



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 Education: the EYFS 2025 Framework and Development Matters 2023](#). 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 2: WORDS AND BEYOND: AGE-RELATED BIG IDEA FOR AGES 3-5

People communicate and express their religious beliefs and worldviews in a variety of ways.

Sample resources

This Big Idea focuses on the creative aspect of religious beliefs and worldviews, and there are lots of opportunities for children to express their own creativity.

TrueTube: 'Charlie and Blue' videos, e.g.: '[Charlie and Blue hear all about Hindu Worship](#)'.

Explore the symbol of the Christ the Teacher icon using REonline's lesson guide:

www.reonline.org.uk/resources/signs-and-symbols-what-do-they-mean-to-a-believer/

If you have, or can buy, Gill Vaisey's publications, e.g., the [Belonging and Believing](#) series and [Celebrations and Special Days](#) and [Puddles \(Christian festivals\)](#) 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 sounds with a spiritual meaning, e.g., 'The Call to Prayer' or 'Hallelujah'. Download the pupils' books from [here >>](#)

RE Today also has relevant lesson ideas in the Primary RE Books, e.g., 'Celebration' and 'Expressive Arts' in the 'RE Ideas' series.

NB Practitioners should be mindful of the backgrounds of their pupils and consider that use of imagery of religious figures is not encouraged / supported in some religious traditions / worldviews.

Children will be learning:

- that religious beliefs, signs, symbols, words, stories, books, artefacts, buildings, festivals, celebrations, food, art, music, dance, actions and drama are diverse and should be treated with respect

Practical ideas

As appropriate, provide opportunity for children to explore and experience activities associated with the symbols, stories, festivals and art etc of two or three religions / worldviews, whilst being mindful of any sensitivities and local interest.

Explore a particular symbol in some detail, e.g., the Icon of Christ the Teacher (see Sample resources above).

Provide opportunities for children to respond creatively to the celebration of festivals through art music, dance, writing etc.

Also explore the different times which children celebrate through the year.



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that there is a variety of ways in which people communicate and express their feelings, beliefs and worldviews, including without words and/or writing	Provide opportunity for the children to experience times of stillness and quiet reflection. Create a quiet reflection area within the classroom. Reflect on times and activities they enjoy. Explore the senses in relation to Hindu worship, e.g., in the 'Charlie and Blue' short film (see resources above).
that some sounds, speech, signs, symbols, artefacts, clothes, buildings, festivals, celebrations, food, art, music, actions, dance and drama may have a deeper 'spiritual' meaning	Hear and become familiar with stories, messages, actions and thoughts connected with secular celebrations and religious festivals. Reflect on how they and others are involved in celebrations at home, school and places of worship. Develop knowledge of when celebrations occur by displaying a calendar of special events. Mark the special events relevant to particular children in the class. Share stories about different aspects of the Christian faith and the significance of these to faith adherents e.g. Harvest, Christmas, Easter, St Francis Service, Weddings, Infant Baptism and helping others (see Resources above). Explore the meaning of the Hebrew word 'Hallelujah', that is, 'Praise God'; Play a short recording of a spontaneous singing of 'Hallelujah', e.g. www.youtube.com/watch?v=kdsnx3RydFc. Tell the story of Handel, the composer of 'The Hallelujah Chorus' and talk about 'welcomes' for a visitor and make a list of joyful words. Play a version of the Hallelujah Chorus from Handel's 'Messiah', and some other joyful chants and songs. Encourage children to relate the music to important events in people's lives.
to express some of their own ideas about the world in a variety of ways (e.g., art, dance, drama).	Encourage children to enjoy being with others and expressing how they feel during activities such as singing, dancing, playing games, listening to and participating in storytelling. Encourage the children to express their feelings on festival celebrations through creative arts.

TRANSFERABLE QUESTION

What does it mean?