Teaching about Religion in English Faith and non-faith Schools

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UK Primary schools

- Community schools (state funded and run)
- Faith schools (to varying degrees run and funded by religious communities)
- Independent schools (independently funded and run)

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Level		Key Stage	School Year	Age	Exam
Primary	**Infant**	**KS 1**	**R** **1 + 2**	**4 - 5** **5 - 7**	SAT
	Junior	**KS 2**	**3 - 6**	**7 - 11**	SAT
Secondary		**KS 3**	**7 - 9**	**11 - 14**	SAT
		KS 4	**10 + 11**	**14 - 16**	GCSE
Further Education		**Sixth Form**	**12**	**16 - 17**	AS level
			13	**17 - 18**	A2 level

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THE NATIONAL ENTITLEMENT TO THE STUDY OF RELIGION AND WORLDVIEWS

Pupils must be taught:

1. 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
2. about key concepts including 'religion', 'secularity', 'spirituality' and 'worldview', and that worldviews are complex, diverse and plural
3. 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
4. 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
5. 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
6. 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
7. The different roles played by worldviews in the lives of individuals and societies, including their influence on moral behaviour and social norms
8. How worldviews have power and influence in societies and cultures, appealing to various sources of authority, including foundational texts
9. 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

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What is RE aiming to do?

- A. **Know about and understand** a range of religions and worldviews.

- B. **Express ideas and insights** about the nature, significance and impact of religions and worldviews.

- C. **Gain and deploy the skills** needed to engage seriously with religions and worldviews.

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RE is NOT :

- Religious <u>Instruction</u>
- Faith Nurture
- Indoctrination
- Scripture
- Bible Study
- Just moral education

RE in community schools should not be nurturing *into* a religion

RE is :

- Religious <u>Education</u>
- Concerned with the spiritual and moral <u>Development</u> of the child
- Concerned with multi-cultural anti racist education
- And multi-faith RE
- Concerned with the present

RE in community schools- Learning *about* and *from* Religion

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Collective Worship:
SOME DEFINITIONS AND DISTINCTIONS

ASSEMBLY

A gathering together of a group of people (most schools have regular assemblies)

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

The gathering together of the spiritually diverse members of the school community for worship (most schools)

CORPORATE WORSHIP

The gathering of members of the same faith community for the purpose of worship (faith schools eg Cof E,Catholic, Muslim

DETERMINATION Schools with a high proportion of non Christian children can opt out of the 'broadly Christian' worship clause

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

A set syllabus written by a SACRE to be followed in RE lessons. Can be based on two strands: learning *about* religion and learning *through* religion.

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THE AIMS OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

The aim of collective worship is to provide the opportunity for pupils to:

• worship God

• reflect on values that are of a broadly Christian nature and on their own beliefs

• develop a community spirit, a common ethos and shared values

• consider spiritual and moral issues

• respond to the worship offered (in a way which is appropriate to them eg a Catholic/Muslim/ Methodist may pray to God, an atheist may consider the message of the worship.

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What makes good Good Collective Worship?

- **Explore**

- **Engage**

- **Express**

- Possible Websites:

- www.assemblies.org.uk

- www.culham.ac.uk

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Pedagogical Strategies in RE

- 10

Pedagogical strategy 1:
    Learning about Religions

Pedagogical strategy 2:
    Learning from Religion

Teece (2015:18)

Elton-Chalcraft, S. ed
(2015)

Teaching RE creatively

Abingdon: Routledge

http://www.brownsbfs.co.uk/Product/Elton-Chalcraft-Sally/Teaching-religious-education-creatively/9780415742580
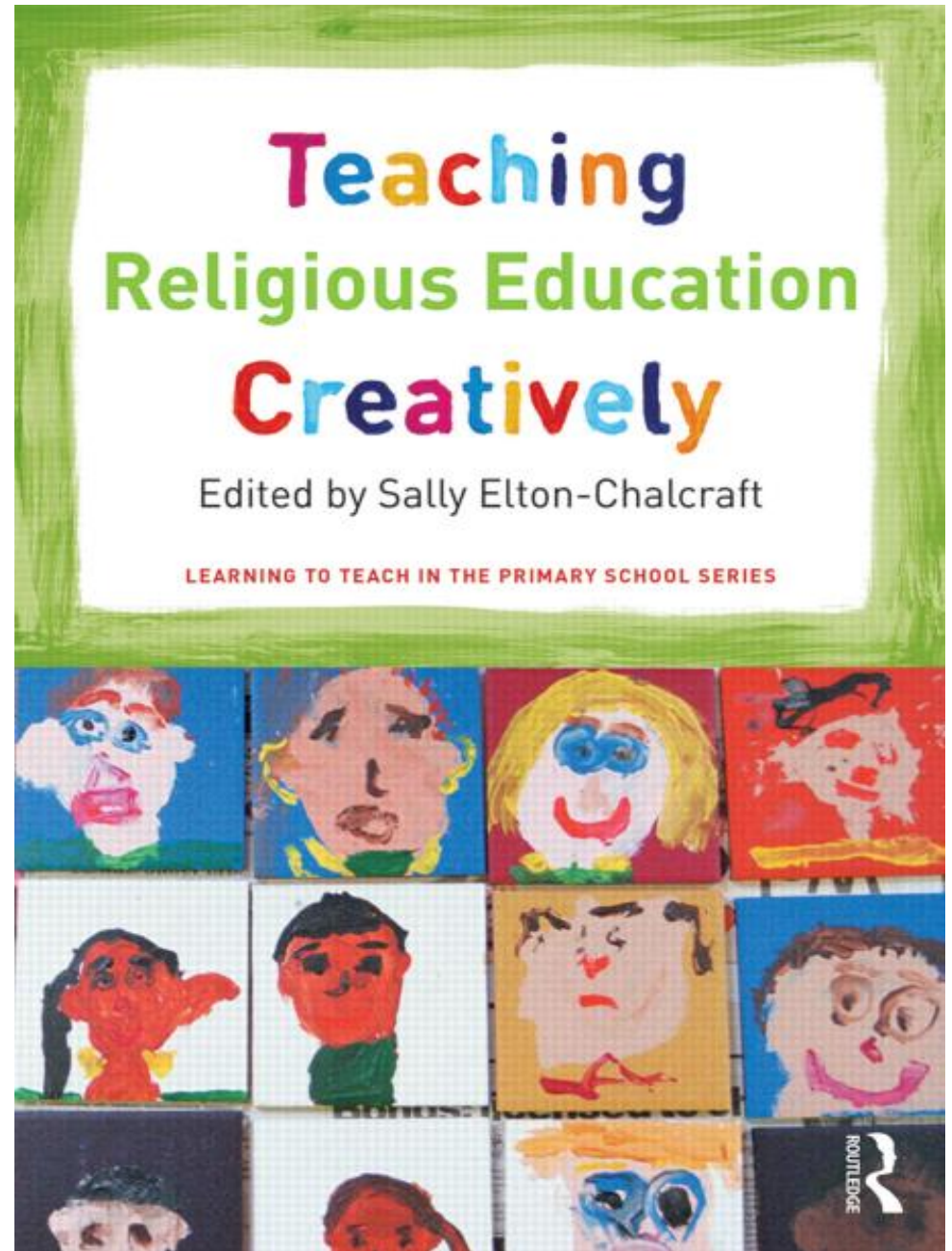
AT1:Learning about Religions REC framework (2013)

This includes the ability to:

- identify, name, describe and give accounts in order to build a coherent picture of each religion

- explain the meaning of religious language, story and symbolism

- explain similarities and differences between, and within, religions

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AT2:Learning from Religion

This includes the ability to:

- give an informed and considered response to religious and moral issues;

- reflect on what might be learnt from religions in the light of one's own beliefs and experience;

- identify and respond to questions of meaning within religions

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Learning intention vocabulary

- AT1
- Explore, Express, Interpret
- Enquire, Investigate, Analyse

- AT2
- Reflect, Examine, React
- Respond, Consider, Apply

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Possible Approaches in teaching RE

Westhill – 3 circles (Grimmit 1999)

- Shared human experience,
- traditional belief systems
- Individual patterns of belief

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Food in RE

- List your favourite 3 meals
- List 3 food you don't eat
- Discuss in 2s or 3s why you chose the foods in the first and second lists
- In groups of 4 or 5 compare what you and others eat and reasons why
- In your group of 4 or 5 list reasons why people eat or don't eat certain foods

Elton-Chalcraft (2015:13)

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Food choices

- List all the reasons why people eat or don't eat particular foods

- Discuss reasons: medical (allergies), preferences (appearance, texture, taste), religious, cultural, bad/good experiences or memories, availability, cost, political etc.

- Encourage the children to evaluate their own biases and preferences in a different light (for example would they eat snake, octopus, seaweed, human?)

- Encourage children to put themselves into the shoes of another. Why would other people not eat what they eat? (For example why do some people not eat meat or fish, or not eat dairy and meat dishes at the same meal?)

Elton-Chalcraft (2015:13)

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BRINGING IN SHABBAT

Concept of God in Hindu Tradition

Copy from the board

Stick person

video

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Hindu tradition concept of 'god'

- Concept of God
- Many Hindus believe in One God (Brahman) – there are various aspects/ deities (try to avoid the terms 'gods')

Teaching : One God many aspects

- Draw a picture of yourself
- Around it list different people you come into contact with/ different roles you have
- 'Anuj' video exemplifies the concept of God many Hindus hold
- Make a display of the Hindu deities/ gods. Adding each deity as they are studied in turn.

Child as agent in their own learning

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RE as Transformative

Looking at different perspectives

- Inclusion
- Equality
- Celebrating difference

The transformative power of RE and a critical multiculturalist standpoint

Next slide: your first response…..

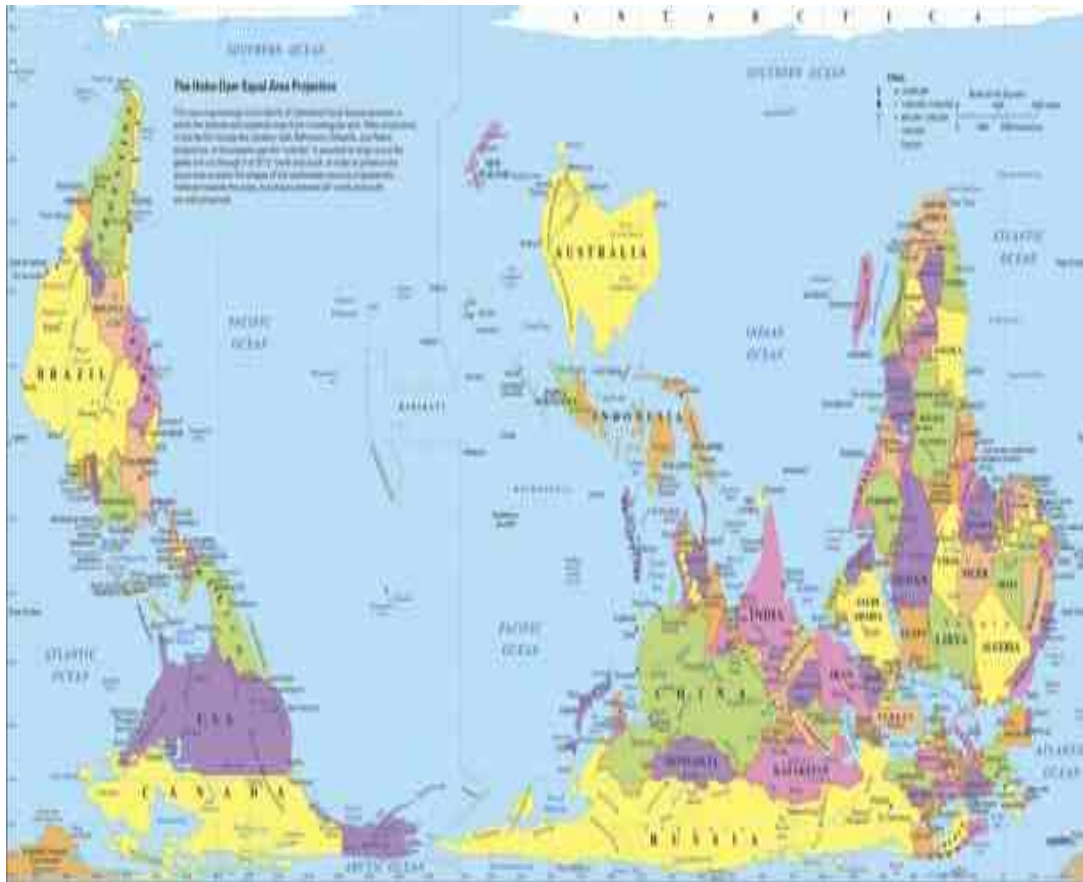University of Cumbria

Anti racist RE

Persona Dolls

- learning about

the traditional belief system of Sikhs

- Individual patterns of belief

Exploring Bullying

- Adopting an anti racist stance

Attitudes: White western patriarchal standpoint- prevents inclusion

- **Consider the unintended consequences of the materials, references and examples used in teaching**
- **Indirect discrimination** is subtle and usually unintended but may present a learner from engaging fully with a subject (hidden curriculum/ ethos of the school)
- **Need to consider** all equality and diversity strands, resources used – maps, dating systems BC/AD or BCE /CE etc

Attitudes (Elton-Chalcraft 2009: 82 adapted from Kincheloe and Steinberg 1997)

- **1) Conservative multi culturalists (mono culturalism)**
- are 'tokenist'. They attempt to address multicultural issues but deep down, they believe in the superiority of Western (white), patriarchal culture

2) Liberal multiculturalists

- are dedicated towards working to 'one race'. They attempt to gloss over differences in an attempt to make everyone equal and the 'same' ('they' are the 'same' as 'us' they just happen to be a different colour.)

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3) pluralist multiculturalism

- Pluralism becomes a supreme social virtue, diversity is pursued and exoticised. There is cultural 'tourism' where 'they' (as opposed to 'us') live in an exotic parallel world. (Eg Hannukha is the Jewish Christmas - neo colonialism.)

4) Left essentialist multiculturalists

- are extreme in promoting the minority culture; to the extent that the dominant culture is seen as 'bad' and the marginalised as 'good'.

- White youngster Darren Coulburn killed Asian heritage Ahmed Iqbal Ullah

- (Elton-Chalcraft 2009)

The most appropriate stance:

- **5) critical multiculturalists** believe in the promotion of an individual's consciousness as a social being. They promote an awareness (self reflection) of how and why his/her opinions and roles are shaped by dominant perspectives. They appreciate that there are differences within as well as between cultures.

Developing spirituality and creativity

- Children search out a leaf, stone, twig etc outside their classroom

- Back in the classroom they look at it intently

- They close their eyes and through 'guided fantasy' (Stone 1995, Elton-Chalcraft, Hollander and Prescott 2015:88) they imagine the 'journey' of their leaf

This session

How does this session

- relate to your degree,
- your own belief system/ aspirations

Has it been useful ?

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