

Assessment

For a full account of our approach to assessment in the Big Ideas for RE project, please read [Chapter 5 of Book 2](#).

In brief: The purpose of assessment here is to find out how well pupils have learnt what they have been taught in following the Big Ideas for RE curriculum.

The model we recommend is based on the work of Lorin Anderson and David Krathwohl's (2000) revision of Bloom's Taxonomy of the Cognitive Domain, which is a sequence of learning knowledge and skills.

Six cognitive processes are identified, and below you will find examples of how to apply each of them in constructing questions and tasks to assess pupils' progress in their learning.

Each unit in the Big Ideas for RE programme contains assessment ideas based on this scheme. A key principle here is that *pupils of any age* might demonstrate ability in *each and all of these processes* and so should be given opportunities to practice all of their skills in relation to the knowledge being developed *at every stage*. In this way **deep learning** can take place, because pupils gain an understanding of a limited amount of content from several different angles.

The Six Cognitive Processes

1. [Remembering](#)
2. [Understanding](#)
3. [Applying](#)
4. [Analysing](#)
5. [Evaluating](#)
6. [Creating](#)

1. REMEMBERING

Anderson and Krathwohl's Taxonomy
1. Remembering: Recognizing or recalling knowledge from memory. Remembering is when memory is used to produce definitions, facts, or lists, or recite or retrieve material.

Remembering is chiefly directed to promoting retention of material, often for exam purposes. Little else is expected. 'Where teachers concentrate solely on rote learning, teaching and assessment focus on remembering facts or isolated fragments of knowledge, often in isolation from their contexts. There are two sides to remembering:

Recognising

- Retrieving information from long-term memory that matches presented information.

- *Sample objectives and assessments:* Objective - recognise the names of Jewish festivals. Assessment - tick from a list of festivals those that are Jewish.

Recalling

- Retrieving relevant knowledge from long-term memory when given a prompt to do so.
- *Sample objectives and assessments:* Objective - recall key people in Christianity today. Assessment - what is the title of the leader of the Roman Catholic Church?

VERBS RELATING TO 'REMEMBERING'

- acquire
- arrange
- choose
- define
- describe
- find
- identify
- know
- label
- list
- locate
- match
- memorize
- name
- order
- outline
- pick
- quote
- recall
- recite
- recognise
- record
- relate
- repeat
- reproduce
- tell.

SAMPLE QUESTION STEMS

- What happened after...?
- How many...?
- Who was it that...?
- Can you name the...?
- Describe what happened at...?
- Who spoke to...?
- Find the meaning of...?
- What is...?
- Which is true or false...?
- What happened after...?
- How many...?
- Who was it that...?
- Can you name the...?
- Describe what happened at...?
- Who spoke to...?
- Find the meaning of...?
- What is...?
- Tell in your own words
- Where?
- Who?

EXAMPLES OF ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTS

- Make a list of the main events...
- Make a timeline of events.
- Make a facts chart.
- Write a list of any pieces of information you can remember.
- List all the in the story/article/reading piece.
- Make a chart showing...

2. UNDERSTANDING

Anderson and Krathwohl's Taxonomy
2. Understanding: Constructing meaning from different types of functions be they written or graphic messages

activities like interpreting, exemplifying, classifying, summarizing, inferring, comparing, and explaining.

Students are said to understand when they are able to construct meaning from what they are taught/read/see/encounter etc.

Understanding involves building connections between new knowledge and prior knowledge i.e. the incoming knowledge is integrated with existing schemas and cognitive frameworks. Concepts are the building blocks for these schemas and frameworks; hence cognitive knowledge provides a basis for understanding.

The main cognitive processes involved are interpreting, exemplifying, classifying, summarizing, inferring, comparing, and explaining.

Interpreting

- Converting information from one form to another e.g. pictures to words, paraphrasing.
- *Sample objectives and assessments:* paraphrase or list summary points of key teachings; produce a labelled plan of a mosque, explaining the purpose of the key features. The key to assessing understanding is processing - pupils must present the information in a different format; the information included in the assessment task must be new e.g. if they learnt about the mosque through a plan/photographs the assessment must require e.g. textual or verbal explanations. Otherwise there is the danger that they will be repeating learned facts rather than demonstrating understanding.

Exemplifying

- Students give specific examples or instances of a general concept or principle e.g. they can give examples of religious festivals. Exemplifying involves 'identifying the defining features of a concept or principle and using these features to select or construct a specific instance' e.g. 'identify common characteristics of a naming ceremony and construct one that could be used in your community'.
- *Sample objectives and assessments:* the student is given a concept or principle and must select or produce a specific example or instance of it that was not encountered in the teaching. e.g. after learning about art in three religions, students select from a list of previously unseen samples art related to each religion. Or - pupils learning about moral issues are presented with an assortment of scenarios and asked to identify which are moral issues.

Classifying

- Recognising that something belongs to a particular category. Classifying is the reverse side of the coin to exemplifying. Exemplifying begins with the general concept and asks the pupil to give a specific instance. Classifying begins with the specific instance and requires pupils to locate it in a general concept or principle.
- *Sample objectives and assessments:* objective - to learn to categorise opinions on conservation and stewardship. Assessment - students are given a list of views, some Biblical teachings and some contemporary views and asked to identify which relate to conservation and which to stewardship. An easier example: At an end of unit test on the theme 'Beliefs and Questions', pupils are asked to classify arguments under the headings 'the origin and

meaning of life · our place in society and the natural world · the existence of God · the experience of suffering · life after death.

Summarising

- Students construct a representation of information e.g. the meaning of a poem/song; a theme of main points.
- *Sample objectives and assessments:* Objective - learn to write short summaries after listening to people talking about their beliefs. Assessment - after watching/listening to Greek Orthodox teenager teenagers talk about their beliefs and note the key points. (Both a learning tool and an assessment)

Comparing

- Students detect similarities and differences between two or more items. Comparing can contribute to reasoning by analogy. This is frequently used in RE.
- *Sample objectives and assessments:* when given new information students detect correspondences with more familiar knowledge. e.g. students are given details of a pilgrimage to Lourdes and asked to compare it to what they know about the Hajj and to their experience of school trips. From this they deduce what kind of event the trip to Lourdes is and in what ways it is similar to/different from the Hajj.
- Comparing is used in RE to help students clarify their thinking and avoid confusion (as is classifying).

Explaining

- This is probably the most mis-used term in relation to understanding in RE. Explain is often used where only 'recall' is required. Students construct and use a cause-and-effect model of a system. The model may be derived from a formal theory or be grounded in research or experience. It is particularly appropriate for history, e.g. explaining the causes of wars. There are relatively few instances where this can be used in RE - after studying three different denominations explain why there are differences between them. Explaining is also used with troubleshooting, redesigning and predicting.

VERBS RELATING TO 'UNDERSTANDING'

- compare
- differentiate
- distinguish
- explain
- express
- give an example
- illustrate
- infer
- interpret

- locate
- paraphrase
- predict
- represent
- restate
- review
- summarise
- translate.

SAMPLE QUESTION STEMS

- Can you write in your own words...?
- Can you write a brief outline...?
- What do you think could of happened next...?
- Who do you think...?
- What was the main idea...?
- Who was the key character...?
- Can you distinguish between...?
- What differences exist between...?
- Can you provide an example of what you mean...?
- Can you provide a definition for...?

EXAMPLES OF ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTS

- Cut out or draw pictures to show a particular event.
- Illustrate what you think the main idea was.
- Make a cartoon strip showing the sequence of events.
- Write and perform a play based on the story.
- Retell the story in your words.
- Paint a picture of some aspect you like.
- Write a summary report of an event.
- Prepare a flow chart to illustrate the sequence of events.

3. APPLYING

Anderson and Krathwohl's Taxonomy
3. Applying:

Carrying out or using a procedure through executing, or implementing. Applying related and refers to situations where learned material is used through products like models, presentations, interviews or simulations.

Applying

- Applying consists of two cognitive processes: *executing* when the student already knows the proper procedure to use for the task and *implementing* when the task is unfamiliar. Understanding conceptual knowledge is a prerequisite for being able to apply procedural knowledge.
- *Executing*: more usually used with maths etc. e.g. student recognises a problem as a quadratic equation and goes on to solve it.
- *Implementing*: most likely example in RE - inquiry. Students are given an inquiry to conduct - they have to identify the best way of conducting it.

VERBS RELATING TO 'APPLYING'

- apply
- demonstrate
- develop
- dramatise
- employ
- illustrate
- interpret
- organise
- relate
- translate
- use.

SAMPLE QUESTION STEMS

- Do you know another instance where...?
- Could this have happened in...?
- Can you group by characteristics such as...?
- What factors would you change if...?
- Can you apply the method used to some experience of your own...?
- What questions would you ask of...?
- From the information given, can you develop a set of instructions about...?
- Would this information be useful if you had a ...?

EXAMPLES OF ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTS

- Make a scrapbook about the areas of study.
- Take a collection of photographs to demonstrate a particular point.
- Make up a puzzle game using the ideas from the study area.
- Make a clay model of an item in the material.
- Write a textbook about... for others.

4. ANALYSING

Anderson and Krathwohl's Taxonomy
<p>4. Analysing:</p> <p>Breaking material or concepts into parts, determining how the parts relate or interrelate to one another or to an overall structure or purpose. Mental actions included in this function are differentiating, organizing, and attributing, as well as being able to distinguish between the components or parts. When one is analysing, he / she can illustrate this mental function by creating spreadsheets, surveys, charts, or diagrams, or graphic representations.</p>

Analysing

- Students break material into its constituent parts and determine how the parts are related to one another and to an overall structure. This is very important in RE, especially in relation to students coming to an overview of individual religions. Includes *differentiating*, *organising* and *attributing*.

Sample objectives and assessments include:

- Learning to determine the relevant or important pieces of the message (differentiating)
- The ways in which the pieces are organised (organising)
- Identifying the underlying purpose (attributing).
- Often used as an extension of understanding or as a prelude to evaluating or creating.

In social sciences/humanities teachers may wish for their students to develop the ability to:

- distinguish fact from fiction, myth etc.
- connect conclusions with supporting statements
- distinguish relevant from extraneous material (important preparation for evaluation)

- determine how ideas are related to one another
- ascertain unstated assumptions involved in what is said
- distinguish dominant from subordinate ideas or themes
- find evidence in support of the author's purposes.

Differentiating: students discriminate relevant from irrelevant or unimportant information. e.g. students read newspaper coverage of an important debate such as the ordination of women/importance of RE in the curriculum and highlight the most and least relevant points.

- *Sample objectives and assessments:* include distinguishing part of question whole in terms of relevance or importance - it involves structural organisation, e.g. determine the major points in text; identify the main steps. Assessment - students are given some unseen material and asked to identify which points are most important/relevant.

Organising: involves identifying elements and recognising how they fit together into a systematic and coherent structure. Usually occurs in conjunction with differentiating - student identifies relevant/important points and then determines the structure into which they fit.

- *Sample objectives and assessments:* include - when given a description of a situation or problem, students can identify systematic, coherent relationships among rival elements, e.g. learn to structure material into for and against an argument/explanation. Assessment - students write an outline which shows which facts in a passage on x support/do not support the conclusion that... A simple objective would be for pupils to analyse text in terms of four phenomena; worship, places of worship; artefacts used in worship; people involved in worship. Assessment - produce a mind map to illustrate key elements in worship.

Attributing: students ascertain the point of view, values or intention underlying communications/text. This involves more inference than interpreting.

- *Sample objectives and assessments:* include, e.g. determining the interests of Luke. Assessment - provide text and ask what author's purpose is. Or give a choice of four responses and ask which the author is most likely to support. Watch a film of the life of Jesus and discover the director's interpretation of the figure of Jesus.

VERBS RELATING TO ANALYSIS:

- analyse
- categorize
- classify
- compare
- contrast
- contrast
- deduce
- detect



- differentiate
- discover
- discriminate
- dissect
- distinguish
- examine
- experiment
- inquire
- inspect
- investigate
- probe
- scrutinize
- separate
- survey.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

- Which events could have happened...?
- How was this similar to...?
- What was the underlying theme of...?
- What do you see as other possible outcomes?
- Why did ... changes occur?
- Can you compare your ... with that presented in...?
- Can you explain what must have happened when...?
- How is ... similar to ...?
- What are some of the problems of...?
- Can you distinguish between...?
- What were some of the motives behind...?
- What was the turning point in the game?
- What was the problem with...?

POTENTIAL ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTS

- Design a questionnaire to gather information.
- Make a flow chart to show the critical stages.
- Construct a graph to illustrate selected information.
- Make a family tree showing relationships.

- Put on a play about the study area.
- Write a biography of the study person.
- Prepare a report about the area of study.
- Arrange a party. Make all the arrangements and record the steps needed.
- Review a work of art in terms of form, colour and texture.
- Review a film.

5. EVALUATING

Anderson and Krathwohl's Taxonomy

5. Evaluating:

Making judgments based on criteria and standards through checking and critiquing. Critiques, recommendations, and reports are some of the products that can be created to demonstrate the processes of evaluation. In the newer taxonomy evaluation comes before creating as it is often a necessary part of the precursory behaviour before creating something.

Evaluating = making judgements based on criteria.

- **Checking** - testing for internal inconsistencies or fallacies in an operation. e.g. students learn to detect inconsistencies in persuasive messages. e.g. look at the message of x on TV and point out flaws in message. Or ask whether a person's conclusion follows from the evidence.
- **Critiquing** - involves judging a produce based on externally imposed criteria or standards. Lies at the core of *critical thinking*. All about critiquing hypotheses.

VERBS RELATING TO EVALUATION:

- appraise
- argue
- assess
- choose
- compare
- conclude
- consider
- criticize
- decide

- deduce
- estimate
- evaluate
- infer
- judge
- rate
- select
- validate
- value

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

- Is there a better solution to...
- Judge the value of...
- Can you defend your position about...?
- Do you think ... is a good or a bad thing?
- How would you have handled...?
- What changes to ... would you recommend?
- Do you believe...?
- Are you a ... person?
- How would you feel if...?
- How effective are...?
- What do you think about...?

POTENTIAL ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTS

- Prepare a list of criteria to judge a ... show. Indicate priority and ratings.
- Conduct a debate about an issue of special interest.
- Make a booklet about 5 rules you see as important. Convince others.
- Form a panel to discuss views, e.g. "Learning at School".
- Write a letter to ... advising on changes needed at...
- Write a report.
- Prepare a case to present your view about...

6. CREATING

Anderson and Krathwohl's Taxonomy
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6. Creating:

Putting elements together to form a coherent or functional whole; reorganizing elements into a new pattern or structure through generating, planning, or producing. Creating requires users to put parts together in a new way or synthesize parts into something new and different a new form or product. This process is the most difficult mental function in the new taxonomy.

Creating - putting together elements to form a coherent or functional whole. As used here - involves the construction of an original product. Likely to draw on earlier cognitive processes - not free expression. All e.gs in this section are from universities - very high level.

Generating - or hypothesising. Involves representing the problem and arriving at alternatives or hypotheses that meet certain criteria. (p87)

Planning - developing a plan for solving the problem.

Producing - carrying out the plan.

VERBS RELATING TO CREATING:

- arrange
- assemble
- collect
- combine
- compose
- construct
- create
- derive
- design
- develop
- document
- formulate
- generalize
- invent
- modify
- organize
- originate
- plan
- predict

- prepare
- produce
- propose
- propose
- relate
- set up
- tell
- write

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

- Can you design a ... to ...?
- Why not compose a song about...?
- Can you see a possible solution to...?
- If you had access to all resources, how would you deal with...?
- Why don't you devise your own way
- to deal with...?
- What would happen if...?
- How many ways can you...?
- Can you create new and unusual uses for...?
- Can you write a new recipe for a tasty dish?
- Can you develop a proposal which would...

POTENTIAL ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTS

- Design a building for worship.
- Write about your feelings in relation to...
- Write a TV show, play, puppet show, role play, song or pantomime about...?
- Design a record, book, or magazine cover for...?
- Make up a new language code and write material using it.
- Sell an idea.
- Devise a way to...
- Compose a rhythm or put new words to a known melody.