

# Acknowledgements

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# Section I: Program Overview and Rationale

## Vision Statement

The Newfoundland and Labrador religious education curriculum is shaped by a vision of enabling and encouraging students to grow religiously, spiritually and morally into informed, caring and contributing members of society, who appreciate their own beliefs and values, and the beliefs and values of others, and who understand the contribution that Christianity and other religions make to human life.

## A Rationale for Religious Education

*Because religion plays significant roles in history and society, study about religion is essential to understanding both the nation and the world. Omission of facts about religion can give students the false impression that the religious life of humankind is insignificant or unimportant. Failure to understand even the basic symbols, practices, and concepts of the various religions makes much of history, literature, art, and contemporary life unintelligible. (Warren A. Nord, Charles C. Haynes, *Taking Religion Seriously Across the Curriculum*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 1998, p. 36.)*

Since time immemorial people have had a quest for the spiritual side of existence and the purpose of life. From early humanity up to the present age the religious realm has continued to occupy people's thoughts and influence their behaviour. In the western world our society and culture have been greatly influenced and shaped by the Judaeo-Christian tradition. Beliefs have evolved and traditions have varied but the religious component of humanity has continued to survive. It has been instrumental in determining attitudes toward God (Ultimate Reality) and attitudes and approaches toward the world in which we live. Now, in the twenty-first century the majority of the world's population continues to believe in a spiritual side of humanity.

Fundamental questions about life continue to be asked. From a young age, children set out on a quest for answers, not always simple answers but answers relating to the profound questions of life and life beyond. This quest is lifelong and includes a search for answers related to questions about the purpose of life, where we fit into the scheme of things, what is the ultimate mystery which embraces our entire existence, what makes us different from other living things, what the source of suffering is, how happiness can be found, what happens after death, and other fundamental questions. These are questions addressed by all major religions and, because of their importance, they are given attention in a K-12 curriculum. While a religious education program should provide a forum to address such questions, it must be noted that central to the faith development of the young person is the family and faith community. The religious education program can support the role of each, where appropriate. Students should be given structured and unstructured opportunities to search in their own religious heritage for the answers to these questions, and to compare these with the answers or frameworks provided in other religious traditions.

In their search for meaning students will develop an awareness of what it means to be human and the inherent responsibilities which come with this. Out of this realization should come a sense of value for humanity and all of creation. In their personal search for meaning it is important that students acquire the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to interpret religious ideas. They need to see themselves as an integral part of creation. When this conclusion is reached behaviour and attitudes toward all creation will be caring and affirming. The religious education curriculum can help students explore their role in the natural order.

In a world that is truly multi-cultural and multi-faith it is important that each person can value and celebrate his/her own faith (religious heritage or commitment). However, with accurate information about other religions the individual should recognize that others have religious beliefs that they value and celebrate as well. Religious and denominational intolerance will be eliminated only when people are more understanding of the intrinsic worth of religious views and traditions that are not their own. An effective religious education program gives accurate information and demonstrate respect for all world faiths.

M. Stackhouse in *Creeds, Society and Human Rights* writes:

*Persons demand beliefs; societies need convictions; and civilizations require a basic social ethical vision by which to guide behavior.* (M. Stackhouse, *Creeds, Society and Human Rights*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1984, p. 4.)

Most of the values and morals upheld by any society have their origins in religious teachings. Through discussion and study of various issues confronting society, students will be in a better position to develop a value system and adopt moral standards that give them principles by which to live. Students will come to understand and appreciate that most religions have sacred writings and all teach values, ethics and morals.

There are other considerations for the importance of religious education being included in the curriculum.

- Religion has been a determining factor in history and in our cultural heritage. Major decisions have been made in light of religious teachings. While it is true that at times religions have been responsible for conflicts in the world it is also true that they have served to bring about resolutions, peace, and social justice. Our students need to be aware of the role religion has played historically. An effective religious education program will enable the student to understand and appreciate the relationship between religion and history.
- Religion is also a large contributing factor in current national and international events. By coming to a realization of the importance of religion in these events the student will better understand some of the underlying causes and complexities.
- Consideration and recognition should be given to the impact

According to John M. Hull:

Religion is too important a part of history, culture, and current experience of [humankind] to be left to believers alone. There is a role for the school in preparing pupils to take an informed and thoughtful part in a pluralistic society. When the society contains not one but several religions, the need for a thoughtful study of religion becomes greater, not less. (“Religious Education in a Pluralistic Society”, *Studies in Religion and Education*. London: Falmer Press, 1984, p. 48.)

and contributions made by religion in the areas of literature, architecture, art, music, film, and theatre.

- Young people develop intellectually, physically, emotionally, socially, and spiritually. It is important to have a religious education component in the school because the school addresses the development and education of the whole child.

*The Atlantic Canada Framework for Essential Graduation Learnings in Schools* states that the mission of Public Education is “to enable and encourage every individual to acquire, through lifelong learning, the knowledge, skills and values necessary for personal growth and the development of society.” In addition to the six Essential Graduation Learnings outlined elsewhere in the Framework, a specific Learning for Newfoundland and Labrador references: “*Graduates will demonstrate understanding and appreciation for the place of belief systems in shaping the development of moral values and ethical conduct.*” An effective religious education program contributes to this intended outcome. Also, there will be aspects of the religious education curriculum that support each of the Essential Graduation Learnings.

## Key Principles Underlying the Religious Education Curriculum

Students should be aware that religion influences local and global events. It is imperative that they be educated regarding other religions. They should acquire knowledge of the founders, beliefs, main practices, symbols and festivals of various religions. They should also understand the similarities and differences among the religions studied.

Throughout the ages, religion has had an influence on, and has been expressed through, the arts, including music, art, drama, literature, and architecture. As students study religious education, they also study history, music, literature, and vice versa.

This religious education curriculum acknowledges and supports the notion that young people have a spiritual dimension and grow spiritually as well as physically, emotionally, psychologically and intellectually.

This religious education curriculum acknowledges that the essence of all inter-faith dialogue is the awareness that human beings share essential truths and experiences that are much more important than those which divide them.

This religious education curriculum respects the place and role of family and faith communities as primary influences on the faith lives of young people. At the same time it acknowledges the complementary and supplementary role of partnership that the school can play in the

*(For information and theories on spiritual and moral development the following authors are recommended: Fritz Oser, James Fowler, Lawrence Kolberg and Carol Gilligan.)*

spiritual, moral, and faith development of young people.

Through their study, students should come to appreciate the intrinsic worth of each religion for its adherents.

## Meeting the Needs of all Learners

While there are outcomes pertaining to belief systems other than Christianity at all primary levels, it is recognized that any formal study of these may be very challenging for primary children. However, teachers are encouraged to be inclusive of other faiths, to help children appreciate differences in beliefs, and to ensure that any information given about other faiths is accurate. Any methodology used must be pedagogically and developmentally sound.

## Multi-Faith Approach

In this regard, teachers are strongly encouraged to avail of community resources for materials to support these goals. Adherents of the various faith communities, if available, can be sources of information, stories and symbols. Suitable materials may be available in school resource centres, public libraries or on the Internet.

Seven major living belief systems and Aboriginal Spirituality are included in the religious education primary program with a different focus at each grade level: Kindergarten - *Celebrations!*, Grade 1 - *Symbols and Sacred Places*, Grade 2 - *Traditions and Practices*, Grade 3 - *Many Friends, One World*.

If teachers are aware of students in their class whose family is an adherent of a living belief system not included in the program, they are encouraged to include these as part of the program.

## The Religious Education Learning Environment

An effective learning environment will be one where sensitivity and respect is shown for all religious traditions. The learning environment should be such that it fosters in students a positive attitude towards other people and their right to hold different beliefs. It should prepare students for living in a society of diverse religions. Recognizing students' varying backgrounds and experiences, the religious education instructional environment must incorporate principles and strategies which support diversity while recognizing the varied learning styles, multiple intelligences, and abilities of the individual.

It is not enough, however, that students learn about other faiths. In addition to attending to the cognitive domain, the learning environment must be conducive to, and supportive of, the affective domain.



*Our pedagogy is to actively engage people's whole "being" in place and time - their physical, mental and volitional capacities, their head, heart and action, their intellect, desire, and will, their reasons, memory, and imagination, and enable them to reclaim their past, embrace their present, and take responsibility for their own and other's future. (Thomas H. Groome, *Sharing Faith, A Comprehensive Approach to Religious Education and Pastoral Ministry*. Harper, San Francisco 1991, p. 430.)*

Also, the learning environment has to be appropriate to the age and developmental needs of the student, with activities being student centered. It may include experiences through celebrations, festivals, food, drama and field trips. An opportunity for reflection is important. The learning environment, however, should be sensitive to aspects of any living belief system that can only be experienced and fully appreciated by adherents of that particular belief system. It should never be the intent to turn any of these celebrations or observances into "pretend" sessions. In many instances the teacher will have to decide to what degree practices or celebrations can be facilitated in the school with the sincerity, dignity, and reverence they deserve. Therefore, an effective religious education environment must be:

- student centered
- engaging and relevant
- respectful of diversity
- inviting and inclusive
- participatory, interactive and collaborative
- reflective and celebratory
- integrative
- challenging
- inquiry based

## **The Role of the Teacher**

It is the role of the teacher to create a supportive environment. The teacher of religious education:

- is a facilitator
- is not "all-knowing" about different religions
- uses people from the faith communities as resource people
- is sensitive to diverse religious beliefs
- fosters a sense of acceptance, trust and comfort in the classroom
- demonstrates a valuing of all learners
- helps each student form individual beliefs and attitudes
- allows time for reflection
- challenges students to act upon their learning
- provides time for students to ask questions

While it is understood that each teacher brings his or her own beliefs to the classroom, it should also be understood that a teacher should not make any attempt to promote or denigrate any student's beliefs. The teacher must not attempt to indoctrinate or proselytize.

There is no one best way to teach. Effective instruction encompasses a variety and combination of approaches - within a program, within a course, within a unit, within a lesson.

## Instructional Strategies

Effective instruction facilitates, promotes and results in student learning. Effective teachers know how to adapt their strategies to meet a wide variety of student needs. Effective teachers make decisions about curriculum selection, organization and implementation based on sound research and a wide range of practical and theoretical knowledge. They engage the student in the learning process. Effective instruction begins with the assessment of student learning needs, interests and abilities, continues with planning and delivering instruction in an appropriate manner. It includes monitoring student growth and understanding, concludes with evaluating student progress and achievement in preparation for the next learning experience.

Instructional strategies should vary so that there is opportunity for direct instruction, seatwork, assessment, cooperative small group work, and learning beyond a prescribed text. No matter what the instructional strategy, assessment, especially formative assessment, should be ongoing. The learning activities and instructional strategies occurring in classrooms should promote a school climate where teachers and learners collaborate about learning. The climate teachers create in any class should foster a sense of acceptance by teachers and peers, as well as a sense of comfort and order. Such a climate is enhanced when time is provided for students to ask and answer questions; when teachers restate/rephrase questions for a student; when teachers guide a student in finding solutions to problems assigned; when teachers acknowledge the worth and dignity of a particular response.

It is important that general and specific curriculum outcomes be used as reference points for planning learning experiences. There are many options for instructional strategies that teachers may select and combine in planning learning experiences for whole class, small group and independent learning. These activities should create learning communities that foster complex, creative, critical and ethical thought. Evaluation instruments should complement instructional strategies by encouraging thinking as well as the acquisition of information.

## Whole Class Learning

Whole class learning experiences often focus on an individual (teacher or student) or on a specific group. It may be used effectively to present strategies, provide information, or communicate directions. This approach is often used to introduce and support other methods of instruction. For example, instructions and explanations can be given to the whole class before they begin to work in smaller groups. Whole-class learning can also be used when the entire class is involved in a common process, for example, in sharing group or

individual experiences, or in planning and making decisions about a class project or other shared learning experience.

Whole-class learning activities include the following:

- questioning and discussion
- demonstrations and presentations
- modelling
- lectures
- mini-lessons
- overviews and outlines
- planning, reflecting on, and evaluating learning

Whole class learning often involves direct communication between a speaker or speakers and an audience by making statements, giving information and directions, or explaining procedures. The information and directions presented in a whole class setting can provide students with necessary support as they become self-directed learners. Demonstrations, for example, provide students with both verbal and non-verbal information.

Although large amounts of information transmitted by lecture may not always be retained, mini-lessons, which are short periods of whole class instruction, provided as the need or opportunity arises, can challenge the imagination, stimulate reflection, and develop a sense of inquiry. They can provide a forum for critical thinking and challenge students to revise and extend their own knowledge base as they encounter the practices and beliefs of others.

### **Small Group Learning**

Small group experiences should be planned to help students learn how to interact effectively and productively as members of a group or team. Group work will decrease students' dependence on the teacher and increase positive interdependence. As groups take on various learning tasks, students will develop and consolidate the skills, abilities, and attitudes involved in group processes. Group processes require students to:

- participate, collaborate, co-operate, and negotiate
- consider different ways of going about a task
- discuss, brainstorm, react, and respond
- build on their own ideas and extend the ideas of others
- share their own expertise and employ the expertise of others
- establish group goals
- identify and manage tasks
- identify and solve problems
- make decisions
- pace projects, and establish and meet deadlines
- respect varying leadership and learning styles
- be sensitive to non-verbal communication — their own and others

- recognize the responsibilities and dynamics of working in groups and make use of their understanding
- assess their own contributions and use feedback from the group to improve their performance

Small group learning experiences demonstrate to students how their patterns of learning, experience, and expertise are different from and similar to those of others. As students become more aware of their individual strengths as learners, they will become better equipped to deal with the demands placed on them by independent learning tasks.

## Independent Learning

Learning is both personal and social. Religious Education recognizes the diverse interests, learning styles, prior knowledge, experiences and beliefs students bring to the classroom. Providing opportunities for independent learning is one of many strategies teachers can use to help students learn. Through the study of various religious beliefs and practices, students will be in a better position to make informed decisions and choices.

Classroom time can be organized to provide students with opportunities to conduct research, confer with peers and with the teacher, prepare reports and presentations, present the results, and evaluate their progress and achievement in independent learning. Such learning experiences will help students to reflect on their own learning strategies and will promote their progress toward becoming independent learners.

Independent learning fosters the development of individual student initiative, responsible decision making, self reliance and independence. It encourages learners to effectively organize and pace their learning. This type of learning may be individual or it may include learning in partnership with others. The teacher and/or the student (under the teacher's guidance), may determine the description and conditions of the task(s). Independent learning allows students to explore in depth personal interests related to educational outcomes. It motivates learners to make connections to their everyday lives and see the relevance of what they are learning. Such learning experiences will help students to reflect on their own learning strategies and will promote their progress toward becoming independent learners. Independent learning can be used in conjunction with other methods. It requires careful monitoring and regular feedback to the learner(s) to be effective.

Independent learning includes:

- homework
- projects

- reports
- essays
- assigned questions
- learning contracts
- learning centres
- computer assisted instruction

### **Indirect Instruction**

Indirect instruction is generally student-centered and involves inquiry, discovery and induction. It seeks a high level of student involvement in observing, investigating, forming hypotheses and drawing inferences from data. Indirect instruction encourages students to generate alternatives and/or solve problems. It frees students to explore diverse possibilities and reduces the fear associated with giving incorrect answers. Indirect instruction fosters creativity, and develops research skills. Learners, because of their explicit contact with subject matter, are better able to understand the material, concepts and ideas under study, and to apply previous learning to new situations. The teacher facilitates the activities, acts as a resource person, arranges the learning environment, provides opportunities for student involvement, and gives feedback to students during the course of their inquiries. Indirect instruction relies on a variety of resources. In order to get optimum results from the indirect method, direct instruction may need to be used to teach requisite skills/processes/procedures.

Indirect instruction includes:

- problem solving
- guided inquiry
- case study
- reflective discussion and questions

### **Direct Instruction**

Direct Instruction is teacher centred and is commonly used to describe a process, present strategies, provide information and to communicate directions. Direct instruction is deductive. It presents the rule or generalization first and then illustrates with examples. Direct instruction can be used to introduce and support other methods and strategies of instruction.

Direct instruction includes:

- lectures
- questioning
- explicit teaching
- guided practice

## **Experiential Learning**

Experiential learning is inductive, student centred, activity rich and multi-sensory. Experiential learning may require the application and consolidation of previous knowledge, skills and values to a new situation and/or may emphasize the acquisition of new knowledge, skills and ideas. Experiential learning can occur both inside and outside the regular classroom setting. It can involve first hand experiences, such as going whale watching, hands-on experiences, reproduce religious symbols with clay and/or vicarious experiences such as exploring art through the Internet. Current technology permits numerous simulations to be shared through various media such as DVDs, videos, cassettes, and computer programs. School visitations by outside resource people can also provide excellent opportunities for learners to connect learned information to real life situations. Students are more motivated to learn when they actively participate. Experiential learning increases student understanding and retention.

Experiential learning includes:

- role playing
- simulation
- experimenting
- field trips
- learning centres

## **Interactive Instruction**

Interactive instruction relies on discussion and sharing among participants, and allows students to react to the views, ideas and experiences of others. It permits the generation of alternate ideas and insights, and provides opportunities for students to develop social and interpersonal skills with peers, teachers and others. Interactive instruction encourages the organization of thoughts and the development of rational arguments. It allows students to learn to refine their observation, listening, interpersonal and intervention skills. The success of interactive learning depends on the skills of the teacher in structuring and facilitating the activity and responding appropriately to the characteristics and dynamics of the group(s). Interactive learning permits a range of groupings.

Interactive instruction includes:

- whole group discussion
- small group discussion
- conferencing
- mentoring
- dialogue
- brainstorming
- interviewing

**Selected Instructional Strategies***Problem Solving*

- application of knowledge, skills, ideas, resources and processes to generate one or many solutions to a problem
- may follow the scientific method
- can be a practical skill
- may include strategies such as “trial and error”, “brainstorming”, “what if/I suppose”, “attribute listing”, “forced relationships”, “idea check list” and “imaging”

*Concept Attainment*

- students are provided with data about a particular concept generated by themselves or their teacher and are encouraged to classify or group the information and to give descriptive labels to their groupings.
- students link the examples to the labels through their own reasoning and form their own understanding of the concept
- students participate actively in their own learning
- students organize and manipulate information
- students create new and expanded meaning of their information

*Inquiry*

- elements of inquiry include thinking, reflecting, developing relevant questions and planning appropriate strategies for generating answers and explanations
- allows students to experience and acquire processes through which they can gather information about the world in a variety of ways from a variety of sources
- allows for a high level of interaction among the learner, teacher, the area of study, available resources and the learning environment
- allows students to act upon their curiosity and interests
- encourages students to formulate questions and analyse situations/problems/information
- calls upon prior learning
- encourages hypothesis development and testing (new questions and hypotheses often emerge as the inquiry continues)
- students make inferences and propose solutions
- students realize that there is often more than one answer to a question; more than one solution to a problem.

*Questioning*

- can be used to diagnose recall and comprehension skills
- can be convergent and/or factual

*Links to Other Curriculum Areas*

*Students should be provided with opportunities to explore connections among curriculum areas. Specific links can be found in Column 4 of the two-page spreads of this curriculum guide.*

- may draw on prior learning experience
- can determine the extent to which lesson outcomes are being achieved
- provides practice
- aids retention of information or processes
- stimulates thinking
- encourages expression
- can be empirical
- can be conceptual

*Explicit Teaching*

- direct telling
- making statements
- giving information or directions
- explaining procedures
- is largely teacher-centred
- can be large group or small group
- can be used to motivate the learner
- may stimulate reflection
- can challenge the imagination
- may develop curiosity and a sense of inquiry
- may include teacher talk; lecture approach; mini-lessons; instruction giving

*Demonstrations*

- can provide verbal and non-verbal information, techniques and procedures
- can illustrate the end product of a process
- can provide a model for reproducing a procedure or creating a product
- can involve the collection and organization of materials
- allow students to receive information through tactile and visual means

*Guided Practice*

- can be individual, student centred and needs based
- may be small group
- used to monitor student performance and practices (e.g., signs of respect, appropriate behaviour)

*Simulation*

- allows for types of experiments/activities that cannot take place in the real environment
- an artificial problem situation or event is presented which



represents some aspect of reality

- removes risk and reduces safety considerations
- the level of complexity is purposefully reduced so that students may become directly involved with underlying concepts
- may involve the use of models, game formats, structured role play or an interactive video or computer program

### *Authentic Experiences*

- are real life learning experiences that require careful planning
- factors such as safety, liability, weather, transportation costs, time and availability have to be considered
- may include field trips, school visitations by outside resource people, surveys, and field observations

### *Role Play*

- is the spontaneous or practiced response to a given situation or theme where the learner attempts to speak, feel, behave like the character they portray
- is designed to illustrate situations in which the behaviour of individuals is the critical factor
- can be part of a game or simulation activity
- is an approach to addressing interpersonal problems and practicing social and communication skills
- allows for high level of student engagement
- promotes independent and self-determined behaviour
- promotes increased understanding of the views, positions and feelings of others
- facilitates attitudinal and behavioural change
- encourages cooperation and sharing
- can be used to resolve decision-making dilemmas, resolve conflict, determine appropriate behavioural responses
- teachers must define the problem situation and problem clearly as well as give very clear instructions

### *Field Trips*

- involve teaching/learning activities at a site other than the classroom
- involve activities that are appropriate for learning outcomes
- require careful planning in order to make the link to learning outcomes
- should spark student interest, discussion, questioning
- may provide “hands on” experience
- may involve application of previous knowledge or acquisition of

- new knowledge
- should involve follow up such as reports, discussions, and/or evaluation
- reflect the real world and put learning in the context of the community
- broaden the student's view

### *Assigned Questions*

- students are provided with a set of questions related to new or previously learned material
- may be a component of problem solving
- may be a component of critical thinking
- may be used for reflection and self-evaluation
- may be an element of programmed instruction
- may be used in guided inquiry
- may be used as the starting point for cooperative group learning
- may be used to guide/direct learning, exploration, experimentation, and/or observation

### *Projects*

- teachers should provide examples of any projects required and clearly discuss all guidelines
- include assigned tasks that provide an opportunity for all learners to consolidate/synthesize learning from a number of disciplines or experiences
- usually involves learners, alone or in small groups, working on a task for an extended time period (the actual time frame may depend to some degree on the ages of the learners involved), usually to produce a tangible product such as a model, a demonstration, a report or a presentation
- may be used to relate knowledge to their own experiences and/or to the broader community
- may involve research
- usually involves extending/enriching/reinforcing learning
- should be focused (e.g., subject matter concept, interdisciplinary theme, action projects)
- should include clearly defined task descriptions such as: interview, compare opinions, make a model, find contrasting views on, create a dramatic presentation
- should include a criteria for planning and evaluation
- students should clearly understand the requirements of the project
- should include clear time lines, and ongoing progress reports

### *Computer-Assisted Instruction*

- an instructional mode which incorporates the computer into the lesson plan
- can include word processing, drill and practice, tutorial, problem solving, critical thinking, creativity, simulation
- may be an independent or cooperative small group learning
- may be appropriate for individualizing instruction
- fosters active involvement
- allows for independent and collaborative decision making
- appropriate for programmed instruction

### *Learning Contracts*

- teacher may initially provide terms and conditions, identify resources and set basic time lines
- the student, parents and other professionals may be involved in designing the contract (such as expectations, conditions, evaluation criteria, time frame, consequences)
- provide a method of individualizing instruction
- can be designed so that students operate at the academic level and the pace most suited for them
- can help students make reasoned choices, become increasingly independent learners and take responsibility for their own learning

### *Conferencing*

- occurs when teachers meet with individual or small groups of students to discuss learning tasks or concerns
- encourages students to talk about their work in a non-threatening low-risk environment where points of view are shared and respected
- allows for an open exchange of ideas between the teacher and the learner
- teachers can guide students and provide feedback
- encourages students to reflect on their learning, engage in self-assessment and make decisions on how to approach tasks
- is an appropriate setting for encouraging independence and promoting self-confidence

### *Brainstorming*

- a process of rapidly generating ideas or responses
- all contributions are accepted without judgement or comment (this includes nods of agreement) and without editing the words of the contributor (this includes "you mean to say....., or "this is the same as....")

- a means of extending boundaries and encouraging creative ideas
- a means of quickly getting a wide range of ideas on a topic or issue
- can be used as a precursor to refining or categorizing ideas/responses
- is intended to capitalize on the varied experiences, knowledge, and ideas of the group
- can be playful with many ideas encouraged and accepted

### *Cooperative Small Group Learning*

- an approach to organizing classroom activity so that students can work collaboratively and build on one another's strengths and ideas
- group members share clearly defined roles and are interdependent in achieving the main goal
- students learn the importance of respecting individual views and maintaining group harmony
- students must be working towards a common goal
- success at achieving the goal depends on the individual learning of all group members
- the teacher's role is primarily that of facilitator in guiding students as social groups and learning teams as they engage in activities such as identifying problems, generating solutions and practicing skills
- successful use of this method requires professional development and practice

### *Interviewing*

- involves individuals, pairs or small groups collecting information from peers, younger students, older students, and adults
- involves focused thought and active thinking to develop questions and explore ideas
- requires interpersonal and listening skills; the student must listen respectfully, react to, and interpret the views and experiences of others
- uses language to articulate and clarify one's thoughts, feelings, and ideas
- allows exchange of ideas, increased understanding and new awareness of a previous knowledge
- involves follow up activities

### *Personal or Self-reflection/Journaling*

- allows individuals to think about their level of knowledge, their beliefs and values
- facilitates personal goal setting and planning

- supports privacy
- respects the personal quality and uniqueness of the individual
- allows students to reflect on what they have learned or are about to learn
- allows students to pose questions and react to learning experiences

## Effective Assessment and Evaluation Practices

### Defining Assessment and Evaluation

Although assessment and evaluation are terms often used interchangeably, they are not the same. *Assessment* refers to the broader activity of gathering information on the full range of student learning in a variety of ways, so that a clear and valid picture emerges of what students know and are able to do in Religious Education. This assessment process should provide a rich collection of information that reflects students' progress in working toward achievement of learning outcomes and guides future instruction, where data from a variety of sources is collected. *Evaluation* involves reflecting on what students have learned for the purpose of sharing this information with them and with their parent(s), caregiver(s), and school administration.

Student evaluation is a process basic to teaching. Evaluation is not an add-on feature of instruction but an integral part of it, since the information it provides allows teachers to make adjustments to instruction and teaching methodologies.

Evaluation must be student-centered where the process and subsequent decisions reflect a genuine concern for each student.

Teachers have a responsibility to provide accurate, reliable and justifiable evaluations which do not undermine the integrity, self-confidence, or enthusiasm of students. Comprehensive evaluation involves the use of a variety of sources, is referenced to specific learning outcomes and ensures that the total growth of every student is recognized. (Adapted from *The Evaluation of Students in the Classroom: A Handbook and Policy Guide*)

### Understanding Process and Product

#### *Guiding Principles for Assessment and Evaluation:*

Assessment and evaluation processes and techniques should:

- determine whether the outcomes have been achieved.
- reflect the stated outcomes for the course.
- be an integral part of the teaching and learning process and of each component of the course.
- give all students the opportunity to demonstrate the

### **Diverse Learners**

*Each student is unique. Within any group of students a range of differences in rates and ways of learning, in experiences and interests are expected and respected. Unique qualities should be celebrated and built upon. A viable goal for each individual is to have equitable opportunity to experience success as he/she works toward the achievement of intended outcomes and a personal best. Improving performance and realizing potential is more important than competition and comparisons to others.*

achievement of outcomes.

- provide positive, instructive, and supportive feedback to students.
- invite and encourage student self-assessment and active participation.
- allow for a range of options to accommodate students' abilities to demonstrate the achievement of outcomes.

Evaluation deals with both process and product. Religious Education places emphasis on the affective domain and the process is as important as the product.

Product can be thought of as the *what* of learning. *What* is it students should know? *What* is it they should be able to do? These whats are typically spelled out in outcomes, whether they are based on a program, a course, a unit or a lesson. In a teaching episode which is focused on product, the ends may be evaluated without reference to the means.

Process refers to the procedure which students go through as they come to know, to value, and to be able to do. The emphasis in teaching shifts from a passing on of "*the what*" to the methods by which it is acquired and utilized. Students are taught to find information, to become autonomous thinkers, and to use knowledge to solve new problems and make decisions for themselves.

In the *two-page spreads* section of this curriculum guide there are specific suggestions for teaching and learning as well as suggestions for assessment. Many of these suggestions can be interchanged and used either as learning activities or assessment activities or both.

### **Identifying the Activity**

In planning for assessment the key question is: "What is the student expected to accomplish?" The answer to this question enables the teacher to choose or design appropriate means that allow the student to demonstrate this. The student will be expected to demonstrate knowledge, skills and abilities. The means can be multiple and varied: presentations, art work, dramatizing, charting or graphing information, locating and displaying information, demonstrating a skill, designing a product or a plan, drawing or graphing a concept a process, or an idea. The choice of means will depend on available resources including time and the type of learners and their strengths.

Teachers are encouraged to use assessment and evaluation practices that are consistent with student-centered instructional practices:

- negotiating and making explicit the criteria by which performance will be evaluated
- designing assessment tasks that help students make judgments about their own learning and performance
- designing assessment tasks that incorporate varying learning styles
- individualizing assessment tasks as appropriate to accommodate students' particular learning needs
- providing feedback on student learning and performance on a regular basis.

### **Assessment Strategies**

Assessment activities, tasks, and strategies include, but are not limited to, the following:

- anecdotal records
- audiotapes
- checklists
- conferences
- demonstrations
- exhibitions
- interviews (structured and informal)
- inventories
- investigations
- learning logs/journals
- media products
- observation (formal and informal)
- peer assessments
- performance tasks
- portfolios
- projects
- questioning
- questionnaires
- self-assessments
- seminar presentations
- surveys
- tests
- videotapes
- work samples
- written assignments

*There may be times when, through summative testing, teachers will want to provide students the opportunity to demonstrate growth in knowledge and understanding. Summative evaluation, however, must reflect the intention of the SCOs and must not be the only means of evaluation.*

Evaluation in Religious Education, is concerned with the development of the whole person in the cognitive, psychomotor, and affective domains.

The affective domain deals with feelings and emotions and is exemplified through students' attitudes, interests, value systems and appreciations.

One of the most effective sources of data for use in evaluating outcomes in the affective domain is observation. This method, utilizing appropriate recording devices such as rating scales, checklists and anecdotal records, enables the teacher to focus upon and record achievement in the affective domain. Other sources of evaluation data for the affective domain include self-reporting devices such as an attitude scale, where students respond on a continuum ranging from favourable to unfavourable, and individual inventories where students check their preference for, or attitude toward, an idea or activity.

In recognizing and valuing the diversity of students, teachers might consider ways to:

- provide a climate and design learning experiences to affirm the dignity and worth of all learners in the classroom community
- redress educational disadvantage - for example, as it relates to students living in poverty
- model the use of inclusive language, attitudes, and actions supportive of all learners
- adapt classroom organization, teaching strategies, assessment strategies, time, and learning resources to address learners' needs and build on their strengths
- provide opportunities for learners to work in a variety of learning contexts, including mixed-ability groupings
- identify and respond to diversity in students' learning styles
- build on students' individual levels of knowledge, skills, and attitudes
- design learning and assessment tasks that draw on learners' strengths
- ensure that learners use strengths as a means of tackling areas of difficulty
- use students' strengths and abilities to motivate and support learning



- offer multiple and varied avenues to learning
- celebrate the accomplishment of learning tasks that learners believed were too challenging for them

## Overview of Religious Education Programs in K-6

At the Primary level, the Religious Education program is designed to engage students in an experiential and inquiry based curriculum covering a variety of belief systems. The curriculum has been developed using narrative and informational writing styles, and where applicable, includes excerpts from sacred texts. The Elementary Religious Education program extends on students' experiences of the world's belief systems through a narrative format with engaging visuals and selections from sacred texts.

**Kindergarten: *Celebrations!* (CD, puppets, visuals, teacher guide)**

An exploration, through narratives, of a variety of special days, festivals and celebrations in various living belief systems from the perspective of a child adherent.

**Grade 1: *Sacred Places and Symbols* (DVD/CD-ROM, visuals, teacher guide)**

An exploration, through narratives and informative stories, of symbols, sacred places, and teachings in various living belief systems from the perspective of a child adherent.

**Grade 2: *Religious Traditions and Practices* (student and teacher texts)**

A presentation of narratives and informative stories, about the importance of religious traditions and practices in various living belief systems.

**Grade 3: *Many Friends, One World* (student and teacher texts)**

A presentation of narratives and informative stories about religious leaders and significant adherents from various living belief systems. The story characters include children, adults, local and community examples, and current and historical individuals.

**Grade 4: *Faiths of Friends* (student and teacher texts)**

*Journeys* is Book 1 of a three-volume collection of stories, story characters and visuals designed to introduce, extend and enrich elementary students' understanding of various living belief systems. *Journeys* includes Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

**Grade 5: *Faiths of Friends* (student and teacher texts)**

*Directions* is Book 2 of a three-volume collection of stories, story characters and visuals designed to introduce, extend and enrich elementary students' understanding of various living belief systems. *Directions* includes Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism and Sikhism.

**Grade 6: *Faiths of Friends* (student and teacher texts)**

*Horizons* is Book 3 of a three-volume collection of stories, story characters and visuals designed to introduce, extend and enrich elementary students' understanding of various living belief systems. *Horizons* includes Christianity, Islam, Aboriginal Spirituality and Bahá'í.



# Section 2: Curriculum Design and Components

## Introduction

This section provides

- information on the curriculum outcomes framework
- essential graduation learnings
- general curriculum outcomes statements
- key-stage curriculum outcomes statements
- an overview of the connection between essential graduation learnings and key-stage curriculum outcomes
- specific curriculum outcomes statements for primary religious education
- suggestions for teaching approaches, learning tasks, and experiences, and assessment strategies and activities

## Curriculum Outcomes Framework

### Essential Graduation Learnings

Essential graduation learnings are statements describing the knowledge, skills, and attitudes expected of all students who graduate from high school. They are

- cross-curricular
- the foundation for all curriculum development
- found on pages 24-26

### General Curriculum Outcomes

General Curriculum outcomes are statements identifying what students are expected to know and be able to do upon completion of study in religious education. These statements

- contribute to the attainment of the essential graduation learnings
- are connected to the key-stage curriculum outcomes for religious education
- are found on page 27

### **Key-Stage Curriculum Outcomes**

Key-stage curriculum outcomes are statements identifying what students are expected to know and be able to do by the end of grades 3, 6, 9, and 12 as a result of cumulative learning experiences in religious education. The key-stage outcomes

- contribute to the achievement of the general curriculum outcomes
- are found on pages 27-29

### **Specific Curriculum Outcomes**

Specific Curriculum Outcomes are statements identifying what students are expected to know and be able to do at a particular grade level. These outcomes

- contribute to the achievement of the key-stage outcomes
- are found on pages 33-50

## **Meeting the Essential Graduation Learnings Through Religious Education**

Essential Graduation Learnings are statements describing the knowledge, skills and attitudes expected of all students who graduate high school. These Learnings describe expectations not in terms of individual school subjects but in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes developed throughout the curriculum. They confirm that students need to make connections and develop abilities across subject boundaries if they are to be ready to meet the shifting and ongoing demands of life, work and study today, and in the future. Essential Graduation Learnings serve as a framework for the curriculum development process.

For graduates of the religious education program, the following connections to the Essential Graduation Learnings apply:

### **Aesthetic Expression**

Graduates will be able to respond with critical awareness to various forms of the arts and be able to express themselves through the arts. Religious education will provide the opportunity for students to develop a growing appreciation for some of the great works of art, architecture, artifacts, literature, and music. In religious education classes students will be encouraged to express their views on religious and social topics through various avenues which would be classified as aesthetic expression. The religious education program will provide opportunities for students to experience and appreciate artistic works from various ages and cultures. Opportunity will be given for reflection, critical responses and expressions of appreciation.

**Citizenship**

Graduates will be able to assess social, cultural, economic, and environmental interdependence in a local and global context. Graduates will be able to show an awareness of the importance and contributions of various religions to the global community. In the religious education program, it will be recognized that there is often a relationship between people's actions and lifestyles and their religious beliefs. Human rights, social justice, freedom of religion, and value systems will figure prominently in the religious education program. By considering various views on these topics, students will better understand what it means to live in a pluralistic multi-faith society.

**Communication**

Graduates will be able to use the listening, viewing, speaking, reading, and writing modes of language(s) as well as mathematical and scientific concepts and symbols to think, learn, and communicate effectively. Religious education requires students to consider many perspectives and beliefs on a wide range of topics. It also requires them to think critically about many current issues. Because of the very nature of the religious education program and the objectives for the courses in which students will be involved, various methods of communicating will be used, such as oral discussion, written responses, art work and the application of technology.

Some levels of discussion will be at an informal level while other discussions will be more formal in design. There will also be creative writing as well as response papers and research papers at particular grade levels. Many of the courses will encourage the use of media and other forms of modern technology as means of communicating.

The very nature of some of the topics discussed will require students to be precise and clear in their writing and in their oral presentation. Developing the skill of appropriate expression of thoughts and opinions and responding appropriately to others' thoughts and opinions will be an integral part of the religious education program.

**Personal Development**

Graduates will be able to continue to learn and to pursue an active, healthy lifestyle. Personal development is an area of great importance for the religious education program. Students will be in a position to be given information and be required to reflect on, and discuss, moral and ethical issues. Recognition will be given to the fact that students are collaborative as well as independent learners. However, this program will challenge them

to see what it means to live in community with others while developing a personal system of beliefs by which to live.

### **Problem Solving**

Graduates will be able to use the strategies and processes needed to solve a wide variety of problems, including those requiring language, mathematical, and scientific concepts. An important component in the religious education program is the interpretation of information in a critical manner in order that students will be in a position to make informed decisions. The nature of many of the topics covered will require students to acquire knowledge on a given topic or issue and take a position. The problem solving process will take many forms in religious education, including reading, discussion, debate, reflection, research, observation and media viewing.

### **Technological Competence**

Graduates will be able to use a variety of technologies, demonstrate an understanding of technological applications, and apply appropriate technologies for solving problems. There will be many opportunities for students to use a range of technologies in the religious education program and to reflect on and discuss the ethical issues around the use of much modern technology. Opportunities will be given for students to use computer and media technology in various areas of the program.

### **Spiritual and Moral Development**

Graduates will demonstrate understanding and appreciation for the place of belief systems in shaping the development of moral values and ethical conduct. A vital component of the religious education program will be the spiritual and moral development of the individual. Development of values, morals, and ethics will be fostered in this program. Being able to express one's beliefs and values while having the ability to listen to and understand other people's beliefs and values contributes to an improved society. The art of expressing and defending appropriately one's own beliefs without degrading or negating those of others is an important part of personal development.

The program will help students understand the belief they are an important part of an unfolding creation and to examine the influence of spirituality on human development. It will support the idea that each person must take responsibility for his/her actions and that a person's actions have direct and indirect effects on both the individual and the community as a whole. Key to the total program will be the recognition of the belief that the human being is a spiritual being whose life can encompass religious principles.



## General Curriculum Outcomes for Religious Education

**General Curriculum Outcomes** are statements which describe the contribution (K-XII) of a curriculum area to the Essential Graduation Learnings by defining what students are expected to know, value and be able to do as a result of completing the program in that curriculum area.

The General Curriculum Outcomes for religious education follow:

1. Students will be expected to examine the historical impact of religion on beliefs, cultures and traditions.
2. Students will be expected to develop an understanding of the beliefs, principles and practices of Christianity and other living belief systems.
3. Students will be expected to examine the meaning and relevance of sacred texts.
4. Students will be expected to demonstrate an appreciation for personal search, commitment and meaning in life.
5. Students will be expected to examine moral and ethical issues and teachings.
6. Students will be expected to develop an appreciation for the connectedness of all creation.
7. Students will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between religion and science.
8. Students will be expected to examine the influence of religion on contemporary issues and events.

## Key-Stage Curriculum Outcomes

Key-stage curriculum outcomes for the end of grades 3, 6, 9, and 12 reflect a continuum of learning. While there may appear to be similarities in outcomes across the grade levels, teachers will recognize the increase in expectations for students according to

- the nature of learning language processes
- students' maturity of thinking and interests
- students' increasing independence as learners
- the complexity and sophistication of ideas, texts, and tasks
- the range of language experiences and the repertoire of strategies and skills students apply to those experiences

The following key-stage curriculum outcomes describe what students should know and be able to do in religious education by the end of grade 3. It should be noted that students work toward achieving these key-stage curriculum outcomes in grades K, 1, 2, and 3.

*Students will be expected to examine the historical impact of religion on beliefs, cultures and traditions.*

*By the end of grade 3, students will be expected to*

- recognize that religions are based on belief systems with distinct stories, symbols and celebrations (e.g., Christmas, Hanukkah)
- explore the influence of religion on the development of morals and values (e.g., Ten Commandments, Four Noble Truths)

*Students will be expected to develop an understanding of beliefs, principles and practices of Christianity and other living belief systems.*

*By the end of grade 3, students will be expected to*

- explore what is meant by belief.
- demonstrate a knowledge of basic beliefs of Christianity (e.g., God's love for creation)
- explore the importance of developing values consistent with religious beliefs for various adherents
- be familiar with individuals whose lives exemplify their values and religious principles (e.g., Jesus, Mother Teresa, Mohandas Gandhi)
- recognize the importance of religious practices (e.g., baptism, worship) in various living belief systems

*Students will be expected to examine the meaning and relevance of sacred texts.*

*By the end of grade 3, students will be expected to*

- recognize the importance placed on sacred texts by their adherents (e.g., Christians, Jews, Muslims)
- be familiar with important events and characters in sacred texts (e.g., Jesus, Moses, Buddha)

*Students will be expected to demonstrate an appreciation for personal search, commitment and meaning in life.*

*By the end of grade 3, students will be expected to*

- explore what is meant by commitment (e.g., promises)
- explore what it means to be committed to God, to another person, or to a cause
- be aware of their personal worth
- identify how people's religious beliefs influence their daily lives (e.g., behaviour, decision making)

*Students will be expected to examine moral and ethical issues and teachings.*

*By the end of grade 3, students will be expected to*

- explore how behaviour affects self and others
- recognize that individuals must take responsibility for their actions
- examine morals and values that affect their daily lives (e.g., honesty, co-operation, respect.)

*Students will be expected to develop an appreciation for the connectedness of all creation.*

*By the end of grade 3, students will be expected to*

- recognize that most religions believe in a Creator (e.g., Judaeo/Christian creation stories)
- explore how all things in creation (natural world) are connected
- develop an appreciation for the wonder and awe of creation
- recognize their responsibility in creation (e.g., Buddhist teaching of caring for the environment)

*Students will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between religion and science.*

*By the end of grade 3, students will be expected to*

- recognize the belief that God can be revealed through the natural world

*Students will be expected to examine the influence of religion on contemporary issues and events.*

*By the end of grade 3, students will be expected to*

- recognize the importance of responding to the needs of others (e.g., caring, sharing)
- be familiar with various responses based on religious belief to contemporary issues



## **Specific Curriculum Outcomes for Grade 3 Religious Education**

**Students will be expected to examine the historical impact of religion on beliefs, cultures, and traditions.**

### **Outcomes**

*Students will be expected to:*

- 1.1 recognize that living belief systems include stories/accounts about significant individuals.
- 1.2 examine the impact that stories/accounts from selected living belief systems have on cultures and traditions.

### **Suggestions for Teaching and Learning**

Using stories introduce and discuss how individuals' beliefs have affected cultures and traditions.

Teachers and students will read and discuss selected stories.

Students may respond to the stories by:

- journal writing
- small group discussion
- illustrating a part of the story
- writing a character sketch
- answering comprehension questions

Invite a guest speaker(s) to share their beliefs and traditions.

Before the speaker's visit to the class challenge students to develop questions they would like to ask. After the visit students can write a thank-you letter that includes at least one thing they learned from the presentation.

Create a classroom display profiling individuals in selected stories. Ask students to do an oral presentation on the individual profiled.

Students will be expected to examine the historical impact of religion on beliefs, cultures, and traditions.

### Suggestions for Assessment

#### Observation

- Observe and record students' participation in discussion and class activities

#### Performance

- Write a journal response
- Illustrate a scene
- Write a character sketch
- Write a diary entry
- Oral presentation
- Answer questions (The focus when answering questions is on understanding, not on the recalling of facts).
- Share their classroom display
- Write a thank-you letter

#### Questioning

- When sharing stories, teachers may question students on their understanding of how living belief systems affect cultures and traditions.

#### Work Sample/Portfolio

- Collect art work
- Collect writing samples
- Collect journal entries

### Resources and Notes

The focus for the Grade 3 curriculum is on individuals/groups whose contributions to society reflect their living belief systems.

In any class discussion, if there are children from living belief systems (religions) other than those included, the teacher should make reference to those living belief systems.

Drawing, colouring or depicting an angel, a prophet or God in any way is against the teachings of Islam. If teachers are aware that there are Muslim students in the class, they should be sensitive to this.

It is important that guest speakers be aware of the age of the students. The purpose is to share information, not to indoctrinate or proselytize.

#### Authorized Resource:

Many Friends, One World

- *Honouring All Creation*
- *My Religion is Kindness*
- *Working for Miracles*
- *Walking the Good Path*
- *Drawing Closer to God*
- *The Power of Peace*
- *A Peace Which Covers All*
- *Caring for the Earth and Each Other*
- and other titles

#### Suggested Children's Literature:

*A Faith Like Mine* by Laura Buller

#### Curriculum Links:

**English Language Arts** – All strands

**Social Studies** – Peoples; Heritage

**Art** – Culture, human experiences and expression

**Physical Education** – Respect for Individual differences

**Health** - Mental health

**Music** - Contexts

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Students will be expected to develop an understanding of beliefs, principles, and practices of Christianity and other living belief systems.

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**Outcomes**

*Students will be expected to:*

- 2.1 identify individuals whose lives exemplify their religious beliefs and principles.
- 2.2 explore how individuals' lives have exemplified their religious beliefs, principles and practices.

**Suggestions for Teaching and Learning**

Using visuals and/or stories introduce and discuss individuals whose lives exemplify their principles, beliefs and practices, *e.g.*, local person, Dalai Lama, Mahatma Gandhi.

Engage students in discussion about these individuals and how their lives exemplified their practices, religious beliefs and principles.

Students may create a presentation on these or other individuals whose lives portray their values, *e.g.*, Gandhi, a community volunteer, etc. The presentation may take the form of:

- a written report
- an interview
- a poster
- a video



Students will be expected to develop an understanding of beliefs, principles, and practices of Christianity and other living belief systems.

### Suggestions for Assessment

#### Observation

- Observe and record student participation in discussions and class activities.

#### Performance

- Write a report
- Make a poster
- Conduct an interview
- Create a video

#### Questioning

- When sharing stories and experiences, teachers may question students about their understanding of beliefs, principles and practices.

#### Work Sample/Portfolio

- Collect work samples

### Resources and Notes

#### Authorized Resource:

Many Friends, One World

- *Placing Their Trust in God*
- *The Earth is But One Country*
- *In Search of One Truth*
- *A Message of Love and Forgiveness*
- *Showing the Way*
- *Unity Under One God*
- *The Path to Happiness*
- *At One With the Land*
- and other titles

#### Suggested Children's Literature:

*The Vision Seeker* by James Whetung

#### Curriculum Links:

**English Language Arts** – All strands

**Social Studies** – Peoples; Heritage

**Art** – Culture, human experiences and expression

**Music** – Contexts

**Students will be expected to examine the meaning and relevance of sacred texts.**

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**Outcomes**

*Students will be expected to:*

- 3.1 recognize the importance of selected individuals as they related to or are found in sacred texts.

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**Suggestions for Teaching and Learning**

Using visuals and/or stories, introduce students to important individuals who are connected with or found in various sacred texts, *e.g.*, Jesus, Guru Nanak, Buddha.

Invite students to participate in a whole class brainstorming on what they know about important individuals from various living belief systems. Record in the form of a character web or list.

As a group, complete a time line of the individuals studied in class.

In a journal, ask students to write about and/or illustrate different teachings of individuals.

Students will be expected to examine the meaning and relevance of sacred texts.

### Suggestions for Assessment

#### Observation

- Observe and record student participation in discussions and class activities.

#### Performance

- Create a time-line
- Write a journal entry
- Illustrate teachings

#### Questioning

- When sharing stories or experiences, teachers may question students on their understanding of the importance of selected individuals connected with sacred texts. (Choice should be given regarding how children present their understanding).

#### Work Samples/Portfolio

- Collect art work
- Collect journal entries
- Collect writing samples

#### Conference

- Teachers may want to conference with students about their work

### Resources and Notes

Not all living belief systems include individuals in their sacred texts but most have individuals connected with their sacred texts, *e.g.*, Muhammad is not in the *Qur'an* but Muslims believe that Allah revealed the *Qur'an* to Muhammad.

#### Authorized Resource:

Many Friends, One World

- *Placing Their Trust in God*
- *The Earth is But One Country*
- *My Religion is Kindness*
- *In Search of One Truth*
- *A Message of Love and Forgiveness*
- *The Power of Love*
- *Showing the Way*
- *The Power of Peace*
- *Unity Under One God*
- *The Path to Happiness*

#### Suggested Children's Literature:

*Nessa's Story* by Nancy Luenn

*The Rumour* by Jan Thornhill

#### Curriculum Links:

**English Language Arts** - All strands

**Art** – Culture, human experiences and expression

**Students will be expected to demonstrate an appreciation for personal search, commitment and meaning for life.**

### Outcomes

*Students will be expected to*

- 4.1 know what is meant by commitment.
- 4.2 investigate contributions made by people or groups as a result of their commitment to their religion, to another person(s) or to a cause.

### Suggestions for Teaching and Learning

Plan for a class discussion focusing on groups to which students belong and the responsibilities associated with belonging to these groups, *e.g.*, family, class, teams, organizations, living belief systems (religions).

Students may create a poster, a class book or a mobile depicting how they help their family or any other group to which they belong.

Students may learn the meaning of commitment by helping care for a pet or plant at home or at school. To document their activities, students could keep a daily or weekly log book.

Share stories of people or groups who have demonstrated a commitment to a cause.

Explore the contributions made by various individuals and groups in the local community, *e.g.*, family, class, school, community and province. Discuss how their contributions demonstrate commitment.

Students may interview an individual regarding his/her contribution and commitment to others. The interview may be written or recorded and presented to the class.

Invite guest speakers to present their individual /group contribution and commitment to others.

Teachers may invite students to respond to the stories by:

- writing a letter to the individual/group thanking them for their commitment
- creating a thank-you card
- creating a class book of individuals who have demonstrated commitment to a cause
- using newspapers to find articles and pictures depicting people helping others. Use these materials to make a collage.

Students will be expected to demonstrate an appreciation for personal search, commitment and meaning for life.

### Suggestions for Assessment

#### Observation

- Observe and record student participation in discussions and class activities.

#### Performance

- Make a poster, class book or mobile
- Keep a daily log
- Present class project
- Present interview
- Write a letter
- Create a thank-you card
- Make a class book
- Make a collage

#### Questioning

- When sharing stories, teachers may question students on their understanding of commitment.

#### Work Samples/Portfolio

- Collect art work
- Collect log books
- Collect written or recorded interview
- Collect students' writing samples.

#### Conference

- Students can share what they have learned about commitment.
- Students can share what they have learned about responsibilities associated with belonging to a group.

### Resources and Notes

Teachers need to be sensitive to students' various family/home situations and modify activities accordingly.

#### Authorized Resource:

Many Friends, One World

- *Working for Miracles*
- *Reaching Out to Help*
- *Caring for the Earth and Each Other*
- *At One With the Land*
- *The Power of Peace*
- *Reaching Out to the Poor*
- *Bringing People Together*
- *The Gift of Forgiveness*
- and other titles

#### Suggested Children's Literature:

*Amazing Grace* by Mary Hoffman

#### Curriculum Links:

**English Language Arts** – All strands

**Social Studies** – People

**Health** – Mental Health; Relationships; Environmental Health

**Science** – Plant Growth and Changes

**Art** – Culture, human experiences and expression

Students will be expected to examine moral ethical issues and teachings.

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**Outcomes**

*Students will be expected to*

5.1 explain how morals and values can affect an individual's actions.

**Suggestions for Teaching and Learning**

Hold a class discussion on how students decide what is right or wrong. Teachers could generate discussion by making references to various groups to which students belong.

Create a *Living Well Together* chart regarding things people need to do in order to live well together in the world.

Give each student a secret pal for a week. Students will be responsible for doing acts of kindness for their secret pal. Encourage students to do acts of kindness in their community as well. As a daily reflection, ask students to connect their acts of kindness to the *Living Well Together* chart.

Students will be expected to examine moral ethical issues and teachings.

### Suggestions for Assessment

#### Observation

- Observe and record student participation in the class community to indicate they understand how to live well together.

#### Performance

- Dramatize an act of kindness
- Secret pal activity

#### Questioning

- Teachers may question students on their understanding of moral or ethical situations.

### Resources and Notes

The purpose for dealing with morals and ethics in this grade is to help students understand that there are acceptable and unacceptable behaviours. Students should understand that in society certain behaviours are considered right and others are considered wrong. It is not the intention to take students into discussions of moral and ethical issues that are beyond their grasp.

#### Authorized Resource:

Many Friends, One World

- *Seva Stands for Service*
- *A Marathon of Courage*
- *One Small Life Matters*
- *A Dream of Freedom*
- *A Peace Which Covers All*
- and other titles

#### Suggested Children's Literature:

*The Three Questions* by Jon J. Muth

#### Curriculum Links:

**English Language Arts** – All strands

**Social Studies** – People; Heritage

**Art** – Human experiences and expression

**Health** – Mental Health; Relationships

**Physical Education** - Cooperation and sharing

**Music** – Contexts

**Students will be expected to develop an appreciation for the connectedness of all creation.**

### Outcomes

*Students will be expected to*

- 6.1 recognize people whose actions, because of their religious or spiritual beliefs, reflect an appreciation for creation.
- 6.2 demonstrate ways they can show they care for creation.

### Suggestions for Teaching and Learning

Share stories about people whose actions reflect an appreciation for all creation.

On a map locate the origins of these significant people and areas of the world where they worked or were instrumental in preserving the environment.

Ask students to imagine they can make laws that people have to follow to protect creation. Share the laws they have created with the class. Create a class book.

Challenge students to design a schoolyard that reflects an appreciation for creation.

Participate in an environmental project, *e.g.*, recycling/clean up/ planting in your local area. Students can write about the event for their school newsletter or local newspaper.

Create a bulletin board display depicting ways by which we can help the environment. For example, use students' written work, poetry, posters, etc.

In consultation with the music teachers, students can learn a song about the environment.



Students will be expected to develop an appreciation for the connectedness of all creation.

### Suggestions for Assessment

#### Observation

- Observe and record student participation in discussions and class activities.

#### Performance

- Create a school yard design
- Compile a class book
- Mapping work
- Environmental projects

#### Work Samples/Portfolio

- Writing samples/posters

#### Conferencing

- Students share what they have learned about people whose actions reflect their appreciation for creation.
- Students share ways they care for creation.

### Resources and Notes

#### Authorized Resource:

Many Friends, One World

- *Walking the Good Path*
- *Honouring All Creation*
- *At One With the Land*
- *A River of Caring*
- *Working for Miracles*
- *Drawing Closer to God*
- *Seva Stands for Service*
- *Caring for the Earth and Each Other*

#### Suggested Children's Literature:

*Waiting for the Whales* by Sheryl McFarlane

*Miss Rumphius* by Barbara Cooney

*The Man Who Planted Trees* by Jean Giono  
(translated from the French)

*Wolf Island* by Celia Godkin

#### Curriculum Links:

**English Language Arts** – All strands

**Social Studies** – People

**Art** – Culture, human experiences and expression

**Health** – Environmental Health

**Science** – Plant Growth and Changes; Earth

Science; Stewardship

**Music** – Contexts

Students will be expected to examine to demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between religion and science.

### Outcomes

*Students will be expected to*

- 7.1 examine how humanity and creation are impacted by science and technology.

### Suggestions for Teaching and Learning

Brainstorm ways by which creation (the natural world) is impacted by science and technology. Some suggested questions are:

- What are some ways people are affected by science, *e.g.*, medical technology, inventions?
- How does science affect our environment, *e.g.*, pesticides, Canadarm for space research?
- How has technology helped us learn about people from different cultures and different religions?
- Can you think of any ways that technology is used as part of worship or other religious ceremonies?

Plan a field trip to a local green area, recycling plant, nursery, etc., to see how technology helps humanity. Students may document their field trip, *e.g.*, writing, photos, art, video, etc.

Ask students to interview an older person in the community who is an adherent of a faith community. Students can ask this person how technology has impacted or changed their religious practices. Students can share their information with the class.

Students will be expected to examine to demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between religion and science.

### Suggestions for Assessment

#### Observation

- Observe and record student participation in discussions and class activities.

#### Performance

- Create a field trip report
- Conduct an interview

#### Questioning

- When sharing experiences, teachers may question students on their understanding of how science and technology impact daily living and can relate to religion.

#### Work Samples/Portfolio

- Collect art work
- Collect writing samples

### Resources and Notes

#### Authorized Resource:

Many Friends, One World

- *A River of Caring*
- *A Gift of a Lifetime*
- *Honouring All Creation*
- *Working for Miracles*
- *Walking the Good Path*
- *Drawing Closer to God*
- *Bringing People Together*
- *Seva Stands for Service*
- *Caring for the Earth and Each Other*

#### Suggested Children's Literature:

*Ladybug Garden* by Celia Godkin

#### Curriculum Links:

**English Language Arts** – All Strands

**Social Studies** – Citizenship

**Art** – Culture, human experiences and expression

**Health** – Mental Health; Environmental Health

**Science** – Plant Growth and Changes; Earth Science

**Music** – Contexts

Students will be expected to examine the influence of religion on contemporary issues and events.

## Outcomes

*Students will be expected to*

- 8.1 recognize how key individuals have responded to the needs of others because of their religious or spiritual beliefs.

## Suggestions for Teaching and Learning

Share stories from the authorized resource about individuals, locally and globally, responding to the needs of others as a result of their religious or spiritual beliefs.

Engage students in a discussion about events in their school, local community and province that respond to people's needs.

Some possibilities include:

- Terry Fox walk
- UNICEF
- Food banks (In the discussion, consider food banks operated by religious institutions as well as others).
- Meal programs for the needy, *e.g.*, lunch programs run by religious institutions
- Breakfast programs
- Janeway Day/Children's Wish Foundation
- Community response to disasters, *e.g.*, fire, sickness, floods, etc. (As with the food bank discussion, consider responses by religious groups as well as others.)
- Sponsorship of immigrant families or of foster children

Students can report about these activities by:

- creating an ongoing scrapbook
- collecting newspaper/newsletter articles

Organize an assembly to highlight students' contribution to a particular need or cause. This assembly may include student poetry, songs, stories and drama. During the assembly a presentation could be made to a chosen cause, *e.g.*, Thanksgiving assembly with donations being made to a food bank.

Students will be expected to examine the influence of religion on contemporary issues and events.

### Suggestions for Assessment

#### Observation

- Observe and record student participation in discussions and class activities.

#### Performance

- Create a scrapbook
- Collect newspaper articles

#### Questioning

- When sharing experiences, teachers may question students on their understanding of how key individuals have responded to the needs of others.

#### Work Samples/Portfolio

- Poetry, songs, stories

#### Conference

- Students can share what they have learned about how key individuals have responded to the needs of others.

### Resources and Notes

#### Authorized Resource:

Many Friends, One World

- *Honouring All Creation*
- *My Religion is Kindness*
- *Working for Miracles*
- *Walking the Good Path*
- *Drawing Closer to God*
- *The Power of Peace*
- *A Peace Which Covers All*
- *Caring for the Earth and Each Other*
- and other titles

#### Suggested Children's Literature:

*Voices in the Park* by Anthony Browne

*Albert & Lila* by Rafik Schami

*The Worst Person's Christmas* by James Stevenson

#### Curriculum Links:

**English Language Arts** – All Strands

**Social Studies** – People

**Art** – Culture, human experiences and expression

**Science** – Stewardship

**Health** – Mental Health; Relationships

**Music** – Contexts



## Section 4 - Resources

### Authorized Resources

- *Many Friends, One World* (Breakwater Books)

### Recommended Teacher Resources

Breuilly, Elizabeth, O'Brien, Joanne and Palmer, Martin. *Religions of the World: The Illustrated Guide to Origins, Beliefs, Traditions and Festivals*. New York: Ferleigh Books, 1997.

Buller, Laura. *A Faith Like Mine*. New York: DK Publishing Inc., 2005.

Ingham, Michael. *Mansions of the Spirit: The Gospel in a Multi-Faith World*. Toronto: Anglican Book Centre, 1997.

Scott, Susan L. *Stories in My Neighbour's Faith*. Toronto: United Church Publishing House, 1999.

Wright, Andrew and Brandon, Ann-Marie. *Learning to Teach Religious Education in the Secondary School*. New York: Routledge Falmer, 2000.

Nord, Warren A. and Haynes, Charles C. *Taking Religion Seriously Across the Curriculum*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 1998.





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Hull, John M. “Religious Education in a Pluralistic Society”, *Studies in Religion and Education*, London: Falmer Press, 1984.

Nord, Warren A. and Haynes, Charles C. *Taking Religion Seriously Across the Curriculum*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 1998.

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Stackhouse, M. *Creeds, Society and Human Rights*, Grand Rapids, Michigan: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1984.

