Religious Education

Grades 4-6

A Curriculum Guide
October 2000

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Chapter 1: Background 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

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 behavior. 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. On the cusp of the twenty-first century the majority of the world's population continues to believe in a spiritual side of humanity. Michael Warren writes:

"Appreciation of the human encounter with transcendence in its multiple forms can be as important as an appreciation of literature and the other arts in helping us lay hold of the wisdom of our collective past." (Michael Warren, "Catechesis: An Enriching category for Religious Education, *Source Book for Modern Catechetics*, Winona: St. Mary's Press, 1983, p.388.)

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 is the source of suffering, how can happiness be found, what happens after death, and other fundamental questions. These are questions addressed by all major religions and because of their importance should be 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 should 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 should 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 should help students explore their role in the natural order.

In a world that is truly multicultural and multifaith 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 should give accurate information and demonstrate respect for all world faiths.

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 should come to understand and appreciate that most religions have sacred writings and all teach values, ethics and morals. 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.)

There are other considerations for the importance of religious education being included in the curriculum. According to John M. Hall:

- 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. (John M. Hull, "Religious Education in a Pluralistic Society", *Studies in Religion and Education*, London: Falmer Press, 1984, p. 48.)

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

- Finally, it must be noted that 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 Seventh 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 will be a contributing factor to that mission. There will be aspects of the religious education curriculum that support each of the Essential Graduation Learnings.

Key Principles Underlying Religious Education

This religious education curriculum is non-confessional. In such a program it is essential that faith, beliefs, doctrines, practices and history of Christianity and other religions be covered with sensitivity and respect. No attempt to indoctrinate, proselytize or present a biased view would be appropriate.

The Framework recognizes that in addition to studying Christianity and other religions students will be enabled to reflect on and make personal decisions about their own spirituality and religious traditions.

Recognition must be given to the fact that students are living in a global society and in a country that is multicultural and multifaith. Newfoundland and Labrador, along with the other provinces and territories, is also witnessing the emergence of various faith communities. Therefore, it is desirable for the citizens of the province to understand and respect many living belief systems.

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

This religious education curriculum acknowledges that the essence of all interfaith 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 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.

Chapter 2: Curriculum Outcomes

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 elementary 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 6-8

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 9

Key-Stage Curriculum Outcomes

Key-stage curriculum outcomes are statements identify 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 page 9-12

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 13-20

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 a very 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 realize they are an important part of an unfolding creation with a caring Creator who sustains and interacts with all that has been created. 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 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 6. It should be noted that students work toward achieving these key-stage curriculum outcomes in grade 4 and 5, as well as in grade 6.

Students will be Expected to Examine the Historical Impact of Religion on Beliefs, Culture and Traditions

By the end of grade 6, students will have achieved the outcomes for entry-grade 3 and will also be epxected to

- develop an understanding that from time immemorial people have been in relationship with the divine (e.g., animism, polytheism, monotheism)

- explore how religions are based on belief systems with distinct stories, symbols and celebrations (e.g., Easter, the Cross, Star of David)

- develop an appreciation of how society's morals and values are often rooted in religious teachings

- explore how religion is expressed through art, architecture, music, drama and literature (e.g., Michelangelo, Handel's Messiah)

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 6, students will have achieved the outcomes for entry-grade 3 and will also be expected to

- explore what is meant by belief

- demonstrate a knowledge of basic beliefs of Christianity and various religions

- demonstrate an understanding that religious principles are founded in religious texts, both oral and written (e.g., Bible, Qur'an, Bhagavad Gita)

- recognize that religious principles emerged from the life and teachings of Jesus, and founders, teachers and leaders of various religions

- examine the importance of religious values in developing a code of living

- explore the importance of religious practices (e.g., rites of passage, confirmation, Bar Mitzvah)

Students will be Expected to Examine the Meaning and Relevance of Sacred Texts

By the end of grade 6, students will have achieved the outcomes for entry-grade 3 and will also be expected to

- demonstrate an understanding of the sources of sacred texts, both oral and written (e.g., Bible, Qur'an)

- demonstrate an appreciation of the importance placed on sacred texts by their adherents

- demonstrate a knowledge of important events and characters within sacred texts (e.g., Passover, Last Supper, Resurrection, Paul)

Students will be Expected to Demonstrate an Appreciation for Personal Search, Commitment and Meaning in Life

By the end of grade 6, students will have achieved the outcomes for entry-grade 3 and will also be expected to

- recognize that people search for meaning in life

- demonstrate an understanding of the meaning of commitment (e.g., discipleship)

- explore the concept of commitment in various religions

- explore how people's religious beliefs influence their daily lives

Students will be Expected to Examine Moral and Ethical Issues and Teachings

By the end of grade 6, students will have achieved the outcomes for entry-grade 3 and will also be expected to

- identify moral and ethical teachings of Christianity and various religions

- explore the processes by which people make moral and ethical decisions

- develop an understanding that behaviour affects self and others

- recognize that individuals must take responsibility for their actions

- explore human sexuality from the perspectives of various religions

Students will be Expected to Develop an Appreciation for the Connectedness of All Creation

By the end of grade 6 students will have achieved the outcomes for entry-grade 3 and will also be expected to

- consider the relationship of a creator with creation

- demonstrate an understanding that all things in creation are connected

- recognize that humanity is an integral part of creation

- explore humanity's responsibility in creation (e.g., Judaeo/ Christian concept of stewardship)

Students will be Expected to Demonstrate an Understanding of the Relationship Between Religion and Science

By the end of grade 6, students will have achieved the outcomes for entry-grade 3 and will also be expected to

- demonstrate an understanding of the often complementary roles of science and religion

Students will be Expected to Examine the Influence of Religion on Contemporary Issues and Events

By the end of grade 6, students will have achieved the outcomes for entry-grade 3 and will also be expected to

- explore how religion affects issues facing humanity (e.g., environmental, social)

- develop an awareness of social justice

- develop an awareness of the response of Christianity and various religions to social justice issues (e.g., poverty, human rights)

- develop a personal response to current issues

Overview of Specific Curriculum Outcomes

The following pages provide an overview of the specific curriculum outcomes for grades 4, 5, and 6. This overview may be especially helpful to teachers operating in multigrade groupings and for addressing the range of learners found in grades 4-6 classrooms across Atlantic Canada.

Students Will be Expected to Examine the Historical Impact of Religion on Beliefs, Cultures and Traditions

Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6
• explore the origins of Judaism, Christianity and Islam • explore celebrations such as Christmas, Easter, Hanukkah and Ramadan • explore how teachings and laws of Christianity and Judaism influence the development of morals and values	• explore the origins of Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Sikhism • develop an understanding of signs and symbols such as the cross, the wheel of life, the sacred thread • explore how teachings and laws of Christianity and Hinduism influence the development of morals, ethics and values • discover how religious beliefs are often expressed through the architecture of places of worship such as churches, temples and gurdwaras	• explore the origins of Christianity and Islam • examine stories of creation and the after-life in Christianity, Islam and Native Spirituality • explore how teachings and laws of Christianity and Islam influence the development of morals and values • examine how religious beliefs are often expressed through art, music, drama, and dance in Christianity and Native Spirituality

Students will be Expected to Develop an Understanding of Beliefs, Principles, and Practices of Christianity and Other Living Belief Systems

Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6
• explore what is meant by religion • develop an understanding of what it means to "believe" • explore basic beliefs of Judaism and Christianity such as belief in God, prayer, and eternal life • demonstrate an understanding that principles such as sharing, caring, acceptance, respect and justice are present in Jewish and Christian texts • recognize that principles such as sharing, caring, acceptance, respect, and justice are present and exemplified in the life and teachings of Moses and Jesus • describe initiation ceremonies such as baptism, naming, dedication and Bar/Bat Mitzvah	• develop an understanding of prayer, meditation and worship as expressions of belief • describe basic beliefs of Christianity, Hinduism, and Sikhism such as belief in an ultimate reality • demonstrate an understanding that principles such as empathy, forgiveness and justice are present in Christian and Buddhist texts and teachings • recognize that principles such as empathy, forgiveness and justice are exemplified in the life and teachings of Jesus and the Buddha	• explore the concept of belief through revelation, hope and reconciliation • demonstrate an understanding that principles such as stewardship and faithfulness are present in Christian and Native texts • recognize that principles such as stewardship and integrity are exemplified in the life and teachings of Jesus and Muhammed

Students will be Expected to Examine the Meaning and Relevance of Sacred Texts

Grade 4	*Grade 5*	*Grade 6*
• recognize in Judaism, Christianity and Islam key characters such as Moses, Ruth, John the Baptist, Jesus, Paul and Muhammad	• describe key events in Christianity and Buddhism such as the Resurrection, Pentecost and the enlightenment of the Buddha	• explore the belief that sacred texts such as the Bible and the Qur'an were revealed by God • demonstrate an appreciation of the importance of sacred texts such as the Bible and the Qur'an for their adherents • explore the role of the Shaman in Native Spirituality

Students will be Expected to Demonstrate an Appreciation for Personal Search, Commitment and Meaning to Life

Grade 4	*Grade 5*	*Grade 6*
• demonstrate an understanding of what it means to be committed to a cause, a belief system or another person • recognize in Judaism and Christianity the importance of keeping promises and taking responsibility • explore the importance of caring, sharing, acceptance, respect and justice in response to religious beliefs	• recognize that in living belief systems such as Christianity, Buddhism, and Hinduism, people search for meaning in life • demonstrate an understanding of loyalty and trust • recognize in Buddhism and Christianity the importance of loyalty/trust • develop an understanding of the importance of empathy, justice, and forgiveness as expressions of religious beliefs	• recognize that in living belief systems such as Christianity and Native Spirituality people search for meaning in life • demonstrate an understanding of discipleship and stewardship • recognize in Christianity and Islam the importance of discipleship and stewardship • explore the importance of discipleship, stewardship and integrity in response to religious beliefs

Students will be Expected to Examine Moral and Ethical Issues and Teaching

Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6
• identify Jewish and Christian teachings concerning honesty, cheating, stealing, and bullying	• explore Christian and Hindu teachings concerning respect for people, property and animals	• discuss conflict resolution and materialism in the teachings of Christianity and Native Spirituality
• recognize the influence of family, peers, community, religion and media on ethical and moral decision making	• explore the influence of family, peers, community, religion and media on ethical and moral decision making	• examine the influence of family, peers, community, religion and media on ethical and moral decision making
• recognize there are consequences to actions for self and others	• discuss the impact of one's actions on self and others	• examine the implications of one's actions on self and others
• recognize that people make appropriate and inappropriate choices and are responsible for these choices	• discuss how people make appropriate and inappropriate choices and are responsible for these choices	• examine why people must take responsibility for their actions

Students will be Expected to Develop an Appreciation for the Connectedness of All Creation

Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6
• explore the concept of a caring God in Judaism and Christianity • recognize Jewish and Christian teachings regarding stewardship and the environment	• explore Hindu and Buddhist beliefs in the connectedness of all things in creation • explore Christian teachings on the role of humanity as an integral part of creation • explore Christian and Hindu teachings regarding stewardship and the environment	• explore the role of a caring Creator as understood in Christianity and Islam • examine the belief in Native Spirituality that all creation is connected • explore the role of humanity as an integral part of creation as understood in Christianity and Native Spirituality • analyze the concept of stewardship towards the environment in Native Spirituality

Students will be Expected to Demonstrate an Understanding of the Relationship Between Religion and Science

Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6
		• explore how science and religion often address the same questions but use different approaches

Students wil be Expected to Examine the Influence of Religion on Contemporary Issues and Events

Grade 4	*Grade 5*	*Grade 6*
• recognize different forms of discrimination • explore Christian and Jewish teachings regarding discrimination and prejudice	• recognize teachings of Christianity and Hinduism on contemporary human rights issues • investigate reasons for human injustice; i.e. poverty • develop a personal response to issues such as poverty, and respect for people	• investigate the impact of Christianity and Islam on contemporary issues and events such as human rights • discuss what it means to be a just leader • develop a personal response to issues such as human rights and leadership

Grade 4

Students will be Expected to Examine the Historical Impact of Religion on Beliefs, Cultures and Traditions

Grade 4
Theme/Organizer: Tenets of Faith

Specific Curriculum Outcomes	Sample Activity/Teaching Strategies
By the end of grade 4 students will be expected to 1.1 explore the origins of Judaism, Christianity and Islam 1.2 explore celebrations such as Christmas, Easter, Hanukkah and Ramadan 1.3 explore how teachings and laws of Christianity and Judaism influence the development of morals and values	Through an activity such as exploring the origins of their own names and/or the name of their community help the children to understand what is meant by "origins". Use sacred texts and stories of Abraham and Sarah, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad to help students become familiar with the origins of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Re-enact religious celebrations. Have students plan and implement class celebrations and invite parents and special guests. Through brainstorming and discussion develop a class list of appropriate behaviors for the classroom and/or the school. Discuss how the class list and some laws of society may have been influenced by religious laws.

Students will be Expected to Examine the Historical Impact of Religion on Beliefs, Cultures and Traditions

Grade 4
Theme/Organizer: Tenets of Faith

Sample Assessment Activities	Notes/Vignettes
Questioning Observation Role-playing Self evaluation Journal	Just as our own names or community names have origins so do the great religions of the world. By starting with familiar origins, the carry-over to religious origins will be easier. Religious celebrations are seasonal and should be dealt with at the appropriate times. These celebrations allow for the experiential but how they are observed must be approached with sensitivity. To reenact one religious celebration, a school set up classes which emphasized the important events between Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday. The Easter story unfolded as the children moved through the sequence of events. This activity brought the story to life. Teachers should emphasize the historical impact these celebrations have on beliefs, cultures and traditions. The intent is not to indoctrinate but to complement the child's existing belief system. The Framework Document for Religious Education states that an effective learning environment will be one where sensitivity and respect is shown for all religious traditions. The journal is a very important part of the religious education program. There are many resource books available on journaling. For this program, a journal which emphasizes self-reflection is recommended.

Students will be Expected to Develop an Understanding of Beliefs, Principles, and Practices of Christianity and Other Living Belief Systems

Grade 4
Theme/Organizer: Tenets of Faith

Specific Curriculum Outcomes	Sample Activity/Teaching Strategies
By the end of grade 4 students will be expected to 2.1 explore what is meant by religion 2.2 develop an understanding of what it means to "believe" 2.3 explore basic beliefs of Judaism and Christianity such as belief in God, prayer, and eternal life 2.4 demonstrate an understanding that principles such as sharing, caring, acceptance, respect and justice are present in Jewish and Christian texts 2.5 recognize that principles such as sharing, caring, acceptance, respect, and justice are present and exemplified in the life and teachings of Moses and Jesus 2.6 describe initiation ceremonies such as baptism, naming, dedication and Bar/Bat Mitzvah	Through small group and class discussion have children share their experiences and ideas of religion. Have students write in a journal to express ideas and feelings about their beliefs. Brainstorm what it means to "believe". Through research, have students investigate basic beliefs of Christianity and Judaism. Invite guest speakers from the community. Use stories to demonstrate caring, sharing, acceptance, respect and justice; i.e., the stories of Amos, David, Jonathan, the Good Samaritan Have students share their knowledge of and experiences with any initiation ceremonies such as in Guides or Scouts. This will lead to a discussion on religious initiation ceremonies.

Students will be Expected to Develop an Understanding of Beliefs, Principles, and Practices of Christianity and Other Living Belief Systems

Grade 4
Theme/Organizer: Tenets of Faith

Sample Assessment Activities	Notes/Vignettes
Student products: • posters • drama • art • class presentations Journal Creative writing	A suggested and important introduction to this section is to explore what is meant by religion. It is also important that students understand the difference between a religion and a denomination. It is important for the teacher to help the students make a distinction between those beliefs which are religious and those which are not. Guest speakers will be an invaluable resource for explaining basic beliefs and ceremonies. The Internet and videos may provide additional resources on a number of the included topics. By starting with familiar initiation ceremonies, the carry-over to religious initiation ceremonies will be easier.

Students will be Expected to Examine the Meaning and Relevance of Sacred Texts

Grade 4
Theme/Organizer: Tenets of Faith

Specific Curriculum Outcomes	Sample Activity/Teaching Strategies
By the end of grade 4 students will be expected to 3.1 recognize in Judaism, Christianity and Islam key characters such as Moses, Ruth, John the Baptist, Jesus, Paul and Muhammad	Read stories associated with key characters. Have students role-play events associated with key characters. Have students write biographies, newspaper articles. Have students take the role of a character and give a personal account/interview/monologue. Have students paint murals depicting characters and events.

Students will be Expected to Examine the Meaning and Relevance of Sacred Texts

Grade 4
Theme/Organizer: Tenets of Faith

Sample Assessment Activities	Notes/Vignettes
Student products: • creative writing • art Journal Observation Questioning	Students need to recognize that characters in sacred texts are important because of their connection to a significant event. The meaning and relevance of sacred texts will be further examined in Grades 5 and 6. Sufficient time should be given to the study of each character. The intention is to extend the study of these characters throughout the program. Several of the suggestions for teaching and learning involve active participation. This is a crucial component of learning for students at this level.

Students will be Expected to Demonstrate an Appreciation for Personal Search, Commitment and Meaning to Life

Grade 4
Theme/Organizer: Relations and Renewal/Commitment/Communication

Specific Curriculum Outcomes	Sample Activity/Teaching Strategies
By the end of grade 4 students will be expected to 4.1 demonstrate an understanding of what it means to be committed to a cause, a belief system or another person 4.2 recognize in Judaism and Christianity the importance of keeping promises and taking responsibility 4.3 explore the importance of caring, sharing, acceptance, respect and justice in response to religious beliefs	Brainstorm and discuss what is important in the lives of the students and how they show it is important (family, friends, pets, organizations, chores). Through discussion, help students understand that commitment usually begins with something that is important to them. Choose characters and stories from sacred texts and other literature that illustrate the importance of keeping promises and taking responsibility. Use additional stories to illustrate caring, sharing, acceptance, respect and justice. Have students devise and carry out a class project which requires commitment to a cause, a belief or a person.

Students will be Expected to Demonstrate an Appreciation for Personal Search, Commitment and Meaning to Life

Grade 4
Theme/Organizer: Relations and Renewal/Commitment/Communication

Sample Assessment Activities	Notes/Vignettes
Student projects: • photo essay • collage • mobile • class project Questioning Observation Self-reflection Journal	The brainstorming activity should lead to the discovery of what "commitment" means. Some examples of characters and stories that can be used include Noah's Ark and the promise of the rainbow, Ruth and Naomi, Paul's promise to spread Christianity, Mother Theresa, the parables, David and Jonathan, Amos, Martin Luther King, Jr., Terry Fox. Include here any local and/or contemporary characters.

Students will be Expected to Examine Moral and Ethical Issues and Teachings

Grade 4
Theme/Organizer: Morals/Ethics/Values/Life Issues

Specific Curriculum Outcomes	Sample Activity/Teaching Strategies
By the end of grade 4 students will be expected to 5.1 identify Jewish and Christian teachings concerning honesty, cheating, stealing, and bullying 5.2 recognize the influence of family, peers, community, religion and media on ethical and moral decision making 5.3 recognize there are consequences to actions for self and others 5.4 recognize that people make appropriate and inappropriate choices and are responsible for these choices	Using sacred texts, read and discuss passages relating to honesty, cheating, stealing and bullying. Roleplay situations which depict honesty, cheating and stealing and their consequences. Present a scenario/story with a moral or ethical dilemma and ask students to consider "What would you do?" Choose stories where characters respond to the same situation in different ways and use questioning to discover why.

Students will be Expected to Examine Moral and Ethical Issues and Teachings

Grade 4
Theme/Organizer: Morals/Ethics/Values/Life Issues

Sample Assessment Activities	Notes/Vignettes
Observation Questioning Self-reflection Journal Role-playing	The area of morals, ethics, values and life issues is very delicate and needs a sensitive approach. It is, however, an important component of the religious education program and needs to be addressed. Recognize that the influence of family, peers, community, religion and media can be both positive and negative. In the scenario/story activity, one suggestion may be to start with their responses to the question. After exploring the sacred texts, re-evaluate their original responses.

Students will be Expected to Develop an Appreciation for the Connectedness of All Creation

Grade 4
Theme/Organizer: Moral/Ethics/Values/Life Issues

Specific Curriculum Outcomes	Sample Activity/Teaching Strategies
By the end of grade 4 students will be expected to 6.1 explore the concept of a caring God in Judaism and Christianity 6.2 recognize Jewish and Christian teachings regarding stewardship and the environment	Share with students music and poetry that reflect a God who cares about creation. Have students create a piece of art work that depicts their interpretation of the images presented in the music and poems. Read and discuss Psalms and identify passages that relate to God and creation. Discuss with students what they have discovered from these passages and have them determine their role in caring for creation. This can be done through oral or written presentations. Design and carry out a plan to care for their local environment.

Students will be Expected to Develop an Appreciation for the Connectedness of All Creation

Grade 4
Theme/Organizer: Moral/Ethics/Values/Life Issues

Sample Assessment Activities	Notes/Vignettes
Observation Art work Bible search Journal Oral/written presentations	This would be a good time for the students to become active in caring for their environment; for example, conduct a clean-up of their school grounds or community, plant trees.

Students will be Expected to Demonstrate an Understanding of the Relationship Between Religion and Science

Grade 4
Theme/Organizer:

Specific Curriculum Outcomes	Sample Activity/Teaching Strategies

Students will be Expected to Demonstrate an Understanding of the Relationship Between Religion and Science

Grade 4
Theme/Organizer:

Sample Assessment Activities	Notes/Vignettes

Students will be Expected to Examine the Influence of Religion on Contemporary Issues and Events

Grade 4
Theme/Organizer: Relationships

Specific Curriculum Outcomes	Sample Activity/Teaching Strategies
By the end of grade 4 students will be expected to 8.1 recognize different forms of discrimination 8.2 explore Christian and Jewish teachings regarding discrimination and prejudice	Group students based on something trivial; i.e., shirt colour. Grant privileges to some and not to others. After a short period of time, have students share their feelings. Through discussion, lead students to understand that they have just experienced a form of discrimination. Brainstorm and list forms of discrimination. Use sacred text examples which show teachings on discrimination and prejudice.

Students will be Expected to Examine the Influence of Religion on Contemporary Issues and Events

Grade 4
Theme/Organizer: Relationships

Sample Assessment Activities	Notes/Vignettes
Readers Theatre Role playing Mime	At the end of the discrimination lesson, teachers should ensure that the object of the lesson is accomplished. Have children see that discrimination is not acceptable behavior. Be sensitive in the choice of privileges granted. Teachers may wish to advise parents of the planned activity and the intent. **Readers Theatre:** A text is read and acted out with a minimum of props so that the text comes alive through voice and oral interpretation. (For further information see the *Grade 4 - 6 English Language Arts Curriculum Guide*, page 122.)

Grade 5

Students will be Expected to Examine the Historical Impact of Religion on Beliefs, Cultures and Traditions

Grade 5
Theme/Organizer: Tenets of Faith

Specific Curriculum Outcomes	Sample Activity/Teaching Strategies
By the end of grade 5 students will be expected to 1.1 explore the origins of Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Sikhism 1.2 develop an understanding of signs and symbols such as the cross, the wheel of life, the sacred thread 1.3 explore how teachings and laws of Christianity and Hinduism influence the development of morals, ethics and values 1.4 discover how religious beliefs are often expressed through the architecture of places of worship such as churches, temples and gurdwaras	Review what is meant by "origins". Read sacred texts' stories of Pentecost, Buddha, and Nanak. Refer to historical texts to show the links between Hinduism and Buddhism. Through brainstorming and discussion develop a list of common signs/symbols and their meanings. This will lead to a discussion of selected religious symbols. Invite guest speakers from the community to share information on signs, symbols and places of worship. Through discussion, develop an understanding of what is meant by morals, ethics and values. Use sacred text references to explore some of the teachings and laws of Christianity and Hinduism and how they have influenced the development of morals, ethics and values; i.e., Ten Commandments, teachings of Jesus, Hindu teachings.

Students will be Expected to Examine the Historical Impact of Religion on Beliefs, Cultures and Traditions

Grade 5
Theme/Organizer: Tenets of Faith

Sample Assessment Activities	Notes/Vignettes
Student products: • artistic representations Self evaluation Observation Role playing Journal	By beginning with common signs/symbols, the carry-over to religious symbols will be easier. Discussion and brainstorming activities will provide an excellent opportunity to bring in pictorial and/or concrete representations of religious signs and symbols. Student-produced artistic representations would be a good follow-up activity. In discussing signs and symbols, one school had a guest speaker do a presentation on the various types of crosses and their origins and significance. Moral and ethical issues resurface in GCO #5 and will continue to resurface throughout the program.

Students will be Expected to Develop an Understanding of Beliefs, Principles, and Practices of Christianity and Other Living Belief Systems

Grade 5
Theme/Organizer: Tenets of Faith

Specific Curriculum Outcomes	Sample Activity/Teaching Strategies
By the end of grade 5 students will be expected to 2.1 develop an understanding of prayer, meditation and worship as expressions of belief 2.2 describe basic beliefs of Christianity, Hinduism, and Sikhism such as belief in an ultimate reality 2.3 demonstrate an understanding that principles such as empathy, forgiveness and justice are present in Christian and Buddhist texts and teachings 2.4 recognize that principles such as empathy, forgiveness and justice are exemplified in the life and teachings of Jesus and the Buddha	Have students share their ideas and experiences regarding prayer, meditation and worship. Through guest speakers, videos, literature, and web sites, explore various personal experiences of prayer, meditation and worship. Research basic beliefs of and rites of passages in Christianity, Hinduism and Sikhism. Use stories from Christian and Buddhist texts to illustrate the principles of empathy, forgiveness and justice. This can be followed by role playing and discussion.

Students will be Expected to Develop an Understanding of Beliefs, Principles, and Practices of Christianity and Other Living Belief Systems

Grade 5
Theme/Organizer: Tenets of Faith

Sample Assessment Activities	Notes/Vignettes
Observation Role playing Questioning Journal Creative Writing Research project	Some examples of rites of passage include baptism, naming ceremony, confirmation and the sacred thread ceremony. Any discussion around prayer, meditation and worship needs to be treated with sensitivity.

Students will be Expected to Examine the Meaning and Relevance of Sacred Texts

Grade 5
Theme/Organizer: Tenets of Faith

Specific Curriculum Outcomes	Sample Activity/Teaching Strategies
By the end of grade 5 students will be expected to 3.1 describe key events in Christianity and Buddhism such as the Resurrection, Pentecost and the enlightenment of the Buddha	Have students share significant events in their lives. This activity should lead to a study of key events in selected religions. Have students create individual time lines of key events in their lives. Create a class graph of the results to identify common key events. This will lead to an understanding that just as there are common key events in the lives of the students, so are there commonalities in the lives of members of world faith communities.

Students will be Expected to Examine the Meaning and Relevance of Sacred Texts

Grade 5
Theme/Organizer: Tenets of Faith

Sample Assessment Activities	Notes/Vignettes
Student products: • time lines • graphs Journal	

Students will be Expected to Demonstrate an Appreciation for Personal Search, Commitment and Meaning to Life

Grade 5
Theme/Organizer: Relations and Renewal/Commitment/Communication

Specific Curriculum Outcomes	Sample Activity/Teaching Strategies
By the end of grade 5 students will be expected to 4.1 recognize that in living belief systems such as Christianity, Buddhism, and Hinduism, people search for meaning in life 4.2 demonstrate an understanding of loyalty and trust 4.3 recognize in Buddhism and Christianity the importance of loyalty/trust 4.4 develop an understanding of the importance of empathy, justice, and forgiveness as expressions of religious beliefs	Explore how famous people found meaning in their lives. Consider how many people have found meaning through religious beliefs. Have students share their understanding of loyalty/trust, empathy, justice and forgiveness. Use stories from literature, including sacred texts, to demonstrate examples. Make a collage as a pictorial representation of people showing loyalty, trust, empathy, justice and forgiveness.

Students will be Expected to Demonstrate an Appreciation for Personal Search, Commitment and Meaning to Life

Grade 5
Theme/Organizer: Relations and Renewal/Commitment/Communication

Sample Assessment Activities	Notes/Vignettes
Student writings Role playing Observation Questioning Journal Self reflection	Try to use current and local people as well as historical figures. Some examples could be Princess Diana, Mother Theresa, and Bishop Desmond Tutu. This unit lend itself to student writings including plays, stories, poems, songs, and biographies. Some examples of stories of loyalty and trust include David and Jonathan, Ruth, Mary.

Students will be Expected to Examine Moral and Ethical Issues and Teachings

Grade 5
Theme/Organizer: Morals/Ethics/Values/Life Issues

Specific Curriculum Outcomes	Sample Activity/Teaching Strategies
By the end of grade 5 students will be expected to 5.1 explore Christian and Hindu teachings concerning respect for people, property and animals 5.2 explore the influence of family, peers, community, religion and media on ethical and moral decision making 5.3 discuss the impact of one's actions on self and others 5.4 discuss how people make appropriate and inappropriate choices and are responsible for these choices	Read and discuss passages from sacred texts relating to respect for people, property and animals. Role play situations which require moral and ethical decision making. Have students reflect on a decision they have made and on what influenced that decision. Present an open-ended scenario/story with a moral or ethical dilemma. This should lead to discussion.

Students will be Expected to Examine Moral and Ethical Issues and Teachings

Grade 5
Theme/Organizer: Morals/Ethics/Values/Life Issues

Sample Assessment Activities	Notes/Vignettes
Journal Role playing Questioning Creative Writing	Not every decision is a moral or ethical one. Teachers should focus on examples of a moral or ethical nature. Follow-up activities would include a discussion of the influences. Audio-visual materials would be valuable resources.

Students will be Expected to Develop an Appreciation for the Connectedness of All Creation

Grade 5
Theme/Organizer: Moral/Ethics/Values/Life Issues

Specific Curriculum Outcomes	Sample Activity/Teaching Strategies
By the end of grade 5 students will be expected to 6.1 explore Hindu and Buddhist beliefs in the connectedness of all things in creation 6.2 explore Christian teachings on the role of humanity as an integral part of creation 6.3 explore Christian and Hindu teachings regarding stewardship and the environment	Using sacred texts, read and discuss passages relating to the connectedness of all things, the role of humanity in creation and stewardship. Have students discuss situations where stewardship has or has not been demonstrated. Follow this with discussions on how they can show good stewardship. Invite guest speakers. Plan and carry out a stewardship project.

Students will be Expected to Develop an Appreciation for the Connectedness of All Creation

Grade 5
Theme/Organizer: Moral/Ethics/Values/Life Issues

Sample Assessment Activities	Notes/Vignettes
Stewardship project	Music and drama will enhance this topic.
Journal	
Role play	
Observation	
Creative Writing • stories • poems • songs • plays	

Students will be Expected to Demonstrate an Understanding of the Relationship Between Religion and Science

Grade 5
Theme/Organizer:

Specific Curriculum Outcomes	Sample Activity/Teaching Strategies

Students will be Expected to Demonstrate an Understanding of the Relationship Between Religion and Science

Grade 5
Theme/Organizer:

Sample Assessment Activities	Notes/Vignettes

Students will be Expected to Examine the Influence of Religion on Contemporary Issues and Events

Grade 5
Theme/Organizer: Relationships

Specific Curriculum Outcomes	Sample Activity/Teaching Strategies
By the end of grade 5 students will be expected to 8.1 recognize teachings of Christianity and Hinduism on contemporary human rights issues 8.2 investigate reasons for human injustice; i.e., poverty 8.3 develop a personal response to issues such as poverty, and respect for people	Through brainstorming, have students share their understanding of human rights and some causes of human injustice; i.e., some reasons for poverty. Have students distinguish between wants and needs. This should lead to the discovery of the three basic human needs of shelter, food and clothing. Read and discuss sacred text stories that relate to human rights. Have the class decide on a human injustice issue and develop a project that would respond to the issue.

Students will be Expected to Examine the Influence of Religion on Contemporary Issues and Events

Grade 5
Theme/Organizer: Relationships

Sample Assessment Activities	Notes/Vignettes
Student products: • posters • letter writing • class project Journal Self reflection	There have been times when religion has not been a positive influence. Generally speaking, however, when help has been needed and given, it has been from religious groups. It is important to help students realize there are degrees of poverty and it exists everywhere. This unit provides an excellent opportunity to write letters to newspaper editors and/or politicans regarding human rights issues.

Grade 6

Students will be Expected to Examine the Historical Impact of Religion on Beliefs, Cultures and Traditions

Grade 6
Theme/Organizer: Tenets of Faith

Specific Curriculum Outcomes	Sample Activity/Teaching Strategies
By the end of grade 6 students will be expected to 1.1 explore the origins of Christianity and Islam 1.2 examine stories of creation and the after-life in Christianity, Islam and Native Spirituality 1.3 explore how teachings and laws of Christianity and Islam influence the development of morals and values 1.4 examine how religious beliefs are often expressed through art, music, drama, and dance in Christianity and Native Spirituality	Use sacred text stories of Christianity and Islam to discover the origins. Read selected sacred text stories to become familiar with beliefs about creation and the after-life in Christianity, Islam and Native Spirituality. Use sacred text references to explore some of the teachings and laws of Christianity and Islam and how they have influenced the development of morals and values. Have students research art, music, drama and dance with the intent of re-enacting and/or producing these art forms.

Students will be Expected to Examine the Historical Impact of Religion on Beliefs, Cultures and Traditions

Grade 6
Theme/Organizer: Tenets of Faith

Sample Assessment Activities	Notes/Vignettes
Student products: • art • music • drama • dance Observation Questioning	A review of what is meant by "origins" may be necessary. Students can draw on their previous learning about indigenous groups studied in Grade 4 and 5 Social Studies.

Students will be Expected to Develop an Understanding of Beliefs, Principles, and Practices of Christianity and Other Living Belief Systems

Grade 6
Theme/Organizer: Tenets of Faith

Specific Curriculum Outcomes	Sample Activity/Teaching Strategies
By the end of grade 6 students will be expected to 2.1 explore the concept of belief through revelation, hope and reconciliation 2.2 demonstrate an understanding that principles such as stewardship and faithfulness are present in Christian and Native texts 2.3 recognize that principles such as stewardship and integrity are exemplified in the life and teachings of Jesus and Muhammed	Have students discuss what they understand about beliefs. Help students understand through stories and the sharing of experiences what is meant by revelation and reconciliation. Link these stories and experiences to the concept of belief. Use sacred texts to identify basic beliefs and principles.

Students will be Expected to Develop an Understanding of Beliefs, Principles, and Practices of Christianity and Other Living Belief Systems

Grade 6
Theme/Organizer: Tenets of Faith

Sample Assessment Activities	Notes/Vignettes
Questioning Self reflection Journal Role playing Observation	The terminology in 2.1 is intended for teachers and must be presented at the students' levels. The stories of the Prodigal Son and Zachhaeus are examples of stewardship, integrity and faithfulness.

Students will be Expected to Examine the Meaning and Relevance of Sacred Texts

Grade 6
Theme/Organizer: Tenets of Faith

Specific Curriculum Outcomes	Sample Activity/Teaching Strategies
By the end of grade 6 students will be expected to 3.1 explore the belief that sacred texts such as the Bible and the Qur'an were revealed by God 3.2 demonstrate an appreciation of the importance of sacred texts such as the Bible and the Qur'an for their adherents 3.3 explore the role of the Shaman in Native Spirituality	Choose a map activity where the students are required to use the map as a guide for a journey. This would lead to a discussion that just as a map shows us the path to follow and is written by someone who knows the way, so it is believed that the sacred texts were given as a guide by God to show adherents the path to follow in life. Have students research the role of the Shaman in Native Spirituality. This could lead to artistic responses.

Students will be Expected to Examine the Meaning and Relevance of Sacred Texts

Grade 6
Theme/Organizer: Tenets of Faith

Sample Assessment Activities	Notes/Vignettes
Student products: • research projects • artistic representations Observation Questioning	It may be interesting to use a destination map. This could be linked to the belief that people are on a spiritual journey.

Students will be Expected to Demonstrate an Appreciation for Personal Search, Commitment and Meaning to Life

Grade 6
Theme/Organizer: Relations and Renewal/Commitment/Communication

Specific Curriculum Outcomes	Sample Activity/Teaching Strategies
By the end of grade 6 students will be expected to 4.1 recognize that in living belief systems such as Christianity and Native Spirituality people search for meaning in life 4.2 demonstrate an understanding of discipleship and stewardship 4.3 recognize in Christianity and Islam the importance of discipleship and stewardship 4.4 explore the importance of discipleship, stewardship and integrity in response to religious beliefs	Look at how famous people found meaning in their lives. Consider how many people have found meaning through religious beliefs. Invite guest speakers to share who they demonstrate stewardship, discipleship and integrity in response to their religious beliefs. Have students devise and carry out a plan for personal stewardship and discipleship.

Students will be Expected to Demonstrate an Appreciation for Personal Search, Commitment and Meaning to Life

Grade 6
Theme/Organizer: Relations and Renewal/Commitment/Communication

Sample Assessment Activities	Notes/Vignettes
Self reflection	Draw on resources from the local community.
Stewardship/Discipleship project	*Chicken Soup for the Soul* books make good resources.
Journal	
Response to guest speakers	

Students will be Expected to Examine Moral and Ethical Issues and Teachings

Grade 6
Theme/Organizer: Morals/Ethics/Values/Life Issues

Specific Curriculum Outcomes	Sample Activity/Teaching Strategies
By the end of grade 6 students will be expected to 5.1 discuss conflict resolution and materialism in the teachings of Christianity and Native Spirituality 5.2 examine the influence of family, peers, community, religion and media on ethical and moral decision making 5.3 examine the implications of one's actions on self and others 5.4 examine why people must take responsibility for their actions	Using sacred texts, read and discuss passages relating to conflict resolution and materialism. Begin with a quote such as "Evil flourishes when good people do nothing." Brainstorm what this statement is saying. Discuss/share examples from TV, printed materials, and real life which exemplify the above statement. Using newspapers and magazines, create a collage of pictures and words depicting wrongdoing and conflict. Have students present and explain their choices. Through class discussion determine if these wrongdoings/conflicts could have been prevented if someone had intervened. Have a class discussion about why some people choose to do what is right while others choose to do what is wrong. Are people ever justified in doing what society considers wrong? Create a matrix to examine a moral/ethical issue and its implications (see sample matrix below).

Students will be Expected to Examine Moral and Ethical Issues and Teachings

Grade 6
Theme/Organizer: Morals/Ethics/Values/Life Issues

Sample Assessment Activities	Notes/Vignettes
Student products: • collage • matrix Journal Self-reflection Observation	Suggestions for topics under moral and ethical issues: vandalism shoplifting bullying cheating littering stealing Be sure that in your discussions students reflect on the question "Is it right/wrong to do nothing?"

Students will be Expected to Develop an Appreciation for the Connectedness of All Creation

Grade 6
Theme/Organizer: Moral/Ethics/Values/Life Issues

Specific Curriculum Outcomes	Sample Activity/Teaching Strategies
By the end of grade 6 students will be expected to 6.1 explore the role of a caring Creator as understood in Christianity and Islam 6.2 examine the belief in Native Spirituality that all creation is connected 6.3 explore the role of humanity as an integral part of creation as understood in Christianity and Native Spirituality 6.4 analyze the concept of stewardship towards the environment in Native Spirituality	Using sacred texts and stories, read and discuss passages relating to a caring Creator, the connectedness of all creation and the concept of stewardship. Have students complete a research project on Native Spirituality teachings regarding stewardship of creation. Take students on a "creation" field trip and have them report on their experiences and feelings.

Students will be Expected to Develop an Appreciation for the Connectedness of All Creation

Grade 6
Theme/Organizer: Moral/Ethics/Values/Life Issues

Sample Assessment Activities	Notes/Vignettes
Research Project Journal Observation	This should be a "feel good" field trip - to appreciate the wonder of creation. Possible field trips: • walk in the woods • walk along a beach • trek through open fields • walk along a river or stream This topic can lend itself to cross-curricular integration with Science; i.e., endangered species, food chain, interdependence.

Students will be Expected to Demonstrate an Understanding of the Relationship Between Religion and Science

Grade 6
Theme/Organizer: Morals/Ethics/Values/Life Issues

Specific Curriculum Outcomes	Sample Activity/Teaching Strategies
By the end of grade 6 students will be expected to 7.1 explore how science and religion often address the same questions but use different approaches	Brainstorm with students familiar events which they consider to be miraculous. Through discussion consider explanations that might be given by science and/or religion. Represent these explanations on a comparison chart.

Students will be Expected to Demonstrate an Understanding of the Relationship Between Religion and Science

Grade 6
Theme/Organizer: Morals/Ethics/Values/Life Issues

Sample Assessment Activities	Notes/Vignettes
Observation	*Chicken Soup for the Soul* books make good resources.
Journals	Here is an example of a true miraculous event that could act as a springboard for the brainstorming session or for further discussion:
	During a conference, a man collapsed with an aortic aneurism. Efforts to revive him were unsuccessful and, near death, he was transported to hospital. The people at the conference immediately stopped the proceedings and prayed for the man's recovery. Upon arrival at the hospital, the medical staff quickly realized that this man needed emergency surgery in order to survive; however, there was no cardiac surgeon employed by the hospital. Meanwhile, due to an unexpected flight delay at the local airport, a cardiac surgeon happened to be visiting the hospital. He was summoned, successfully completed the operation, and the man's life was saved.

Students will be Expected to Examine the Influence of Religion on Contemporary Issues and Events

Grade 6
Theme/Organizer: Relationships

Specific Curriculum Outcomes	Sample Activity/Teaching Strategies
By the end of grade 6 students will be expected to 8.1 investigate the impact of Christianity and Islam on contemporary issues and events such as human rights 8.2 discuss what it means to be a just leader 8.3 develop a personal response to issues such as human rights and leadership	Explore how the right to the basic necessities of life is revealed in sacred texts. Discuss how Christianity and Islam have had an impact on human rights. Have students research a leader to identify qualities which make a just leader. Have students choose an issue and develop a personal project to respond to the issue. Have students complete the following activity: "If I could change five things to make this world a better place, I would ...."

Students will be Expected to Examine the Influence of Religion on Contemporary Issues and Events

Grade 6
Theme/Organizer: Relationships

Sample Assessment Activities	Notes/Vignettes
Student products: • research • personal projects • writing activities Observation	Some examples of leaders: • Martin Luther King • Rosa Parks • Nelson Mandella • Desmond Tutu

Chapter 3: The Instructional Environment

The Elementary Learner

Children have many ways of understanding the world. A basic need for all elementary learners is to make sense of their experiences as they grow intellectually, physically, emotionally, morally and spiritually. Developing self-awareness and a sensitive appreciation of others, and becoming responsible members of society are fundamental to the life-long learning process.

The characteristics of the elementary learner should be considered within the instructional environment. The elementary learner...

- is developing a sense of humour
- is learning to communicate
- is enthusiastic about sharing ideas and experiences
- is learning to reason
- is very active - wants to **do** things
- is beginning to reflect on feelings and emotions
- is becoming more independent and responsible
- is developing an understanding of fairness
- seeks acceptance by peers
- understands at a concrete and literal level
- responds well to praise and positive feedback
- is open to a wider range of influences
- is moving to a greater degree beyond the sphere of family influence
- is becoming more self-conscious
- is learning to interact cooperatively
- asks questions and questions answers
- is beginning to understand that symbols have meanings
- can reflect on the past and consider the future
- is developing a sense of right and wrong
- is capable of showing empathy
- responds best when expectations are clear

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 from their own. 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 child, with activities being student centered. The program should include play, music, dance, song, art, and story. It may also 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 of 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

A supportive environment is crucial. It is the role of the teacher to create that 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 child to form individual beliefs and attitudes
- fosters feelings of wonder, delight and mystery in creation
- helps students understand what 'reflection' is and 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 denegrate any student's beliefs. The teacher must not attempt to indoctrinate or proselytize.

Instructional Strategies

To increase one's repertoire is to develop the aptitude to teach: the ability to coordinate objectives, students, and learning environments with increasing skill and effectiveness. (Joyce and Weil, 1986).

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.

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, evaluation, especially formative evaluation, 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 progress toward becoming 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 in grades 4-6 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

Independent Learning

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.

Learning is both personal and social. Religious Education recognizes the diverse interests, learning styles, prior knowledge, experiences and beliefs students bring to the classroom. 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 must be given to allow students 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. (*English Language Arts Curriculum Guide, Grades 4-6*, 1998, p. 109-111)

Indirect Instruction

Indirect Instruction is generally student-centered and involves inquiry, discovery, 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

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

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*
- *decision making*
- *cloze procedure*
- *concept formation*
- *concept attainment*
- *guided inquiry*
- *case study*
- *reflective discussion and questions*

Direct Instruction

Direct Instructions 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*
- *drill and practice*
- *demonstrations*
- *guided practice*
- *guides or templates (outlines)*
- *structured overview*
- *compare and contrast*

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 resource 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
- 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

Cautions:
- not all students learn well with this technique
- lectured content is often rapidly forgotten
- effective and critical listening generally lasts for between 5-10 minutes for children

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

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 laser video discs, 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*
- *working model*
- *mock-up*
- *field trips*
- *surveys*
- *games*
- *learning centres*

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 behavioral change
- encourages cooperation and sharing
- can be used to resolve decision-making dilemmas, resolve conflict, determine appropriate behavioral responses
- teachers must define the problem situation and problem clearly as well as give very clear instructions

Cautions:

- consider very carefully the developmental stage of the learner (young children can find portraying negative characters very disturbing and traumatic).
- some students may feel self conscious or threatened
- may not be appropriate for large groups
- may not be appropriate for all learners

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

Independent Learning

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. Independent 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 and see the relevance of what they are learning to their everyday lives. 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*

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 timelines
- 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 pace most suited for them
- can help students make reasoned choices, become increasingly independent learners and take responsibility for their own learning.

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.

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 zany ideas encouraged and accepted

Interactive instruction includes:
- *whole group discussion*
- *small group discussion*
- *conferencing*
- *mentoring*
- *dialogue*
- *brainstorming*
- *cooperative learning groups*
- *laboratory groups*
- *computer partners*
- *buddy reading*
- *interviewing*
- *peer practice*

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

Chapter 4: Assessment and Evaluation

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. Evaluating 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. (*English Language Arts Curriculum Guide 4-6*, 1998, page 203.)

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*, page 4))

Understanding Process and Product

Evaluation deals with both process and product. Because Religious Education focuses mainly on the affective domain, emphasis should be placed on process.

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.

Diverse Learners

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

Assessment Strategies

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 judgements 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 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
  (*English Language Arts Guide, 4-6*, 1998, pages 203-204.)

While evaluation is concerned with the development of the whole child in the cognitive, psychomotor, and affective domains, it should be understood that the affective domain is the focus of evaluation in Religious Education.

The affective domain deals with feelings and emotions and is exemplified through students' attitudes, interests, value systems and appreciations. There is little doubt this is a more difficult area to evaluate than either the cognitive or psychomotor domains. For this reason, it is generally inappropriate and undesirable to attach percentage values to affective outcomes. This does not, however, diminish the importance of the affective domain, since values and value systems are central to the learning and evaluation process (Eiss and Harbeck, 1969). It is important to keep the three domains separate for evaluation purposes. This is important since it is possible for progress to be uneven across the different domains. Even though a student might have a negative attitude toward school, it is possible for that student to achieve at a high level in the cognitive domain.

A question that arises is why so little attention has been given to assessing student progress in such a crucial area of child development. Perhaps the home and church are expected to provide instruction in those areas. Perhaps it is because schools tend to place most emphasis on the cognitive aspects of education. Undoubtedly, a major reason is the difficulty associated with measuring progress toward affect outcomes.

One of the most effective sources of data for use in evaluating outcomes in the affective domain is observation. This method, utilizing appropriate recording devises 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 devises 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. Student reports or terms papers can be evaluated from an affective point of view if they are designed so the student is required to take a stand on a certain issue. Personal interviews and discussions can also be used to evaluate affective growth if care is taken to use indirect questions so that students cannot guess which answer the teacher would like to hear.

To become lifelong learners, students need to develop internal motivation. They are more likely to perceive learning as its own reward when they are empowered to assess their own progress. Rather than asking teachers, What do you want?, students should be encouraged to ask themselves questions such as, What have I learned? What can I do now that I couldn't do before? What do I need to learn next? Assessment must provide opportunities for students to reflect on their progress, evaluate their learning, and set goals for future learning.

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
  (*English Language Arts Curriculum Guide, 4-6*, 1998, page 5)

Chapter 5: Resources

Authorized Resources

The following resources are to be used in accordance with the key principles underlying the Religious Education Curriculum.

Religious Education Interim Edition - A Curriculum Framework (1998)

Religious Education Primary Interim Curriculum Guide (1998)

Grade 1

Teacher Resources:
Religious Education and the Primary Child, Department of Education

Core Children's Literature

Polacco, Patricia. *Mrs. Katz and Tush,* ISBN # 0440409365

The Beginner's Bible. ISBN # 945564317

Grade 2

Teacher Resources:
Religious Education and the Primary Child, Department of Education

Core Children's Literature

Oberman, Sheldon. *By the Hanukkah Light,* ISBN # 1563976587

The Beginner's Bible. ISBN # 945564317

Grade 3

Teacher Resources:
Pennell, Sandy; Downer, Wynanne; Maggs, Catherine. *Friends of God - Teacher's Edition,* ISBN# 0-920911-76-5

Kindersley, Anabel & Barnabas. *Celebrations.* ISBN # 1551681080

Holy Bible - Contemporary English Version. ISBN # 10627

Interim Curriculum Guide and the resource *Religious Education and the Primary Child.*

StudentResource:
Pennell, Sandy; Downer, Wyanne; Maggs, Catherine. *Friends of God.* ISBN # 0-920911-75-7

Recommended Resources

Recommended resources can be found in appropriate sections of the *Religious Education: Primary Interim Curriculum Guide* and the resource *Religious Education and the Primary Child.*

The Primary/Elementary Levels Handbook. July 1996, Department of Education.