

# PUTTING BIG IDEAS INTO PRACTICE IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION 2<sup>nd</sup> edition

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## INTRODUCTION

### WHAT THIS BOOK IS ABOUT

This book is a sequel to '*Big Ideas for Religious Education*'<sup>1</sup>. As the name suggests, it demonstrates how Big Ideas might be put into practice in providing a rationale and learning objectives for the selection and organisation of subject knowledge and for assessment. It is intended for anyone who designs syllabuses, schemes of learning and units of work in RE. The book takes account of the recommendations of the Commission for Religious Education and also of the feedback received after the publication of *Big Ideas for Religious Education*. The most frequent comment concerned the length of the Big Idea narratives. We have accordingly revised both the overall narrative for each Big Idea (below) and the age-group narratives (Appendix 1).

### REVISED BIG IDEA NARRATIVES

#### **Big Idea 1: Continuity, Change and Diversity**

Religions / worldviews involve interconnected patterns of beliefs, practices and values. They are also highly diverse and change in response to new situations and challenges. These patterns of diversity and change can be the cause of debate, tension and conflict or result in new, creative developments.

#### **Big Idea 2: Words and Beyond**

People often find it difficult to express their deepest beliefs, feelings, emotions and religious experiences using everyday language. Instead, they may use a variety of different approaches including figurative language and a range of literary genres. In addition, people sometimes use non-verbal forms of communication such as art, music, drama and dance that seek to explain or illustrate religious or non-religious ideas or experiences. There are different ways of interpreting both verbal and non-verbal forms of expression, often depending on a person's view of the origin or inspiration behind them. The use of some non-verbal forms of communication is highly controversial within some religious groups, particularly their use in worship or ritual.

#### **Big Idea 3: A Good Life**

Many people, whether religious or not, strive to live according to what they understand as a good life. Religious and non-religious communities often share an understanding as to the sort of characteristics and behaviours a good person will seek to achieve, as well as dealing with what is, or is not, acceptable moral behaviour. The ideal is usually presented in the lives and character of exemplary members. There are points of agreement and disagreement over the interpretation and application of moral principles both across and within different religions / worldviews.

#### **Big Idea 4: Making Sense of Life's Experiences**

Many people have deeply felt experiences, which they may refer to as being 'religious' or 'spiritual' or simply part of what it means to be human. These experiences can take place in both religious and non-religious contexts and may produce a heightened sense of awareness and mystery, or of identity, purpose and belonging. The experience is sometimes so powerful that it transforms people's lives. As a result, people may change their beliefs and allegiances and on rare occasions the experience of a single person has led to the formation of a new religion / worldview.

#### **Big Idea 5: Influence and Power**

Religious and non-religious communities interact with wider society and cultures. These communities affect societies by shaping their traditions, laws, political systems, festivals, values, rituals and arts. The patterns of influence vary significantly in different societies and at different points in time. Some societies are influenced predominantly by one religion / worldview, others by several or many. Religions / worldviews often appeal to a highly respected authority or vision, and this can have significant impacts on societies and cultures, whether positive or negative.

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<sup>1</sup> [tinyurl.com/bigideasforre](http://tinyurl.com/bigideasforre)

## **Big Idea 6: The Big Picture**

Religions / worldviews provide comprehensive accounts of how and why the world is as it is. These accounts are sometimes called 'grand narratives'. They seek to answer the big questions about the universe and the nature of humanity. These narratives are usually based on approaches to life, texts or traditions, which are taken to be authoritative. People interpret and understand these texts and traditions in different ways.

## **CHAPTER SUMMARIES**

Chapter 1 sets the context of this work within the current debate about subject knowledge, distinguishing between the traditional 'substantive' knowledge in RE about religions / worldviews and the less well developed 'disciplinary' knowledge, of which Big Ideas are an example. The chapter explains how disciplinary knowledge acts upon substantive knowledge, bringing it to life and raising it from the knowledge of facts to understanding.

Chapter 2 explains the basic principles involved in planning the RE curriculum on the foundation of Big Ideas. In particular it examines *progression*; how it has been misunderstood in the past and how it can be achieved through a Big Ideas based curriculum. The chapter goes on to explain other principles in the Big Ideas approach.

Chapter 3 examines the practical implications of government advice that pupils should learn less content in greater depth; making the case that breadth also has a place in the curriculum.

Chapter 4 explains the process of identifying the questions and processes required to understand the Big Ideas. This important chapter should be understood as a necessary precursor for the examples in Chapter 7.

Chapter 5, sets out proposals for a form of assessment, which reflects the curriculum, rather than abstractions expressed in levels. The model is that developed for the 'Learn, Teach, Lead RE' (LTLRE) project and is based on Lorin Anderson<sup>2</sup> and David Krathwohl's revision of Bloom's Taxonomy of the Cognitive Domain.

Chapter 6 identifies the questions and substantive knowledge that might be included at each age-group if pupils are to understand the Big Idea. The charts included for each Big Idea are resources from which teachers and others can draw in creating schemes of learning.

Chapter 7 includes a unit of work as an illustration of how to use the charts in chapter 6 and two examples of assessment, illustrating the principles in Chapter 5.

Appendix 1 sets out the revised Big Ideas in four age-groups.

Appendix 2 sets out the Big Ideas as targets for pupils in four age-groups.

Appendix 3 sets out the revised Big Idea age-group narratives and their parallels with the *National Entitlement* recommended by the Commission on Religious Education.

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<sup>2</sup> Anderson, L and Krathwohl, D etc. (2000). *A Taxonomy for Learning, Teaching, and Assessing: A Revision of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, Complete Edition*. London. Pearson.

## CHAPTER 1

### BIG IDEAS AND TYPES OF KNOWLEDGE

The debate over what knowledge to teach in RE is one that has plagued the subject for many years. In order to understand the contribution that Big Ideas make to the debate it is important to look at two different ways in which 'knowledge' can be understood.

#### Substantive knowledge

Substantive knowledge is also known as 'contextual' or 'factual' knowledge'. It is the 'content' or 'stuff' of a subject. In RE it is at one level the information about people, places, buildings, festivals, beliefs and so on that pupils study in RE. It can also be the artwork, music, symbols and gestures that pupils might study. That a Mosque is a place of worship for Muslims; that it has a mihrab, minbar, qibla wall, minaret and so on are examples of substantive knowledge. Even the knowledge of abstract ideas can be classed as 'factual knowledge' where pupils acquire them as pieces of information without necessarily demonstrating any depth of understanding.

It is impossible to include all the available factual knowledge in the RE curriculum for pupils aged 4-16. The factual knowledge included will always be the result of selection on some premise or other. This project offers a clear rationale for the selection of appropriate factual knowledge, so that pupils may grasp the Big Ideas for the subject. RE contains an enormous amount of substantive knowledge and the Big Ideas help to prioritise and sort this.

#### Disciplinary knowledge

Disciplinary knowledge is generally developed in higher education and is sometimes known as 'procedural' or 'theoretical' knowledge. There is no agreed definition of disciplinary knowledge. It has been described as 'the sum total of the tools, norms, methods and modus operandi of the way in which humans go about exploring a field of human knowledge that has its own set of conventions'<sup>3</sup>. It may also include the new knowledge and understanding generated by means of these disciplinary tools, such as theories that explain, for example, the origins, relationships and significance of substantive knowledge. The nature of disciplinary knowledge depends on the subject and the nature of its raw material. For example, the processes developed in science to test whether a liquid is acid or alkaline are very different from those deployed in establishing whether or not Scientology is a religion. In addition, fundamental to disciplinary knowledge is the pursuit of what is true, recognising that human beings are limited in their understanding and in their access to known evidence. Consequently, disciplinary knowledge changes over time as must those elements of the school curriculum that derive from it.

In the field of humanities, the Schools Council History Project (SCHP), founded in 1972, was one of the earliest systematic attempts to make disciplinary knowledge of history accessible to all pupils. The debates around the application of the structure and rules of university history to school history continue to this day. Disciplinary knowledge in history falls broadly into three categories, expressed as concepts:

1. Types of historical question and the corresponding types of account. These are questions about:
  - a. cause and consequence
  - b. change and continuity
  - c. similarity and difference
  - d. significance
2. Using evidence
3. Interpretations of the past.

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<sup>3</sup> Kueh, R. (2019) 'A Matter of Discipline?' On knowledge, curriculum and the disciplinary in RE' (Professional Reflection, REToday, September 2019).

History is unusual among subjects of the school curriculum in that its disciplinary knowledge is entirely made up of processes. This is because history does not draw (for its concepts) on several disciplines in the way that, for example RE, geography and science do. If we look at the Big Ideas for science<sup>4</sup>, we see that they are very different from the history concepts. The first nine are what we are calling 'product' based: they are new understandings of the sciences that were developed in higher education and have subsequently been included in the school curriculum. These are much closer than history to the Big Ideas we have developed for RE. The last four Big Ideas for science 'include big ideas about the processes of arriving at these theories, principles and models'.<sup>5</sup> In this publication and its predecessor, we have limited ourselves to Big Ideas that enable selection of content, and have not included Big Ideas relating to methods. We took this decision because we believed that questions of methodology distracted from our main concern. Also, we plan to leave methodological questions open for further development.

Disciplinary knowledge applied to substantive knowledge brings it to life, raising it from 'facts' to 'understanding'. For example, pupils aged 7-11 are often made aware that there are several different churches in their neighbourhood. When they apply to this knowledge the understanding of diversity within religions / worldviews (BI 1), appropriate to their age group, their knowledge will become enriched by the understanding that *'In each religion / worldview there are people who believe different things and practise in different ways. There is a variety of reasons why some aspects have changed over time and why some have stayed the same'*.

What then, is the disciplinary knowledge for RE? Since such knowledge is developed in the university disciplines, our next question must be 'with what university discipline(s) is RE most closely related?'

### **Religious Education - Big Ideas and Disciplinary Knowledge**

Big Ideas for RE are a product of disciplinary thinking and reflect both the processes of study and some of the key theories to emerge from the disciplines with which RE is most closely associated: religious studies, theology, philosophy, and others drawn from humanities, social sciences and the arts. Just as emerging theories change over time, so will the Big Ideas.

Like disciplinary knowledge, Big Ideas do not emerge directly from within religions / worldviews but from the *study* of religions / worldviews by communities of experts, which have provided the interpretations, connections and associations that bring factual knowledge to life.

They meet the requirements for disciplinary knowledge in four specific ways:

1. They reflect the university disciplines that contribute to contemporary RE, principally religious studies and theology, which themselves draw upon other disciplines such as history, philosophy and ethics, sociology, anthropology, psychology, textual studies / literary criticism, creative arts and media studies. From its inception as a discipline distinct from theology, religious studies has been heavily influenced by phenomenology and ethnography, and both religious studies and theology have been more recently influenced by feminist, queer and post-colonial theory.
2. Applied as lenses, Big Ideas clarify substantive knowledge and help the pupil to make sense of it.
3. Big Ideas transform substantive knowledge, by interpreting it and creating connections.
4. Big Ideas prompt questions in the context of substantive knowledge. This makes them very useful as a basis of curriculum planning and assessment.

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<sup>4</sup> Harlen, W. (2010). *Principles and Big Ideas of Science Education*. Hatfield. ASE.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. p.26.

## Religious Education - Big Ideas and Substantive Knowledge

Disciplinary knowledge has developed over decades, or even centuries, among people who study religions / worldviews in universities. As with the national curriculum, Parliament has prescribed the boundaries for RE in community schools and has identified the agencies that turn legislation into agreed syllabuses and syllabuses for faith schools or academies. The law requires that an agreed syllabus (and now also syllabuses for academies without a religious character) must 'reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are, in the main, Christian while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain'<sup>6</sup>. This leaves enormous scope for interpretations. In voluntary aided schools RE must be taught in accordance with the trust deed.

Schools and syllabus makers have taken advantage of this imprecise wording and consequently several interpretations exist; reflected for example in the degree of emphasis given to different religions or in the number of religions included for each age-group. All that can be said with a degree of confidence is that syllabuses and schemes of work should include teaching about Christianity and the 'other principal religions represented in Great Britain'. Since the 1980s in England these have usually been understood as Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism, although there is no reason why others should not be included. There has been debate about the legal position regarding the inclusion of non-religious worldviews, but many syllabuses have included Humanism.

More recently (September 2018) the final report of the Commission on Religious Education in England has recommended that:

'Programmes of study must reflect the complex, diverse and plural nature of worldviews. They may draw from a range of religious, philosophical, spiritual and other approaches to life including different traditions within Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism, non-religious worldviews and concepts including Humanism, secularism, atheism and agnosticism, and other relevant worldviews within and beyond the traditions listed above, including worldviews of local significance where appropriate'. Further guidance is given in Appendix 2 of the report on deciding which worldviews to include (p.76).

This is the approach taken by the Big Ideas project.

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<sup>6</sup> 375 (3) of the Education Act 1996 and paragraph (5) of Schedule 19 to the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

## CHAPTER 2

### USING BIG IDEAS TO PLAN THE RE CURRICULUM: SOME BASIC PRINCIPLES

Any RE curriculum based on Big Ideas should, if it is to be fully effective, incorporate the following principles.

#### **Progression**

Teachers and other professionals have struggled to secure progression in pupils' learning in RE. There are several reasons for this, but one contributor is the lack of any obvious sequencing of substantive knowledge. In subjects such as Maths and science it is often (but not universally) argued that pupils need to learn some basic knowledge and processes in the primary phase on which to build more complex knowledge and understanding later on. In the case of RE and other humanities subjects most substantive knowledge can be taught to any age group. Hence it is not possible to establish progression through substantive knowledge alone.

Although this principle may be widely understood, it is not always applied and one of the most common problems encountered by Ofsted when it inspected RE was confusion between 'progress' and 'change', or 'harder' and 'different'. In particular it was too often assumed that if pupils aged 11-14 began to study religions / worldviews that they had not previously encountered, such as Sikhism or Buddhism, they were automatically 'making progress'. In reality, although they might be learning new factual material, they were not necessarily learning at a greater depth or greater difficulty than the work they had already done in primary school on different religions / worldviews. This was one reason why 11-14 year-olds sometimes found RE 'easy' or 'boring'.

The age-group narratives in the Big Ideas project are planned to provide answers to the question, 'How might pupils in this age group demonstrate that they have grasped the overarching Big Idea?'. Sometimes the answer lies in building on a previous idea with an increase in difficulty, but often the narrative for a specific age-group draws on different ideas from those encountered previously. So, for example, (p.55) the focus of BI 1 (Continuity, Change and Diversity) is that pupils should understand that religions / worldviews display evidence of both continuity and diversity. For pupils aged 5-7 we have suggested that as first steps on the road to understanding this Big Idea, pupils should begin to identify things, times and places that people regard as 'precious', 'holy' or 'sacred' and what is distinctive about them. For pupils aged 7-11, rather than continue the idea of 'precious', 'holy' or 'sacred', pupils move on from identifying individual items to identifying some of the key characteristics of a religion / worldview, explaining how they interact, and expecting pupils to demonstrate their understanding of diversity.

In *Big Ideas for Religious Education* the following principles were proposed as a basis of progression in RE<sup>7</sup>. This section is so important that it is worth repeating here in full:

In order to make progress in RE, pupils add to their understanding as they extend their use of subject-specific vocabulary and encounter the same concepts in the contexts of different religions / worldviews. In particular, they learn at greater depth, which is reflected in:

**1. Increasing the level of detail**

For example, while 5-7 year-olds approach expression at word level, 7-11 year-olds consider how feelings and beliefs are expressed in books and other texts (BI 2).

**2. Moving from local to global contexts**

For example, BI 1 begins to develop the idea of religion with 5-7 year-olds through concrete 'holy things' that are found locally or in pupils' families. It is also proposed that with this age group teachers draw on religions / worldviews familiar to pupils, to be found in the area or historically important. 4-5 year-olds may never have encountered religion previously. It is important that teachers tune into and develop any language that pupils may already use.

**3. Making increasing links between smaller ideas**

For example, 7-11 year-olds make links between different elements of a religion (BI 1).

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<sup>7</sup> op. cit. p.16.



#### **4. Including exceptions and contrasts**

For example, 14-16 year-olds consider contrasting views of the nature of spirituality (BI 4).

#### **5. Moving from simple to complex and controversial ideas**

An important part of this process is the practice, recommended on p.46, of keeping records of pupils' work and passing it on to their next teacher(s) and schools. This will help pupils build on earlier knowledge. It is also important to keep records of their responses to transferable questions so that pupils can reconsider them as they get older. Digital records can be created quickly and passed on to other schools.

#### **6. Understanding diversity in increasingly complex settings**

For example, 11-14 year-olds consider how diversity within religions / worldviews may be related to historical or cultural influences or disagreements over beliefs, (BIs 1&6).

#### **7. Recognising and handling an increasingly wide range of interpretations**

For example, 14-16 year-olds consider how the grand narratives of every religion / worldview are interpreted differently.

### **People as well as 'isms'**

The Big Ideas distinguish between the study of people as well as 'isms'; for example, Jewish people as well as Judaism; Christians as well as Christianity. The Commission on RE made the comparison rather more elegantly between an individual's 'view of the world' or 'philosophy of (or approach to) life' and the term 'institutional worldview' to describe organised worldviews shared among particular groups and sometimes embedded in institutions<sup>8</sup>. The two are connected because individuals' ways of understanding the world are likely to draw on one, or many, institutional worldviews. These two important dimensions of worldviews are reflected in each of the Big Ideas, although the balance is different in each. BI 5 in particular is about institutional worldviews because they and their agents, rather than individuals acting alone, generally have the power to intervene in and change national and world affairs. However, at community level it is as likely to be individuals or local groups who are influential while the influences of worldviews on culture are altogether less overt. There is often tension between individuals and the institution(s) from which they draw and this is reflected in most of the Big Ideas.

### **RE Live**

The initial discussion of what the Big Ideas for RE should be began with a discussion about the ideas and questions relating to religion that were most likely to be encountered by people living in the 21st century. The Big Ideas project has continued to emphasise the importance of reflecting contemporary issues in the RE curriculum. *Big Ideas for Religious Education* (p.33) recommended 'RE Live', an approach to RE through contemporary events. The enquiry into 'religious leaders in our community' emphasises the value of drawing the starting point of RE units of work away from a focus on the 'orthodox' and generally 'institutional' textbook definitions of religions and towards the lived experience of the many. For example, pupils might begin to learn about Sunni and Shi'a by carrying out an enquiry into the situation in Iraq. This is not to suggest that pupils should not learn about institutional worldviews, but that syllabus writers might search for new contexts and points of entry, which show religions / worldviews to be live issues in the lives of real people. This is where the Big Ideas offer new possibilities. Because they are so clearly anchored in the study of religions / worldviews, when applied as *lenses* to any area of content, the questions they trigger will be distinctively RE questions. It should therefore be possible to be more adventurous with the focus of learning. Teachers searching for contemporary case studies will be able to use the several websites that give weekly summaries of religious news<sup>9</sup>. The following examples all appeared in the news in 2018:

[hnbcnews.com/better/pop-culture/he-s-jewish-i-m-not-hanukkah-speaks-both-us-nca944946](https://www.hnbcnews.com/better/pop-culture/he-s-jewish-i-m-not-hanukkah-speaks-both-us-nca944946)

<sup>8</sup> *Religion and Worldviews: The Way Forward*. p.4.

<sup>9</sup> e.g. [theguardian.com/world/religion](https://www.theguardian.com/world/religion); [worldreligionnews.com/](https://www.worldreligionnews.com/); [bbc.co.uk/news/topics/cjnwl8q4ny3t/religion](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/topics/cjnwl8q4ny3t/religion); [independent.co.uk/topic/Religion](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/Religion); [telegraph.co.uk/religion/](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/religion/); [nytimes.com/topic/subject/religion-and-belief](https://www.nytimes.com/topic/subject/religion-and-belief); [religionnews.com/tag/religion-in-2018/](https://www.religionnews.com/tag/religion-in-2018/); [religionnews.com/category/news/](https://www.religionnews.com/category/news/)

[bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-india-46499737?intlink\\_from\\_url=https://.bbc.co](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-india-46499737?intlink_from_url=https://.bbc.co)  
[https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-45968315?intlink\\_from\\_url=https://www.bbc.co](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-45968315?intlink_from_url=https://www.bbc.co)  
[https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-46336355?intlink\\_from\\_url=https://www.bbc.co.uk/news](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-46336355?intlink_from_url=https://www.bbc.co.uk/news)  
[independent.co.uk/news/business/comment/veganism-league-against-cruel-sports-employment-tribunal-employee-rights-discrimination-protected-a8664681.html](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/business/comment/veganism-league-against-cruel-sports-employment-tribunal-employee-rights-discrimination-protected-a8664681.html)  
[independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/us-politics/pence-rabbi-christian-jesus-pittsburgh-shooting-synagogue-trump-campaign-rally-a8608876.html](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/us-politics/pence-rabbi-christian-jesus-pittsburgh-shooting-synagogue-trump-campaign-rally-a8608876.html)  
[independent.co.uk/topic/Halloween](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/Halloween)  
[theguardian.com/world/2018/dec/15/ukrainian-priests-rile-moscow-with-moves-to-set-up-independent-orthodox-church](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/dec/15/ukrainian-priests-rile-moscow-with-moves-to-set-up-independent-orthodox-church)  
[nbcnews.com/news/world/ukraine-moves-create-its-own-orthodox-church-out-russia-s-n947451](https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/ukraine-moves-create-its-own-orthodox-church-out-russia-s-n947451)  
[theguardian.com/news/2018/aug/27/religion-why-is-faith-growing-and-what-happens-next](https://www.theguardian.com/news/2018/aug/27/religion-why-is-faith-growing-and-what-happens-next)

When using this type of material teachers will need to adapt the text to the age and ability of their pupils.

### **Religion and Worldviews**

Some of the most prevalent ideas and questions relating to religion that are likely to be encountered by people living in the 21st century concern the very truths of religions / worldviews themselves. Any study of religion that claims to belong to the 21st century must address these challenges and must reflect the movement of people in the West away from institutional religions / worldviews to personal interpretations on the 'fringe' of religions / worldviews, new religions, spiritual movements and a range of agnostic and atheist views, often drawing on elements of one or several of these in developing their individual worldview.

### **Quick enquiries**

These are important in the context of prioritising content and the 'depth and breadth' debate. Pupils too often spend inordinate amounts of time in RE finding out quite basic information that can be summarised very quickly. Some of this information provides the breadth required for understanding key issues in depth. For example, at age 7, pupils could complete a simple grid showing, for example, the name of the place of worship / community centre; title of community leader; titles of national leaders; name of most important person/people; name of holy book; name of two important festivals in relation to the religions / worldviews they will study up to age 11. The resulting diagram should be kept on display for reference. If teachers believe that pupils should know these things, they should not be afraid to set a simple test of this 'general knowledge'. Another 'quick enquiry' suggested for 11–12-year-olds involves working with maths and IT staff to plan a data processing and interpretation activity using the latest census data. This activity will provide them with important background information about the percentage of the UK and local populations who identify themselves in relation to specific religious or non-religious groups (see p.49).

### **Big Ideas overlap**

The Big Ideas should not be seen as completely separate entities. Although each has its own distinctive focus it also has natural connections with some of the others. When teachers and others design units of learning around one of the Big Ideas, these links will become apparent and should be exploited. For example, there are links between BI 1 [*Continuity, Change and Diversity*] with BI 5 [*Influence and Power*]; BI 2 [*Words and Beyond*] with BI 4 [*Making Sense of Life's Experiences*] and 6 [*The Big Picture*]; BI 4 with BI 6. For this reason, we have suggested that in each unit of learning there might be a main and subsidiary focus, enabling these connections to be drawn out.

## **Cross curricular planning**

Big Ideas invite cross-curricular planning. For example, the 7-11 age-related narrative for BI 2 has been written specifically to draw attention to the parallels with literacy, for which RE provides many suitable texts. Also, for most age-groups there are opportunities to plan and teach RE and history in parallel. BIs 3 and 6 in particular are likely to find common ground with science.

## **Transferable questions**

Transferable questions are generalisations of topical questions that have long-term relevance and create connections with other units<sup>10</sup>. They are an important part of each pupils' personal search for meaning in the context of the study of religion and worldviews. Examples of these are identified in chapter 6 for each Big Idea, although it is likely that pupils will raise transferable questions of their own. A transferable question will often be one that is not directly related to the matter in hand at the time of asking, although that is what prompted it. It is typically the sort of question that receives the response, 'that's a very good question - I'll come back to it later'. It may be that the time of asking is actually an excellent point at which to raise the question. If not, create a digital page headed 'Name of Big Idea' and 'Transferable' or 'Big' Questions'. These questions can be displayed at the end of the unit or at another suitable point. Once pupils are accustomed to this technique they will know that their questions are not being sidelined (see BI 3 for 7-11 year olds).

## **IT**

The curriculum proposals in this book assume a good working knowledge of IT on the part of teachers as well as pupils. For example, on several occasions it is suggested that pupils' displays and summaries of learning are kept digitally for later use, including by teachers of later year groups and in different schools.

## **The Internet**

The learning proposed here is heavily reliant on the internet for research. It is expected that schools teach good practice in internet use and that teachers direct pupils to specific sites in order to avoid time-wasting 'surfing'. Teachers should also have strategies to prevent pupils copying from the internet.

## **The Big Idea focus**

The status of RE and the time given to the subject vary widely between schools. Where time for the subject does not allow teachers to teach the whole programme, the following two principles should be observed:

1. It is more important during each unit of learning to draw on a little of the material in relation to each Big Idea than to focus on a few Big Ideas and ignore others.
2. The priority is that pupils learn and understand the essence of the Big Idea (e.g. that religions / worldviews are diverse). Where time does not allow for all aspects of the Big Idea to be taught, teachers should choose from the examples of knowledge and activities those which, in their judgement, will best enable their pupils to achieve this learning. This principle also applies to planning for pupils with learning difficulties.

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<sup>10</sup> op. cit. p.26.

## CHAPTER 3

### BREADTH AND DEPTH IN THE RE CURRICULUM

The recommendation of the Commission on Religious Education<sup>11</sup> reflects the changes in thinking about subject content that have come about over the last thirty years:

'Programmes of study must reflect the complex, diverse and plural nature of worldviews. They may draw from a range of religious, philosophical, spiritual and other approaches to life including different traditions within Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism, non-religious worldviews and concepts including Humanism, secularism, atheism and agnosticism, and other relevant worldviews within and beyond the traditions listed above, including worldviews of local significance where appropriate'.

One of the purposes of this document is to demonstrate how a curriculum based on the Big Ideas can be adapted to take account, not only of the overall national and international significance of specific religions / worldviews, but also of the religious and cultural demographics of the area that it will serve. In addition, at school level, individual teacher expertise and experience may be taken into account.

#### **Breadth and depth: a question of balance**

The curriculum as a whole and every subject within it is involved in an age-old tug-of-war between breadth and depth. Both are important and the key challenge is to achieve an appropriate balance between the amount of content covered and the depth in which pupils explore what they are learning.

'Breadth' is generally a less precise term than depth, in that it appears in different contexts. It is used widely at present, for example by Ofsted, to refer to breadth in the whole curriculum, including individual subjects. In this context breadth is the antithesis of teaching pupils to focus too much on deep learning of a few concepts in order to gain maximum marks on high tariff examination questions. This argument for breadth in the context of whole curriculum planning is used in urging schools to give time to culturally rich subjects that may not be examined. 'Breadth' is used in other contexts that pose fewer challenges. Pupils should have a 'breadth' of experiences and a 'breadth' of resources, which complement rather than challenge the enquiry approaches to deep learning that are generally favoured.

'Depth' is a qualitative concept, used here in contrast to the 'superficial' knowledge, which so often characterises pupils' learning in RE. The Big Ideas project took as its starting point the fact that it is neither practical nor necessary for pupils to achieve deeper levels of learning in relation to all the knowledge they acquire. Big Ideas have been identified, which give pupils insight into disciplinary thinking; that is the kinds of questions asked by experts in the related disciplines and the ways in which they might go about finding answers.

**In the Big Ideas approach *breadth* is not so much about covering as many religions / worldviews as possible as ensuring that pupils have the opportunity to broaden their understanding of religion and worldviews over time.**

**In the Big Ideas approach *depth* is not so much about restricting the number of religions / worldviews covered in detail as ensuring that pupils have the opportunity to deepen their understanding of each Big Idea in the context of an appropriately wide range of religions / worldviews.**

For example, in the case of 5-7 year-olds, BI 1 (Continuity, Change and Diversity) introduces pupils to three basic ideas: (a) that there are phenomena around them that belong to particular religions; (b) that these phenomena are different for each religion; and (c) that within a religion people believe and practise different things. These modest gains may seem far from the overall narrative for BI 1, but for this age group these are some of the foundations of later learning and they need to be learnt in the context of specific religions in order that by the age of 7 pupils know that, for example, church, Christmas and Easter are features of Christianity while synagogue,

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<sup>11</sup> op. cit. p.12

Pesach and rabbi are features of Judaism. Similarly, BIs 3 (A Good Life) and 6 (The Big Picture) introduce this age group to the idea that every religion / worldview has moral teachings and a central narrative. These teachings are different for each religion / worldview and are reflected differently by groups within them and hence, to avoid confusion, are best taught in relation to specific traditions. It follows that if these BIs are to be the focus of learning in *depth*, there is a limit to the number of religions / worldviews that can be included in each unit; probably two at most.

Other Big Ideas have a different focus. BIs 2 (Words and Beyond) and 4 (Making Sense of Life's Experiences) are essentially about people; how they express their beliefs, feelings and experiences. These are common to people of all faiths and none, although how they are presented and interpreted varies between people of different religions / worldviews. What we want pupils to know and understand in *depth* in these cases is human experience and expression rather than the specifics of different religions. These BIs can of course be taught in relation to the same two religions as BIs 1 and 6, but they also offer opportunities for pupils to gain insights into a wider range of religions / worldviews.

BIs 3 and 5 are different again in focus, being more about 'religion' than individual religions (at this age). The focus of learning in *depth* here are the points that religions (a) teach morality and (b) inter-relate with communities. Because England, in this case, is the location of pupils' immediate experience, it is important that Christianity, in particular the Anglican Church, is included in learning related to BI 5, because of its particular cultural and political influence. But there is also scope for including material relating to other Christian traditions or other religions, particularly if they are familiar to groups of children in the school.

**Those responsible for drawing up schemes of learning should ensure that the choices they make about which religions / worldviews are taught conform with current legislation. Further guidance on selecting religions / worldviews may be found in the CoRE report pp.73-75.**

### **Balancing breadth and depth in the selection of substantive knowledge**

'Broad' subject knowledge is the antithesis of 'narrow'. The question of what 'narrow' knowledge might look like in an RE context is a hotly debated question. Sometimes the debate centres on the number of religions pupils encounter overall and for each age-group. Some argue that a curriculum that includes just one religion can only be narrow, while others claim that if this one religion is studied from a wide range of perspectives, then pupils' experience can be broad. Others argue that in a broad curriculum a worldview should be studied from a wide range of perspectives. RE curricula that dwell on ethical issues, textual studies or worldviews from a single perspective taking little if any notice of inner diversity are generally viewed as narrow. The curriculum is wider than knowledge and pupils who are exposed to little variety in the way they are encouraged to learn are also subject to a 'narrow' experience.

With careful planning breadth and depth can be complementary. In the case of the Big Ideas, although each one represents a focus for deep learning, taken as a group the six together offer a broader range of insights into religion and worldviews than many current RE syllabuses. Deep learning often involves making connections with other ideas and in this sense it contributes to a breadth of learning.

Another dimension of breadth in the RE curriculum is the contrast between institutional and personal worldviews, a contrast that was well made by the RE Commissioners:

*We use the term 'institutional worldview' to describe organised worldviews shared among particular groups and sometimes embedded in institutions. These include what we describe as religions as well as non-religious worldviews such as Humanism, Secularism or Atheism<sup>12</sup>.*

Traditionally, RE syllabuses focus on institutional religions in the form of six 'major world faiths'. However, the decline in adherence to institutional religions in the West over the last half century

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<sup>12</sup> *ibid.* p.4

has accelerated in recent years. Today's pupils live in an increasingly diverse world in which adherence to a worldview takes many forms from full commitment to the institution to a recognition of a worldview's cultural legacy. Research indicates that it is institutional religion that many people in the West are rejecting, and that people who call themselves 'nones' (i.e. 'no religion') often have personal beliefs that might be regarded as 'religious' or 'spiritual'.

Institutional worldviews may be contrasted with 'personal worldviews'. The RE Commissioners used the term

*'personal worldview' for an individual's own way of understanding and living in the world, which may or may not draw from one, or many, institutional worldviews<sup>13</sup>...Everyone has a worldview; their way of seeing, making sense of and giving coherence and meaning to the world and to their own experience and behaviour. An individual's worldview may be more or less systematic and more or less consciously held. It may or may not refer to institutional or communal religious or non-religious perspectives<sup>14</sup>.*

This balance between institutional and personal religion / worldview is reflected in each of the Big Ideas and in the set overall. BI 5 in particular dwells on institutions because it is they, rather than individuals, that hold power and influence cultures. BI 1 and BI 6, and less so BI 3, also take account of institutional worldviews while BIs 2 and 4 in particular focus more on personal worldviews.

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<sup>13</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> *ibid.* p.26.

## CHAPTER 4

### IDENTIFYING QUESTIONS AND SUBSTANTIVE KNOWLEDGE IN RELATION TO THE BIG IDEAS

#### Topic-related and transferable questions

There is a long-standing practice in England of using *key questions* to frame programmes of study, units of work and lessons. Planning based on Big Ideas follows this practice in using two different types of question. The first type is the *topic-related question* which, as the name suggests, arises from the topic being studied at the time. Topic-related questions are familiar to most RE teachers in England. Less familiar is the practice of identifying what Wiggins and McTighe<sup>15</sup> call *essential questions*, which are big, universal questions drawn from topic-related questions.

This publication and its predecessor<sup>16</sup> use the term 'transferable' instead of 'essential' as a reminder that a key feature of these questions is transferability from year to year, between topics, between subjects and even between life within and beyond school. Put simply, the Big Idea provides the answer(s) to the transferable question(s). In order to find the answer to the questions, pupils explore the key concepts, themes, theories, issues and problems located in the content. Transferable questions are different from ordinary questions in the same way that Big Ideas are different from ordinary ideas in that they:

- cause genuine and relevant enquiry into the big ideas and core content
- provoke deep thinking, discussion, enquiry, *new understanding* and *new questions*
- require pupils to weigh evidence, support their ideas, consider alternatives and justify their answers
- encourage continuous *rethinking of prior learning* and personal experiences
- create opportunities for *transfer* to other situations and subjects
- spark meaningful *connections with prior learning* and personal experiences
- naturally recur, creating opportunities for *transfer* to other situations and subjects.<sup>17</sup>

The italicised words show how central is the importance of transfer, rethinking and revisiting. Transferable questions are in many ways the keys to that most elusive of qualities in the RE curriculum; continuity.

The following examples show how transferable questions can emerge as generalisations of topic-related questions.

Topic-related	Transferable
What do ceremonial masks reveal about the Inca culture?	In what way does art reflect as well as shape culture?
Why did the Roman Empire fall? Why did the British Empire come to an end?	What are the common factors in the rise and fall of colonial powers?
How does Hemingway use language to establish mood?	How do authors establish mood?
What does the book of Genesis say about the creation of the world?	Why does anything exist?
What did the Buddha teach about suffering?	Why do people suffer?
What does Islam teach about life after death?	Is there life after death?

<sup>15</sup> Wiggins G.P. & J. McTighe (2005). *Understanding by Design*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Alexandria, VA. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

<sup>16</sup> Wintersgill, B. (2017). *Big Ideas for Religious Education*. Exeter. Exeter University Press.

<sup>17</sup> *ibid.* p.110.

Each of these transferable questions is a generalisation of one or more topic-related question, created to have wider application. They may be applied to, or transferred, across the same subject and a wide range of other subjects. The important point is that every time one of these 'transferable' questions is asked, a pupil's understanding of the possible answers can deepen and extend.

An important difference between topic-related and transferable questions is that there will be at least one topic-related question for every lesson, while there may only be one transferable question for every unit. Few pupils remember all the detail of every lesson, or every answer to every topic-related question but if teachers get their transferable questions right and spot others when they are asked by pupils, then pupils are likely to ask those questions throughout their lives.

### The planning process

Chapter 6 illustrates the process of identifying substantive knowledge to accompany each Big Idea for each age-group. What we end up with here is the subject knowledge that teachers and others can draw upon in creating more detailed schemes of learning (See chapter 7).

Because there are no other subject plans for RE based on Big Ideas, in this section the process used here will be explained stage by stage.

Here is the planning template<sup>18</sup>. This includes:

1. the pupils' age-group
2. a header box, giving the name and number of the BI and the age-related BI narrative
3. a list of topic-related questions, derived from the BI for the age-group
4. the learning objectives related to this BI and this age group, with examples of substantive knowledge for each question
5. transferable question(s).

### Age-group

BIG IDEA x AGE-RELATED BIG IDEA	
Topic-related question	Pupils know and understand:
1.	i.
2.	ii.
3.	iii.
<b>TRANSFERABLE QUESTION(s)</b>	

In chapter 7 we will explain how to use these learning objectives and subject content in planning two detailed schemes of learning.

<sup>18</sup> Updated guidance on Developing your own 'Big Ideas for RE' curriculum may be found [here >>](#)



## CHAPTER 5 ASSESSMENT

### THE FOCUS OF THE BIG IDEAS MODEL of ASSESSMENT

#### Priorities for subject assessment

One of the fundamental differences between the old assessment system and new proposals is that assessment is now expected to reflect the curriculum, rather than some predetermined abstract statement of theoretical standards, expressed in levels.

Schools are developing their own approaches to assessment and subject leaders' priority is to develop assessment processes that comply with the expectations of senior management.

For the purposes of this project, the Big Ideas form the curriculum and the purpose of assessment is to find out how well pupils have learnt what they have been taught. It follows that the Big Ideas themselves provide the basis of assessment. This leaves room for several assessment models.

#### *Defining a rationale*

The model for assessment used here is that developed for the 'Learn, Teach, Lead RE' (LTLRE) project. A complete description of this approach can be found on the LTLRE website<sup>19</sup>.

In summary, this model is based on the work of Lorin Anderson<sup>20</sup> and David Krathwohl's revision of Bloom's Taxonomy of the Cognitive Domain, which is a sequence of learning knowledge and skills.

Taxonomy of the Cognitive Domain		
Cognitive processes	Description	Examples in relation to Big ideas
<b>Remembering</b>	Recognizing or recalling knowledge from memory. Remembering is when memory is used to produce definitions, facts, or lists, or recite or retrieve material.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Give an example of a mysterious or unexplained event in the stories from one religion (BI 4 / 7-11).</li><li>• Name one country that is an example of each of the following: theocracy, secular state, established religion (BI 5 / 11-14).</li></ul>
<b>Understanding</b>	Constructing meaning from different types of information. Achieved through activities like interpreting, exemplifying, classifying, summarizing, inferring, comparing, and explaining.	<p>Classification: A theist, an atheist and an agnostic were invited to take part in a radio debate entitled 'Does God exist'. They all wrote their arguments on index cards, but an unfortunate collision with a BBC tea trolley led to all the cards being dropped and dragged along the floor. As an office junior, you have been given the task of collecting all the cards and putting them, correctly, into three piles for the visitors (BI 6 / 11-14).</p> <p>Summarise/exemplify/compare:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. Summarise a story from each of three religions that tells of a personal encounter between a human being and a divine being.</li><li>ii. In what ways are these stories similar/different?</li><li>iii. What important messages do these stories contain for people of the three traditions? (BI 4 / 11-14).</li></ol>

<sup>19</sup> [www.ltlre.org/projects/assessment-without-levels-in-re/](http://www.ltlre.org/projects/assessment-without-levels-in-re/)


<sup>20</sup> Anderson, L and Krathwohl, D etc. (2000). A Taxonomy for Learning, Teaching, and Assessing: A Revision of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, Complete Edition. London. Pearson.

<p><b>Applying</b></p>	<p>'Applying' is the most complex of the cognitive processes to interpret in relation to RE. Anderson &amp; Krathwohl explain it as 'carrying out or using a procedure through executing, or implementing. Applying refers to situations where learned material is used through products like models, presentations, interviews or simulations'. Applying is generally to do with applying <i>processes</i>, which may be implemented or executed. In relation to RE it can mean 'recognise the type of problem and resolve it', e.g. a pupil recognises a task as requiring 'evaluation' and goes on to apply the evaluation process. It could also require pupils to apply their understanding to new situations.</p>	<p>You are a researcher for a high-powered TV current affairs program. Next weekend the interviewer will be questioning Dr Manz, a speaker on moral issues who argues that there are no moral absolutes - nothing that is always right or wrong, regardless of circumstances. Your job is to draft a set of six questions for the interviewer, which will challenge Dr Manz's position and put her on the spot. The interviewer also asks that you write down how Dr Manz is likely to answer each question and also provide some follow up questions (BI 3 / 14-18).</p> <p>Your school has to review its policy on promoting pupils' spiritual development and has asked you and your friends to help. The head teacher wants you to report back on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. what pupils think spirituality is</li> <li>ii. the extent to which different subjects promote spirituality</li> <li>iii. how different subjects promote spirituality.</li> </ol> <p>You have to work out how you are going to approach this task. How are you going to get the information you need and how are you going to present it clearly? (BI 4 / 14-18).</p>
<p><b>Analysing</b></p>	<p>Breaking material or concepts into parts, explaining how the parts relate to one another or to an overall structure or purpose. Pupils output will often include charts, or diagrams, or graphic representations (e.g. mind maps). Key processes include:</p> <p><i>Differentiating</i>: sorting relevant from irrelevant information</p> <p><i>Organising</i>: working out how different elements fit together - working out a structure</p> <p><i>Attributing</i>: inferring values or underlying purpose e.g. in text.</p>	<p>Pupils are told that they will be making a simple presentation about Hindu worship. They are shown a film about 'the Hindu home'. They have to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. write down/talk about what was relevant to worship in the film</li> <li>ii. decide on a few headings to summarise these points e.g. objects, people and actions</li> <li>iii. present what they have learnt under these headings (BI 1 / 5-7).</li> </ol> <p>Pupils are given key texts from St Luke's Gospel and comparable texts from the other gospels. Their task is to suggest what the author's particular purposes might have been (BI 2 / 11-14).</p>
<p><b>Evaluating</b></p>	<p>Making judgments based on criteria through checking and critiquing.</p>	<p>Pupils read or watch a presentation designed to persuade (on any issue). They check the truth claims for accuracy and critique the validity of the argument.</p>
<p><b>Creating<sup>21</sup></b></p>	<p>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</p>	<p>This would naturally be an end-of-topic task. The danger is that it can be very time consuming. Creating might involve:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. composing a song to communicate an idea or story</li> <li>ii. designing a building for inter-faith worship</li> </ol>

<sup>21</sup> [ltlre.org/projects/assessment-without-levels-in-re/](https://ltlre.org/projects/assessment-without-levels-in-re/)

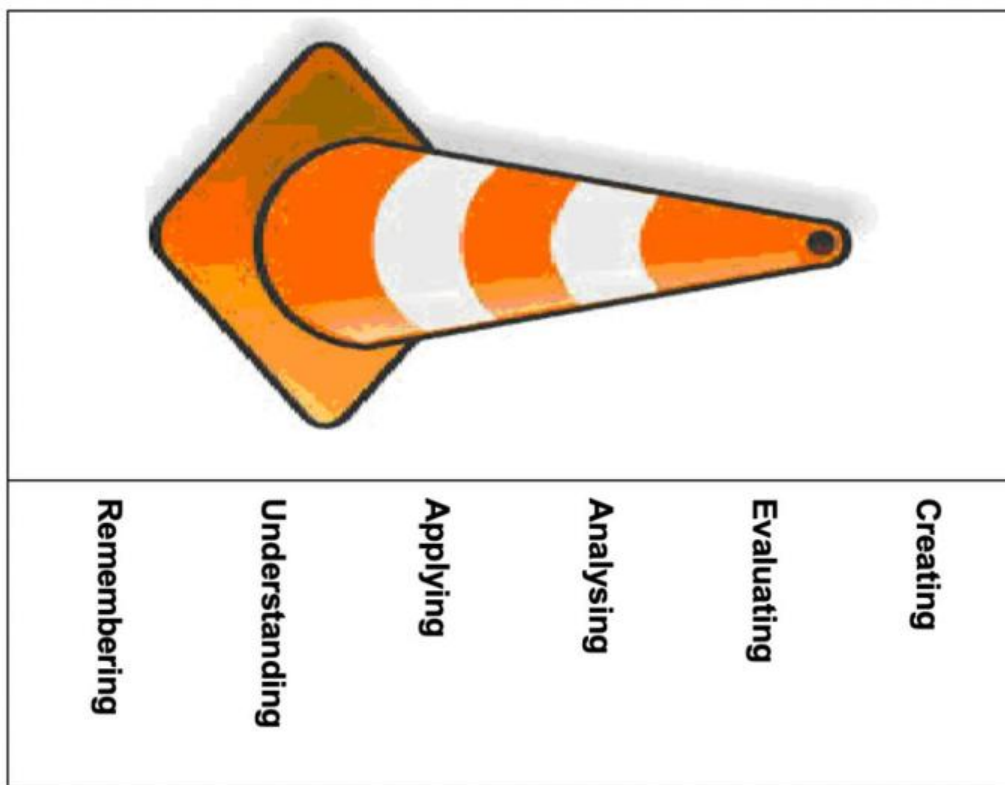
	something new and different a new form or product.	iii. writing a TV show, play, puppet show, role play, song or pantomime about...? iv. designing a record, book, or magazine cover for a text v. putting new words to a known melody.
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If these cognitive processes look familiar, they should do. They have underpinned the 8-level scale for 30 years.

	<b>Creating</b>	
	<b>Evaluating</b>	
	<b>Analysing</b>	<b>14-18</b>
	<b>Applying</b>	
	<b>Understanding</b>	<b>11-14</b>
	<b>Remembering</b>	<b>7-11</b> <b>5-7</b>

**However**, there were two essential flaws in the use of the taxonomy in the 8-level scale, which is represented here by a traffic cone. At the base, the widest part, are those processes regarded as the simplest - remembering and understanding. These processes are achieved by the majority of pupils and, together with sub-sets of remembering, 'recognise' and 'recall', dominate level descriptions for age-groups 5-7 and 7-11. Only for age-group 11-14 and above do we find reference to processes associated with applying, analysing, evaluating and creating. A similar distribution of the taxonomy on a vertical axis may be found in the 8-level scale for most subjects.

- (i) The first flaw in this vertical model of progression is the assumption that learning is linear and that only older pupils can analyse, evaluate and so on. Primary teachers are well aware that this is not the case and that depending on the complexity of the subject content, young children are also able to do these things. For example, take a group of five-year-olds who have learnt the basics of the nativity story. Ask them to sort a pile of Christmas cards into two groups representing those that relate to the nativity and those that relate to non-religious customs. Most of them will be able to do it and this is analysis at their level.
- (ii) The other implication of the linear or vertical scale is that pupils pass through each stage only once. This is obviously nonsense. We go back to the beginning of the process every time we learn something new. Pupils learning about Sikhism for the first time in Year 7 will have to start off by finding out some information before they can go on to 'understand', 'analyse' and so on. They can't immediately transfer their 'Level 6' from primary to secondary school, although they should be able to re-attain their previous standard and beyond more quickly in Y7.



If we turn the cone on its side we come up with a model that Bloom would have recognised. The words describing the stages of learning are exactly the same, but with an important difference. This **horizontal** sequence of learning is how Bloom intended his taxonomy to be used. The sequence is repeated over and over again from ages 5-18 and beyond. Bloom designed his taxonomy for use with undergraduates and intended it to be used over short periods. His intention was that every time teachers started a new topic/unit of work/module they would begin by expecting pupils to learn some basic information. The second stage is to introduce **not** more facts but more challenging tasks using the same content. In this stage pupils develop a better **understanding** of the material and are able to manipulate it in different ways (e.g. through analysis and synthesis). Bloom called this **deep learning**: deep because pupils understand a limited amount of content from several different angles.

The taxonomy is particularly helpful for assessment without levels because it provides the means of differentiation between different depths of response and in doing so clearly indicates which parts of the assessment task a pupil can do and where he/she required more assistance. For example, less able pupils may struggle to understand arguments clearly enough to be able to compare and differentiate them from each other.

### **Mastery learning**

Tim Oates, Government adviser on assessment, proposed 'mastery learning' at the heart of assessment<sup>22</sup>. This is another of Bloom's theories that schools sometimes get wrong. Bloom's main points about mastery were:

- i. The main difference between pupils is the speed at which they learn rather than ability;
- ii. The essential purpose of assessment is to check that pupils have grasped what they have been taught NOT to compare pupils against each other;
- iii. Nearly all pupils can achieve 'mastery' of a subject, therefore 'mastery' is **not the highest standard that can be reached but the standard that can be reached by most pupils.**

<sup>22</sup> See, e.g. 'Could do better: using international comparisons to refine the National Curriculum in England', BERA. Published online: 21 Jun 2011. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09585176.2011.578908>

- iv. Teachers should not introduce a new topic until all pupils have 'mastered' or reached the expected standard (ES). Pupils who finish early should be given more challenging work that enables them to learn in greater depth. One way that teachers can set more challenging work is by setting tasks based on the cognitive processes explained in this chapter.

This last point is key. Ofsted inspectors often find in weaker schools a large number of exercise books and folders full of unfinished work. What had happened? The teacher had planned after a set number of lessons to move on to the next task or part of the topic or new subject knowledge, whether pupils had finished previous work or not.

The challenge for teachers and others involved in curriculum planning is to identify the expected standard (ES) for each assessment. For internal purposes the simplest way to identify a pupil's performance is to give him/her one of three outcomes:

- **'Expected standard'** (most pupils)
- **'Working towards the expected standard'** and
- **'Working at greater depth within the expected standard'**.

Where necessary these outcomes can easily be transferred into a system of numerical scores or grades.

## CHAPTER 6

### BRINGING BIG IDEAS TO LIFE

This chapter suggests topic-related questions and examples of substantive knowledge that will enable pupils to understand the Big Ideas. The examples are given by age-group.

The bridge between the Big Idea and the substantive knowledge is the topic-related question.

#### AGES 5-7

Schools should interpret the following 'pupils know and understand' sections in relation to the religions / worldviews they have chosen to teach for this age-group. These decisions will reflect the national legal requirement and any local or denominational requirements.

#### BI 1: CONTINUITY, CHANGE AND DIVERSITY: AGE-RELATED BIG IDEA FOR AGES 5-7

*We are surrounded by distinctive things that are very important to people. Some of these are called 'precious', 'sacred' or 'holy'. People belonging to the same religion / worldview may have different 'holy' or important things and express their religion / worldview in different ways.*

Topic-related question	Pupils know and understand:
1. What sort of things might be precious to people and why?	i. that many people have particular things (e.g. items, places, music) that are precious or special to them ii. that these things are often important to people because of their association with a significant event, experience or person.
2. What things do people regard as 'holy' or 'sacred', and why?	i. meaning for the words 'holy' and 'sacred' ii. the sorts of things that people might regard as 'holy' or 'sacred' iii. differences between things that people regard as 'precious', 'holy' or 'sacred' and things that they regard as everyday.
3. What people, objects and places might Christians believe to be 'holy' or 'sacred' and why? 4. Do all Christians have the same holy things?	i. some items, places and people that are 'holy' or 'sacred' for Christians ii. why these things are regarded as 'holy' or 'sacred' by Christians iii. that not all Christians agree about what is 'holy' or 'sacred'.
5. What other religions / worldviews are to be found locally? 6. Do people of all religions / worldviews have items that they regard as 'holy' or 'sacred'? 7. What do we think a religion might be?	i. the names of other religions practised by people in the school ii. examples of items they regard as 'precious', 'holy' or 'sacred' iii. the names of places of worship in the neighbourhood or region, other than churches iv. which items might be 'sacred' to people of the second religion being studied v. that people from within the same religion / worldview may have different views and practices from each other.
<b>TRANSFERABLE QUESTION</b> What do you think a religion is?	

**BI 2: WORDS AND BEYOND: AGE-RELATED BIG IDEA FOR AGES 5-7**

*People often give words different meanings when they are trying to express what is most important to them. Many people also use symbols to express important ideas. We need to interpret these words and symbols to find out what they mean.*

<b>Topic-related question</b>	<b>Pupils know and understand that:</b>
1. Do words always mean the same thing?	i. people can give words different meanings in order to express what is important to them.
2. How might people express their beliefs and feelings without using words?	i. people use symbols to express important ideas.
3. How can we know how to interpret symbols and symbolic words?	i. we need to know something about the people before we can understand the meaning of their symbols.
<b>TRANSFERABLE QUESTION</b> What does it mean?	

**BI 3: A GOOD LIFE: AGE-RELATED BIG IDEA FOR AGES 5-7**

*Most religions / worldviews introduce children to stories from the lives of their exemplary people as examples of the qualities and characteristics they might try to achieve. They also teach about specific actions that are right and wrong and about good and bad attitudes.*

<b>Topic-related question</b>	<b>Pupils know and understand that:</b>
1. Who's my role model? 2. Whose <b>moral</b> example would I like to follow?	i. many people have role models - people whose example they would like to follow ii. we choose to follow people for very different reasons (e.g. fame, fortune, fashion); not necessarily because they are a 'good' person iii. parents sometimes tell their children stories about people who they believe set a good example of how to behave iv. most people in religious / non-religious traditions tell children stories about people who set a good example to follow because they live out their tradition's understanding of right and wrong.
3. How do we know what is right and wrong?	i. most children learn about what is right and wrong from adults who bring them up ii. adults do not always agree over what is right and wrong iii. there are some things that many people believe are right or wrong iv. many people get their idea of right and wrong from their culture or their religion v. most religions / worldviews have rules or teachings to remind people how to live their lives vi. not all members of a religion / worldview agree on how their traditional teachings should be interpreted.

**TRANSFERABLE QUESTIONS**

How do we know what is the right thing to do?

Why do people believe that it is important to live a good life?



**BI 4: MAKING SENSE OF LIFE'S EXPERIENCES: AGE-RELATED BIG IDEA FOR AGES 5-7**

*Some people have amazing, puzzling or mysterious experiences that make them ask big questions about life. There are many stories about people's experiences and encounters that have made them change their lives.*

<b>Topic-related question</b>	<b>Pupils know and understand that:</b>
1. What makes us joyful, peaceful, wonder, reflective, happy, sad?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. people experience a similar range of feelings but not necessarily in the same situations</li><li>ii. some things that we experience with our senses can surprise or amaze us and make us reflect and wonder.</li></ul>
2. How might stories from different worldviews help us understand more about the mysteries of life?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. there are many different stories about how wonderful the world is</li><li>ii. there are many different beliefs about the relationship of the world to a deity, including the belief that there are no divine beings.</li></ul>
3. How might belonging to a group help us understand more about our experiences of life?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. people frequently get together with others who share common interests</li><li>ii. some people get together with others who believe similar things to them, or who practise their religion in similar ways or have similar ideas of right and wrong.</li></ul>
<b>TRANSFERABLE QUESTIONS</b>	
What feelings do we have in response to different experiences?	
How can we best make sense of our different experiences and feelings?	

**BI 5: INFLUENCE AND POWER: AGE-RELATED BIG IDEA FOR AGES 5-7**

*All around us there is evidence of the influence of religions / worldviews on our community. Religion does not influence everyone's life in the same way.*

<b>Topic-related question</b>	<b>Pupils know and understand that:</b>
1. How do we know that religions / worldviews have made / continue to make a difference to our community?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. there is plenty of evidence of the Christian history of England, e.g. buildings, street names; school names; holidays; festivals, traditions, well known stories, rites of passage</li><li>ii. in many areas of the country, other religions / worldviews, which have arrived in England more recently, are also making their mark, e.g. places of worship or meeting, dress, food, festivals, stories</li><li>iii. religions / worldviews make a difference to the lives of people in the community through clubs, societies, education, charities, and so on.</li></ul>
2. Do religions make a difference to everyone's life in England?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. Christianity in particular plays a part in everyone's life in England, whether they have a religion or not, e.g. through their involvement in civic events and the annual calendar</li><li>ii. religions may play a very large part in the lives of their members, e.g. Christians, Muslims, Jews.</li><li>iii. some people are not aware of the extent to which a religion may affect their lives: others do not agree with the idea of religion and choose to have nothing to do with it: others think of their religion more as a cultural tradition and may use the church for baptisms and weddings and little else.</li></ul>
<b>TRANSFERABLE QUESTIONS</b> Are religions important any more?	

**BI 6: THE BIG PICTURE: AGE-RELATED BIG IDEA FOR AGES 5-7**

*Human beings, including groups of religious people, tell stories that help them grapple with some of the big questions of life. Many of these stories are well-known as they have been handed down over generations.*

<b>Topic-related question</b>	<b>Pupils know and understand:</b>
1. How do stories tell us something about ourselves and the world?	i. that many stories teach us important lessons ii. how to detect the message of a story iii. that there are different kinds of 'truth' in stories.
2. What is a mystery'? 3. What stories suggest answers to mysteries?	i. how a 'big question' is different from other kinds of question ii. that many children's stories pose solutions to mysteries iii. that each religion / worldview has its own solutions to mysteries and tells them in stories, songs and poems.
4. How do religions pass stories from one generation to the next? 5. What are 'holy' books'? 6. What books are not called 'holy' but are really important to many people?	i. that most religions used to pass their most important stories down orally and some still do ii. that sometimes these stories get written down in 'holy' or important books that form an important part of people's view of the world, that is, their 'religion' or 'worldview' iii. that many people believe that God has, in some way, inspired some individuals to tell or write down the messages and stories in these books that help people understand how best to live their lives.
<b>TRANSFERABLE QUESTIONS</b>	
Can a story about something that didn't actually happen be 'true'?	
Is it possible to know the mind of God?	

## AGES 7-11

Schools should interpret the following 'pupils know and understand' sections in relation to the religions / worldviews they have chosen to teach for this age-group. These decisions will reflect the national legal requirement and any local or denominational requirements.

### BI 1: CONTINUITY, CHANGE AND DIVERSITY: AGE-RELATED BIG IDEA FOR AGES 7-11

*The name 'religion' or 'worldview' is commonly given to an overall approach to life which includes beliefs, practices, values and a sense of identity. In each religion / worldview there are people who believe different things and practise in different ways. There is a variety of reasons why some aspects have changed over time and why some have stayed the same.*

Topic-related question	Pupils know and understand:
<p>In relation to the religions / worldviews being studied:</p> <p>1. What are some of the main differences in belief and practice between groups / denominations?</p>	<p>i. the names of at least two contrasting groups or denominations</p> <p>ii. ways in which these groups are similar and different.</p>
<p>2. What aspects have remained unchanged and which have changed?</p>	<p>i. how beliefs and/or practices and/or organisation changed as a result of an event in history: (where possible linked to a period studied in the history curriculum)</p> <p>ii. how beliefs and practices changed and stayed the same as a result of people moving from one country to another and taking their religion / worldview with them (again where possible link with history and geography).</p>
<p>3. Why are some systems of beliefs, practices, values and a sense of identity called 'religions' or 'worldviews'?</p>	<p>i. that finding a definition of religions / worldviews can be difficult</p> <p>ii. that in spite of this, people still identify as belonging to a religion or worldview because it involves their whole approach to life.</p>

### TRANSFERABLE QUESTIONS

Since people say different things about their religion / worldview, how do I know who to believe?

If the teachings of a religion / worldview are true, how can they change?

**BI 2: WORDS AND BEYOND: AGE-RELATED BIG IDEA FOR AGES 7-11**

*People often express their feelings and beliefs through art, music, poetry, story, drama and physical movement - both creating and observing/performing. These creative forms of expression also play important roles in most religions and cultures.*

<b>Topic-related question</b>	<b>Pupils know and understand that:</b>
1. How do people express their deepest experiences and beliefs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. self-expression through the arts is a shared human experience among all human beings, religious or not</li> <li>ii. feelings, beliefs and values can be expressed in a variety of literary and artistic forms</li> <li>iii. there is a variety of ways in which such forms can be interpreted.</li> </ul>
2. How can music, story, poetry and art express feelings, beliefs and values?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. story, lyrics and poetry can be used to affect how we feel through devices such as parable, metaphor and analogy</li> <li>ii. music can be used to affect how we feel, describe things and to create effect through devices such as tempi, instrumentation, voice, key, style, mood and genre</li> <li>iii. feelings, beliefs and values can be expressed and experienced through the elements of art, such as colour, balance, emphasis and pattern.</li> </ul>
3. How do religions / worldviews contribute to the arts?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. most religions and some worldviews have a long tradition of communicating their beliefs through story, poetry and other texts, music, song, dance and drama that people can either listen to or join in</li> <li>ii. different groups within the same religion / worldview can promote different styles of creative expression.</li> </ul>
4. How are various forms of literary expression in religious and other worldviews interpreted differently?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. there are different types of religious stories, scriptures and texts, including accounts of events, parables, poetry, allegorical story and proverbs</li> <li>ii. many people believe that such writings are divinely inspired but that there are different interpretations and ways of understanding them.</li> </ul>

**TRANSFERABLE QUESTIONS**

Can I express my deepest feelings and beliefs through someone else's creative art form?

**BI 3: A GOOD LIFE: AGE-RELATED BIG IDEA FOR AGES 7-11**

*Most religions / worldviews have stories about people from the distant past or from recent times who set a moral example to their followers. Religions / worldviews provide guidance for their followers on how to live a good life. There are different ideas about why people should aim to live a good life and considerable agreement as well as disagreement over desirable virtues and qualities and what is right and wrong, good and bad, between and within groups.*

<b>Topic-related question</b>	<b>Pupils know and understand that:</b>
1. How do we know what is the right thing to do?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. most children are brought up to know that some things are good and bad, right and wrong</li> <li>ii. people get their ideas of right and wrong from several sources, such as family, community, education, friends, religion and interest groups</li> <li>iii. in most situations people have different ideas about the 'right' thing to do and why.</li> </ul>
2. According to religions / worldviews, which people are setting a strong moral example to their followers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. people who are identified as setting a strong moral example are usually those who exemplify the beliefs and values of the religion / worldview</li> <li>ii. some of the people regarded as showing strong moral leadership are believed to have had a special relationship with God</li> <li>iii. some people believe that the best way to live a good life is to try to be like God.</li> </ul>
3. Where are religions' / worldviews' teachings about right and wrong to be found?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. many religions / worldviews provide their followers with a path, way of life or set of rules to follow</li> <li>ii. many people of faith believe that their moral teachings were revealed by God</li> <li>iii. moral teachings of religions are often to be found in their holy books</li> <li>iv. most religions also have other moral teachings, which were written after the holy books: many of these written to explain the meaning of the older texts or to make them relevant to later generations.</li> </ul>
4. What do religions / worldviews teach about attitudes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. many religions / worldviews teach about the importance of having the right attitude: a person with the right attitude is less likely to do wrong (e.g. 'right intentions' in Buddhism and Jesus' teaching about 'love').</li> </ul>

**TRANSFERABLE QUESTIONS**

How do we know what is the right thing to do?

Is it possible to live a good life without any guidance?

Why do people believe that it is important to live a good life?

**BI 4: MAKING SENSE OF LIFE'S EXPERIENCES: AGE-RELATED BIG IDEA FOR AGES 7-11**

*Some people have amazing, puzzling or mysterious experiences that they may explain as an encounter with a power above, beyond or within the material world, and which they may claim has given them new insights into life.*

<b>Topic-related question</b>	<b>Pupils know and understand that:</b>
1. What makes us go 'wow'?	i. people feel wonder or amazement (wow moments) in response to 'wonderful' things in the natural world ii. people can also feel shock or amazement when they see bad things happening (e.g. starving children in Syria) iii. some people feel wonder and amazement at experiences, which they believe cannot be accounted for by everyday or scientific explanations.
2. How do people explain experiences of wonder and amazement?	i. some people explain these experiences as encounters with a power beyond or within the universe ii. some people believe that all experiences, however strange, are the result of natural phenomena and can be explained by science iii. some people regard such experiences as mysteries and do not believe that they can be explained at the moment.
3. How might stories from different religions / worldviews help us understand more about the mysteries of life?	i. there are many different stories, poems, songs and paintings on the theme of how wonderful the world is; some of them provide description and great detail and some are in picture-language ii. some of these stories come from religions / worldviews and that they offer different answers to some of life's most puzzling questions.

**TRANSFERABLE QUESTIONS**

What feelings do we have in response to different experiences?

How can we best make sense of our different experiences and feelings?

**BI 5: INFLUENCE AND POWER: AGE-RELATED BIG IDEA FOR AGES 7-11**

*Many communities around the world are influenced at several levels by their traditional religions / worldviews. In some communities, one religion / worldview is influential; other communities are influenced by many different religions / worldviews living alongside each other. In some communities, religions / worldviews have little influence apart from among their followers.*

Topic-related question	Pupils know and understand:
1. How influential are religions / worldviews in England today?	i. that the Church of England has a special position as the established church through its connection with the monarchy, the government, parliament, schools and national and civic events ii. that over the last few decades other denominations and religions / worldviews have come to make a larger contribution to British politics, life and culture iii. that people have different opinions on whether religions should have any special status in British society.
2. How important are leaders of religions / worldviews in our community?	i. that religious leaders often have an important role in the wider community ii. that leaders of different religions / worldviews often work together to try to promote good relationships between people of different faiths and cultures iii. that increasingly in England people with no religious belief are taking on the traditional role of religious leaders (e.g. naming, marriage and funeral ceremonies).
3. How much of a positive impact can religious and non-religious charitable organisations have locally, nationally and internationally?	i. the work and impact of a local organisation that is established on the principles of a religion / worldview ii. that many charitable organisations have no religious connections.

**TRANSFERABLE QUESTIONS**

How much influence and power should religion(s) have in any society?



**BI 6: THE BIG PICTURE: AGE-RELATED BIG IDEA FOR AGES 7-11**

*People tell different stories to communicate important teachings and these stories often form part of longer narratives. Groups of religious and non-religious people tell different stories, which reflect the different ways in which they view the world.*

<b>Topic-related question</b>	<b>Pupils know and understand:</b>
1. How can the context of a story help us understand it better?	i. that some stories become famous because they have been handed down through the dominant religion(s) / worldview(s) in a community ii. that many of these stories say something important about human beings and things that go beyond this world iii. that there are different understandings of 'truth' that can be learnt from a story, poem or text iv. that stories are often understood better when the reader has some understanding of the bigger picture of what is going on and how they fit into the larger way of looking at the world v. that many religions / worldviews have a 'Big Story', which can be summarised to explain the origin and end of the universe; the place of human beings in the universe; good and evil; what is wrong with or lacking in human beings and how this can be put right. Most of their smaller stories illustrate part of this 'Big Story'.
2. What is the place of human beings within life's journey?	i. the role of human beings in relation to the natural world in at least two 'grand narratives' ii. the role of human beings in relation to God in at least two religions / worldviews iii. the teachings of at least two religions / worldviews about the origin of human beings iv. the teachings of at least two religions / worldviews about what happens after death.
3. How did the world begin and how will it end?	i. two different scientific theories about the origin and end of the universe ii. two contrasting traditional stories about how our world came about, what it should be like and what will happen to it in the end.

**TRANSFERABLE QUESTIONS**

Does anything exist that cannot be experienced with our senses or proved by science?

Are scientific and religious beliefs about life and the universe compatible?

## AGES 11-14

Schools should interpret the following 'pupils know and understand' sections in relation to the religions / worldviews they have chosen to teach for this age-group. These decisions will reflect the national legal requirement and any local or denominational requirements.

### BI 1: CONTINUITY, CHANGE AND DIVERSITY: AGE-RELATED BIG IDEA FOR AGES 11-14

*There are important differences in beliefs, values and practices between religions / worldviews but also close connections between some of them. Religions / worldviews tend to be made up of several smaller groups, which are similar in some ways and very different in others. Many of these similarities and differences relate to their history and changing cultural context.*

Topic-related question	Pupils know and understand:
1. According to survey data, what number of people say they belong to different religious and non-religious groups?	With reference to survey data: <sup>23</sup> i. the percentage of people belonging to different religions /and worldviews at national and local level, including the percentage belonging to 'other religious' groups and 'no religion' groups.
2. What do people mean when they refer to their 'religion' or 'worldview'?	i. that these terms can be used in different ways by different people ii. that 'worldview' is intended to include both religious and non-religious ways of looking at life.
3. Why are there similarities and differences between some religions / worldviews?	In relation to at least TWO traditions, for example: Jews & Christians, Christians & Muslims, Hindus & Sikhs. Hindus & Buddhists, Jews & Humanists, Christians & Humanists, pupils know and understand: i. ways in which they are similar; and why ii. ways in which they are different; and why.
4. Why do different groups within the same religion / worldview believe and practise different things?	In relation to contrasting groups within the religions / worldviews being studied, that divisions within them come about as a result of: i. arguments over theology / philosophy ii. disagreements over authority in the tradition iii. the influence of culture, society, politics.
<b>TRANSFERABLE QUESTIONS</b> Are we a secular society? (Also BI 5) Why are so few women mentioned in the histories of religions / worldviews? Why aren't all the people in a religion / worldview the same? Why do religions / worldviews change?	

<sup>23</sup> Table QS210EW, 2011 Census: Religion (Detailed), local authorities in England and Wales.

**BI 2: WORDS AND BEYOND: AGE-RELATED BIG IDEA FOR AGES 11-14**

*People convey their beliefs, values, commitments and identities through different media. Some created works, e.g., texts, music, drama, dance, art, may be regarded by some people as divinely inspired. All works are subject to different interpretations. In recent times, people are learning to value the arts of worldviews other than their own.*

<b>Topic-related question</b>	<b>Pupils know and understand:</b>
1. How are different items associated with a religion / worldview (e.g. stories, poems, drama, music, art, dance) used to express beliefs, values, commitments and identities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. that many items originally had an important educational purpose</li> <li>ii. how different items are used to express and support faith</li> <li>iii. how religions / worldviews contribute to national cultures.</li> </ul>
2. Why may some items be given a particularly high status by members of the religion / worldview with which they are associated?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. why certain items are held to have a particular connection to what is important in a religion / worldview or within a tradition, giving them an elevated status</li> <li>ii. how these items are different from other items from the same religion / worldview.</li> </ul>
3. Why are certain items associated with a religion / worldview subject to such a wide range of interpretation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. that the high-status items within religions / worldviews often lead to controversies about their meaning and importance</li> <li>ii. why these controversies exist.</li> </ul>
4. How do individual artists and writers use their arts to express feelings, experiences, ideas and beliefs in ways that inspire others?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. how writers, artists, composers and playwrights express feelings, experiences, beliefs and ideas through their work</li> <li>ii. how the beliefs and ideas of religions / worldviews can be popularised and continued through the arts</li> <li>iii. that how people interpret these works will depend on their own perspective</li> <li>iv. how such works may become a source of inspiration to others.</li> </ul>
<b>TRANSFERABLE QUESTION</b>	
Do the arts reflect or shape culture?	
How are the texts of religions / worldviews to be interpreted?	

**BI 3: A GOOD LIFE: AGE-RELATED BIG IDEA FOR AGES 11-14**

Many of the rules of religions / worldviews were created a long time ago. Different interpretations of such rules may be needed for application to today's world. Some religions / worldviews distinguish between rules revealed by God, those developed as a result of reasoned reflection, those that are customs and traditions developed by community leaders over many years, and those that reflect the nature of the world. This matters because people need to know the origin of a 'rule' before deciding how far it can be changed. All our moral actions have consequences for ourselves and others. Some believe that the consequences extend beyond this life.

Topic-related question	Pupils know and understand:
1. What might a 'good life' mean?	i. the meaning of key terms including good and bad, evil, morality and ethics ii. the teachings of the focus religions / worldviews on living a good life iii. for what reasons people come to live by one / some ethical codes rather than others iv. why in some religions / worldviews there are different moral expectations for different groups of people
2. How do people approach moral questions?	i. how to distinguish between moral questions and other kinds of questions ii. how and why people of religions / worldviews interpret their texts and are influenced by them as individuals, in communities and in the wider world iii. utilitarian theory and virtue ethics.
3. What is meant by absolute and relative morality?	i. the meaning of <i>absolute</i> and <i>relative</i> morality ii. conservative and liberal approaches to the interpretation of scripture in the context of morality (see BI 2) iii. how conservative and liberal interpretations lead to contrasting answers to moral questions.

**TRANSFERABLE QUESTIONS**

How do we know what is right and wrong/good and bad?

Can there be an absolute answer to any moral question - an answer that is true for all times and all places?

#### BI 4: MAKING SENSE OF LIFE'S EXPERIENCES: AGE-RELATED BIG IDEA FOR AGES 11-14

*Many people find profound meaning at some points in their lives in mystical, religious, spiritual or peak experiences. Some individuals and groups say experience of religious rituals and other practices help them make a connection with God or gods and with each other, or with what is most important to them. The experiences of a few key people are believed to have given them extraordinary insights into the nature of reality. Some believe these experiences are related to a spiritual dimension of human beings, which may or may not be associated with religion. Others deny humans have a spiritual nature, believing that a human being is no more than a complex, highly evolved animal.*

Topic-related question	Pupils know and understand:
1. Do human beings have a spiritual dimension?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. contrasting religious and non-religious theories and beliefs regarding whether human beings have a spirit or a spiritual dimension</li> <li>ii. contrasting theories and beliefs regarding what spirituality is</li> <li>iii. contrasting theories and beliefs regarding how spirituality can be developed</li> <li>iv. research claiming that spiritual experience is common to most people; and its critics.</li> </ul>
2. How can we best understand accounts of such experiences as: profound insights into the true nature of reality, unity with nature or an encounter with God or another spiritual being?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. different explanations of stories about key people having profound insights into the true nature of reality (e.g. the Enlightenment of the Buddha)</li> <li>ii. different explanations of stories about individuals reporting profound feelings of unity with nature (e.g. William Wordsworth; contemporary Pagans)</li> <li>iii. different explanations of stories about key people having religious experiences in which they meet or talk with God, usually for a specific purpose (e.g. Moses/10 Commandments; Jesus/baptism; Muhammad/night journey; Guru Nanak/at the river; Krishna revealing his true form to Arjuna in the Bhagavad-Gita)</li> <li>iv. different explanations of stories about revelations from supernatural beings such as angels, saints, deities, demons, jinn and spirits: (e.g. Gabriel/Jibreel with Daniel, Mary and Muhammad; the god Brahma persuading the Buddha to teach; appearances of the Virgin Mary at Lourdes; Mara and the Buddha; Satan and Eve in the Garden of Eden and Jesus in the Wilderness)</li> </ul>
3. How, according to some people, is it possible to see a religious message in an everyday event?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. how a few people have claimed to understand truths by perceiving and interpreting an ordinary event (e.g. Old Testament Prophets: Amos, Hosea, Isaiah; the Buddha/the four sights)</li> <li>ii. explanations of having a spiritual experience during religious worship and other rituals.</li> </ul>

#### TRANSFERABLE QUESTIONS

Do human beings and other animals have a soul?

Some people lay claim to experiences that have, e.g. taken them out of this world, or seen God. Are these experiences in their imagination or is it possible that a few people have particularly fine-tuned spiritual perception?

**BI 5: INFLUENCE AND POWER: AGE-RELATED BIG IDEA FOR AGES 11-14**

*Religions / worldviews are influential at several levels: individual, local, national and global. They will exert different levels of influence in different places and at different times.*

Topic-related question	Pupils know and understand:
1. In what different ways do countries define their relationship with religions / worldviews?	i. contrasting models for religion-state relationships, for example, 'theocracy', 'secular state', 'established religion' ii. the relationship between the state and the main religious and/or non-religious worldview(s) in one or more specific cases.
2. How do religions/ worldviews come to hold power or influence in particular countries?	i. how and why a religion / worldview has come to be in a position of influence or power in a particular state ii. whether all groups in the religion / worldview have equal power and influence in this state iii. how far similar situations exist elsewhere.
3. How are religion / worldview communities responding to the different social and political contexts in which they are found today?	i. how religions / worldviews as international institutions respond to specific issues in the countries studied ii. the extent to which these issues unite and divide groups within the religion / worldview iii. the benefits and challenges of living in plural societies for both the dominant culture and minority groups.
<b>TRANSFERABLE QUESTIONS</b> What does 'secular' mean? Can countries benefit when their governments take advice from religious leaders?	

**BI 6: THE BIG PICTURE: AGE-RELATED BIG IDEA FOR AGES 11-14**

*Many religions / worldviews provide a coherent account of what the universe is like and why it is as it is. These accounts may be called 'grand narratives'. For many religious people the most important source of their big picture of the world is found in sacred texts, often believed to have been divinely inspired. Many people identify with narratives that deny the existence of any divine beings or predetermined purpose in life. Other people believe that science and reason can explain everything and that there is no need for religious explanations.*

<b>Topic-related question</b>	<b>Pupils know and understand:</b>
1. What is a 'grand narrative'?	i. the nature of a grand narrative ii. the 'big story' of the religions / worldviews studied iii. the names of sacred texts of the world faiths and the names of some highly influential non-religious texts iv. how smaller narratives of a religion / worldview relate to its overall 'big story' v. why people from the same religion / worldview interpret and apply narratives differently.
2. Why do some people deny the existence of any divine being or that there is any predetermined purpose in life?	i. the meaning of the terms 'atheist' and 'agnostic' ii. the arguments put forward against the existence of a divine being and against the need for religious grand narratives iii. that not all religions are based on the existence of a divine being and why they are considered religions e.g. Buddhism, Jainism.
3. What are some of the non-religious explanations about the origin, meaning and purpose of life?	i. explanations of the meaning and purpose of life without a divine being (e.g. Humanism, scientific explanations).
<b>TRANSFERABLE QUESTIONS</b> Does God exist? Does life have a purpose?	

## AGES 14-18

The Programmes of Study for ages 14-18 are designed primarily for pupils who are not following an examination course at GCSE and they may be similarly used with 6th form pupils. These pupils may be following an RE course in a variety of contexts (e.g. Citizenship; PSHE) in order to meet the statutory requirement. Realistically, whatever the context of the course, it is unlikely that they will be prepared to do much preparation or written work given the demands of examination subjects. It is therefore suggested that these lessons should be conducted mainly through well planned discussion and debate with input from high quality and engaging personal, audio, visual and web-based resources.

Schools should interpret the following 'pupils know and understand' sections in relation to the religions / worldviews they have chosen to teach for this age-group. These decisions will reflect the national legal requirement and any local or denominational requirements.

### BI 1: CONTINUITY, CHANGE AND DIVERSITY: AGE-RELATED BIG IDEA FOR AGES 14-18

*There is no consensus on the meaning of the word 'religion' or how it relates to the term 'worldview'. During the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries in particular, religious and non-religious worldviews have faced challenges from a range of moral, political and social issues in national and international contexts.*

Topic-related question	Pupils know and understand:
1. What is the difference, if any, between a religious and a non-religious worldview?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. popular understandings of what religion is</li> <li>ii. different scholarly definitions of religion</li> <li>iii. views from adherents of religious and non-religious worldviews of what religion is</li> <li>iv. different meanings of the word 'worldview'</li> <li>v. why some worldviews are classified as religions while others are not and by whom.</li> </ul>
2. What factors have led to changes in religions / worldviews in the past and how have these impacted upon the traditions?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. that religions / worldviews can change as a result of:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. the effect of local culture (e.g. Islam in Pakistan and Turkey; compare the life of a CofE Cathedral and a new community church on a housing estate)</li> <li>b. disagreements about ideology and authority (e.g. Sunni / Shia)</li> <li>c. the intervention of an influential person or group with a new interpretation of the religion (e.g. A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada; Charles Taze Russell)</li> </ul> </li> <li>ii. that some people who do not agree with the decisions their leaders have made may break away and set up a new group (e.g. reactions in the CofE to the ordination of women).</li> </ul>
3. What are the main challenges of the 21st century and how are religions / worldviews responding?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. that religions in particular have been challenged to respond to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. religious plurality</li> <li>b. the impact of liberalism on traditional values</li> <li>c. the role of women, feminism</li> <li>d. feminism</li> <li>e. LGBT+ issues</li> <li>f. the environmental crisis</li> <li>g. developments in the sciences, including medicine</li> <li>h. war and peace, terrorism and the rise of extremism</li> <li>i. social justice, including poverty/wealth, refugees.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

#### TRANSFERABLE QUESTIONS

Is England a secular society? (Also BI 5)

Why are so few women mentioned in the histories of worldviews?

Why aren't all the people in a religion / worldview the same?

Why do religions / worldviews change?



**BI 2: WORDS AND BEYOND: AGE-RELATED BIG IDEA FOR AGES 14-18**

*It is very difficult to describe metaphysical or abstract concepts using everyday language. In attempting to express the inexpressible, people have used what philosophers call 'religious language'. They also use everyday language through metaphor and analogy. Many artists and musicians of all genres have created works in order to express their or their sponsors', views on a moral or religious issue. This continues to the present day. People of all beliefs and none are equally capable of being moved by creative works that communicate a religious message, although people inside and outside a tradition are likely to interpret them very differently. In more recent times, people are learning to value the arts of traditions other than their own.*

Topic-related question	Pupils know and understand:
1. How are religious, spiritual, moral and philosophical ideas, beliefs and values conveyed through a variety of forms of expression?	i. that important beliefs and values are communicated using a variety of forms of expression, including art, music, narrative and dance <sup>24</sup> ii. that religions / worldviews have different attitudes and traditions regarding the sort of music that should be performed <sup>25</sup> and regarding the sort of artistic expression that is permitted or proscribed.
2. How are people outside a tradition likely to respond to a work of art, (e.g. art, music, narrative, dance) compared to those inside a tradition?	i. that it isn't always easy to distinguish between religious and non-religious interpretations of the arts ii. that creative works may be interpreted differently iii. that for people within a tradition, certain creative works will have particular meanings related to their history, beliefs, values and identity iv. that people who have no religious beliefs are capable of appreciating creative works that communicate a religious message.
3. How are creative works from particular traditions being experienced beyond those traditions?	i. how some forms of art, design, literature and music have acquired followers from beyond the original tradition (e.g. places of worship open to the public; 'religious' music performed in secular concert halls) ii. how creative elements in one tradition are sometimes carried over into the traditions of another.
<b>TRANSFERABLE QUESTION:</b> What does it mean?	

<sup>24</sup> (e.g. the dominance of Christian liturgy over compositions until recently; the frequency of Biblical themes in Western art).

<sup>25</sup> (e.g. *halal* music in Islam; modern Islamic artists such as Sami Yusuf and Ahmed Bukhatir and the idea of singing as spiritual experience).

**BI 3: A GOOD LIFE: AGE-RELATED BIG IDEA FOR AGES 14-18**

*Religious and non-religious groups agree on some moral issues and disagree on others. Different theories are offered about how and why humans ought to live a good life; these theories are not necessarily religious. When these perspectives are used in discussions about moral issues, they yield very different answers. Various religious and non-religious organisations have tried to identify rules and principles that should apply universally, and they often contain teachings about the character and virtues needed to lead a 'good' life. Some religions / worldviews have different expectations for different groups of people, often in relation to hierarchies within their traditions.*

<b>Topic-related question</b>	<b>Pupils know and understand:</b>
1. Do people from all religions / worldviews agree on how to resolve the most important moral questions?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. the general agreement of religions / worldviews on core values and attitudes, such as love / consideration for others and care for the environment</li> <li>ii. the differences of opinion that arise between and within religions / worldviews from applying these values and other teachings to specific moral issues</li> <li>iii. the impact of different attitudes to authority on the different opinions within religions / worldviews on specific moral questions.</li> </ul>
2. What are some of the main theories in Western philosophy about how and why we ought to live a good life?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. the relationship between utilitarianism, virtue theory and normative ethics</li> <li>ii. the strengths and weaknesses of these and other normative theories such as egoism, consequentialism, hedonism and deontology</li> <li>iii. that there are other ways of thinking about ethics in non-Western traditions, such as Buddhist, Hindu or Confucian.</li> </ul>
3. How do we decide what to do?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. how different people approach the task of resolving moral questions (from a range of religious and non-religious questions)</li> <li>ii. that within some religions / worldviews there may be different expectations of different members, depending on their status or role.</li> </ul>

**TRANSFERABLE QUESTIONS**

Are there any moral absolutes regarding attitudes or actions?

How can we know what is the right thing to do in any situation?

Do we need ethical codes and guidelines? Is personal conscience enough for living a good life?

Who has the authority to lay down ethical codes and guidelines for others to follow?

**BI 4: MAKING SENSE OF LIFE'S EXPERIENCES: AGE-RELATED BIG IDEA FOR AGES 14-18**

*Some claim that consciousness is the distinguishing feature of being human and speak of human 'spirituality'. Some people regard their spirituality as the inner personal dimension of being religious, while others see themselves as spiritual rather than religious because they do not identify with traditional religious institutions or beliefs. There are also people who do not identify with religion or spirituality. Membership of groups with whom they share beliefs, values and traditions often gives people a heightened sense of awareness, mystery, identity and belonging, and brings about a transformation in their lives.*

<b>Topic-related question</b>	<b>Pupils know and understand:</b>
1. What is meant by 'human spirituality'?	i. contrasting theories, religious and non-religious, about the nature of human spirituality.
2. What do people mean when they say that they have had a spiritual experience?	i. contrasting accounts of spiritual experience: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. numinous (e.g. Isaiah; Rudolph Otto)</li> <li>b. conversion (e.g. Angulimala; St Paul; Davey Falcus)</li> <li>c. visions (e.g. Teresa of Avila; Muhammad receiving the Qur'an)</li> <li>d. voices (e.g. Muhammad and the angel; Jesus' baptism)</li> <li>e. mystical experiences of unity with the divine or the universe or truth (e.g. St John of the Cross, Sufism, Hindu ascetics, forms of Buddhist meditation)</li> </ol> ii. non-religious spiritual experience (e.g. feeling part of a greater whole, nature mysticism).
3. Can we believe accounts of spiritual experiences?	i. arguments against spiritual experiences being 'real' ii. arguments in support of spiritual experiences iii. arguments for experience being a source of authority.

**TRANSFERABLE QUESTION**

Can all claims to religious experience be explained by psychology or neuroscience?

**BI 5: INFLUENCE AND POWER: AGE-RELATED BIG IDEA FOR AGES 14-18**

*Religions / worldviews reach into many different areas of human life and have various degrees of influence; their influence is often linked to the extent to which those religions possess degrees of power (see BI 1). When something within a religion / worldview becomes authoritative, it may be used to justify social and political actions. The outcomes of these actions are varied and complex, from social improvement or spiritual development to greater intolerance and violence.*

Topic-related question	Pupils know and understand:
1. How have religions / worldviews influenced social change?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. situations in which religions / worldviews have been instrumental in bringing about social change (e.g. Martin Luther King and the civil rights movement in the USA bringing about a change in legislation regarding discrimination (1960s); the Liberation Theology movement supporting the Sandinistas in Nicaragua (1979); Desmond Tutu contributing to the end of apartheid in South Africa (1990s); the RC Church and Solidarity bringing an end to communist control in Poland (1990s); Al Qaeda: motives and methods; the 9/11 attacks on the USA and resulting change in USA foreign policy - knock on effects in Afghanistan and Iraq; the Russian revolution (1917) inspired by a communist worldview)</li> <li>ii. how particular religions / worldviews and their leaders have been effective in bringing about change</li> <li>iii. various understandings of the 'secular state' (e.g. Turkey, France, USA, India) and the impact these have on the role of religions / worldviews in those societies</li> <li>iv. why religions / worldviews might be more influential in bringing about change in some communities rather than in others.</li> </ul>
2. How fair is it to claim that “religions cause conflict”?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. instances where religions have been cited as causing conflict (e.g. Terror attacks in the UK from the IRA to Islamic State: the desire of some groups to impose Islamic Law, e.g. the Taliban in Afghanistan; conflict between Jews and Palestinians; Bosnia - conflict between Orthodox Serbs, Catholic Croatians and Muslims (1990s); divisions between Sunni and Shia Muslims in Iraq, Syria and Yemen; conflict between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland)</li> <li>ii. whether in the chosen cases religion was the only cause (Liaise with history department and where possible draw on examples already known to pupils)</li> <li>iii. the role of groups inspired by religions / worldviews in peace-making or humanitarian assistance in conflict situations (e.g. Quakers, Red Crescent).</li> </ul>

**TRANSFERABLE QUESTION**

Is it true that religions cause all the wars and violence in the world?

## BI 6: THE BIG PICTURE: AGE-RELATED BIG IDEA FOR AGES 14-18

*Many religions / worldviews have constructed an overarching narrative, sometimes called a 'grand narrative', which in most cases refers to the relationship between God or ultimate reality and the world, the nature of human beings and their place in the universe. Most narratives that attempt to explain what the world is like claim an authority for their explanation. Nevertheless within each tradition there are variations of belief about the truth and meaning of these narratives. Many religious people accept scientific accounts and find no conflict with their religious beliefs. Others say it is only possible to believe one or the other.*

Topic-related question	Pupils know and understand:
1. What authority do religions / worldviews claim for the way they understand the world?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. on what grounds particular texts and individuals are said to be authoritative voices for their religion / worldview</li> <li>ii. how the understanding of individuals relating to the world depends on their interpretation of texts.</li> </ul>
2. What do people believe about the relationship between God(s) and the world?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. how a divine being(s) relates to the world in the 'grand narrative' of some religions: in particular the role of a divine being(s) in creation; beliefs about time; beliefs about the end of all things; beliefs about the immanence / transcendence of a divine being(s)</li> <li>ii. how other religious 'grand narratives', such as Buddhism or Jainism, are not based on the concept of God</li> <li>iii. why many people deny the existence of divine beings and the validity of any narratives in which divine beings play a part.</li> </ul>
3. What do people believe about the nature of human beings and their place in the universe?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. the nature of human beings and their place in the grand scheme of things; in particular ideas such as: body/soul/spirit/no-self, origins/creation, sin, human weaknesses, delusion, determinism versus free-will, destiny, karma and rebirth, salvation, liberation, heaven(s), hell(s), unity with the divine, Buddhahood</li> <li>ii. how the nature of the divine and the position of humanity may be expressed in theistic traditions in terms of relationship, e.g. father/son (Christianity), vice-regent (Islam), servant or lover (theistic Hinduism), mother/daughter (feminist Christianity)</li> <li>iii. the relationship of humanity to other living things.</li> </ul>
4. Are religion and science compatible with each other?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. science-based accounts of the origins of the universe and of the evolution of life on earth: scientific method and the contingency of scientific theory and conclusions</li> <li>ii. how science has challenged traditional religious teachings</li> <li>iii. different ways in which people of faith have responded to scientific challenges</li> <li>iv. how this debate has contributed to the development of different interpretations of religious texts and different attitudes towards the authority of texts within most religions.</li> </ul>

### TRANSFERABLE QUESTIONS

Are human beings in need of salvation?

Has science made God and religion redundant?

What happens when we die?

## CHAPTER 7

### USING BIG IDEAS TO CREATE UNITS OF LEARNING AND ASSESSMENTS

Chapter 6 identified in general terms the subject knowledge which pupils need in order to achieve the understanding expected of them in the Big Ideas.

This chapter includes an example of how a unit of learning might be planned. The unit below is written as though by a subject leader for other teachers of RE. The example for 5-7 year olds may be taught in any organisational structure, although we suggest that pupils might learn more readily if the topics are taught on consecutive days rather than in one lesson every week.

#### AGES 5-7 - BIG IDEA 1

Big Idea 1 is all about understanding that religions are not monolithic structures but are rather highly diverse, with members who hold a range (often a wide range) of beliefs and practices. The idea of 'holy' or 'sacred' is used here to introduce 5-6 year-olds to the very existence of religions. This concept has been chosen because it has parallels beyond religion in concepts such as 'special', 'value' and 'precious'.

The example below refers primarily to Christianity but it can be adapted as schools wish. The three sections below, each based on a topic-related question or set of questions, may be taught in consecutive lessons or may be dispersed across a longer period.

Note: This example makes use of an earlier version of the Topic-Related Questions and Learning objectives.

PUPILS		BIG IDEAS:
Ages	5-7	<b>BI 1: AGE-RELATED BIG IDEA</b> <i>We are surrounded by distinctive things that are very important to people. Some of these are called 'precious', 'sacred', or 'holy'. People belonging to the same religion / worldview may have different 'holy' or important things and express their religion or worldview in different ways.</i>
Year	1	
Term	3	
Focus:	Non-religious perspectives. Christians.	
<b>TRANSFERABLE QUESTIONS</b>		
What do people mean when they say that something is 'precious', 'holy' or 'sacred'?		
What do you think a religion is?		
These questions are 'transferable' because they are likely to be raised at any point during pupils' school days and beyond. Make a digital record of the outcome that can be retrieved next time these questions arise. The pupils can then be shown the record with the task: 'this is how you answered these questions when you were in Year x. Have you learnt anything since then that makes you want to amend what you said then?'		
<b>TOPIC-RELATED QUESTION 1</b>		
1. What things do some people call 'precious'?		
<b>Learning objectives</b>		
Pupils find out and understand:		
i. meanings for the words 'precious', 'holy' and 'sacred'		
ii. the sorts of things that people might regard as 'precious', 'holy' or 'sacred'		
iii. differences between things that people regard 'precious', 'holy' or 'sacred' and things that they regard as everyday.		
<b>SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES FOR FINDING AND USING KNOWLEDGE</b>		
<b>Lesson 1</b>		
Bring to school something that you treasure or cherish - or a photograph of it. It should be something that holds associations with, e.g. a person, event, memory etc. If you have a classroom assistant ask them to do the same. Wrap these up to form a package that looks inviting - perhaps use high quality fabric, paper, ribbons or a box. Present the packages one at a time (if there are two). Tell the pupils that what is inside your package is very special/important to you - so much so that you would be heartbroken if it was lost, damaged or destroyed.		

Ask them to guess what it might be - or what it might be to do with. Help them with 'warm' and 'cold' hints.

Open the package(s). Now do they see what it is? Encourage pupils to ask you questions about the package(s); in particular **why** it is important.

Ask pupils to talk to a partner or group about their most 'special' thing (try to use a more specific word than 'special' if there is one that they can understand, e.g. 'cherished', 'precious' or 'treasured' are closest but explain that their possession does not have to have value in terms of money).

Ask pupils to bring to school next lesson one (non-living) item (or photograph of an item) that is 'special' to them and/or their family.

## Lesson 2

Ask pupils to show the class or group their item and talk about it: in particular to say what it is, where it came from, where it is kept, what it is used for, how they treat it and any other associations. *It is perfectly possible that some objects/photos are not religious. They could include, e.g. a photo of the 'sacred turf' of Wembley, or something belonging to a deceased relative. (Note: we're aiming at depth here. The object of the exercise is not to name as many holy things as possible but to understand what it is about them that make them holy. This could be achieved with half a dozen or so items.)*

Help the pupils make individual contributions to a display (which may be paper based or digital, or both). You might prefer to ask the class to choose half of the items and work in pairs.

- a) Each pupil (or pair) is given a photo of or draws a picture of their object.
- b) Pupils write underneath their picture as much of the following information as possible: its name, where it came from, where it is kept, how it is used, what it makes someone think of; why it is important and who it is important to.
- c) Number each pupil's contribution and get pupils to help you put up the display.

## Lesson 3: Interim assessment task

*The purpose of this task is to establish whether all or most pupils have grasped the meaning of 'precious', 'holy' or 'sacred'. This is not a test or an individual assignment. It can be conducted using Q&A with the whole class or with smaller groups.*

- a) From the display, what kind of things do people say are 'precious', 'holy' or 'sacred'? (e.g. - *there might be books, objects, pictures*).
- b) How do people treat their 'precious', 'holy' or 'sacred' things?
- c) What do people's 'precious', 'holy' or 'sacred' things remind them of or make them think about?
- d) What other words might someone prefer to use instead of 'precious', 'holy' or 'sacred' in this sentence? *My great granny gave me her old teddy bear. I will always take care of it because it is very ..... to me. (Possibilities include special, important).*

Be prepared for pupils to come up with some surprising suggestions. As with any activity of this kind, a lot depends on the backgrounds of the pupils in the school. **Keep a digital record of the display.**

## TOPIC-RELATED QUESTIONS 2-3

2. What objects and places are holy or sacred to different Christians, and why?
3. Do all Christians have the same holy things?

## Learning objectives

Pupils find out and understand:

- i. what items and places are 'holy' or 'sacred' for Christians
- ii. why these things are regarded as 'holy' or 'sacred' by Christians
- iii. that not all Christians agree about what is 'holy' or 'sacred'
- iv. ways in which churches are different on the inside.

## SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES FOR FINDING AND USING KNOWLEDGE

### Lesson 4

From the previous display, get the pupils to help you pick out any items that might be used by Christians or in a church. (If they haven't come across the term 'Christian' yet then talk about who Christians are in simple terms.) When the items associated with Christians or churches have been selected, talk with pupils about their possible use and associations. Does this help explain why Christians regard these things as sacred?

### Lesson 5

Where possible, take pupils to visit two contrasting churches, e.g. RC or CofE or Orthodox compared with Methodist, Baptist or URC. If either or both are unavailable, make use of visual images, virtual tours, videos etc.

It is important to work with a 'guide' (who doesn't have to be the priest/minister) to set the visit up and to be there to talk to the pupils during the visit. Explain to the guide that the pupils are learning:

- i. what is characteristic of 'holy' or 'sacred' things?
- ii. what things might be regarded as 'holy' or 'sacred' by people who use this church and why?
- iii. whether all Christians have the same idea of what is 'holy'?
- iv. why churches are different?

Make sure that the visits do address these priorities as systematically as possible.

(Be prepared for surprises, e.g. the idea that people are holy because they have a special relationship with God or Jesus.)

### **Lessons 6-7**

If possible arrange for the 'guides' to make a follow up visit to the classroom together to answer any questions arising from the visit. Encourage questions by drawing attention to the features of the buildings e.g. 'Why were the churches so different?' and 'Are there any ways in which the Christians who go to both churches are the same?'

Focus lessons on the four questions at the heart of the visits (above)

Invite pupils with personal knowledge of other places of worship and say how they are similar or different they are from the churches they visited.

Use a creative way of recording and displaying findings - e.g. digital photographs or a virtual tour of the buildings to show the name and purpose of different things seen in the churches and why they are important to the people who go there. **Keep a digital record of the display.**

### **Lesson 8 Assessment** (See p.52)

#### **TOPIC-RELATED QUESTIONS 4-6**

4. What other religions / worldviews are to be found locally?
5. Do people of other religions / worldviews (as well as Christians) have items that they regard as 'holy' or 'sacred'?
6. What do we think a religion / worldview might be?

#### **Learning objectives**

Pupils find out and understand:

- i. the names of other religions / worldviews practised by people in the country
- ii. examples of items they regard as 'precious', 'holy' or 'sacred'
- iii. the names of places of worship in the neighbourhood, other than churches
- iv. which items might be 'sacred' to people of the second religion / worldview being studied.
- v. whether all the people who belong to other religions are the same.

#### **SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES FOR FINDING AND USING KNOWLEDGE**

##### **Lesson 9-10**

Display the following words: HINDUS; MUSLIMS. Read the words out loud and ask pupils to read them to you.

Ask pupils if they know anything about these words? Tell them that the words describe groups of people. What sort of groups might they be? (If the school population includes pupils or adults of different religions, invite them to be involved at this point.)

Tell pupils that these are the names people call themselves if they belong to a particular religion. Display pictures of Hindu and Muslim girls and boys from different ethnic backgrounds, wearing different styles of clothing and with different skin colours. Ask pupils to choose one Hindu and one Muslim from the group. Give them names with religious and cultural accuracy. (As a class activity use the internet to look up, e.g. popular names for Muslim boys from Turkey/Pakistan/Saudi Arabia etc).

Display photographs of a Qur'an, the Ka'ba, a Hindu deity, a cow. Ask pupils which of these things they think are important to each child. Once they have established the correct associations, explain the significance of these things. Stress their use and/or associations.

Remind pupils that they have discovered that Christians, Hindus and Muslims have 'precious', 'holy' or 'sacred' things. Do they think it likely that people of all religions / worldviews have them? Tell them that this is something to look out for in later years as they learn about other religions / worldviews.

An assessment for this unit of work may be found on p.52.



## EXAMPLE OF A QUICK ENQUIRY

PUPILS		BIG IDEAS:
Ages	11-14	<b>BI 5</b> <b>AGE-RELATED BIG IDEA</b> <i>Religions / worldviews are influential at several levels: individual, local, national and global. They will exert different levels of influence in different places and at different times.</i>
Year	7	
Term	1	
Focus:	The strength of religions / worldviews in England.	
<b>TRANSFERABLE QUESTIONS</b> Is England a Christian country? Is Europe less religious than the rest of the world and if so, why?		
<b>TOPIC-RELATED QUESTION 1</b> 1. How many followers do different religions / worldviews have in England?		
<b>Learning objectives</b> Using the 2011 census, pupils will find out the relative proportions of people belonging to different religions / worldviews in England.		
<b>SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES FOR FINDING AND USING KNOWLEDGE</b>		
<b>Preparation</b> 1. You will need a whiteboard and projector. Pupils will need computers/laptops. 2. Check with maths staff that Y7 pupils understand percentages (they should do by the age of 11). 3. Inform the maths and ICT staff of the data you are using in case they would like to use it in their lessons. 4. The detail in which you ask pupils to analyse the data will depend on how much time you want to spend on this task and on their ability. The division into 'lessons' below should not be taken too literally. The pace at which pupils work will depend on their age and ability (although the topic is recommended for Y7 it could be done with older pupils. Alternatively some of it may be done in Y7 and the rest later.		
<b>Lesson 1</b> Model the initial stages of the investigation on a whiteboard, with pupils copying on their computers/laptops. 1. Copy the following link into the search bar of your search engine. Pupils do the same on their computers: <a href="https://ons.gov.uk/file?uri=/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/datasets/2011censuskeystatisticsforlocalauthoritiesinenglandandwales/r21ewrtableqs210ewladv1_tcm77-290988.xls">ons.gov.uk/file?uri=/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/datasets/2011censuskeystatisticsforlocalauthoritiesinenglandandwales/r21ewrtableqs210ewladv1_tcm77-290988.xls</a> Alternatively, ask them to search for "2011 Census: QS210EW Religion" 2. Open the webpage that appears: 2011 Census: QS210EW Religion 3. Point to the word 'census'. Ask pupils if they know what a census is. Clarify how often it takes place, what areas of life it investigates and what sort of things it can tell us. 4. Point to the Table title (row 30). This tells us that the section we are going to look at concerns <b>religion</b> . 5. Find the percentages tab at the bottom of the page (QS210EW_Percentages). Click on it to open the data in percentages. Ask pupils what they can see (N.B. row 17 is the data for England. We will be using this first). 6. For now, direct pupils to row 17 'England'. a. Ask them how many adults in England responded to the questions about religion (column E). b. Ask them to look at the <b>percentages</b> of the adult population in 2011 who gave their religion as Christian, Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh and 'Other religion' (columns E-L) and to write down on the worksheet provided (see Worksheet 1 below) the percentages of adults belonging to these religions in order to show which religion had the most adherents to the least. c. At this point ask why they are looking at percentages rather than numbers. Make sure that they understand why comparisons are often easier in percentages. d. Ask them to look at the percentage who said they belonged to 'other religions' (column L). There are many of these (columns M-BA). Ask them which, if any, they have heard of. 7. When pupils try to put the different 'other groups' in order from largest to smallest they will find that this can't be done. Ask them if they can work out why.		

8. Ask pupils to click the tab at the bottom of the screen that says 'QS210EW\_Numbers' and go to (columns M-BA). Now they can make the comparisons. (This could be a task for those who finish early).
  - a. Ask them to write down in order of membership the six 'other religions' that had most adult adherents in 2011 (see Worksheet 2 below). They should share this information with the class. Homework could be to find some information about the six.
  - b. Pupils should record on Worksheet 3 the number of people in 2011 who said that they had 'no religion' (column BB).
  - c. Since there are only seven groups in this category, all pupils could find the numbers of members for each (columns BC-BJ) and list them in order of membership.
  - d. Homework: find out about these seven groups.

### Questions for discussion

1. Look at your summaries of the information from the 2011 census. Does anything surprise you? What surprises you most?
2. The next census is in 2021. Regarding peoples' religions, what do you think may have changed between 2011 and 2021? Would you expect any of these groups to have got smaller or bigger? If so, why?
3. Regarding the local authority in which this school is situated, do you think that the 2011 data for religion was more or less the same as for England? What, if any, differences do you expect to find and why?

### Lesson 2

Check that pupils remember and understand what they learnt last lesson. There are several possible follow up activities:

1. Compare the data for your local authority with the national data.
  - a. Open the Percentages tab (make sure that pupils understand why comparisons between two different totals should be done using percentages).
  - b. Find your local authority (columns C and D) depending on the level of detail you want.
  - c. Highlight all the rows between 'England' and your local authority; right click the mouse and click on 'hide'. You could also hide the authorities below yours. Now you can only see data for England and your local authority.
2. Pupils look up the same data for their county or unitary authority as they did for England. They record it parallel with the England data and compare the two (see Worksheet 4 below).
3. Groups of pupils could find out about one religion and one worldview represented in their area which has more or fewer adherents than England as a whole and seek reasons for the differences.
4. Pupils could find the data for the 2001 census and summarise the changes between 2001 and 2011. On this basis they could return to 'Question for discussion' 2 (Lesson 1)

### Lesson 3

1. Help pupils find more recent surveys in order to identify apparent trends between 2011-2019 (e.g. [brin.ac.uk/](http://brin.ac.uk/); [//www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/04/05/christians-remain-worlds-largest-religious-group-but-they-are-declining-in-europe/](http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/04/05/christians-remain-worlds-largest-religious-group-but-they-are-declining-in-europe/); [theguardian.com/world/2017/may/13/uk-losing-faith-religion-young-reject-parents-beliefs](http://theguardian.com/world/2017/may/13/uk-losing-faith-religion-young-reject-parents-beliefs)).

Depending on the age and ability of pupils you may need to summarise these findings for them.

2. Different groups of pupils could note the key finding of each survey.
3. Questions for discussion could include:
  - a. What has changed in England since 2011 in relation to the proportion of people holding a religious faith?
  - b. Is religion growing everywhere except Europe and North America?

Adapt this article from the Guardian to give pupils another view: [theguardian.com/news/2018/aug/27/religion-why-is-faith-growing-and-what-happens-next](http://theguardian.com/news/2018/aug/27/religion-why-is-faith-growing-and-what-happens-next).

Help pupils to display their findings in a way that can most easily be accessed, e.g. through database charts. Keep the data on display for reference.

### Worksheet 1

Religions in England in order of adult adherents (according to the 2011 census)

	Religion	Number*	Percentage
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			

\*Optional

### Worksheet 2

Numbers of adults in England adhering to the 'other religions' with highest membership (according to the 2011 census)

	'Other religion' Name of group	Number
Total	<b>ALL</b>	
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		

### Worksheet 3

Numbers of adults in England with 'no religion': all 7 groups in order of membership (according to the 2011 census)

	'No religion' Name of group	Number
Total	<b>ALL</b>	
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		

## Worksheet 4

Religions in England and in the local authority in order of the PERCENTAGE of adult adherents (according to the 2011 census)

	Religion	England (copy from Worksheet 1)	Local authority
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			

## ASSESSMENTS

The following assessment accompanies the Ages 5-7 task at the beginning of this chapter (p.47).

<p><b>Ages 5-7</b>  <b>Big Idea 1</b>  <b>Pupils understand that:</b>  <i>people belonging to the same religion / worldview may have different 'holy' or important things and express their religion or worldview in different ways.</i></p>	
<p><b>Lesson 8: Assessment task</b>  The purpose of this task is to establish whether all or most pupils have grasped:  i. why certain things are held to be 'precious', 'holy' or 'sacred'  ii. what items and places are 'holy' or 'sacred' for Christians  iii. why these things are regarded as 'holy' or 'sacred' by Christians  iv. that not all Christians agree about what is 'holy' or 'sacred'.  This is not a test or an individual assignment. It can be conducted using Q&amp;A with the whole class or with smaller groups.</p>	
COGNITIVE PROCESSES	ACTIVITIES
1. Remembering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. From a collage of 'holy' and 'everyday' items, mark the items that some people regard as 'holy' (because people may regard many different things as holy, include as contrasts items that are very unlikely to be, such as a supermarket trolley; a saucepan).</li> <li>ii. From a list of names, pupils circle/highlight those that refer to a person's religion (e.g. Brownie, Muslim, Auntie, Christian, monitor, pupil, Hindu).</li> <li>iii. From photographs of the churches visited or viewed, pupils say which church each picture relates to.</li> </ul>
2. Understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Pupils explain ways in which the two churches were (a) similar and (b) different.</li> <li>ii. Pupils explain in their own words the meaning of 'holy'.</li> <li>iii. Pupils look at pictured of two 'holy' items with which they are familiar. For each one they say: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <i>what it is called</i></li> <li>b. <i>where it is usually kept</i></li> <li>c. <i>what it is used for?</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>iv. Pupils explain why Christians do not all have the same 'holy' things.</li> <li>v. 'Christians' and 'churches' are part of what we call 'religions'. Pupils give their ideas of what a religion might be.</li> </ul>
3. Applying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Pupils look at a picture of 'Lisa' holding a skateboard and 'Antonio' holding a Bible. 'Lisa is holding her most precious possession and Antonio is holding his holy book. They answer the question, 'What feelings might they share in common about these possessions and why'?</li> </ul>
4. Analysing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Pupils look at the classroom display of their church visits. They list the 'holy' or 'sacred' items they saw under one (or both) of these headings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. These things help people remember stories and beliefs of their religion</li> <li>b. These things help people concentrate on their worship.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
5. Evaluating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. The most important thing in Jakub's life is supporting the England football team. He says, 'My holy place is the pitch at Wembley'. Ioana says, 'A football pitch can't be holy. Only a religious place can be holy'. Jakub says, 'Yes it can because football is my religion'.  <i>Do you agree with Jakub or Ioana? Explain why.</i></li> </ul>
6. Creating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Working in groups, pupils prepare a display for parents explaining what you have learnt about different people's ideas of 'holiness'.</li> </ul>

The following assessment task for students aged 14-18 is an example of an assessment that has been developed in relation to Big Idea 1 (Continuity, Change and Diversity) with Big Idea 6 (The Big Picture), based on a television report of the installation of Dame Sarah Mullally as Bishop of London. The questions asked in the assessment are new to these pupils, (i.e. they cannot have been answered previously and 'learnt' for the assessment). Pupils are required to relate to this assessment understanding gained previously. For example, they need to be able to relate to this topic:

- knowledge of Christian denominations that do and do not ordain priests, and why (related to understanding of liberal and conservative interpretations of scripture and tradition)
- different views on the ordination of women priests and on the consecration of women bishops
- their knowledge of how to evaluate an issue.

<p><b>Ages 14-18</b>  <b>Big Idea 1</b>  <b>Pupils understand that:</b>  <i>During the 20th and 21st centuries in particular, religious and non-religious worldviews have faced challenges from a range of moral, political and social issues in national and international contexts.</i>  <b>Subsidiary BI 6</b>  <i>Most narratives that attempt to explain what the world is like claim an authority for their explanation. Nevertheless, within each tradition there are variations of belief about the truth and meaning of these narratives.</i></p>	
<p><b>The ordination of women</b>  <b>Should women become priests and bishops?</b></p>	
COGNITIVE PROCESSES	ACTIVITIES
1. Remembering	<p>1. Pupils give brief definitions of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Priest</li> <li>Ordination</li> <li>Bishop</li> <li>Diocese</li> <li>Episcopal consecration.</li> </ol> <p>2. Pupils name:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>two Christian denominations that ordain priests</li> <li>two Christian denominations that do not ordain priests.</li> </ol>
2. Understanding	<p>3. Pupils:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>explain at least two different Christian arguments for, and against, the ordination of women priests</li> <li>explain the additional arguments given for, and against, the consecration of women bishops.</li> </ol>
3. Applying	<p>4. Pupils outline the potential advantages and disadvantages for the community of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>allowing women to be ordained as priests</li> <li>maintaining the tradition of an all-male priesthood.</li> </ol>
4. Analysing	<p>5. Pupils:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>make use of scripture and tradition in commenting on the position of different churches regarding the ordination of women</li> <li>distinguish between emotional and rational arguments by differentiating between the arguments they have already given and arguments based on emotional responses to the issue.</li> </ol>

5. Evaluating	6. 'The arguments used by those in favour of ordaining priests belong to the women's equality movement: they have nothing to do with Christianity and should therefore be ignored'. Give a balanced evaluation of this point of view, taking account of different points of view.
6. Creating	<p>7. Pupils working alone or in groups create a piece of their choosing, e.g. a newspaper response to the ordination of a priest or bishop; a radio/TV debate; an entry for social media and responses to it.</p> <p>The piece should:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. clearly distinguish between the arguments put by each side for and against the ordination of women priests</li> <li>b. explain the foundation of each argument (scripture, tradition, custom, feeling) and give the opposing arguments to each side (Working at greater depth).</li> </ol> <p>If they wish, pupils may incorporate this piece into a wider report on the consecration of women bishops.</p>

**NB. The taxonomy does not have to be followed exactly. Depending on the context, Analysing and Applying are sometimes reversed.**

## APPENDIX 1 REVISED BIG IDEAS BY AGE-GROUP

The original text of the Big Ideas across four key stages included a considerable amount of detail in the form of exemplification and explanation. The purpose of this was to help the many teachers of RE who have no qualifications in the subject. However, feedback we have received during the last year indicates that teachers find the original key stage narratives over-long.

In creating the revised narratives below, we have separated the core Big Idea text (under the heading BI - revised age-group - from the exemplification/explanation. For the purposes of planning, the BI text remains a summary of what we want pupils of this age to understand and hence drives the learning and assessment objectives. The exemplification/explanation provides helpful guidance for identifying substantive knowledge and setting tasks.

In this new version for the purposes of international comparison, we have changed the key stage designations to age-groups; thus, KS1 = 5-7; KS2 = 7-11; KS3 = 11-14 and KS4 and Sixth Form = 14-18.

### Big Idea 1: CONTINUITY, CHANGE AND DIVERSITY

<b>BIG IDEA 1</b>		
<b>Religions / worldviews involve interconnected patterns of beliefs, practices and values. They are also highly diverse and change in response to new situations and challenges. These patterns of diversity and change can be the cause of debate, tension and conflict or result in new, creative developments.</b>		
5-7	<b>ORIGINAL</b>	
	We are surrounded by distinctive things that are often called 'sacred' or 'holy'. These include buildings, festivals and celebrations, rituals, books, acts of worship and symbols. These are usually different for each religion and non-religious worldview. Within the same religion or non-religious worldview people may believe different things and practise in different ways.	
	<b>BI 1 revised age-group 5-7</b>	<b>Exemplification/explanation</b>
	<i>We are surrounded by distinctive things that are very important to people. Some of these are called 'precious', 'sacred' or 'holy'. People belonging to the same religion / worldview may have different 'holy' or important things and express their religion / worldview in different ways.</i>	'Precious', 'sacred' or 'holy' things include buildings, festivals and celebrations, rituals, books, acts of worship and symbols. They are regarded as 'precious', 'sacred' or 'holy' because of their use and/or associations.
7-11	<b>ORIGINAL</b>	
	The name 'religion' is given to systems of belief, practices and values which share some common features, such as beliefs, values, places of worship, festivals, pilgrimages, rituals, texts and symbols. All the elements of each religion are closely connected and can only properly be understood in relation to each other. Each religion and non-religious worldview is made up of several groups of people who often believe different things and practise in different ways. For some people their religion is more important to them than it is for others. Religions and non-religious worldviews change over time; sometimes as a result of historical events or technological developments or as a result of people moving from country to country and taking their traditions with them.	
	<b>BI 1 revised age-group 7-11</b>	<b>Exemplification/explanation</b>
	<i>The name 'religion' or 'worldview' is commonly given to an overall approach to life which includes beliefs, practices, values and a sense of identity. In each religion / worldview there are people who believe different things and practise in different ways. There is a variety of reasons why some aspects have changed over time and why some have stayed the same.</i>	Common features include beliefs, values, places of worship, festivals, pilgrimages, rituals, texts and symbols. Religions / worldviews change over time; sometimes as a result of historical events or as a result of people moving from country to country and taking their traditions with them. For some people their religion is more important to them than it is for others.



11-14	<p><b>ORIGINAL</b></p> <p>There are a number of features that constitute a religion or non-religious worldview which can only be understood in relation to each other. Such features need to be understood in the context of their historical and cultural settings and the messages and lived experiences of the community being studied. Many people in the world belong to a religion; many others subscribe to non-religious worldviews; many others do not identify with any belief group. As a result, it is important that we do not make assumptions about all members of a religion on the basis of one group or individual. Most people recognise that religions do not stay the same; they change as a result of a number of factors, such as political and cultural differences, disagreements about ideology and authority, changes in population, the intervention of an influential person or group with a new interpretation of the religion – often several of these. Some think that religions and non-religious worldviews must adapt to the times. Others believe that there is one eternal truth for all time and that therefore their religion or non-religious worldview cannot change. Some people who do not agree with the decisions their leaders have made may break away and set up a new group. There are important differences in beliefs, values and practices between religions. There are also close connections between some religions for historical and cultural reasons.</p>	
	<b>BI 1 revised age-group 11-14</b>	<b>Exemplification/explanation</b>
	<p><i>There are important differences in beliefs, values and practices between religions / worldviews but also close connections between some of them. Religions / worldviews tend to be made up of several smaller groups, which are similar in some ways and very different in others. Many of these similarities and differences relate to their history and changing cultural context.</i></p>	<p>Most people recognise that religions / worldviews do not stay the same; they change as a result of a number of factors, such as political and cultural differences, disagreements about ideology and authority, changes in population, the intervention of an influential person or group with a new interpretation of the religion – often several of these. Some people who do not agree with the decisions their leaders have made may break away and set up a new group.</p>
14-18	<p><b>ORIGINAL</b></p> <p>There is no consensus on the meaning of the word ‘religion’ or how it may be clearly distinguished from a non-religious worldview. Religions and worldviews are often understood as multi-dimensional, where the main elements are doctrinal/philosophical, ritual/practical, mythological/narrative, ethical/legal, experiential/emotional, social/ institutional, material/symbolic and economic/political. Some argue that they are best studied as whole systems of beliefs, practices and values; others as lived realities in individual communities. No religion or non-religious worldview is monolithic. Rather, they are diverse. Some people believe that there can only be one truth, and there can only be one true version of a religion, not several. Others value diversity and respect each other’s right to difference. During the 20th and 21st centuries religions and non-religious worldviews have been challenged to give their response to many issues, particularly those involving gender, sexuality, marriage, roles of men and women, the environment and the role of religion in education. They have also been challenged from other schools of thought such as science, philosophy, history and sociology, as well as the media, in addition to being challenged by each other. Religious groups and individuals have responded differently to these challenges. They have to ask whether their differences allow them to work and live together in mutual respect and tolerance or whether their differences make such co-operation impossible. Awareness of a wider range of religions and non-religious worldviews can deepen, challenge or change people’s views and commitments. Some people believe that there can only be one truth, that only one religion can be true and that there can only be one true version of a religion, not several. Others believe that truth may be found in many different religious and non-religious traditions. However, people may respect each other’s right to difference, whatever their beliefs about truth. In response to religious plurality, many religious and non-religious groups are now involved in inter-faith organisations at local, national and international level, often with the purpose of working together for a cause.</p>	
	<b>BI 1 revised age-group 14-18</b>	<b>Exemplification/explanation</b>
	<p><i>There is no consensus on the meaning of the word ‘religion’ or how it relates to the term ‘worldview’. During the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries in particular, religious and non-religious worldviews have faced challenges from a range of moral,</i></p>	<p>Religions / worldviews are often understood as multi-dimensional, where the main elements are doctrinal/philosophical, ritual/practical, mythological/narrative, ethical/legal, experiential/emotional, social/ institutional, material/symbolic and economic/political. Some argue that they are best studied as whole systems of beliefs,</p>

	<p><i>political and social issues in national and international contexts.</i></p>	<p>practices and values; others as lived realities in individual communities.</p> <p>In particular religions have been challenged in heated debates over gender, sexuality, marriage, roles of men and women, the environment and the role of religion in education. They have also been challenged from other schools of thought such as science, philosophy, history and sociology, as well as the media, in addition to being challenged by each other. Religious groups and individuals have responded differently to these challenges.</p> <p>Awareness of a wider range of religions and non-religious worldviews can deepen, challenge or change people's views and commitments. They have to ask whether their differences allow them to work and live together in mutual respect and tolerance or whether their differences make such co-operation impossible.</p> <p>In response to religious plurality, many religious and non-religious groups are now involved in inter-faith organisations at local, national and international level, often with the purpose of working together for a cause.</p> <p>Some people believe that there can only be one truth, that only one religion can be true and that there can only be one true version of a religion, not several. Others believe that truth may be found in many different religious and non-religious traditions. However, people may respect each other's right to difference, whatever their beliefs about truth.</p>
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#### FINAL TEXT BI 1

<p><b>5-7</b></p>	<p><i>We are surrounded by distinctive things that are very important to people. Some of these are called 'precious', 'sacred' or 'holy'. People belonging to the same religion / worldview may have different 'holy' or important things and express their religion / worldview in different ways.</i></p>
<p><b>7-11</b></p>	<p><i>The name 'religion' or 'worldview' is commonly given to an overall approach to life which includes beliefs, practices, values and a sense of identity. In each religion / worldview there are people who believe different things and practise in different ways. There is a variety of reasons why some aspects have changed over time and why some have stayed the same.</i></p>
<p><b>11-14</b></p>	<p><i>There are important differences in beliefs, values and practices between religions / worldviews but also close connections between some of them. Religions / worldviews tend to be made up of several smaller groups, which are similar in some ways and very different in others. Many of these similarities and differences relate to their history and changing cultural context.</i></p>
<p><b>14-18</b></p>	<p><i>There is no consensus on the meaning of the word 'religion' or how it relates to the term 'worldview'. During the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries in particular, religious and non-religious worldviews have faced challenges from a range of moral, political and social issues in national and international contexts.</i></p>

## Big Idea 2: WORDS AND BEYOND

<p><b>BIG IDEA 2</b></p> <p><i>Many people often find it difficult to express their deepest beliefs, feelings, emotions and religious experiences using everyday language. Instead, they may use a variety of different approaches including figurative language and a range of literary genres. In addition, People sometimes use non-verbal forms of communication such as art, music, drama and dance that seek to explain or illustrate religious or non-religious ideas or experiences. There are different ways of interpreting both verbal and non-verbal forms of expression, often depending on a person's view of the origin or inspiration behind them. The use of some non-verbal forms of communication is highly controversial within some religious groups, particularly their use in worship or ritual.</i></p>		
5-7	<p><b>ORIGINAL</b></p> <p>People have developed several different ways to express their beliefs and feelings, such as using words in different ways when writing about spiritual or religious things in stories, poetry and drama. People also use symbols, art, music, drama and dance to express their beliefs and to tell their favourite stories. Some people believe that it is wrong to use certain forms of non-verbal expression. People may learn different things from these stories and symbols and might not agree about their meaning.</p>	
	<p><b>B1 2 revised age-group 5-7</b></p> <p><i>People often give words different meanings when they are trying to express what is most important to them. Many people also use symbols to express important ideas. We need to interpret these word and symbols to find out what they mean.</i></p>	<p><b>Exemplification/explanation</b></p> <p>For example, people express themselves by using words in different ways when writing about spiritual or religious things in stories, poetry and drama.</p>
7-11	<p><b>ORIGINAL</b></p> <p>People often cannot find the words to express their feelings and beliefs. They often use imagery, for example symbol, metaphor, simile, analogy and allusion, to interpret their religious or spiritual experiences and beliefs. Human beings also express and communicate beliefs and experiences without words: through art, artefacts, symbols and icons; through dance, drama and symbolic gestures; and through music and ritual. There are different views as to which forms of nonverbal communication are appropriate to use, particularly in a religious context. All of these forms of expression not only provide a means of expressing complex ideas, they are also vehicles for learning, wisdom and inspiration and important evidence for those who want to understand the beliefs, ideas and values of others. Nevertheless, people find different meanings in all these forms of expression.</p>	
	<p><b>B1 2 revised age-group 7-11</b></p> <p><i>People often express their feelings and beliefs through art, music, poetry, story, drama and physical movement - both creating and observing/performing. These creative forms of expression also play important roles in most religions and cultures.</i></p>	<p><b>Exemplification/explanation</b></p> <p>Imagery includes symbol, metaphor, simile, analogy and allusion.</p> <p>Examples of expression can include paintings, sculptures, stained-glass windows, artefacts, symbols, icons, dances, plays and symbolic gestures, hymns, songs, poems, music and different forms of ritual.</p> <p>These forms of expression can provide wisdom and inspiration and important evidence for those who want to understand the beliefs, ideas and values of others.</p>
11-14	<p><b>ORIGINAL</b></p> <p>People have used many methods to express their most profound beliefs and experiences. Sometimes this is in verbal form, and is communicated either orally or in writing. Non-verbal forms of communication may be used to communicate complex issues and make connections to key ideas, beliefs and practices. Different styles of non-verbal forms of communication, such as portraits, calligraphy, icons, sculptures, abstract, geometric and decorative arts and artefacts, may be used to express different aspects of religious or non-religious ideas or experiences. The extent to which these non-verbal forms of expression are used varies from religion to religion and between people of the same religion or non-religious worldview. The aim of some pictures, songs and choral music is often to remind people of important events, myths and stories in their tradition. They are also evidence of the faith of the community for which they were created. Both verbal and non-verbal forms of</p>	

	expression can be challenging to interpret and often raise further questions. The interpretation will depend in part on what is believed about the origins and inspiration behind them.	
	<b>BI 2 revised age-group 11-14</b>	<b>Exemplification/explanation</b>
	<i>People convey their beliefs, values, commitments and identities through different media. Some things are regarded by some as divinely created or inspired. All works are subject to different interpretations.</i>	<p>Beliefs and experiences may be conveyed in verbal form, communicated either orally or in writing. There are different beliefs about the origins and inspiration behind them.</p> <p>Religions / worldviews may have oral or verbal texts which are considered of central importance. Some of these may be viewed as of divine origin, or inspired, although exactly what is meant by that may differ.</p> <p>Non-verbal forms include portraits, calligraphy, icons, sculptures, abstract, geometric and decorative arts and artefacts. Different styles of non-verbal forms of communication may be used to express different aspects of religious or non-religious ideas or experiences.</p> <p>The aim of some pictures, songs and choral music is often to remind people of important events, myths and stories in their tradition. They are also evidence of the faith of the community for which they were created.</p> <p>The interpretation will depend in part on what is believed about the origins and inspiration behind them.</p>
<b>14-18</b>	<b>ORIGINAL</b>	
	<p>It is very difficult to describe metaphysical or abstract concepts using everyday language, particularly in religions, which frequently refer to ideas beyond our ordinary understanding such as God, nirvana, soul and heaven. In attempting to express the inexpressible, people have used what philosophers call 'religious language'. People of all religions and non-religious worldviews have developed technical terms to express what they believe. They also use everyday language through metaphor and analogy. Nonverbal forms of communication may have an explanatory power of their own. Some pictures, songs and choral music can remind people of important events and stories in their tradition. Other works have less obvious meanings and require more interpretation. Many musical compositions and works of art were originally created to inspire or aid devotion or commitment. Today, these works are available in a wider range of contexts. Whether displayed or performed in a religious building to inspire worship or made available to the wider public in a concert hall or gallery, they can inspire people to reflect on spiritual ideas and ask important questions. Each religion and non-religious worldview and many different groups within the same religion or worldview differ in the extent to which the use of some or any forms of art is compatible with their beliefs and practices. The uses of some forms of non-verbal expression can lead to debate within different groups. There are many ways of understanding verbal and non-verbal expressions of beliefs, experiences and commitments. They may be interpreted through studying the original purposes of the authors or artists, but also by studying the different meanings they may have for people today. Some forms of expression, such as sacred texts, are believed to be divinely inspired and may be interpreted in that light.</p>	
	<b>BI 2 revised age-group 14-18</b>	<b>Exemplification/explanation</b>
	<i>It is very difficult to describe metaphysical or abstract concepts using everyday language. In attempting to express the inexpressible, people have used what philosophers call 'religious language'. They also use everyday language through metaphor and analogy. Many artists and musicians of all genres have created works in order to express their, or their sponsors', views on a moral or religious issue. This continues to the present day. People of all beliefs and none are equally capable of being moved by creative works that communicate a religious message, although people inside and outside a tradition are likely to</i>	<p>People of all religions and non-religious worldviews have developed technical terms to express what they believe. These terms frequently refer to ideas beyond our ordinary understanding such as God, nirvana, soul and heaven.</p> <p>Some pictures, songs and choral music can remind people of important events and stories in their tradition.</p> <p>Whether displayed or performed in a religious building to inspire worship or made available to the wider public in a concert hall or gallery, they can inspire people to reflect on spiritual ideas and ask important questions.</p> <p>Many musical compositions and works of art were originally created to inspire or aid devotion or commitment. Today, these works are available in a wider range of contexts.</p>

	<p><i>interpret them very differently. In more recent times, people are learning to value the arts of traditions other than their own.</i></p>	<p>There are many ways of understanding verbal and non-verbal expressions of beliefs, experiences and commitments. Some forms of expression, such as sacred texts, are believed to be divinely inspired and may be interpreted in that light. They may be interpreted through studying the original purposes of the authors or artists, but also by studying the different meanings they may have for people today.</p>
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**FINAL TEXT BI 2**

<p><b>5-7</b></p>	<p><i>People often give words different meanings when they are trying to express what is most important to them. Many people also use symbols to express important ideas. We need to interpret these word and symbols to find out what they mean.</i></p>
<p><b>7-11</b></p>	<p><i>People often express their feelings and beliefs through art, music, poetry, story, drama and physical movement - both creating and observing/performing. These creative forms of expression also play important roles in most religions and cultures.</i></p>
<p><b>11-14</b></p>	<p><i>People convey their beliefs, values, commitments and identities through different media. Some things are regarded by some as divinely created or inspired. All works are subject to different interpretations.</i></p>
<p><b>14-18</b></p>	<p><i>It is very difficult to describe metaphysical or abstract concepts using everyday language. In attempting to express the inexpressible, people have used what philosophers call 'religious language'. They also use everyday language through metaphor and analogy. Many artists and musicians of all genres have created works in order to express their, or their sponsors', views on a moral or religious issue. This continues to the present day. People of all beliefs and none are equally capable of being moved by creative works that communicate a religious message, although people inside and outside a tradition are likely to interpret them very differently. In more recent times, people are learning to value the arts of traditions other than their own.</i></p>

### Big Idea 3: A GOOD LIFE

<b>BIG IDEA 3</b>		
<b>Many people, whether religious or not, strive to live according to what they understand as a good life. Religious and non-religious communities often share an understanding as to the sort of characteristics and behaviours a good person will seek to achieve, as well as dealing with what is, or is not, acceptable moral behaviour. The ideal is usually presented in the lives and character of exemplary members. There are points of agreement and disagreement over the interpretation and application of moral principles both across and within different religions / worldviews.</b>		
5-7	<b>ORIGINAL</b>	Most religions and non-religious worldviews introduce children to stories from the lives of their exemplary people as examples of the qualities and characteristics they might try to achieve. They also teach about specific actions that are right and wrong and about good and bad attitudes. This guidance can help people treat each other fairly and live together without upsetting or hurting each other or damaging the environment.
	<b>B1 3 revised age-group 5-7</b>	<b>Exemplification/explanation</b>
	<i>Most religions / worldviews introduce children to stories from the lives of their exemplary people as examples of the qualities and characteristics they might try to achieve. They also teach about specific actions that are right and wrong and about good and bad attitudes.</i>	This guidance can help people treat each other fairly and live together without upsetting or hurting each other or damaging the environment.
7-11	<b>ORIGINAL</b>	Religions and non-religious worldviews provide guidance for their followers on how to live a good life. Moral teachings come in many forms including songs and poems, codes of conduct and rules, proverbs and wisdom sayings and stories, including stories about people from the distant past or from recent times who set a moral example to their followers. It may be their particular actions or behaviour that inspire others or it may be their teachings that their followers apply to their lives. Many religions and non-religious worldviews also have codes of behaviour or sets of rules which tell people what actions are right and wrong and what their duties are. In many cases a balance is struck between advocating specific behaviours and guiding people to judge what is the right thing to do in a given situation and to act for the right reasons. There are different ideas about why people should aim to live a good life. Some believe it is the will of God, others that it is for the good of everyone, or for the good of the whole world. There is considerable agreement over desirable virtues and qualities and what is right and wrong, good and bad, across religious and non-religious groups. However, there are also important disagreements between and within groups.
	<b>B1 3 revised age-group 7-11</b>	<b>Exemplification/explanation</b>
	<i>Most religions / worldviews have stories about people from the distant past or from recent times who set a moral example to their followers. Religions / worldviews provide guidance for their followers on how to live a good life. There are different ideas about why people should aim to live a good life and considerable agreement as well as disagreement over desirable virtues and qualities and what is right and wrong, good and bad, between and within groups.</i>	It may be the particular actions or behaviour of exemplary people that inspire others or it may be their teachings that their followers apply to their lives. Guidance includes songs and poems, codes of conduct and rules, proverbs and wisdom sayings. Many religions / worldviews also have codes of behaviour or sets of rules which tell people what actions are right and wrong and what their duties are. In many cases a balance is struck between advocating specific behaviours and guiding people to judge what is the right thing to do in a given situation and to act for the right reasons. Some believe it is the will of God, others that it is for the good of everyone, or for the good of the whole world.

11-14	<p><b>ORIGINAL</b></p> <p>People have different ways of approaching moral issues. Some prioritise developing the virtues, personal qualities and characteristics that would make them a ‘good’ person – someone who would live by these virtues and act on them when encountering moral challenges. Many people turn to religions and non-religious worldviews for guidance and personal examples of the virtues and qualities they should aspire to. Some people consider how their actions affect other people; some think that if they follow rules and codes of conduct they will do the right thing. It is very difficult to live a good life, even for people who try to follow the rules and guidance provided by their tradition. This is partly because the guidance from any tradition, religious or non-religious, does not extend to every situation with a moral dimension that face people. So, we have to do our best by asking questions like ‘what would be the best outcome from this situation?’ or ‘what might a person who is recognised as ‘good’ have done in this situation?’ or ‘what does this rule about right and wrong suggest I should do in this situation?’. Some religions and non-religious worldviews have different expectations for different groups of people. Some distinguish between rules revealed by God, those developed as a result of reasoned human reflection, those that are customs and traditions developed by community leaders over many years, and those that reflect the nature of the world.</p>	
	<b>BI 3 revised age-group 11-14</b>	<b>Exemplification/explanation</b>
	<p><i>Many of the rules of religions / worldviews were created a long time ago. Different interpretations of such rules may be needed for application to today’s world.</i></p> <p><i>Some religions / worldviews distinguish between rules revealed by God, those developed as a result of reasoned human reflection, those that are customs and traditions developed by community leaders over many years, and those that reflect the nature of the world. This matters because people need to know the origin of a ‘rule’ before deciding how far it can be changed.</i></p> <p><i>All our moral actions have consequences for ourselves and others. Some believe that the consequences extend beyond this life.</i></p>	<p>Some prioritise developing the virtues, personal qualities and characteristics that would make them a ‘good’ person – someone who would live by these virtues and act on them when encountering moral challenges. Many people turn to religions / worldviews for guidance and personal examples of the virtues and qualities they should aspire to. Some people consider how their actions affect other people; some think that if they follow rules and codes of conduct they will do the right thing.</p> <p>This is partly because the guidance from any tradition, religious or non-religious, does not extend to every situation with a moral dimension that face people. So, we have to do our best by asking questions like ‘what would be the best outcome from this situation?’ or ‘what might a person who is recognised as ‘good’ have done in this situation?’ or ‘what does this rule about right and wrong suggest I should do in this situation?’.</p>
14-18	<p><b>ORIGINAL</b></p> <p>Religious and non-religious groups agree on some moral issues and disagree on others. They may have different reasons for their views and they may disagree with each other and among themselves about how to interpret their ideas of right and wrong, good and evil, and how to apply these ideas to difficult moral questions of today. People have different theories, which may be religious or non-religious, about how and why we ought to live a good life. Some teach ‘virtue theory’. They say that in order to lead a moral life we should concentrate on developing a good character and good personal virtues such as generosity and compassion, which would then make us behave generously or compassionately. Others teach deontological theories. They say that the way to lead a moral life is to do one’s duty or to follow the rules which tell us what is good or bad, right or wrong. A third group teach consequentialism. They say that we ought to act in the way that brings about the best overall results, no matter what those acts are. When people discuss contemporary moral issues from these perspectives, they may come up with very different answers. One of the big moral questions which is relevant for religious and non-religious worldviews alike is whether or not there are unchanging moral rules. Are there rules that apply to all people and at all times, irrespective of culture and regardless of circumstance, or does right and wrong depends on context and circumstance? Many moral conflicts result from clashes between these two points of view. This is partly because ideas about morality are closely connected to a group’s core teachings about Ultimate Reality, what it is to be human and how we should relate to our planet. Various religious and non-religious organisations have tried to identify rules and principles that should apply universally.</p>	
	<b>BI 3 revised age-group 14-18</b>	<b>Exemplification/explanation</b>
	<i>Religious and non-religious groups agree on some moral issues and disagree on</i>	They may have different reasons for their views and they may disagree with each other and among themselves

	<p><i>others. Different theories are offered about how and why humans ought to live a good life; these theories are not necessarily religious. When these perspectives are used in discussions about moral issues, they yield very different answers. Various religious and non-religious organisations have tried to identify rules and principles that should apply universally, and they often contain teachings about the character and virtues needed to lead a 'good' life. Some religions / worldviews have different expectations for different groups of people, often in relation to hierarchies within their traditions.</i></p>	<p>about how to interpret their ideas of right and wrong, good and evil, and how to apply these ideas to difficult moral questions of today.</p> <p>Some teach 'virtue theory'. They say that in order to lead a moral life we should concentrate on developing a good character and good personal virtues such as generosity and compassion, which would then make us behave generously or compassionately. Others teach deontological theories. They say that the way to lead a moral life is to do one's duty or to follow the rules which tell us what is good or bad, right or wrong. A third group teach consequentialism. They say that we ought to act in the way that brings about the best overall results, no matter what those acts are.</p> <p>One of the big moral questions which is relevant for religious and non-religious worldviews alike is whether or not there are unchanging moral rules. Are there rules that apply to all people and at all times, irrespective of culture and regardless of circumstance, or does right and wrong depends on context and circumstance? Many moral conflicts result from clashes between these two points of view. This is partly because ideas about morality are closely connected to a group's core teachings about Ultimate Reality, what it is to be human and how we should relate to our planet.</p>
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### FINAL TEXT BI 3

<b>5-7</b>	<p><i>Most religions / worldviews introduce children to stories from the lives of their exemplary people as examples of the qualities and characteristics they might try to achieve. They also teach about specific actions that are right and wrong and about good and bad attitudes.</i></p>
<b>7-11</b>	<p><i>Most religions / worldviews have stories about people from the distant past or from recent times who set a moral example to their followers. Religions / worldviews provide guidance for their followers on how to live a good life. There are different ideas about why people should aim to live a good life and considerable agreement as well as disagreement over desirable virtues and qualities and what is right and wrong, good and bad, between and within groups.</i></p>
<b>11-14</b>	<p><i>Many of the rules of religions / worldviews were created a long time ago. Different interpretations of such rules may be needed for application to today's world.</i></p> <p><i>Some religions / worldviews distinguish between rules revealed by God, those developed as a result of reasoned human reflection, those that are customs and traditions developed by community leaders over many years, and those that reflect the nature of the world. This matters because people need to know the origin of a 'rule' before deciding how far it can be changed.</i></p> <p><i>All our moral actions have consequences for ourselves and others. Some believe that the consequences extend beyond this life.</i></p>
<b>14-18</b>	<p><i>Religious and non-religious groups agree on some moral issues and disagree on others. Different theories are offered about how and why humans ought to live a good life; these theories are not necessarily religious. When these perspectives are used in discussions about moral issues, they yield very different answers. Various religious and non-religious organisations have tried to identify rules and principles that should apply universally, and they often contain teachings about the character and virtues needed to lead a 'good' life. Some religions / worldviews have different expectations for different groups of people, often in relation to hierarchies within their traditions.</i></p>



## Big Idea 4: MAKING SENSE OF LIFE'S EXPERIENCES

<p><b>BIG IDEA 4</b></p> <p><i>Many people have deeply felt experiences, which they may refer to as being 'religious' or 'spiritual' or simply part of what it means to be human. These experiences can take place in both religious and non-religious contexts and may produce a heightened sense of awareness and mystery, or of identity, purpose and belonging. The experience is sometimes so powerful that it transforms people's lives. As a result, people may change their beliefs and allegiances and on rare occasions the experience of a single person has led to the formation of a new religion / worldview.</i></p>		
5-7	<p><b>ORIGINAL</b></p> <p>Some people have amazing, puzzling or mysterious experiences that make them ask big questions about life. Others find deep spiritual meaning in everyday experiences. There are many stories about people's experiences and encounters that have made them change their lives. Some people find that belonging to religious or non-religious groups which share their beliefs, values and traditions gives them a sense of identity and belonging.</p>	
	<b>B14 revised age-group 5-7</b>	<b>Exemplification/explanation</b>
	<p><i>Some people have amazing, puzzling or mysterious experiences that make them ask big questions about life. There are many stories about people's experiences and encounters that have made them change their lives.</i></p>	<p>Some people find wonder and amazement at the ordinary things of life, such as nature.</p> <p>There are many stories in religions about amazing experiences.</p> <p>Many people like belonging to groups which have the same interests as them.</p>
7-11	<p><b>ORIGINAL</b></p> <p>Many people have amazing, puzzling or mysterious experiences with the wonders of nature, other people, the arts, or with a power above or beyond the material world. These encounters may be highly affecting, changing their lives in a positive way and sometimes giving them a sense of destiny. Some people account for these experiences by saying that humans have an inner consciousness or spiritual nature. Certain individuals throughout history are said to have had extraordinary insights into the meaning of human life and have passed those insights on to others. In many cases their experiences have had a major impact on religions and non-religious worldviews or have even led to a new one. Many people find that religious rituals and other practices provide opportunities for them to make connections with God or gods and each other, or with what is most important to them. When practised in community with others, these experiences may give them a deep sense of identity and belonging.</p>	
	<b>BI 4 revised age-group 7-11</b>	<b>Exemplification/explanation</b>
	<p><i>Some people have amazing, puzzling or mysterious experiences that they may explain as an encounter with a power above, beyond or within the material world, and which they may claim has given them new insights into life.</i></p>	<p>These encounters may be highly affecting, changing peoples' lives in a positive way and sometimes giving them a sense of destiny.</p> <p>Some people account for these experiences by saying that humans have an inner consciousness or spiritual nature.</p> <p>In many cases profound experiences have had a major impact on religions / worldviews or have even led to a new one.</p> <p>When practised in community with others, these experiences may give people a deep sense of identity and belonging.</p> <p>Certain individuals throughout history are said to have had extraordinary insights into the meaning of human life and have passed those insights on to others.</p>
11-14	<p><b>ORIGINAL</b></p> <p>Many people find profound meaning at some points in their lives in mystical, religious, spiritual or peak experiences. These experiences may be prompted by encounters with the wonders of nature, beautiful works of art or music or with tragic events. Some people believe these experiences are capable of putting them, or others, in touch with a greater power or powers or with other realms of</p>	

	<p>existence and provide insights into the world and their place within it. Some individuals and groups say experience of religious rituals and other practices help them make a connection with God or gods and with each other, or with what is most important to them. The experiences of a few key people are believed to have given them extraordinary insights into the nature of reality. They hold important and different places within one or more religions or non-religious worldviews. Some believe these experiences are related to a spiritual dimension of human beings, which may or may not be associated with religion. Others deny humans have a spiritual nature, believing that a human being is no more than a complex, highly evolved animal. Whether they see themselves as spiritual, religious or not, many people get a sense of identity from belonging to the same group as others who believe the same things, see the world in the same way, and have the same values. This can develop strong feelings of identity, belonging, loyalty and commitment.</p>	
	<b>BI 4 revised age-group 11-14</b>	<b>Exemplification/explanation</b>
	<p><i>Many people find profound meaning at some points in their lives in mystical, religious, spiritual or peak experiences. Some individuals and groups say experience of religious rituals and other practices help them make a connection with God or gods and with each other, or with what is most important to them. The experiences of a few key people are believed to have given them extraordinary insights into the nature of reality. Some believe these experiences are related to a spiritual dimension of human beings, which may or may not be associated with religion. Others deny humans have a spiritual nature, believing that a human being is no more than a complex, highly evolved animal.</i></p>	<p>These experiences may be prompted by encounters with the wonders of nature, beautiful works of art or music or with tragic events.</p> <p>Some people believe these experiences are capable of putting them, or others, in touch with a greater power or powers or with other realms of existence and provide insights into the world and their place within it.</p> <p>Whether they see themselves as spiritual, religious or not, many people get a sense of identity from belonging to the same group as others who believe the same things, see the world in the same way, and have the same values. This can develop strong feelings of identity, belonging, loyalty and commitment.</p>
<b>14-18</b>	<p><b>ORIGINAL</b></p> <p>Some believe that consciousness is the key feature of being human. It is believed by some to be God-given, constituting people’s spiritual nature, which marks them out from the rest of the animal world and enables them to think beyond their ordinary experience. Some people regard their spirituality as the inner personal dimension of being religious, while others see themselves as spiritual rather than religious because they do not identify with traditional religious institutions or beliefs. There are also people who do not identify with religion or spirituality. A few individuals are believed to have had exceptional experiences that have resulted in insights into the meaning and purpose of life which they have communicated to others. This can lead to the formation of new religions and non-religious worldviews, something which is still happening today. People from different religions and non-religious worldviews might disagree about the origin and meaning of religious, mystical, spiritual or peak experiences. Some find religious rituals and other practices may enable them to experience a deep connection with God or gods, nature, their own consciousness or with each other. Membership of groups with whom they share beliefs, values and traditions often gives people a heightened sense of awareness, mystery, identity and belonging, and bring about a transformation in their lives.</p>	
	<b>BI 4 revised age-group 14-18</b>	<b>Exemplification/explanation</b>
	<p><i>Some claim that consciousness is the distinguishing feature of being human and speak of human ‘spirituality’. Some people regard their spirituality as the inner personal dimension of being religious, while others see themselves as spiritual rather than religious because they do not identify with traditional religious institutions or beliefs. There are also people who do not identify with religion or spirituality. Membership of groups with whom they share beliefs, values and traditions often gives people a heightened sense of awareness, mystery, identity and belonging, and brings about a transformation in their lives.</i></p>	<p>Consciousness is believed by some to be God-given, constituting people’s spiritual nature, which marks them out from the rest of the animal world and enables them to think beyond their ordinary experience.</p> <p>People from different religions / worldviews might disagree about the origin and meaning of religious, mystical, spiritual or peak experiences. Some find religious rituals and other practices may enable them to experience a deep connection with God or gods, nature, their own consciousness or with each other.</p>

**FINAL TEXT BI 4**

<p><b>5-7</b></p>	<p><i>Some people have amazing, puzzling or mysterious experiences that make them ask big questions about life. Others find deep spiritual meaning in everyday experiences. There are many stories about people's experiences and encounters that have made them change their lives.</i></p>
<p><b>7-11</b></p>	<p><i>Some people have amazing, puzzling or mysterious experiences that they may explain as an encounter with a power above, beyond or within the material world, and which they may claim has given them new insights into life.</i></p>
<p><b>11-14</b></p>	<p><i>Many people find profound meaning at some points in their lives in mystical, religious, spiritual or peak experiences. Some individuals and groups say experience of religious rituals and other practices help them make a connection with God or gods and with each other, or with what is most important to them. The experiences of a few key people are believed to have given them extraordinary insights into the nature of reality. Some believe these experiences are related to a spiritual dimension of human beings, which may or may not be associated with religion. Others deny humans have a spiritual nature, believing that a human being is no more than a complex, highly evolved animal.</i></p>
<p><b>14-18</b></p>	<p><i>Some claim that consciousness is the distinguishing feature of being human and speak of human 'spirituality'. Some people regard their spirituality as the inner personal dimension of being religious, while others see themselves as spiritual rather than religious because they do not identify with traditional religious institutions or beliefs. There are also people who do not identify with religion or spirituality. Membership of groups with whom they share beliefs, values and traditions often gives people a heightened sense of awareness, mystery, identity and belonging, and brings about a transformation in their lives.</i></p>

## Big Idea 5: INFLUENCE AND POWER

<p><b>BIG IDEA 5</b></p> <p><b>Religious and non-religious communities interact with wider society and cultures. These communities affect societies by shaping their traditions, laws, political systems, festivals, values, rituals and arts. The patterns of influence vary significantly in different societies and at different points in time. Some societies are influenced predominantly by one religion / worldview, others by several or many. Religions / worldviews often appeal to a highly respected authority or vision, and this can have significant impacts on societies and cultures, whether positive or negative.</b></p>		
5-7	<p><b>ORIGINAL</b></p> <p>There are signs of religious and non-religious worldviews all around us and lots of evidence of their influence on our communities. Many local and national holidays are held at the time of religious or other festivals, and religious leaders are often important people locally. Several well-known traditional stories and songs reflect the ideas of religious traditions present in the community. Religions are not equally influential everywhere. Some places are more religious than others; some families are more religious than others. Most schools have children from different religions and non-religious worldviews and may have many who do not identify with any religion or worldview.</p>	
	<b>B1 5 revised age-group 5-7</b>	<b>Exemplification/explanation</b>
	<p><i>All around us there is evidence of the influence of religions / worldviews on our community. Religion does not influence everyone's life in the same way.</i></p>	<p>Many local and national holidays are held at the time of religious or other festivals, and religious leaders are often important people locally. Several well-known traditional stories and songs reflect the ideas of religious traditions present in the community.</p> <p>Most schools have children from different religions / worldviews and may have many who do not identify with any religion or worldview.</p>
7-11	<p><b>ORIGINAL</b></p> <p>Many communities around the world are influenced at several levels by their traditional religions and non-religious worldviews. Families who no longer practise a religion may continue to celebrate religious festivals, follow traditional religious rituals at key points in life and uphold traditional values. Local community leaders may be motivated by religious or non-religious worldviews, and religious leaders are often important people in the community. Organisations and individuals may be inspired by religions and beliefs to make a positive difference in their communities, while others sometimes use their religion or worldview to justify actions that do harm. Many well-known pieces of music and works of art reflect the ideas of religious and non-religious traditions present in the community. In some communities, one religion or worldview is influential; other communities are influenced by many different religions and worldviews living alongside each other. In some communities, religions and non-religious worldviews have little influence apart from among their followers.</p>	
	<b>B1 5 revised age-group 7-11</b>	<b>Exemplification/explanation</b>
	<p><i>Many communities around the world are influenced at several levels by their traditional religions / worldviews. In some communities, one religion / worldview is influential; other communities are influenced by many different religions / worldviews living alongside each other. In some communities, religions / worldviews have little influence apart from among their followers.</i></p>	<p>Families who no longer practise a religion may continue to celebrate religious festivals, follow traditional religious rituals at key points in life and uphold traditional values.</p> <p>Local community leaders may be motivated by religious or non-religious worldviews, and religious leaders are often important people in the community.</p> <p>Organisations and individuals may be inspired by religions and beliefs to make a positive difference in their communities, while others sometimes use their religion or worldview to justify actions that do harm.</p>
11-14	<p><b>ORIGINAL</b></p> <p>Religions and non-religious worldviews are influential at several levels: global, national, local and individual. In communities where religions are influential, not everyone is affected to the same extent. In some communities, leaders may appeal to religions and non-religious worldviews in order to justify their policies, for good or ill. In many places, religious and non-religious groups make an important contribution to community life through their contribution to education, youth work and work with the disadvantaged and with local charities. Claiming a connection to God or gods or to a non-religious vision or ideal can give them great power, to which they can appeal in order to justify their actions. These actions may benefit or harm communities, communities and individuals. The</p>	

	relationship between a community and its religions is related to its history, distant and recent, and to particular events that have changed attitudes and allegiances. As populations become more diverse so does the landscape of religious and belief and its impact on communities. Throughout the world, the arts reflect both the religious heritage of communities and the changes in religious belief and unbelief that have occurred over time and continue in the present.	
	<b>B1 5 revised age-group 11-14</b>	<b>Exemplification/explanation</b>
	<i>Religions / worldviews are influential at several levels: individual, local, national and global. They will exert different levels of influence in different places and at different times.</i>	<p>In communities where religions are influential, not everyone is affected to the same extent. In some communities, leaders may appeal to religions / worldviews in order to justify their policies, for good or ill. Claiming a connection to God or gods or to a non-religious vision or ideal can give them great power, to which they can appeal in order to justify their actions. These actions may benefit or harm communities, communities and individuals. The relationship between a community and its religions is related to its history, distant and recent, and to particular events that have changed attitudes and allegiances. As populations become more diverse so does the landscape of religious and belief and its impact on communities. Throughout the world, the arts reflect both the religious heritage of communities and the changes in religious belief and unbelief that have occurred over time and continue in the present.</p> <p>In many places, religious and non-religious groups make an important contribution to community life through their contribution to education, youth work and work with the disadvantaged and with local charities.</p>
<b>14-18</b>	<p><b>ORIGINAL</b></p> <p>Religions and non-religious worldviews exist at several levels. Most people encounter religions at local level where they can make a difference to communities and individuals. At national level, everyone is affected when a religious or non-religious group influences the country's political and legal systems, its education system or the times of national holidays. Religious and non-religious groups also influence people's ideas about what is right and wrong and affect the way they respond to ethical issues. Some people see their role as one of offering a critique of prevailing social attitudes and practices. Religions and non-religious worldviews influence culture and community in places where they had power in the past and may still have it. Consequently, around the world countries and communities have very different relationships with religions and non-religious worldviews, from theocracies, where God is seen as the source of all authority, to secular states, which may claim to be neutral in matters of religion and belief. Many communities have become more diverse and have responded to this diversity in different ways. Changes in community are also reflected in the arts, which in most communities continue to remind people of their traditional religious identities while also being affected by contemporary religious and non-religious ideas. Most religions have a global presence and respond to the hardship that results from natural disasters, war, prejudice or disability. The relationship between religions, cultures and communities is both complex and controversial, since it can be peaceful and harmonious or can lead to conflict and disagreement. The appeal to ideas about a superior authority or vision represented by God, an authoritative text, a powerful leader or a compelling vision of the future may be used to justify social and political actions. This may lead to social and spiritual improvement, but it may lead to intolerance and violence.</p>	
	<b>B1 5 revised age-group 14-18</b>	<b>Exemplification/explanation</b>
	<i>Religions / worldviews reach into many different areas of human life and have various degrees of influence; their influence is often linked to the extent to which those religions possess degrees of power (see BI 1). When something within a religion / worldview becomes authoritative, it may be used to justify</i>	Religions / worldviews exist at several levels. Most people encounter them at local level where they can make a difference to communities and individuals. At national level, everyone is affected when a religious or non-religious group influences the country's political and legal systems, its education system or the times of national holidays.

	<p><i>social and political actions. The outcomes of these actions are varied and complex, from social improvement or spiritual development to greater intolerance and violence.</i></p>	<p>Religions / worldviews also influence people's ideas about what is right and wrong and affect the way they respond to ethical issues. Some people see their role as one of offering a critique of prevailing social attitudes and practices.</p> <p>Religions / worldviews influence culture and community in places where they had power in the past and may still have it.</p> <p>Around the world countries and communities have very different relationships with religions / worldviews, from theocracies, where God is seen as the source of all authority, to secular states, which may claim to be neutral in matters of religion and belief.</p> <p>The appeal to ideas about a superior authority or vision may be used to justify social and political actions. In some communities, leaders may appeal to God, an authoritative text, a powerful leader or a compelling vision of the future in order to justify their policies, for good or ill.</p> <p>Religions / worldviews have responded at institutional and personal levels to several important issues where religious and other protected characteristics come into conflict, such as issues relating to gender and sexuality. The relationship between religions, cultures and communities is both complex and controversial, since it can be peaceful and harmonious or can lead to conflict and disagreement.</p>
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**FINAL TEXT BI 5**

<p><b>5-7</b></p>	<p><i>All around us there is evidence of the influence of religions / worldviews on our community. Religion does not influence everyone's life in the same way.</i></p>
<p><b>7-11</b></p>	<p><i>Many communities around the world are influenced at several levels by their traditional religions / worldviews. In some communities, one religion / worldview is influential; other communities are influenced by many different religions / worldviews living alongside each other. In some communities, religions / worldviews have little influence apart from among their followers.</i></p>
<p><b>11-14</b></p>	<p><i>Religions / worldviews are influential at several levels: individual, local, national and global. They will exert different levels of influence in different places and at different times.</i></p>
<p><b>14-18</b></p>	<p><i>Religions / worldviews reach into many different areas of human life and have various degrees of influence; their influence is often linked to the extent to which those religions possess degrees of power (see BI 1). When something within a religion / worldview becomes authoritative, it may be used to justify social and political actions. The outcomes of these actions are varied and complex, from social improvement or spiritual development to greater intolerance and violence.</i></p>

## Big Idea 6: THE BIG PICTURE

<b>BIG IDEA 6</b>		
<b>Religions / worldviews provide comprehensive accounts of how and why the world is as it is. These accounts are sometimes called ‘grand narratives’. They seek to answer the big questions about the universe and the nature of humanity. These narratives are usually based on approaches to life, texts or traditions, which are taken to be authoritative. People interpret and understand these texts and traditions in different ways.</b>		
<b>5-7</b>	<b>ORIGINAL</b>	
	Stories are very important in religions and in non-religious worldviews. They are used to explain ideas about life, and may include God, gods, spirits, humans and animals and the rest of the natural world. Religious and non-religious worldviews help people grapple with some of the big questions of life, such as ‘What happens when people die?’ and ‘Where did the world come from?’. Many of these stories are well known because they have been handed down over generations for hundreds of years. They are often found in holy books.	
	<b>B1 6 revised age-group 5-7</b>	<b>Exemplification/explanation</b>
	<i>Human beings, including groups of religious people, tell stories that help them grapple with some of the big questions of life. Many of these stories are well-known as they have been handed down over generations.</i>	Stories are used to explain ideas about life, and may include God, gods, spirits, humans and animals and the rest of the natural world. Questions such as ‘What happens when people die?’ and ‘Where did the world come from?’. These stories are often found in holy or highly respected books.
<b>7-11</b>	<b>ORIGINAL</b>	
	Stories from religions and non-religious worldviews are used to communicate important teachings and often form part of longer narratives. Some religious narratives begin with stories to explain how and why God created the universe and everything in it. Others focus more on the nature of the world itself rather than how it came to be. All religions and non-religious narratives have a lot to say about where human beings fit into the grand order of things. They seek to help people understand the mysteries of life such as whether or not there is life after death and how people might find meaning and purpose in their own lives. People come to understand these stories in different ways. These stories are valued because they come from trusted people or traditions. They are often found in texts believed to be divinely inspired and therefore sacred or holy. Non-religious narratives today usually draw upon scientific theories of how the universe began and predictions about how it will end.	
	<b>B1 6 revised age-group 7-11</b>	<b>Exemplification/explanation</b>
	<i>People tell different stories to communicate important teachings and these stories often form part of longer narratives. Groups of religious and non-religious people tell different stories, which reflect the different ways in which they view the world.</i>	Some religious narratives begin with stories to explain how and why God created the universe and everything in it. Others focus more on the nature of the world itself rather than how it came to be. All religious and non-religious narratives have a lot to say about where human beings fit into the grand order of things. They seek to help people understand the mysteries of life such as whether or not there is life after death and how people might find meaning and purpose in their own lives. These stories are often valued because they come from trusted people or traditions. They are often found in texts believed to be divinely inspired and therefore sacred or holy.
<b>11-14</b>	<b>ORIGINAL</b>	
	Many religions and non-religious worldviews provide a coherent account of what the universe is like and why it is as it is. These accounts may be called ‘grand narratives’. Grand narratives frequently begin with stories of how the universe came to be, whether or how it will end, and the place of human beings in it. Other narratives treat these questions in terms of an ongoing cycle of life, death and rebirth. In most religious and non-religious narratives, people are acknowledged to be in some way imperfect. There are many different ideas about this and some grand narratives provide	

	<p>guidance on how to be liberated from this state. Most religious narratives support the idea that there is some form of life after this one, which may be a spiritual existence or another physical one. Some religious narratives say what happens to people after death depends on how good a life they have led; others emphasise faith in divine power; others stress belonging to a community and performing appropriate ceremonies; many combine all of these. These explanations of the meaning and purpose of life come from a variety of sources. These can include community traditions, scientific evidence, personal experience, and reasoning. For many religious people the most important source of their big picture of the world is found in sacred texts, often believed to have been divinely inspired. Many people identify with narratives that deny the existence of any divine beings or predetermined purpose in life and state that the only things that exist are those that can be experienced with the physical senses or verified by science.</p>	
	<p><b>B1 6 revised age-group 11-14</b></p>	<p><b>Exemplification/explanation</b></p>
	<p><i>Many religions / worldviews provide a coherent account of what the universe is like and why it is as it is. These accounts may be called ‘grand narratives’. For many religious people the most important source of their big picture of the world is found in sacred texts, often believed to have been divinely inspired. Many people identify with narratives that deny the existence of any divine beings or predetermined purpose in life. Other people believe that science and reason can explain everything and that there is no need for religious explanations.</i></p>	<p>Grand narratives offer explanations of the meaning and purpose of life and come from a variety of sources. These can include community traditions, scientific evidence, personal experience, and reasoning. They frequently begin with stories of how the universe came to be, whether or how it will end, and the place of human beings in it.</p> <p>Other narratives treat these questions in terms of an ongoing cycle of life, death and rebirth. In most religious and non-religious narratives, people are acknowledged to be in some way imperfect. There are many different ideas about this and some grand narratives provide guidance on how to be liberated from this state.</p> <p>Most religious narratives support the idea that there is some form of life after this one, which may be a spiritual existence or another physical one. Some religious narratives say what happens to people after death depends on how good a life they have led; others emphasise faith in divine power; others stress belonging to a community and performing appropriate ceremonies; many combine all of these.</p> <p>In order to explain the way things are, people may draw on a variety of sources, including community traditions, scientific evidence, personal experience, and reasoning.</p>
<p><b>14-18</b></p>	<p><b>ORIGINAL</b></p> <p>Many religions and non-religious worldviews have constructed an overarching narrative, sometimes called a ‘grand narrative’, which seeks to offer ways of understanding the big questions about the universe and the nature of humanity. Final answers are not always provided, but such narratives usually provide a context within which the questions may be understood. There are variations of belief about these narratives. Some people consider their narrative cannot change, as it is true for all time. Others say the narrative needs to be adapted or re-expressed to take account of new discoveries, changes in community or new cultural settings. Many people believe in a balance between innovation and common shared practice, but where and how to strike such a balance is often a subject of debate. Most religious narratives recognise an Ultimate Reality may be expressed as a personal and loving God, an impersonal source of existence, or an eternal truth or principle that governs the universe. Other narratives, both religious and non-religious, focus more on the nature of the world itself and the human condition rather than on questions about the nature of God and creation. Religions and non-religious narratives tell very different stories about the nature of human beings and their place in the universe. Most of the religious narratives include common themes, such as why there is suffering in the world, why humans seem to be flawed, how they might find liberation or salvation or how they might make the world a better place. In some narratives death is the end for humans and all life forms; in others, humans, and sometimes other life forms, continue after death, although there are many different views on the form that existence beyond death will take, and on whether it is desirable. Most narratives that attempt to explain what the world is like appeal for their authority to one or more of community traditions, sacred texts, scientific evidence, personal experience and reasoning. For many religious people the most important source of their big picture of the world is found in sacred texts, though the nature of the ‘truth’ or ‘truths’ found in the</p>	



	texts is disputed. Many religious people accept scientific accounts and find no conflict with their religious beliefs. Others say it is only possible to believe one or the other.	
	<b>B1 6 revised age-group 14-18</b>	<b>Exemplification/explanation</b>
	<p><i>Many religions / worldviews have constructed an overarching narrative, sometimes called a 'grand narrative', which in most cases refers to the relationship between God or ultimate reality and the world, the nature of human beings and their place in the universe. Most narratives that attempt to explain what the world is like claim an authority for their explanation. Nevertheless within each tradition there are variations of belief about the truth and meaning of these narratives. Many religious people accept scientific accounts and find no conflict with their religious beliefs. Others say it is only possible to believe one or the other.</i></p>	<p>The 'grand narratives' of many religions / worldviews seek to offer ways of understanding the big questions about the universe and the nature of humanity. Final answers are not always provided, but such narratives usually provide a context within which the questions may be understood.</p> <p>Some people consider their narrative cannot change, as it is true for all time. Others say the narrative needs to be adapted or re-expressed to take account of new discoveries, changes in community or new cultural settings. Many people believe in a balance between these approaches, but where and how to strike such a balance is often a subject of debate.</p> <p>The idea of Ultimate Reality may be expressed in a variety of ways, for example, as a personal and loving God, an impersonal source of existence, or an eternal truth or principle that governs the universe. Other narratives, both religious and non-religious, focus more on the nature of the world itself and the human condition rather than on questions about the nature of God and creation.</p> <p>Most of the religious narratives include common themes, such as why there is suffering in the world, why humans seem to be flawed, how they might find liberation or salvation or how they might make the world a better place. In some narratives death is the end for humans and all life forms; in others, humans, and sometimes other life forms, continue after death, although there are many different views on the form that existence beyond death will take, and on whether it is desirable.</p> <p>Such narratives appeal for their authority to one or more of the following sources: community traditions, sacred texts, scientific evidence, personal experience and reasoning. For many religious people the most important source of their big picture of the world is found in sacred texts, though the nature of the 'truth' or 'truths' found in the texts is disputed.</p>

#### FINAL TEXT BI 6

<b>5-7</b>	<i>Human beings, including groups of religious people, tell stories that help them grapple with some of the big questions of life. Many of these stories are well-known as they have been handed down over generations.</i>
<b>7-11</b>	<i>People tell different stories to communicate important teachings and these stories often form part of longer narratives. Groups of religious and non-religious people tell different stories, which reflect the different ways in which they view the world.</i>
<b>11-14</b>	<i>Many religions / worldviews provide a coherent account of what the universe is like and why it is as it is. These accounts may be called 'grand narratives'. For many religious people the most important source of their big picture of the world is found in sacred texts, often believed to have been divinely inspired. Many people identify with narratives that deny the existence of any divine beings or predetermined purpose in life. Other people believe that science and reason can explain everything and that there is no need for religious explanations.</i>
<b>14-18</b>	<i>Many religions / worldviews have constructed an overarching narrative, sometimes called a 'grand narrative', which in most cases refers to the relationship between God or ultimate reality and the world, the nature of human beings and their place in the universe. Most narratives that attempt to</i>

<p><i>explain what the world is like claim an authority for their explanation. Nevertheless within each tradition there are variations of belief about the truth and meaning of these narratives. Many people accept scientific accounts and find no conflict with their religious beliefs. Others say it is only possible to believe one or the other.</i></p>
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## APPENDIX 2 BIG IDEAS FOR STUDENTS

If students are to be involved in their assessment they need to understand what they are expected to do. The following three sheets have been designed to help students make progress from one age-group to the next.

### **Age-group 5-7**

#### **What can good RE students do?**

1. **Good RE students** can tell the difference between ordinary everyday things and things that some 'people call 'sacred', 'holy' or 'special'. They understand that many people belong to religions / worldviews, each of which has their 'holy' or 'special' things, which are set apart by the way they are treated and what people connect them with.
2. **Good RE students** can recognise that people sometimes give different meanings to words when they are writing about their religious beliefs and feelings. They can suggest different possible meanings for stories, symbols, art and music that people have created to express their beliefs.
3. **Good RE students** can identify characteristics in the lives of people who are held as examples by religions / worldviews. They can identify and suggest meanings for the teachings about right and wrong from different religions / worldviews.
4. **Good RE students** can give examples of amazing, puzzling or mysterious experiences that make people wonder at the world and ask big questions about life. They can retell a story about someone whose experience or encounter changed their life.
5. **Good RE students** can identify evidence of religions / worldviews in their community. They understand that religions / worldviews do not have the same importance for all people and all places.
6. **Good RE students** can identify some of the big questions that people might ask about life and can explain how some favourite stories, including stories from religions / worldviews, might help people answer these questions. They can tell the difference between contemporary stories and stories that have become traditional because they have been handed down for hundreds or thousands of years.

### **Age-group 7-11**

#### **What can good RE students do?**

1. **Good RE students** identify shared characteristics of religions. They explain how within each religious tradition these characteristics might be connected to each other. They recognise that each religion / worldview is made up of several groups of people and can compare some of the different beliefs and practices.
2. **Good RE students** Good RE students can show how people often express their feelings and beliefs through art, music, poetry, story, drama and physical movement and that these have been important in most religions and culture.
3. **Good RE students** explain how certain people who are regarded as role models for people of particular religions / worldviews put their teachings and values into practice. They compare some of the different opinions held by people from different religious and non-religious groups about what is right and wrong, about what is good and bad, and about what is desirable in life.
4. **Good RE students** explain how some people have amazing, puzzling or mysterious experiences that make them ask big questions about life and, in some cases, have made them change their lives or given them new insights to share with others.
5. **Good RE students** give examples to show how communities are influenced by their traditional religions / worldviews. They understand that different religions / worldviews, in different combinations, are influential in different countries.

6. **Good RE students** explain how people from different religions / worldviews express what they understand about the world through stories.

### Age-group 11-14

#### What can good RE students do?

1. **Good RE students** understand that religion is a world-wide phenomenon. They explain why in some ways each religion / worldview is quite different while in other ways there are close connections between some of them. They understand that religions / worldviews are made up of smaller groups which are alike in some ways and very different in others.
2. **Good RE students** show how people communicate complex ideas using many media. They account for the fact that people have different opinions about whether the arts have a place within religion. They suggest interpretations of selected expressions of faith and belief.
3. **Good RE students** explain why people have different opinions about what it means to live a good life. They compare guidance for living found in different religions / worldviews and can show how different consequences can follow from different moral decisions.
4. **Good RE students** compare experiences that people have had, which they thought of as 'mystical', 'religious', 'spiritual' or 'peak' experiences. They compare different meanings for 'spirituality' and different opinions about its importance in people's lives.
5. **Good RE students** compare the influence of religions / worldviews in different contexts; individual, local, national and global. They demonstrate understanding of the influence of one or two religions / worldviews in different places and at different times.
6. **Good RE students** compare the view of the universe in contrasting grand narratives. They are able to explain the difference between scientific and traditional narratives and that there are different views on whether these can be compatible. They are able to explain that there are different ways of understanding the claims of religious texts.

### Age-group 14-18

#### What can good RE students do?

1. **Good RE students** understand that the word 'religion' means different things to different people and that it is often hard to say what is 'religious' and what is not. They suggest ways in which religions / worldviews are both similar and different. They understand the importance of recognising that religions / worldviews are diverse and that they respond in different ways to contemporary global, political and social issues.
2. **Good RE students** distinguish what makes 'religious language' different. They understand why the ability to interpret non-verbal forms of religious expression and its importance for religions can be valuable for all people today.
3. **Good RE students** consider different theories about how and why humans ought to live a good life. They show awareness that religious and non-religious groups agree on some moral issues and disagree on others, both across and within religions / worldviews. They understand that people may argue that there are some moral rules that should apply universally, or that some rules only apply to some groups of people in particular circumstances.
4. **Good RE students** compare religious and non-religious understandings of 'spirituality'. They understand why many people today prefer to be thought of as spiritual rather than religious while others do not want to be thought of as either. They understand why many people like belonging to groups that share their beliefs and values.
5. **Good RE students** make links between ideas in religions / worldviews and certain social and political actions. They compare the use of power by different religious and non-religious groups, which have resulted in social improvement or intolerance and violence.

6. **Good RE students compare** different interpretations of a grand narrative from within a religion / worldview. They are able to explain the difference between scientific and traditional narratives, and the relevance of different literary forms. They compare the views of members of a religion who believe that their narrative is compatible with scientific accounts and those who do not and explain reasons for this difference of opinion.

## APPENDIX 3

### BIG IDEAS (BI) and the NATIONAL ENTITLEMENT (NE) commended by the RE Commission<sup>26</sup>

<b>BI</b>	<b>NE</b>
<p><b>BIG IDEA 1: Continuity, Change and Diversity</b></p> <p><i>Religions / worldviews involve interconnected patterns of beliefs, practices and values. They are also highly diverse and change in response to new situations and challenges. These patterns of diversity and change can be the cause of debate, tension and conflict or result in new, creative developments.</i></p>	<p>Pupils must be taught:</p> <p><b>NE2</b> about key concepts (including ‘religion’, ‘secularity’, ‘spirituality’ and ‘worldview,’ and that worldviews are complex, diverse and plural.</p> <p><b>NE3</b> the ways in which patterns of belief, expression and belonging may change across and within worldviews, locally, nationally and globally, both historically and in contemporary times.</p> <p><b>NE4</b> the ways in which worldviews develop in interaction with each other, have some shared beliefs and practices as well as differences, and that people may draw upon more than one tradition.</p>
<p><b>BIG IDEA 2: Words and Beyond</b></p> <p><i>Many people often find it difficult to express their deepest beliefs, feelings, emotions and religious experiences using everyday language. Instead, they may use a variety of different approaches including figurative language and a range of literary genres. In addition, people sometimes use non-verbal forms of communication such as art, music, drama and dance that seek to explain or illustrate religious or non-religious ideas or experiences. There are different ways of interpreting both verbal and non-verbal forms of expression, often depending on a person’s view of the origin or inspiration behind them. The use of some non-verbal forms of communication is highly controversial within some religious groups, particularly their use in worship or ritual.</i></p>	<p>Pupils must be taught:</p> <p><b>NE5</b> the role of religious and non-religious ritual and practices, foundational texts, and of the arts, in both the formation and communication of experience, beliefs, values, identities and commitments.</p>

<sup>26</sup> The Big Ideas and the National Entitlement Statement can be linked with disciplines commonly used in the study of religions / worldviews.

BI 1/NE 2,3,4 Religious Studies, Theology, History, Geography and Sociology

BI 2/NE 5 Literary and Textual studies, Languages, Ritual Studies, the Creative Arts (and Theology and Religious Studies)

BI 3/NE 7 Ethics, within Philosophy, Theology and Religious Studies

BI 4/NE 6 Psychology, Philosophy, (and Theology and Religious Studies)

BI 5/NE 8 History, Sociology, Politics, (and Theology and Religious Studies)

BI 6/NE 1 Theology, Religious Studies, Philosophy, Natural Sciences

Understanding of all six Big Ideas are enhanced by direct encounter and discussion with individuals who hold these religions / worldviews in addition to using written academic resources.

<p><b>BIG IDEA 3: A Good Life</b></p> <p><i>Many people, whether religious or not, strive to live according to what they understand as a good life. Religious and non-religious communities often share an understanding as to the sort of characteristics and behaviours a good person will seek to achieve, as well as dealing with what is, or is not, acceptable moral behaviour. The ideal is usually presented in the lives and character of exemplary members. There are points of agreement and disagreement over the interpretation and application of moral principles both across and within different religions / worldviews.</i></p>	<p>Pupils must be taught:</p> <p><b>NE7</b> the different roles played by worldviews in the lives of individuals and societies, including their influence on moral behaviour and social norms.</p>
<p><b>BIG IDEA 4: Making Sense of Life's Experiences</b></p> <p><i>Many people have deeply felt experiences, which they may refer to as being religious or spiritual or simply part of what it means to be human. These experiences can take place in both religious and non-religious contexts and may produce a heightened sense of awareness and mystery, or of identity, purpose and belonging. The experience is sometimes so powerful that it transforms people's lives. As a result, people may change their beliefs and allegiances and on rare occasions the experience of a single person has led to the formation of a new religion / worldview.</i></p>	<p>Pupils must be taught:</p> <p><b>NE6</b> how worldviews may offer responses to fundamental questions of meaning and purpose raised by human experience, and the different roles that worldviews play in providing people with ways of making sense of their lives.</p>
<p><b>BIG IDEA 5: Influence and Power</b></p> <p><i>Religious and non-religious communities interact with wider society and cultures. These communities affect societies by shaping their traditions, laws, political systems, festivals, values, rituals and the arts. The patterns of influence vary significantly in different societies and at different points in time. Some communities are influenced predominantly by one religion / worldview, others by several or many. Religions / worldviews often appeal to a highly respected authority or vision, and this can have significant impacts on societies and cultures, whether positive or negative.</i></p>	<p>Pupils must be taught:</p> <p><b>NE8</b> how worldviews have power and influence in societies and cultures, appealing to various sources of authority, including foundational texts.</p>
<p><b>BIG IDEA 6: The Big Picture</b></p> <p><i>Religions / worldviews provide comprehensive accounts of how and why the world is as it is. These accounts are sometimes called 'grand narratives'. They seek to answer the big questions about the universe and the nature of humanity. These narratives are usually based on approaches to life, texts or traditions, which are taken to be authoritative. People interpret and understand these traditions in different ways.</i></p>	<p>Pupils must be taught:</p> <p><b>NE1</b> about matters of central importance to the worldviews studied, how these can form coherent accounts for adherents, and how these matters are interpreted in different times, cultures and places.</p>

The National Entitlement also included a ninth statement on processes / methods:

Pupils must be taught *'the different ways in which religion and worldviews can be understood, interpreted and studied, including through a wide range of academic disciplines and through direct encounter and discussion with individuals and communities who hold these worldviews'* (NE9).

In this publication and its predecessor, we have limited ourselves to Big Ideas that enable selection of content, and have not included Big Ideas relating to methods. We took this decision because we believed that questions of methodology distracted from our main concern, which is the use of Big Ideas to prioritise what substantive knowledge should be included in schemes of learning for RE. We plan to leave methodological questions open for further development.



## THE WRITING TEAM

Putting Big Ideas into Practice for Religious Education was conceived and written by Barbara Wintersgill with assistance from Denise Cush and Dave Francis.

### Denise Cush

Denise Cush is Professor Emerita of Religion and Education, Bath Spa University, where she was Head of Department of Study of Religions. Her interests include Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity and alternative spiritualities such as Paganism, as well as religious education internationally. She was Deputy Editor of the British Journal of Religious Education until 2019, and was a member of the national Commission exploring the future of religious education in England (2016-2018). She has an MA in Theology from Oxford University, an MA in Religious Studies from the University of Lancaster, a PhD in Religious Education from the University of Warwick, and an honorary doctorate from the University of Uppsala. She has also been an RE teacher and trainer of both primary and secondary teachers. Publications include *A Student's Approach to Buddhism*; *Celebrating Planet Earth, a Pagan/ Christian Conversation: First Steps in Interfaith Dialogue* (ed.); *The Routledge Encyclopaedia of Hinduism* (ed. with Robinson & York); and many articles and book chapters on aspects of religious education.

### Dave Francis

Dave Francis was the Associate Adviser for Bath & North East Somerset SACRE and Deputy Chair of the Religious Education Council of England and Wales (REC). He is a former Chair of AREIAC and Lead Consultant for RE:ONLINE. He worked as a teacher of RE for 14 years, including ten as Head of a Department of Religion, Philosophy and Social Education, and has published several RE text books, as well as practical guides for primary and secondary RE teachers on assessment, ICT, self-evaluation and developing an effective curriculum. He continues to offer a range of continuing professional development training events in RE and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

**Barbara Wintersgill** is an Honorary Research Fellow of the College of Social Sciences and International Studies at the University of Exeter. She was the Professional Officer for religious education (RE) at the National Curriculum Council (1990–93) and then at the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority (1993–97). In 1997, she was appointed by Ofsted as HMI and Specialist Subject Adviser for RE and continued in this post until taking early retirement in 2005, after being diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. She has come out of retirement numerous times to work on projects for Ofsted, the REC, the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for RE, Warwick University and the University of Exeter. Her professional interests include research and development of the curriculum and assessment in RE and teenagers' spirituality. She has written numerous papers, contributed to a number of books, most recently 'Government national agencies for inspection and curriculum development' (with Alan Brine) in *Religion and Nationhood* (ed. Gates) and is the author of *Teenage Perspectives on Spirituality* (Kindle).

## AFTERWORD

Working on the development of Big Ideas for RE and their value as a foundation for planning and assessing pupils' learning has been exciting, challenging and rewarding. We hope that teachers and all those involved in writing RE curricula will find it both thought provoking and of practical help.

Book 2, *Putting Big Ideas into Practice in Religious Education* has been published on-line rather than in hard copy because we see it both as a work in process and as a handbook, from which teachers of different age groups will want to use some sections but not others.

Unlike Book 1, Book 2 was written after the publication of the Report of the Commission on Religious Education (CoRE) and in the light of this report we have used the term 'religions / worldviews' throughout to refer to institutional and personal philosophies of life. We find the word 'worldviews' to be a helpful and flexible term that is inclusive of both religious and non-religious approaches to life. Nevertheless, to move directly to the term 'worldviews' from 'religions' may be too dramatic a shift for many curriculum designers, so we have settled for 'religions / worldviews' in the present context.

### A work in progress

This is not to suggest that the book is unfinished; rather that there is more that could be included.

1. **Process**<sup>27</sup>: on pp.3-5 we explain the important distinction between disciplinary and substantive knowledge and their relative contributions to Big Ideas. We recognise that disciplinary knowledge, which is reflected in the Big Ideas, should include both the *processes* deployed by the various disciplines concerned with the study of religion and religions / worldviews and the *new knowledge and understanding* that results from the application of these processes. We have to date focused on the knowledge and understanding and not so much on the processes. There are two reasons for this:
  - a. The processes deployed in the study of religions inform teaching and learning, which are not the immediate priority of this publication, which has been to show how the Big Ideas may be used as criteria for the selection of substantive knowledge.
  - b. When we investigated the processes / methodologies developed for the study of religion in higher education, we found that a deep understanding of religions / worldviews can only be achieved via a polymethodic approach, drawing upon a wide range of disciplines, which can be adapted for use in school-level study.<sup>28</sup>
2. **Programmes of learning/units of work**: In Chapter 7 we include two illustrative units of work and two assessments to illustrate how planning can be based on the Big Ideas. These illustrate in part our thinking on process. We intend to develop further examples of long, medium and short term planning. We also invite teachers who would like to contribute examples of planning to contact us at [barwintersgill@gmail.com](mailto:barwintersgill@gmail.com)
3. **Keeping the Big Ideas under review**: An important aspect of Big Ideas is that, since they emerge from disciplinary knowledge, they must be reviewed regularly to ensure that they reflect new knowledge and understanding (pp.3-5).
4. **Tools not categories**: Big Ideas are intended to be helpful as criteria for selecting content in RE. They are not meant to be treated as fixed and unchangeable categories. The danger might be to treat the Big Ideas as representing inflexible targets for pupils' learning (see Chapter 5 for ideas on how the Big Ideas for RE can be used to develop appropriate assessment).

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<sup>27</sup> By process we mean 'the methods employed to study religions / worldviews'.

<sup>28</sup> See, e.g. Freathy et al (2015) *The RE-searchers: a new approach to primary religious education*. Exeter: University of Exeter.

## What's new?

When teachers and syllabus writers decide to develop their RE curriculum around Big Ideas, what should be different from before?

1. A broad and balanced curriculum. There are six Big Ideas and together, in our view, they provide the basis of RE curricula that are fit for young people of the 21st century and the world they inhabit. The six form a coherent whole: none are optional. RE curricula based on the Big Ideas should show the following characteristics. They:
  - a. include elements of all six Big Ideas for each age-group
  - b. reflect a range of disciplines from which RE takes its content (principally religious studies and theology, but also drawing on history, philosophy, phenomenology, ethics, sociology, anthropology (including ethnography), psychology, textual studies / literary criticism, creative arts and media studies)
  - c. extend pupils' understanding of religions / worldviews by including countries beyond the UK.
2. Relevance. In both the curriculum and teaching it should be clear to adults and pupils why it is so often claimed that RE is an essential subject in the curriculum because religions / worldviews play a central place in world affairs. Schools adopting the approach advocated in 'RE live' will make regular reference to reports in the media of stories involving religions / worldviews.
3. Depth. Planning is based on questions derived from the age-group narratives of the Big Ideas involved. This leads to pupils investigating topics from several angles, including personal perspectives, and thereby appreciating the complex nature of religions / worldviews and their place in the world.
4. Continuity. The Big Ideas provide continuity and coherence from one age-group to another and from specific year to year. The transferable questions are also threads that connect age groups.
5. Progress. Pupils make progress at each age-group by achieving the understanding set out in the age-group narratives for the six Big Ideas. The project identifies seven areas in which pupils can demonstrate that they have made progress (pp.7f).
6. A clear and rigorous new approach to planning. The age-group Big Ideas and the questions arising from them ensure that work is appropriate for the age group and keeps pupils' work focused on the aims and purposes of RE.
7. Raising the bar for students aged 11-19. An RE curriculum for 11-14 year olds based on Big Ideas should set more demanding targets for pupils than has often been the case. The Big Ideas for students aged 14-18 offer a new approach to RE for pupils who are not taking the subject at GCSE. In time, we propose that GCSE specifications more closely reflect the Big Ideas approach.

## Contributing to the Big Ideas project

Anyone wishing to ask questions or to contribute units of work or other proposals should contact Barbara Wintersgill at [barwintersgill@gmail.com](mailto:barwintersgill@gmail.com). Any material published will be attributed to its author.