



Big Ideas for Religious Education



BRINGING BIG IDEAS TO LIFE: MEDIUM TERM PLANNING

The bridge between the Big Idea and the substantive knowledge for pre-school children is the learning objective in the left-hand column of the table below.

The Practical Ideas right hand column draws largely on Gill Vaisey’s curriculum support documents (used with kind permission) and in particular her [Religion and Worldviews and EYFS 2021 and Development Matters 2020 \(England\)](#). Some further suggestions have been added also.

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

Learning objectives, helpful resources and practical ideas for Ages 3-5

BI 4: MAKING SENSE OF LIFE’S EXPERIENCES: AGE-RELATED BIG IDEA FOR AGES 3-5: <i>Throughout history people have had special, puzzling and mysterious experiences which have changed their lives.</i>	
Sample resources	
This Big Idea focuses on the wonders and mysteries of the world and children’s own experiences.	
TrueTube: ‘Charlie and Blue’ videos, e.g: ‘Charlie and Blue ask about Allah and Creation’ .	
If you have, or can buy, Gill Vaisey’s publications, e.g., the Belonging and Believing series, they will also be useful here.	
Similarly, the University of Birmingham project, ‘Gift to the Child’, Series 1 (Simon & Schuster, 1991), can be used to explore stories from Christianity, Islam and other traditions about ‘Angels’, or the amazing experience of Guru Nanak in the Court of God, in ‘Nanak’s Song’. Download the pupils’ books from here >>	
RE Today also has relevant lesson ideas in the Primary RE Books, e.g., the appearance of an angel to Mary, before the birth of Jesus in ‘Christmas’ in the ‘RE Ideas’ series, or the story of Abraham who experienced the voice of God in ‘Spiritual Development’ in the same series.	
Many ‘non-religious’ stories for children also explore the mysterious ‘spiritual’ dimensions of life, e.g. ‘Can’t You Sleep, Little Bear?’ by Martin Waddell and Barbara Firth: www.youtube.com/watch?v=u1aJimzuzbg	
YouTube: ‘Short Stories for Kids: the Importance of Earth Day’	
CBeebies: My First Festivals - Harvest: www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/watch/my-first-festivals-harvest	
Children will be learning:	Practical ideas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> about feelings and reactions to the wonders and mysteries of the natural world 	<p>Provide opportunity for children to develop curiosity and a sense of awe and wonder, mystery and spirituality connected with the natural world, e.g. through direct experience of being outside in a variety of weather conditions and seasons, first-hand experience with animals and birds, and through video, photographs, and books.</p> <p>Ask children to respond to stories about feelings such as ‘Can’t You Sleep, Little Bear’.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> stories about life-changing or mysterious 	<p>Tell and explore two or three stories from different traditions that involve puzzling or amazing experiences that changed people’s</p>



Big Ideas for Religious Education



<p>experiences and asking their own questions about them</p>	<p>lives, e.g. Guru Nanak, the appearance of an angel to Mary, before the birth of Jesus, or to Muhammad, telling him to read the words of Allah, or to Husayn-‘Alí / Bahá’u’lláh whilst he was imprisoned (see sample resources above).</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• about some beliefs and traditions, both religious and non-religious, that are linked to celebrations of the natural world	<p>Consider what might be done to celebrate ‘Earth Day’ by showing a short film such as the one on YouTube (see Sample resources above).</p> <p>Explore some annual festivals that are connected to the natural world, such as Harvest Festival. Start with the CBeebies film.</p> <p>Gill Vaisey’s Belonging and Believing series features a variety of religion and belief families with a focus on caring for the natural world. For example, you could use the book Belonging and Believing: My Christian Family and PowerPoint teaching and learning resources to focus on Vesper and her family’s belief about God and the natural world.</p> <p>Use Belonging and Believing: My Humanist Family and accompanying teaching and learning PowerPoint resources to explore Wilf’s family’s beliefs about relationship with and responsibility towards the natural world.</p> <p>The Tiny Ants and /or Seven New Kittens story book and cross-curricular activity packs can be used to explore and respond to Muslim beliefs about caring for the natural world and The Baby Birds book and puppet will encourage thinking about the importance of careful actions towards living creatures.</p> <p>Similarly, the story ‘Puddles and the St Francis Service’ can help children reflect on Christian beliefs on ‘stewardship’ and caring for all animals. Through the story, explore how some Christians celebrate the value and love for animals through a special church service.</p>
<p>TRANSFERABLE QUESTION</p> <p>What feelings do we have in response to different experiences?</p>	