**RE-Live Mini-Schemes of Learning: Written by Amy Trevethan, Gordano School**

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| **pupils** | | **AMV unit & Areas of Enquiry** |
| **Key stage** | **3** | **5. How are religions and beliefs portrayed in the media? [C&E]**  **This unit explores how big questions of faith and truth are portrayed in a variety of media**   1. Is reporting in the local and national press, radio and television  on religion and beliefs fair and accurate? 2. How do religious groups use the media today? What are the  potential benefits and problems of this? (E.g. Internet, television,  radio, press and arts) 3. What criteria can we use to analyse the portrayal of religion  and beliefs in the media? 4. How would I portray religion and beliefs through a variety of media? |
| **Year** | **8** |
| **Term** | **5** |
| **Focus:** | Christianity and Islam |
| **AGE-RELATED big ideas**  **BI2: WORDS AND BEYOND**  *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.* | | |
| **TRANSFERABLE QUESTIONS** Is the media fair to religious belief?  How can we analyse the ‘fairness’ of media which references religion?  Does the media reflect or shape culture?  How are the texts of religions / worldviews to be interpreted? | | |
| **Learning objectives:** Using various sources and examples students will explore how religion is portrayed in the media and whether it is ‘fair’ and balanced to those religions.  Pupils will learn:   1. how a wide range of texts and other forms of expression are used to convey the key concepts of religions / worldviews 2. why various forms of expression, particularly texts, are believed to be divinely revealed 3. why texts and other forms of expression are subject to a range of interpretations. | | |
| **Suggested learning activities FOR FINDING AND USING KNOWLEDGE** | | |
| **Preparation** These lessons make use of several films to which you will need access and permission to use ‘for educational purposes only’ in your setting: *Bruce Almighty*, *The Lion King*.  [Resource 1: PowerPoint with several activities as in the scheme below](http://awarenessmysteryvalue.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/REL-3051-Res1.pptx)  [Resource 2: Hijab information](http://awarenessmysteryvalue.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/REL-3051-Res2.docx)  Students need to have access/ knowledge of how to use the internet. | | |
| **TOPIC-RELATED QUESTION**  **BI2, TRQ4:** How do individual artists and writers use their arts to express feelings, experiences, ideas and beliefs in ways that inspire others?  **Lesson 1**   1. Introduce topic: Religion in the Media. Explain that students will explore many different types of media and how it uses or refers to religion. Students will look at examples from Christianity and Islam. 2. Ask students what they think media is – create a Mind Map of different examples and discuss which types of media might be more influential on different types of people. Then discuss and categorise examples, e.g. Bruce Almighty (film), Soap Opera (television). 3. Ask students what makes a piece of ‘media’ religious and whether religion has to be implicit/ explicit. Discuss whether in media it is acceptable to joke about belief and religion. Explain that for some people their religion and their holy scriptures are ‘who they are’, i.e. their identity and meaning in life. Ask students whether this makes a difference to ‘how far’ a joke can be taken. Are there no limits? If there are limits, where should they be drawn? 4. Show clips from the Lion King (Simba’s escape and return to Pride Rock). Ask students to identify where feelings, experiences, ideas and beliefs are being featured. [Res 1, Slide 1] Then ask whether they think there are any references to any religious (Christian) figures – [Like Moses Simba is raised by others, e.g. Timon and Pumba but then returns to fight for his pride, like Moses leads his people from slavery]. Discuss what motivates Simba to return to Pride Rock, e.g. Family/ lineage/ rightful king/ he is grown up and no longer scared of his uncle. Ask students to consider why these values are important to Simba. Link this to themselves – what values do they hold as individuals – why? 5. Then show the soup / Red Sea clip from Bruce Almighty and ask again whether they see any religious references. Ask students what this clip relates to and how do they know? What does it express about God, e.g. Christians believe God is omnipotent – how might parting a sea evidence this? How is parting the soup a key moment for Bruce? How does this clip help him realise that he now has God’s powers? 6. Explain references / background to Moses in both clips. Ask students whether knowing the story of Moses would impact how someone viewed each clip. Ask them whether they consider the Lion King to portray a religious figure or whether this is tenuous. 7. Ask students to consider whether a piece of media can still have an impact on you whether you know the religious references or not. Ask them to consider whether cartoons can be just as impactful as films / documentaries or not. How are the producers of these films using their creativity to INSPIRE people? Or is it all ‘just entertainment’? Consider whether religion can be found everywhere and whether it is inevitable or not that we are influenced by it in film and TV. | | |
| **TOPIC-RELATED QUESTION**  **BI2, TRQ4:** How do individual artists and writers use their arts to express feelings, experiences, ideas and beliefs in ways that inspire others?  **Lesson 2**   1. Explain that huge diversity exists within religions. Demonstrate this first by asking students to identify difference between themselves and others in the room (appearance, likes, dislikes, personality etc – not even identical twins are exactly the same) therefore neither are believers. 2. Now look at some optical illusions and use an example of a glass and discuss the concept of glass half full/ half empty, e.g. people can look at the same thing and see differently. 3. Students to complete sheet [Res 1 – Slides 2&3] what do they think the quotes mean? Why doesn’t everyone agree? In what way might the quotes seem contradictory or different? How might a believer decide what to follow or how to treat the environment? 4. Discuss the concepts of literal and symbolic interpretations especially in monotheistic faiths and how some religious people/ groups consider religious texts to be divinely inspired and others literally the words of God/s. Ask the students to discuss in pairs or small groups such questions as (i) what might convince someone that a certain text is divinely inspired, (ii) the difference between a literal and symbolic interpretation of text, (iii) what might be meant by ‘symbolic truth’. Get feedback from the class and bring out points about the reliability of evidence and witnesses, interpretation of poetry and how symbolism in art can work to reveal ‘truths’ about life, the human condition and so on. The Qur’an and Bible can be used as examples. 5. Finish by looking at the painting ‘Jesus on the Tube’ by Antonia Rolls and ask students what messages / feelings / experiences / ideas / beliefs they think the painter was trying to get across. Point out that no one really knows what Jesus looked like and ask them how they knew which one he was. Explain the symbolism of the halo – a symbol used for holiness and enlightenment in many religions. What else do you see in the picture that could be challenging us to think more deeply about life? Why is Jesus looking directly at the viewer? Look at new interpretations of the painting. Who are the other people in the carriage? Do these change what is being put across? [Res 1 Slides 4&5] The artist is a Christian herself; does this make a difference to your understanding of the painting? Do you find the paintings *inspiring* in any way? What might viewers be inspired to think or do? 6. Homework: find out more about Antonia Rolls here: <http://antoniarollsartistextraordinaire.blogspot.com/2013/01/i-am-going-to-introduce-you-to-phase-of.html> and compose a question to ask about her art work. | | |
| **TOPIC-RELATED QUESTIONS**  **BI2, TRQ2:** Why may some non-text items be given a particularly high status? [ In this case – certain items of female attire in Islam] and also **BI2 TRQ3:** Why are certain texts and objects subject to such a wide range of interpretation?  **Lesson 3**   1. Briefly recap on the symbolism in the art studied in the last session and ask for feedback on Antonia Rolls’ work. Point out that she has also done a lot of work on helping people with addictions and that a lot of her work has a moral and compassionate dimension. Collect the questions students have composed and choose one or two to send to her at: [agd@antoniarolls.co.uk](mailto:agd@antoniarolls.co.uk) 2. Explain that today’s session investigates symbolism in the clothing people wear and why that might be particularly important to some people. 3. Look at a range of images of people wearing head coverings. [Res 1 Slides 6&7]. Ask students to identify which they think are Muslims – why? Ask how students made their decisions and what might have influenced them. Reveal and discuss why some generalisations and assumption might have been made. Identify women who are Muslims who do not wear a head covering. Ask students why some might choose to wear or not wear a hijab – emphasise that for many Muslim women there will be a sense of ‘choice’ rather than ‘force’ which might be the impression given from the UK media. Show students different versions of traditional Islamic dress. [Res 1 Slide 8] 4. Explore extracts from the Qur’an relating to modesty. Res 1 Slide 9 for students and Res 2 to support teacher. Discuss why this might lead to different interpretations. 5. Watch the video from ‘Good Morning’. How do both individuals use Qur’anic scripture to come to different conclusions about clothing? [www.youtube.com/watch?v=EtPzU41og-Q&t=195s](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EtPzU41og-Q&t=195s). Consider a programme such as ‘Good Morning’: they might feel it their responsibility to show ‘both sides’ of the argument – is two sides enough? 6. Ask students why Muslims might have differing interpretations of the Qur’an and therefore how this might relate to their beliefs/ values and how they live their life. Consider also the arguments arising from video and the veil [Res 2] as an item of ‘cultural significance’ rather than distinctly ‘Islamic’. Ask students whether this matters. Perhaps relate to their lives, e.g. Traditions they may have at Christmas or birthdays that others might too and then those which might be more unusual or unexpected. Discuss whether it matters if cultural tradition and religious tradition come together - could be linked to the idea that Jesus may have been born in the spring and not in December yet the date of 25th is used because of the link to Pagan festivals. 7. Finish by looking at an article relating to burkinis in France. France has a ban on all religious symbols. Discuss whether France is justified in doing this. Discuss what messages / feelings / experiences / ideas / beliefs come out of the article. [Res 1 Slides 10&11] | | |
| **TOPIC-RELATED QUESTIONS**  **BI2, TRQ1:** How are texts used to express beliefs, values, commitments and identities? and **BI2 TRQ3:** Why are certain texts and objects subject to such a wide range of interpretation?  **Lesson 4**   1. If you have had a reply from Antonia Rolls, discuss briefly with the class, reminding them of how artists find ways to express different beliefs, values, commitments and identities – and to inspire other to reflect more deeply about different aspects of life. 2. Look at a recent tweet from Justin Welby [Res 1 Slide 12]. Ask students if they know who this person is, whether the Archbishop of Canterbury should have twitter, is this a good way to promote LGBT rights etc. 3. Is a ‘tweet’ from a religious leader different to a quote from a religious leader during a service? Why might this be the case? Can tweets be just as authoritative as scripture? Is a tweet from a vicar/ priest/ imam more important than a lay believer? 4. Complete ranking activity [Res 1 Slide 13] – Why might some be regarded as more important or ‘authoritative’ than others? 5. Look at some key quotes in the Qur’an. Discuss how and why they might be interpreted differently [Res 1 Slide 14]. 6. Discuss misconceptions and recent media coverage of connections between Islam and terrorism / extremism. Draw a comparison with the Ku Klux Klan e.g. they identify as a Christian, yet are a white supremacist group or the 696 movement in Buddhism which is a nationalist anti-Islam group. Demonstrate that terrorism and extremism exist in every tradition and world religion. Discuss what principles extremists might be ignoring or be influenced by. Ask the students why they think Islamic extremism seems to get the most coverage in the UK despite extremism being present in all world religions and belief systems. 7. Introduce a fairly recent news event: Ariana Concert explosion. Ask students what they know about event and who was responsible – link to above discussion. Read newspaper article to students or students read themselves [Res 1 Slide 15] – how has it been portrayed? Has it been emphasised enough that this was an extremist group and does not represent the huge majority of Muslims? 8. Show students a range of responses from the Muslim community [Res 1 Slides 16-18]. What message are they trying to get across? Why was it necessary to comment on something they play no part in? What values and beliefs are put across in their statements and how does this differ to what the original article says and general portrayals of Islam in the media? How do religious groups themselves make use of text and social media to argue their case? | | |
| **BI2, TRQ4:** How do individual artists and writers use their arts to express feelings, experiences, ideas and beliefs in ways that inspire others?  [Returning to this question of how individual artists, musicians etc use their arts, gives a good direction to the investigation in this lesson.]  **Lesson 5**   1. Show students a range of famous contemporary people who had a religious upbringing / belong to a faith / belief system e.g Gigi Hadid (model), Zayn Malik (One Direction), Stormzy (singer), Stephen Fry (humanist). Ask students to discuss whether these people belong to a religion / belief system and whether they promote a positive view of their faith in the media.   Computers needed:   1. Ask the students to research how a local church / religious figure uses social media, e.g. do they have a website / twitter etc. What are the benefits and problems of this? 2. To help students to do this first model using MLKJ’s famous “I have a dream” speech. Ask students to record his beliefs and what influences his beliefs, e.g. his Christian faith. 3. Ask students to research the twitter of some famous religious people and complete the table – how does their faith influence them on social media? [Res 1 Slide 19] | | |

**ASSESSMENT**

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| **Big Idea 2 (KS3)**  **Pupils understand:**   1. how a wide range of texts and other forms of expression are used to convey the key concepts of religions / worldviews 2. why various forms of expression, particularly texts, are believed to be divinely revealed 3. why texts and other forms of expression are subject to a range of interpretations. | |
| **Assessment task**  Students are asked to design their own piece of ‘media’ which fairly portrays an aspect of religion.  The purpose of this task is to establish whether all or most students have grasped how to analyse the portrayal of religion and beliefs in the media using a variety of criteria and how they would portray religion and beliefs through a particular media. | |
| **COGNITIVE PROCESSES** | **ACTIVITIES** |
| Understanding, Analysing and Evaluating | **Part A:**  Choose from 5 different media sources based on work we have previously done. Annotate the source considering the following success criteria:   1. Is there a clear / obvious religious view or idea? 2. Does it have more than one point of view or interpretation? (Is it balanced?) 3. Does it refer to a religious teaching / text / belief or key figure? (supported by evidence) 4. Who is the source for? (intended audience) 5. Does it take into account the deeply held beliefs, ideas, experiences and feelings of believers? 6. Is it likely to cause extreme offense to anyone? (is it extreme?) |
| Applying and Creating | **Part B:**  Edit or create your own source based on Part A.  Explain in detail how you will ensure the media / source is fair and how it may be a source of inspiration for others and the source will impact beliefs, ideas, experiences and feelings. |