 5- or 9-year-olds. Whatever strategies are being employed it is the formative strategies, those that go on in the classroom, that are of most importance.

There is a danger that when making a judgement on a pupil's progress in RE, teachers may be unsure how to judge pupils and have ended up making judgements based on a pupil's ability in, say, English or history. In order to prevent this, teachers need to be confident in what needs to be learnt in a unit. They need to be informally and continually using lots of formative assessment

strategies as part of everyday teaching and learning. Putting information into a summative assessment system should not then be an issue. The teacher can use their knowledge of the pupils and their professional judgement to record how pupils are achieving, as in the example below.

An example of a summative model in primary RE

In this example, the teacher has produced a useful document that succinctly and effectively conveys summative information about how their class has responded to a unit from this syllabus. This will be a useful starting point for discussion with the subject leader, perhaps making comparisons with other groups of learners undertaking the same unit.

With this overview, groups of learners within the class can be identified, e.g. by gender, pupil premium, and so on, and strategies can be put in place to deal with attainment gaps. Review notes could include reflection on what specific areas of learning need to be targeted in the next unit, and how learners who have not met the expected outcomes might be supported.

Year: 1 Unit: 1.5		Term: Spring 2 Strand: Salvation	
Key question: Why does Easter matter to Christians?			
Pupils can:			
• Recognise that Incarnation and Salvation are part of a 'big story' of the Bible. • Retell stories connected with Easter and Holy week with links to Salvation (Jesus rescuing people) • Ask questions about whether the story of Easter has anything to say to them about sadness, hope or heaven, exploring different ideas. • Give examples how Christians show their beliefs about Jesus' death and resurrection in church worship at Easter.			
Children: 26		SEN	
Emerging	Expected	Exceeding	
Jonta	Oliver Dylan Mayah Seb Mayan Marley Ayan Aanya Frankie Maisie Noah Iraaya Annt Saarah Kemaya Garcia	Farrah Jasleen G Olivia Anaya Beatrice Hasan Harrison Kia Neha	
3%	62%	35%	
Unit review notes:			

Questions in Theology

There are questions we can ask that help us understand that stories, texts and sources of authority...

are important to a group or individual.	have particular meanings and significance.	are written in context which might affect its meaning.	are interpreted differently due to a readers own worldview and personal experience.
- Where does this story come from? - Is this story important to me? (If not, why not?) - Is this story or text important to people? If so, to whom? - Why is it important to them? - Is this text a source of authority for anyone? If so, how is it used? - Is its authority widely acknowledged (within and beyond the worldview)? - Do some people question its authority? If so, why?	- What is the story about? - Who is this story about? - What happens in this story? - Why is this important? - How can it help us understand the 'hidden meaning' of the story? - What is this text / source of authority about? - Who is it significant to? Why is it significant to them? - How is this source of authority used? - Has the way in which it is used or interpreted changed over time? - Is it used differently in differently contexts and if so, why? - How (if at all) does it relate to other sources of authority within this worldview?	- Who told this story? - Who wrote this text? - When did they tell/write it? - Who did they tell it to/write it for? - Why did they tell/write it – what difference did they think it would make? - What type of text is this? - Is it a particular genre of writing? - Where/when/why was this written? - Who was/is the intended audience? - What can we say about the origin of this source of authority? - Who was/is the intended audience? - Does it matter whether we know this or not?	- What does this story tell me? - Does everyone draw the same meaning from this text? If not, why not? - How might context affect how someone understands the meaning of the text? - What genre is this source of authority? - How might this affect the way in which it is read/interpreted?



Questions in Human/Social Science

There are questions we can ask that help us to understand how people live...

when looking at objects, places, photographs, videos, surveys, case studies, etc.

- What is this?
- How is this used?
- Who uses this?
- Where might I find this?
- When is this used?
- What is happening here?
- When is this? How do I know

through examining their context, including time, place, culture and gender.

- Who does this? How do they do it?
- Why do they do it like this?
- Is this done the same way today as it was in the past?
- Is it done the same way in one place as in another?
- Is this done the same way by one person as another?
- What does this tell me about how context affects this activity? Who uses this thing?
- Do different people use this same thing? How is this thing used?
- Does everyone use this thing in the same way? If not, why not?
- Is this thing used the same way today as it was in the past?
- Is this thing used the same way in one place as in another?
- Is this thing used the same way by one person as another?
- What does this tell me about how context affects this thing?
- What happens here?
- Would it happen the same or differently somewhere else? Why?

by examining the origin of sources.

- Where is this information from?
- Does this matter?
- How might this make a difference to the way I understand it?
- How else can we find out about this?

by examining how our own worldviews and personal experiences affect the way we interpret sources.

- How might someone's worldview affect the way in which they analyse this information?
- How might my worldview affect the way in which I analyse this information?



Questions in Philosophy

There are questions we can ask that help us understand more about how people think or reason...

about themselves, others and the world around them, including their understanding of 'good' and 'bad' or 'right' and 'wrong'.

- What questions do I have about this thing?
- What do I think about this?
- What questions could I ask about this?
- What are good questions to ask?
- What are bad questions to ask? How do we know?
- How might asking questions help us to know more and to think more deeply?
- How does this way of thinking about [x] tell us more about this person's understanding of 'right' and 'wrong'?

in different ways about themselves, others and the world in different ways, including their understanding of 'good' and 'bad' or 'right' and 'wrong'.

- What questions do I have about this?
- What questions do others ask about this?
- Do we all have the same questions? Why do I think this?
- Do I think the same thing as others? (If not, why not?)
- How does this person think about what it means to live a 'good' life?
- Why do they think this? What does this tell us about what they understand 'good' (and 'bad') to be?
- How might my/someone's worldview impact on the way I/they think about this?
- Based on what we have learned about [x], how might this person justify that doing this is the right / wrong thing to do?

about moral and ethical issues in reliable.

- How do we know what we know?
- What evidence do we / I have?
- Can I give a reason why I think what I think?
- Is this/your argument/position coherent/reliable?
- Does this make sense? How do we know? Is this a well-structured argument?

and the importance of considering how different people articulate their understanding of 'validity'.

- Is this a valid argument/position?
- How do you know?
- What evidence is there to support this?
- What different types of evidence might there be?
- Are all types of evidence equally valid? Why/why not?



1.6 Who is Muslim and what do they believe?

Being Theologians

What is the Shahadah and why is it important?

Explore the Shahadah with pupils. Discuss the word IMAN (belief). Look at the words carefully. What might they tell you? Explore how this is the most important belief for Muslims. Why do pupils think it's important? Explore when it is used – adhan, whispering in the ear of a baby etc.

What does the Shahadah tell Muslims about God and Muhammed (PBUH)

Explore Tawhid (the oneness of God). What does this mean for a Muslim?

How might they live because of it? Explore that it's the central theme.

What might that say about its importance?

Explore what a prophet is. What do Muslims believe about the Prophet Muhammed (PBUH)?

What do names tell a Muslim about Allah?

Discuss names, why are names important? Explore that Allah is so important to Muslims, that he has 99 names. Why might he have so many? Explore some of the different names through artwork and discussion around what they might mean.

What is a prophet and how are people inspired by them?

Look at stories that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) told.

e.g Muhammad and the Cat, Muhammad and the Camel, Bilal and the Butterfly

Where can this story be found? What does it teach Muslims about how to live? What might the hidden meaning of the story be? What might this story teach Muslims about Allah?

Look at quotes from the story asking pupils to explore what they say about Allah.

Why is the Qur'an important to Muslims?

Explore the concept of special books. Look at the Qur'an. Ensure pupils understand it is the holy book of the Islamic faith. Explore how the Qur'an was revealed by looking at the Night of Power. Why is this story special? What is the hidden meaning? Explore how a Muslim looks after the Qur'an. Why is this? Do all people do this?

Key Stage 1

continued.... 1.6 Who is Muslim and what do they believe?

Being Human / Social Scientists

Do all Muslims look the same and live in the same place?

Talk to pupils about what they think a Muslim is like. Look at some pictures - could they tell which person is Muslim. Explore the idea that anybody could be Muslim, just like anybody could be a doctor, nurse or bus driver, you can't always tell by the physical appearance. Look at the census data about where Muslims might live. Is there anything that is surprising?

What is important to people? What is important to Muslims?

Explore different roles people have. Look at things that are important to pupils. Talk about why they might be important.

What things are important to Muslims in Britain? Are these the same as Muslims in another part of the world?

Explore what things might be important. Are these similar or different? Explore why these differences might occur. Diamond 9 activity.

What makes a good leader?

Explore that Muslims believe Muhammad (PBUH) to be a prophet. There are other prophets in Islam – Ibrahim (Abraham), Musa (Moses), Isa (Jesus). What makes a good leader? What qualities are most important? Do you need other qualities to be a religious leader?

How does 'ibadah' show what is important to a Muslim?

Explore that there are 5 Pillars of Islam which form part of worship for a Muslim. Discuss 'Salah/Salat' (prayer). Look at how Muslims pray: when, how often, where, what do they do? Explore the importance of these concepts. Why would a Muslim want to pray 5 times a day? Do all Muslims do this?

How does a mosque support Muslims in worship?

Explore what is inside a mosque. Are all mosques the same around the world? Why not? Look at differences – men/women for example. Look at rituals in the mosque – Wudu for example, listen to the call to prayer. Why are these things important?

Considering Philosophy

What can we learn from Islam?

Is there anything that we have learned that might apply, even if we are not a Muslim? What might these things be? Why might they still be important?

How does being a Muslim impact on the way people live?

How might a Muslim person living in our area act, knowing what we have learned? How might faith have an impact on the decisions that people have made?

1.8 What makes some places sacred to believers?

We are going to be human and social scientists and philosophers

Being Human /
Social Scientists

Why are buildings sacred to believers?

Consider the terminology of sacred and holy. What do they mean? (see appendices). Look at pictures of different religious buildings. Why might they be sacred? What makes them unique/similar? Discuss how we might show respect for religious buildings.

How do people worship in buildings?

Look again at pictures of different buildings. Can pupils identify important aspects? Where might the pews, font, pulpit etc be? Or where might the prayer hall, mirab, minaret be? Why are these aspects important - what do people do there and how do these aid worship? Explore different religious buildings. Where might there be similarities in what people do? Where might there be differences?

Listen to music that might be played. How do these songs enable people to worship or feel close to God?

Are buildings used the same way everywhere?

Explore religious buildings from around the world. Particularly in Christianity, look at churches of different denominations. Do all Christians worship in the same way? Do all buildings look the same? Explore reasons why there might be a difference. Also look at early buildings - what has changed? Explore how this might reflect the way people worship.

How are artefacts used in buildings?

Look at different artefacts from buildings e.g. church: altar, cross, crucifix, font, lectern, candles and the symbol of light; plus specific features from different denominations as appropriate: vestments and colours, icons, Stations of the Cross, baptismal pool, pulpit;

synagogue: ark, Ner Tamid, Torah scroll, tzitzit (tassels), tefillin, tallit (prayer shawl) and kippah (skullcap), chanukiah, bimah;

mosque/masjid: wudu, calligraphy, prayer mat, prayer beads, minbar, mihrab, muezzin.

Explore how they are used and aid worship.

Are artefacts used the same way everywhere?

Explore difference in denominations, or traditions, as well as religious buildings from around the world.

Being
Philosophers

Why do I think the way I do?

Explore where pupils' own thoughts come from. Enable them to ask questions about religious buildings and artefacts. What do they think is special to them, and how this might be different with things that are sacred?

How do sacred buildings help the way people think or reason about faith?

Invite a Christian and/or Muslim into school to talk about the importance of sacred buildings and how they help them to find God. This could be done as part of a visit. Explore with children if they think religious buildings are important. Could we find God without a religious building?

Key Stage 1

Unit	Story	
1.1 What do Christians believe God is like?	Luke 15:11-32 – The Lost Son	27
	Luke 15:1-10 – The Lost Sheep and The Lost Coin	27
1.2 Who do Christians say made the world?	Genesis 1 – Creation Story	6
	Genesis 2:1-3 – God Rests	6
1.3 Why does Christmas matter to Christians?	Christmas – Luke 1+2	22
1.4 What is the 'good news' Christians believe Jesus brings?	Matthew 9:9-13 – Calling of Matthew	18
	Luke 19:1-10 – Zacchaeus	28
	Luke 6:37-38 – Judging Others	25
	John 14:27 – Peace	31
1.5 Why does Easter matter to Christians?	John 12:12-20 – Entry to Jerusalem	30
	Luke 22:47-53 – Betrayal	29
	Luke 23:26-56 – Death	29
	Luke 24:1-12 – Empty Tomb and Resurrection	30
	John 20:11-23 – Women and the Gardener	31
1.9 How should we care for others and for the world, and why does it matter?	Matthew 6:26 – Value of people	17
	Matthew 19:13-15 – Jesus and the Little Children	19
	Psalms 8 – Psalm of Creation	11
	Luke 5:1-11 – Jesus' Friends	24
	Luke 5:17-26 – Paralysed Man	24
	Luke 10:25-37 – Good Samaritan	26
	Ruth 1-4 – The Story of Ruth and Naomi	10
1.10 What does it mean to belong to a faith or belief community?	Luke 15:1-10 – The Lost Sheep and The Lost Coin	27
	John 13:34-35 – A New Commandment	31
	Mark 12:30-31 – Love everybody	21
	Leviticus 19:18 – Love your neighbour as yourself	10

Deuteronomy 5:1-22 – 10 Commandments (Again!)

Unit L2.12 refers to looking at the 10 Commandments in 2 different places. It is not unusual for the Bible to have two versions of the same event, there are two creation stories in Genesis for example (Genesis 1:1-2:4, and Genesis 2:4-25). Furthermore, the gospel writers cover the same stories between them but tell them from a different point of view or try to make a slightly different point.

It is understood that the 10 Commandments in Exodus are a retelling of how Moses received them from God at the top of Mt Siani. In Deuteronomy, the 10 Commandments form part of a larger discourse. The people are on the edge of the Promised Land; however, Moses will not enter it, as he is about to die. As he passes the baton on to Joshua, his successor, he uses this time to address the people to remind them of everything that God has told them about how to live. It may be seen as understandable then that there are a few minor differences between the Exodus account and Deuteronomy account, as one is written and the other spoken.

The major difference is in the command about the Sabbath. In Exodus we see, "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy." However, in Deuteronomy we see, "Observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy, as the Lord your God has commanded you." It is argued that the difference was to encourage people to actually keep the Sabbath holy, rather than just having a memorial to celebrate that there was a Sabbath. In other words, Moses was clarifying its use rather than changing the understanding of it.

Leviticus 19:18 – Love your neighbour as yourself

'Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against anyone among your people; but love your neighbour as yourself. I am the Lord.'

On the surface this is a very simple command from God. However, Leviticus 19:18 sits in a much wider context of laws given to Moses by God on how people should behave – supporting living a good life. These laws were primarily about how people should treat one another as they looked to enter the Promised Land.

At this time, there were many tensions between the Israelites as they wandered on the path to freedom. Many felt that the journey was taking too long, and many were wanting to turn back to Egypt. Because of this, they grumbled and fought with one another. This added to the need for God to bring in new rules on how to treat one another.

Here, the word 'love' (*ahab*) means to be an ally with, or to love as a friend. In other words, God was stating that people should support one another. Another way of looking at this was to say that when we do something wrong, we can be hard on ourselves, but then we get over it and move on. People should do the same thing when others do things to them.

Ruth 1-4 - The Story of Ruth and Naomi

This is a long story to go through, and it is suggested that an abridged version should be used. It is recommended that you use the Lion's Storyteller Bible as there are several adult themes, such as prostitution, that are inappropriate for children.

The author of the book of Ruth is unclear. Due to the style of writing and general themes of the book, many commentators suggest that the author was a woman. The book was written for the Israelites and was written during a time of peace between Israel and Moab. It is generally believed that it was written after David became King, around 1010BC, during a time of 'The Judges'. This

period of Jewish history can often be characterised by a feeling of people doing whatever they thought was best, with little guidance or leadership.

There are many key themes that should be explored.

1) **Loyalty**

This story is full of loyalty. Ruth is a character that demonstrates great loyalty. She refuses to leave Naomi, even though following her may have been detrimental to Ruth. Ruth is also loyal to Boaz. She remains working in the fields, working hard and ensuring the work is done properly even when others have fallen away. Boaz is also loyal to God and plays his part in ensuring that Ruth and her family are well looked after.

2) **Treatment of the outsider**

Ruth was an immigrant. She was an outsider. Not only did she come from a foreign land, but she was also a widow. She may have been seen by many as a burden to society. Despite this she is welcomed into Boaz's family, cared for and ultimately blessed by God. Boaz shows her kindness and allows her to glean in his fields and through this she is protected from harm.

I Samuel 17 - David and Goliath

Historically speaking, Israel's first king, Saul, became king around 1050BC. The events in the story of David and Goliath took place several years after this, approximately 1023BC. The Philistines were a group of people that possibly came from Crete or other coastal regions of Canaan. The term Philistine was used to refer to a combination of tribes rather than a specific one. They were known as Sea People as they used the seas to travel from place to place. Philistines were great warriors.

The story of David and Goliath is not the first time we meet the Philistines in the Bible, before this we see stories of the Philistines in Genesis 10 and in Deuteronomy 2. Due to their chequered history with the Israelites, the Philistines became a symbol of the thing that Israel is most afraid of.

Goliath is the Philistine champion. It is interesting to note that in different translations of the Bible in different cultures, Goliath varies in size from approx. 7ft tall to over 10ft tall. This might be something to explore in terms of looking at diversity in religion and focussing on the question of "does the size of Goliath change the perception or feeling of the story?". Ultimately, the physical size of Goliath is not important as what he represents is Israel's fear.

The overriding theme of David and Goliath is about triumph over fear. The Israelites were too afraid of Goliath. It wasn't that David was not afraid but rather that he wasn't going to let his fear hold him back. Again, fighting with stones and a sling shot against someone with a spear is not the most important part. For Christians, it is the understanding that God was on David's side. David put his trust in God and that allowed him to conquer his fear.

We may explore this in a modern setting by thinking about what things hold us back from achieving our goals and what might we put in place to overcome our fears.

previous prophecies. This is why they talk about seeing a star and have an understanding of what it means.

Traditionally the Magi appear in the Nativity story on the night Jesus was born. However, due to the length of journey that they took, it is estimated that they walked for several years, and it is more likely that they arrived at the house when Jesus was approximately 2 years old. This is what is celebrated in the Church on Epiphany. It is also worth considering some other variations within the appearance of the Magi. Although our Nativity story generally shows 3 Magi (because there were three gifts), it is likely that there were many more that made the journey. It is also possible that these Magi included women. Although we understand culturally that it would have been men who were the more educated individuals, many scholars argue that it would be entirely possible, in this culture, for some women to be part of the Magi group.

Matthew 3:13-17 – The Baptism of Jesus

In Matthew's gospel, the Baptism of Jesus is the first time we encounter Jesus as an adult about to start the ministry that he came to do. In the agreed syllabus this story is used to explore the understanding of the Trinity and baptism. There are some significant things to explore.

Jesus is baptised by John (known as John the Baptist). John was Jesus' cousin, he was the son of Elizabeth, Mary's cousin. John is seen as a forerunner, someone who prepares the way. In other words, some of the things that he did, point the way to what Jesus was going to do in a different and better way.

Baptism is often seen as a Christian thing which was instigated by Jesus. However, Jesus was baptised by John because, historically, baptism was a Jewish ritual which symbolised repentance and a desire to be right with God. In Jewish culture baptism was carried out in a pool of water and done by full immersion. It is because of this that Jesus is baptised the way he was. He was first and foremost Jewish and so following the Jewish customs was important. However, Christians understand Jesus to be perfect and have nothing to repent for. It is for this reason that John says, "I should be baptised by you." But Jesus' desire to be baptised again demonstrates that Jesus was not there to disregard the Jewish faith, law and customs but rather show how to interpret them correctly.

There are many different understandings of how baptism should occur across different denominations and world cultures. Many Christians believe that people should be baptised by full immersion (going under the water) just as Jesus did. In some cultures, this is done in rivers and lakes to imitate how Jesus was baptised. Some Christian denominations, particularly Church of England, prefer to baptise babies. It is believed that this came out of the Middle Ages when infant mortality rates were high. If babies were baptised but didn't live long, they would go to heaven.

Matthew 4:18-22 – First Disciples

When looking at the story of Jesus calling his first disciples, it is important to know a couple of things. The town of Capernaum was on the Sea of Galilee. Capernaum was a fishing town and many of the people made their living as fishermen. The metaphors of being fishers of men were used because they were things that ordinary people could relate to. They knew what it was like to catch fish and so could apply that understanding to what Jesus wanted in terms of bringing people to God.

Secondly, Jesus deliberately chooses ordinary people to be his disciples. Jewish leaders were people who were the most intelligent. They had been to school; they had studied scripture and the law.

He is not saying that everyone should not try and work, or shop for food, or try to make a good life, but rather that these things are not the most important thing. People assumed that the rich had value and worth, but Jesus is saying that everyone has value and worth to God.

In this verse many Christians understand that it is not what you have that is important but rather how you see and treat others. Treating people with dignity and respect is vital because that is how God treats everyone. Furthermore, people are more valuable than birds and birds are taken care of by God. Therefore, everybody is valued and has value despite what they do or do not have. This was an eye opener for people at the time as they would not have understood life in this way.

There are some Christians, in some global settings that see verses like this as being proof that people should have everything that they want, because God says he will provide. However, others will argue that what God provides is not material things but rather spiritual things like freedom from sin.

Matthew 7:12 – Golden Rule

Many religious and non-religious worldviews have what they class as a 'Golden Rule'. Many of these rules follow a similar line to what Jesus states in Matthew 7:12.

Just before verse 12, Jesus talks about God giving good gifts to those who ask him. Again, there are some Christians who have taken this to mean that they can ask for a sports car and God will give them one. And that if they do not have wealth, it is because they haven't asked enough, or prayed enough; however, there are many who dispute this line of interpretation.

It is worth pointing out that Jesus only said things for a reason and therefore, in this instance, Jesus is directing his words at religious leaders who believed that they were better than everyone else. They felt that they could do, and say, what they wanted whilst keeping with the letter of the law. Their attitude suggested that because they didn't break the law, they were going to be OK.

Jesus argues that doing to others as you would have them do to you sums up the law and the prophets. What does he mean? He is referring to words written in the book of Leviticus where Moses is summing up the law (See Leviticus 19:9-18). It could be argued that people were misusing the law as a way of judging other people and saying, 'I'm better than you because...' and then looking down on people. Furthermore, people would argue, 'I am better because I didn't steal, kill or do something wrong' etc. However, Jesus subverts this to say that you should treat people how you want to be treated. It's not just about not doing bad things.

It is also interesting that Jesus creates a positive rule. "Do to others what you would have them do to you" rather than "don't do to others the things that you wouldn't like", which is the line the Old Testament takes. He makes the rule more active, which again is counter-cultural for the time.

Matthew 7:24-27 – Wise and Foolish Builders

These verses still form part of the Sermon on the Mount. The first word within these verses is 'therefore', showing that this is part of everything that has come before. Jesus continues with the analogy of "wise" and "foolish" people.

In this extension he looks at building houses. The two houses that the men build are almost identical in their external structure. One is not more ornate than the other. The materials that are

punishment that sin brings. Therefore, if God can forgive really big things, humans should forgive one another.

Jesus often uses the phrase, 'The Kingdom of Heaven is like...'. What he is trying to say, is not that there is a place called Heaven that will be like x or y, but rather that the Kingdom of Heaven is here on earth, now, and it is rooted in how people mirror God's actions, share love with one another and treat each other.

Matthew 19:13-15 – Jesus and the Little Children

Many of the conversations that Jesus had were about addressing misconceptions that many people had, about the law. Those conversations were also about challenging the religious leaders' understanding of the law.

In Jewish culture, children were a vital means of legacy and passing on inheritance. However, children were also thought of in terms of being seen and not heard. In a world that was very dangerous to children, some argue that people brought children to Jesus as they thought if he blessed them, it would protect them. In earlier chapters, Jesus talked about how important children are. Children are very trusting of their parents, and they need them for sustenance. Furthermore, children have great value in the Kingdom of God. Jesus wanted to make the parallel that people should be trusting of God and look to him for sustenance, because they have value too.

When the disciples became annoyed with the parents for bringing their children to Jesus, Jesus rebukes them. In this moment he is annoyed that the disciples have not taken on board what he said earlier about children being of great value in the Kingdom of God.

Matthew 21:7-11 - Palm Sunday

Palm Sunday is a vital part of the Christian calendar and the understanding of Easter. This is a multi-layered story that has much symbolism and a wealth of importance to Christians. It marks the end of Lent, a time of preparation for Easter.

Historically and culturally, Palm Sunday happens just before the festival of Passover. When Jesus and his disciples entered Jerusalem on what is now known as Palm Sunday, they entered to celebrate the Passover, an important Jewish festival. This is now at the end of his 3 years of ministry.

The disciples took a donkey for Jesus to enter the city on. Historically, how kings approached cities or other leaders, showed what their intentions would be. If kings entered or approached on horseback, then their intention was war. However, if they approached on the back of a donkey, then their intention was peace. As Jesus entered on a donkey, he is setting out that his intentions are for peace. In this instance we often refer to the peace being about the tensions between the Jews and the gentiles. In a world which was full of racial tension, this understanding of peace was important. Jesus was bringing everyone under God's umbrella.

The crowd wave palm branches as he enters. The waving of palm branches was part of the Jewish celebrations happening at the time. Just before this text, in verse 5, the Bible mentions that Jesus coming on a donkey was done to fulfil the prophecy set out in Zechariah 9:9. People at the time would have known what the prophecies had said and when they saw Jesus coming, they would have related what they saw to Zechariah's prophecy. The only suitable response would have been to wave branches and shout as their saviour entered the city.

For Christians, the Last Supper has become something that helps them remember the sacrifice that Jesus made. They remember that because he died, they have new life and no longer need to offer sacrifices to atone for their sins, as Jesus' death did this once and for all.

There is great diversity in how different Christians celebrate the Last Supper and what they call it. Some of this has to do with denomination and some has to do with tradition. We often hear words like "(Holy) Communion", "Eucharist", "The Last Supper" or "The Lord's Supper". All of these are referring to the same event – the different name is purely a matter of preference to a particular tradition or denomination.

The Gospel of Luke

Luke's gospel was most likely written between 60 and 80 AD. Luke was a well-educated man being a historian and a physician. The gospel is written as a letter to Theophilus, a friend of Luke's; although who Theophilus is, is not clear. Luke suggests that he has researched what he is writing carefully, speaking to people who were eyewitnesses of what Jesus did, as well as looking at other sources. It is understood that Luke uses Mark's gospel as a basis and source for his writing. Luke writes in a typical Roman style and is writing to a Roman audience. His focus is on looking at Jesus as the 'Son of Man' and the healing power of the Holy Spirit, which may tie in with his profession as a physician.

Luke 1+2 – The Birth of Jesus

Luke is the only gospel writer to give a detailed account of Jesus' birth. Like Matthew, he mentions aspects of the prophecies to show that Jesus' birth fulfils what had been said in the Old Testament prophecies. When reading Luke's account of the birth of Jesus there are many things that we may notice are different to the traditional nativity that may be performed each year in school. These are interesting things to look at and may help children to understanding the importance of Christmas to Christians, rather than just reading a story.

When looking at the birth of Jesus it is worth looking at some of the historical and cultural backgrounds, particularly when considering Mary's response to the angel to be the mother of Jesus.

According to Jewish custom at the time of Jesus' birth, women as young as 12 could be betrothed (engaged) to be married. The marriage itself may not take place for several months or possibly years. Therefore, it is entirely possible that Mary was anywhere between 13-16 years old when Jesus was born, although many historians put her around 15-16.

Under Jewish Law, for Mary to be pregnant and not married would have been a sin and punishable by placing her outside the city walls and stoning her to death. At very least she would have been excommunicated from her family. Therefore, for Mary to accept God's invitation to be the mother of Jesus would have come with a number of risks.

For many Christians, Mary's trust and faith in God and being willing to following his plans despite the possible repercussions, is something of an inspiration. Mary had faith that God would protect her and had a special plan for her. In the same way, many Christians see her life as an inspiration of committed living and want to follow her example. This example of faith, and her subsequent devotion to Jesus as a disciple, is a reason why Mary is so revered within Catholicism.

Luke 5:1-11 – Jesus' Friends

In this passage Jesus calls his first disciples. The Lake of Gennesaret is also known as the Sea of Galilee and is a freshwater lake in Israel to the north-east of Nazareth. The area of Galilee was a fishing region, and many people made a living through fishing in the waters there. Given that Galilee was a fishing region, it is perhaps unsurprising that Jesus' first disciples were fishermen. And Jesus' comments about being fishers of people are not lost in their metaphorical tone.

For Christians, this calling of the first disciples is significant. Jesus chose ordinary, hardworking people. People who had skills and had something to offer; however, these were not the most educated, eloquent and respected people. Just as the shepherds that came to see Jesus, fishermen were not the sort of people that you would expect to be the mouthpiece of a great leader. For many Christians, this means that they too can be used by God to do great things. They do not need to be rich or powerful.

It is worth considering who might be the modern-day equivalent of the fishermen. It may still be fishermen, factory workers or taxi drivers. It is important not to demean these roles in society, but rather ensure that children understand that Jesus was not looking for the sort of people that we may think are successful; he was looking for people who would follow him.

Luke 5:17-26 – Paralysed Man

Many of the stories surrounding Jesus' healing ministry, were not so much about healing people, but rather subverting what the Kingdom of God was really about. The impact of disabilities, illness, and other afflictions that people had, meant that they didn't just need healing, but also needed reintroducing to society. People like the paralysed man would have been an outcast. They were unable to work and so would have resorted to begging on the street. This in turn meant that they would have been ignored by society and there were not the same benefits available in those days as they might be today.

In healing the man, Jesus was making a statement about how people, particularly the Jewish leaders, cared for the whole of society. He was taking society to those who needed the love the most; not just because of their illness, but also because of how they were treated by others.

Within the text Jesus says, 'your sins are forgiven'. The Pharisees are upset because only God can forgive sins. Jesus was explaining to all, that he was God incarnate.

For many Christians, passages like this bring hope that they can be healed from their illnesses, although it is sometimes useful to think about, not so much the physical illness of being paralysed, but rather a spiritual understanding that people have been paralysed with sin through a lack of compassion etc. For many Christians, this is the healing that Jesus brings rather than a purely physical one.

Luke 6:37-38 – Judging Others

This passage is part of what is known as the Sermon on the Mount. This encompasses the Beatitudes as well as a number of additional passages. It is important to remember that Jesus is trying to turn people's understanding of the Kingdom of God upside down. Up until this point, many people believed that you were a good person if you followed the religious laws. However, many

Luke 22:47-53 – Betrayal

In this reading, we are in the Garden of Gethsemane and Judas enters the garden with the Sanhedrin. There isn't really anything cultural or historic with this encounter. Judas came with the Sanhedrin, as they were the ones that wanted Jesus dead. At this time, it was the Sanhedrin (religious leaders) that came to arrest Jesus as his crimes were against the religious law.

Judas betrays Jesus with a kiss, which matched the prophecy about him. Jesus' friends step in to protect him, but he stands them down. This may be for different reasons, mainly he didn't want any further trouble, but secondly everything needed to happen to fulfil the prophecy.

Luke 23:26-56 – Death

One of the things to note about Jesus' death, is that this mode of execution was not something that was created just for Jesus. Crucifixion was a normal Roman form of execution, which made a public spectacle of those who defied the Roman authorities.

It is also worth considering, age appropriately, that Jesus' death was fairly brutal. Although within Christian tradition, it seems quite easy to say, 'Jesus died on the cross', it is important to remember that was Jesus whipped and beaten multiple times. Furthermore, hanging on a cross would have caused of his lungs to collapse.

Jesus hung on the cross for many hours. When Jesus died, darkness descended over the land. This is representative of the fact that Jesus was the light of the world, and he has now gone. At the same time, the curtain is torn in two. But what does this refer to? Within the temple there were two key areas – The Holy Place and The Most Holy of Holies. These two areas were separated by a curtain. The priest performed his duties in the Holy Place. The Most Holy of Holies was filled with incense. This was the place that God entered. Once a year the High Priest entered the Holy of Holies to offer sacrifices to God for the forgiveness of sins. When Jesus died, the curtain was torn in two to symbolise that anyone could now enter the Holy of Holies where God dwelt.

For some Christians the death of Jesus is the most important part of the Easter story as it is through his death that all sins are forgiven. Christians believe that Jesus' death is a representation of the sacrificial lamb that was used at the first Passover. Christians believe that Jesus' death forgives everyone's sins in a similar way to how sacrificing a lamb at Passover forgave sins. The only difference is that Jesus's death makes it once and for all. Therefore, Christians believe that they do not need to keep making sacrifices.

Luke 23:32-35 – Jesus' attitude on the Cross

Two other men were crucified next to Jesus. These men were criminals, and so for them to be on the cross was justified.

Jesus prays for forgiveness. He is asking God to forgive the Roman soldiers and the chief priests for what they are doing to him. For Christians, Jesus' attitude on the cross is a reminder of how they should behave towards other people. Despite being spat at, jeered at, insulted etc, Jesus managed to remain calm and showed compassion to those around him.

Those in the crowd called out for Jesus to take himself down from the cross and save himself. Christians believe that Jesus was God, so it was completely within his power to save himself; however, he needed to die in order to save humanity.

Luke 24:1-12 – Empty Tomb and Resurrection

Because Jesus died during the Passover, it was unlawful for the disciples to perform the relevant burial rituals. Hence Jesus was placed in a tomb until after the Passover was complete. It was customary to embalm the body with spices prior to burial. After the Passover was over, the disciples went to the tomb to perform the rituals.

It is interesting that Mary Magdalen, Mary (Jesus' mother) and Joanna were the disciples that first saw the resurrected Jesus. In Mark's gospel a woman by the name of Salome, is also mentioned. During this time women did not have the same rights as men and were not seen as important, therefore using the testimony of women showed that Jesus' resurrection must be true. Just like at the birth of Jesus where shepherds being the least important in society, Jesus appears to women first – also considered one of the least in society.

For many Christians the resurrection of Jesus is the most important part of the Easter story. For Christians the resurrection represents the understanding that death is not the end. Jesus raising from the dead signifies that there is a hope in new life with God. Because of this Christians believe that they do not need to fear death

The Gospel of John

John's gospel was most likely written between 70 and 100 AD. It was written at a time when perhaps the identity of Jesus was disputed. Some argued that he was the Messiah, as prophesied, whilst others believed that this was against the Jewish scripture. John writes specifically to prove that Jesus was God incarnate and uses a lot of language that alludes to this point, making connections with Old Testament scripture. John's gospel is different from the other 3 and there are more stories in John's gospel that you do not find in the others. There has been some debate over who John was; however, the most common consensus is that the writer of John's Gospel was the disciple, John.

John 12:12-20 – Entry to Jerusalem

John's account of Palm Sunday is much shorter than in some of the other gospels. Remember John is trying to show that Jesus is God, hence his use of language around being glorified. Because of this, John dispenses of the background to the story of the Triumphant Entry and focuses purely on the fact that Jesus fulfils the prophecy from the Old Testament. John does not focus on the disciples getting the colt but rather the fulfilment of the prophecy. However, the symbolism behind the donkey etc remains the same. See explanation of Matthew 21:7-11 for more detailed information about the context of Palm Sunday and this reading.

John 13:34-35 – A New Commandment

This verse sits in the context of Jesus' final days with his disciples. They have already entered Jerusalem and have just celebrated the Passover. Jesus talks to his disciples about the fact that he is no longer going to be with them physically. Jesus leaves them with a new command: Love one another.

Often, we look at this as being kind to each other and treating each other well. And whilst there is an aspect of that in this, we need to look at the context in which Jesus is talking. Jesus has been talking about how he is about to show his love by sacrificing himself for the world. And in this moment, he challenges the disciples to do the same.

With a modern reading it may not be right to think about people laying down their lives for one another, but many Christians will use this to reflect on the concept of what do they sacrifice for the sake of others. This could be practically such as money, time etc. Or it may be something else. Putting others first is often the biggest sign of love.

In some cultures, this may mean that Christians donate money to charity etc and for others it is what drives them to be missionaries or live a life in a monastery, for example.

John 14:27 – Peace

This small verse sits in the context of Jesus talking to his disciples about his upcoming death. Naturally, his disciples are concerned, mainly because they haven't fully understood everything that is about to happen and why. Just before this verse, Jesus promises that the Holy Spirit will come – a prelude to Pentecost when the Holy Spirit did come.

Jesus promises the disciples peace. The peace Jesus was to give them was not the peace that people seek, e.g. end to war; everyone getting everything that they want, etc, but rather an understanding that God is always with them. This is more about a reassurance that they have a new life with God.

Many argue that when he promises peace, this is another way of referring to 'The Holy Spirit'. This is because the Holy Spirit is often referred to as the Spirit of Peace. However, for many Christians, God's peace is not a feeling or an emotion but rather it is a state of being that says, no matter how difficult things get, Christians have a life with God which no one can take away from them. This enables many Christians to live a life free from worry about the future because they know that in the end there is a place for them in heaven.

John 20:11-23 – Women and the Gardener

This is an important scripture in the context of Easter and everything that happens around it. Firstly, this takes place on the third day after Jesus's death. Jesus said that on the third day he will rise again. It is also interesting that John writes about Mary meeting Jesus in the Garden. In Jewish culture women were not always seen as being authoritative; however, John brings the role of women back into sharp focus with this story as Jesus appearing, first to Mary and then to the others.

We see in the story that Mary did not realise that she was talking to Jesus. Some say that her unbelief in what would happen was clouding her vision. Others suggest that Jesus was in his 'heavenly body' and therefore didn't look like he did when he was alive on earth. This is similar to how, in the Old Testament, God and angels appeared to people and they did not recognise who they were speaking to.