

Activities



In the months leading up to *Celebrating RE*, children and young people of all ages had the opportunity to enter a variety of competitions. These provided a focus for engaging in enriching, inspiring and thought provoking RE activities. Below are adaptations of some of the competition activities.

Angels

Inspired by a visit to the Angel of the North, this competition aims to explore religious ideas and beliefs about angels. Although mainly confined to the three Abrahamic faiths, there are also references to angels in Bahá'í, Zoroastrianism and early Sikhism.

1. *Either take an original photograph of a sculpture or monument of an angel or select a piece of religious text which conveys an aspect of angels you are interested in exploring*
2. *Using an art package and/or photo software, manipulate the selected image or religious text to bring out some characteristics of angelic ideas/beliefs and develop some thoughts or questions about messengers/ messages from God. A reflective piece of writing, either as part of the montage or separately, should express these ideas.*

Articles of faith

This activity provides the opportunity to explore and reflect on the impact and complex and multiple meanings of artefacts for individuals and the global community. This exploration brings many challenges as it requires students to demonstrate an understanding of symbolism within their own lives and those of others.

1. *Research the importance of religious artefacts, investigating their symbolism and how they are used by communities and individuals*
2. *From this investigation, select 5 artefacts which have a real impact on the lives of believers - both individuals and communities*
3. *Create a presentation (digital or otherwise) which explains the choice of artefacts and demonstrates their symbolism and impact*

The Buddha in the city

This activity gives pupils the opportunity to reflect on the 'Four sights' that the Buddha saw and four sights in the 21st century that would give rise to similar realisations.

Create an A4 poster or poem, *The Buddha in the City*, which illustrates your chosen four sights for the 21st century. The poster or poem should demonstrate:

- an understanding of the significance of the story of the 'Four sights' in the life of the Buddha
- an ability to draw telling 21st century parallels



The Buddha's fourth sight today

This activity provides an opportunity for students to reflect on the application of the story of Siddhartha and the Four Sights, and its relevance to contemporary life.

Having witnessed the experiences of ageing, sickness and death common to all living beings, Siddhartha encounters a wandering holy man, whose contentment in simplicity is an inspiring challenge to Siddhartha's princely and discontented way of life. Siddhartha is inspired to search for meaning and purpose in life and to change his life for the benefit of others.

1. Identify two people from your school or local community (women, men, young or old), who in some way challenge people's thinking in the same way as the wandering holy man did to Siddhartha.
2. Design an audio-visual resource to demonstrate how these people do something which expresses compassion and wisdom and represents a challenge to the way people normally think about things.

The resource should be thought-provoking, enabling others to engage with and explore:

- possible reasons why these two people have been selected
- what inspired these people to help others what motivates them to carry on their effect on others
- how their actions have changed them
- what qualities these people have that are truly inspirational

It should be:

- dynamic and use digital media effectively
- demonstrate how the people profiled influence or change situations through their lives
- capable of provoking questioning, dialogue and reflection in other students and help them to understand more deeply the original story of the Four Sights



Diversity of religious experience in my community

This activity provides opportunities to learn outside the classroom and investigate the diversity of religious expression in their community.

Team of students should create an exhibition to illustrate the subject, *The diversity of religious expression in my community*. The exhibition should consist of ten items chosen by the group following its research into the local faith community context. This could include items presented through a range of media such as photographs, art work, written pieces and film/audio materials such as stories and music related to the selected items.

The exhibition should include:

- a text description to go with each exhibit item noting its relevance to the exhibition
- an explanation about how the collection of items illustrates diversity in your community



Is it only a building?

This activity explores the roles of places of worship in the local community and their importance in people's lives. In addition to creativity, this activity provides an opportunity to research, analyse and evaluate what makes a place special and explore the sense of identity and belonging that places of worship foster in communities.

1. Carry out a survey amongst members of the school's community to explore the role of places of worship in the lives of individuals and communities.
2. Create a short presentation of the investigation, based on the results of the survey and using any material recorded during the investigation. The presentation could be in the form of e.g. a PowerPoint, Prezi, a three minute filmed news report, a radio broadcast or a range of mixed media.



Objects of importance

*This activity explores artefacts that are central to, or symbolise, key beliefs, teachings or practices in Judaism. (The CD *The Jewish Way of Life* distributed free to every school may offer some ideas when considering the most important artefacts.)*

Everyone possesses objects or artefacts which are important and precious. For Jewish people, these will include some which are used daily whilst others are reserved for special occasions. Imagine a Jewish family is moving house. They have a special container for their four most precious religious artefacts.

Which four objects will they put into the container?

- one artefact which is used daily
 - one artefact which is used weekly
 - one personal religious artefact
 - one artefact which is used at a special time or festival
1. Design a poster (digital or otherwise) which shows the four artefacts.
 2. Accompanying text should explain the importance of each artefact in terms of beliefs, teachings and practices.

The poster should demonstrate:

- an understanding of the beliefs, teachings and/or practices surrounding the artefact
- an understanding of the symbolism of each artefact
- an understanding of the inner meaning and importance of each artefact for living a Jewish life



Storytelling

Storytelling is universal and human beings are unique in having the skills and imagination to create and communicate stories. Oral storytelling is an ancient art form with common themes which occur worldwide. Stories can entertain, pass on old knowledge, evoke strong emotions, influence others, answer questions and explain mysteries. Within religious communities, stories can also be used to teach, pass on wisdom, reveal messages or truths and explore rules or codes for living.

Select one of the five concepts below to create, develop, perform and produce an audio recording of a story which shows an understanding of their chosen concept in a religious context:

- forgiveness
- gratitude
- loving kindness
- mercy
- truth

The performance should:

- engage the audience
- make good use of voice
- include use of rhythm and pace.

The story should:

- engage with the theme in a meaningful way
- show a clear understanding of the religious concept
- make the audience think.



Trails in Sacred Spaces

Learning outside the classroom (LOtC) activities create opportunities for pupils to:

- *explore what makes a space sacred or special*
- *explore identity, religion and culture*
- *reflect on sacred and/or special spaces in their own lives.*

Design an interactive RE trail for pupils of your age or year group to a sacred space of the school's choice.

Include:

- up to 5 activity stops on the trail that would help a visitor understand more about the chosen sacred space, explaining what visitors would do at each stop and why. Activities should include a balance between: (a) opportunities to develop knowledge and understanding and (b) invitations to reflect on what is seen and experienced. Activity stops at points of significance or special interest to help visitors understand more about beliefs, practices and/or ways of life of the people whose sacred space it is.
- sensory (smell, taste, touch, sight, sound) experiences where possible during the trail.

The trail could take the form of a PowerPoint or electronic leaflet with illustrations of each activity stop and questions/activities to develop knowledge and understanding and to provide opportunities for reflection. It could also be developed using a medium such as QR (Quick Response) codes.

Through its range of activities, questions and points for reflection and through the attractiveness of its presentation, the trail should:

- be engaging
- give the visitor an understanding of beliefs, practices and ways of life.
- give the visitor an understanding of identity, religion and culture