

Text centred teaching and learning in RE for 7-14s

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RE-Juvinating and RE-Inspiring RE Conference 2021



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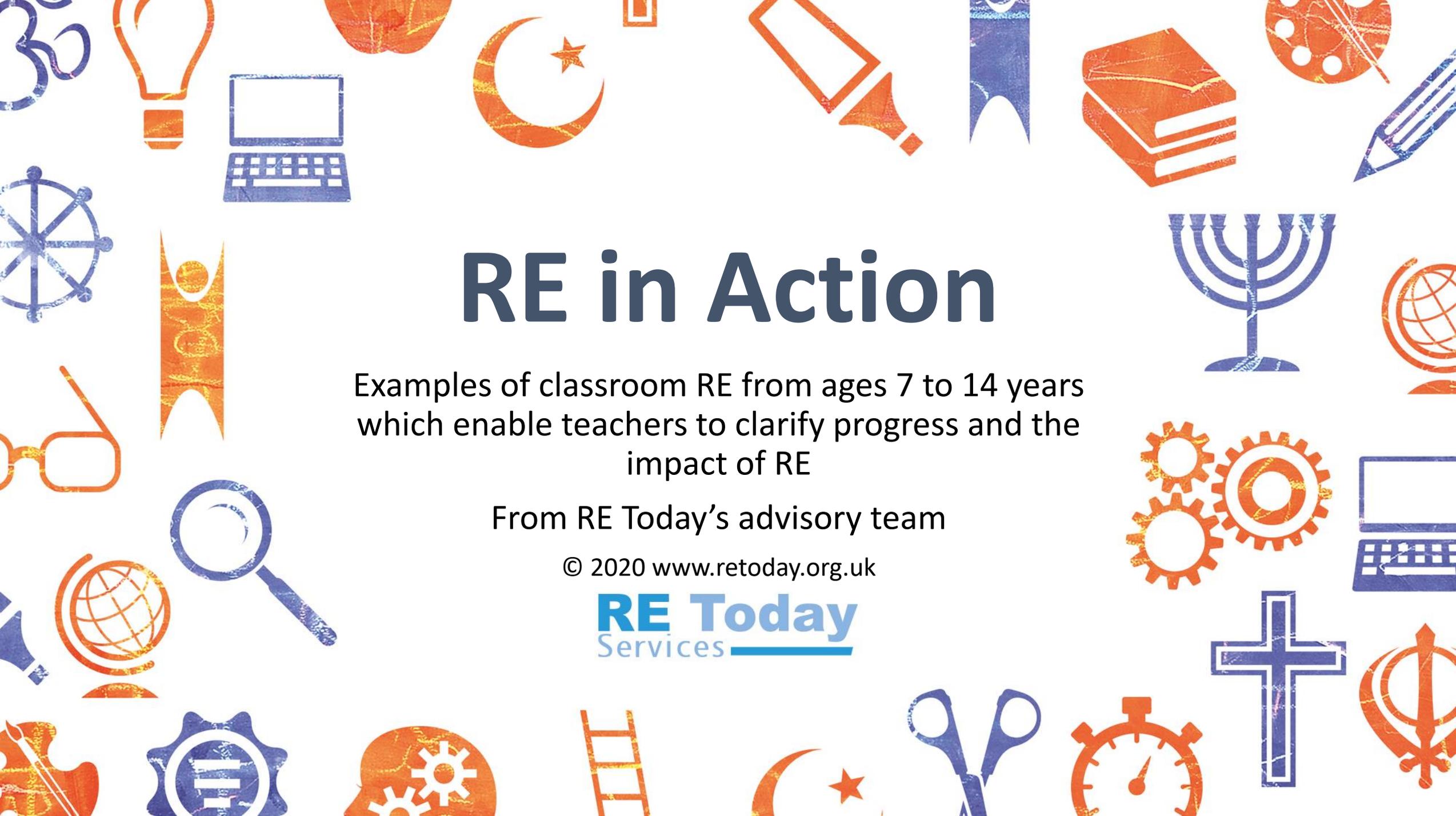


RE-Juvinating and RE-Inspiring RE Conference 2021

Text Centred Teaching for 7-14s

- Religions have dynamic and interactive relations with texts which preserve their origins, challenge their practice, define their beliefs, encapsulate their spirituality and do a dozen other things...
- Religions are often currently interested in narrative theologies, the expression of ideas about God through story...
- RE has a long history with texts: from 1944 the Bible was the key to RE not least because it avoided any denominational bias...
- Teaching with texts can be dynamic, spiritual, intriguing, creative, thoughtful and generally riveting...
- One good way of expressing the aims of RE is in terms of hermeneutics, the processes of interpretation. What do we want from RE? For pupils to be confident and able interpreters of religious 'texts' of all kinds...



The background features a collage of various icons in orange and blue. These include a lightbulb, a laptop, a crescent moon with a star, a pencil, a book, a globe, a magnifying glass, a gear, a cross, a ladder, a pair of scissors, a stopwatch, a gear with a list, a head with gears, a ladder, a crescent moon with a star, a pair of scissors, a stopwatch, a cross, and a Khanda. The icons are scattered across the page, framing the central text.

RE in Action

Examples of classroom RE from ages 7 to 14 years
which enable teachers to clarify progress and the
impact of RE

From RE Today's advisory team

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The selection of examples of text based RE which follows shows work from a wide range of religions and worldviews, and from a wide range of standards across the age range 7-14. As you engage with these examples, you may find it helpful to take note of the tasks which have enabled pupils to show their achievements. The work demonstrates a strong vision of progress across the age range.

Questions:

- What examples from your own RE practice would you like to contribute to this selection of pupil work?
- How does the set of examples in this presentation demonstrate the progression in learning that RE seeks from 7-9 year olds?
- These examples are largely from 'work on paper', which is important – pupils should write well in RE – but not the only way achievements are shown. What other achievements are your pupils showing in RE and how can they be captured or credited?

Ivy, age 7

The story of Jesus meeting Zacchaeus and changing his life from greed and loneliness to generosity and community

- This example shows that pupils can make sense of religious story for themselves if they are set well structured tasks. Ivy chooses 6 ideas about the kind of person Zacchaeus was at the start of the story, and 7 words to describe how he changed. The work is focused on the way an encounter with Jesus transformed his life – a big idea about religion’s power to change people’s lives.
- Regarding age related expectations, this work shows that Ivy can give examples of how stories show what difference faith makes, and think, talk and ask questions about the story using her own ideas about values.

Questions:

How could your school use a task like this to show progress in RE?

The task has several layers – to draw, to select words, to write a sentence summarising the story. Do you use layered tasks enough, to deepen pupil responses in RE?

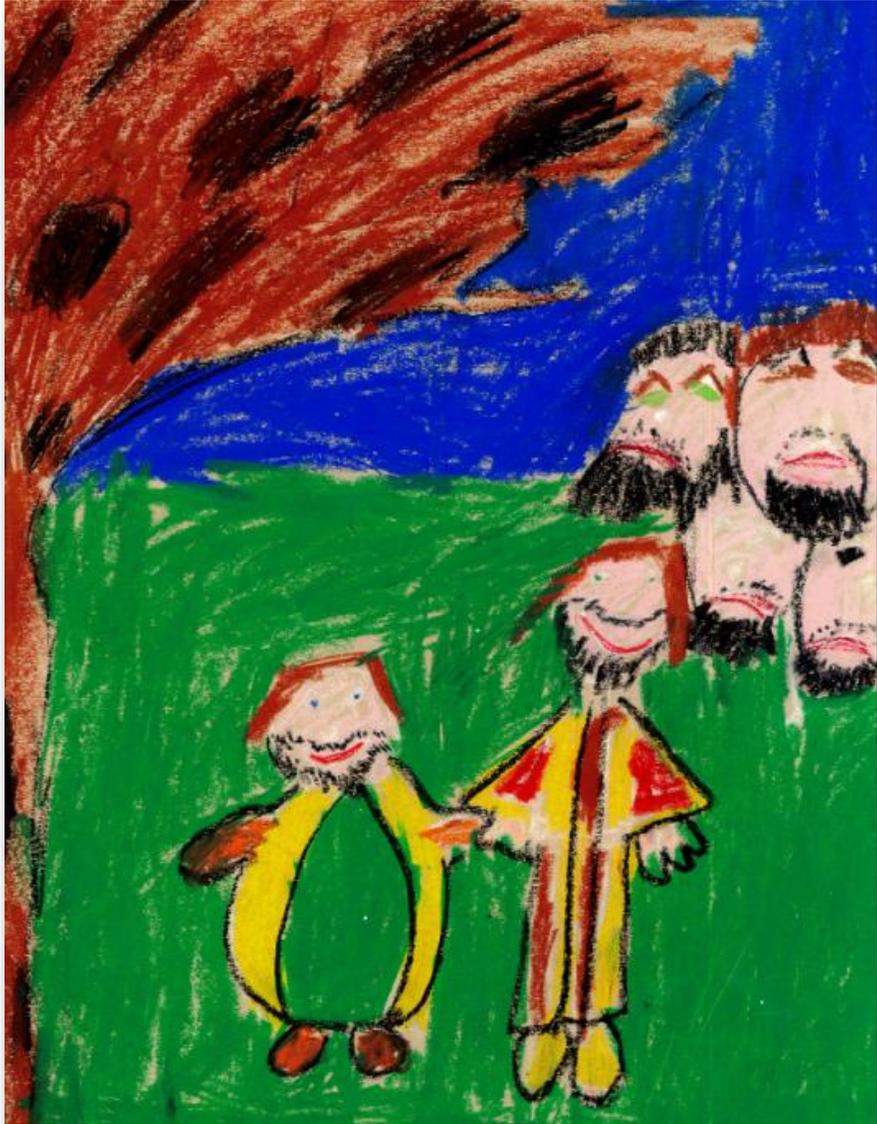
In what ways does this work show good RE in action?

Name Ivy Date 10.1.20

Draw Zacchaeus before and after he met Jesus.

Before	After
<p>greedy dishonest hasty</p>  <p>mean</p> <p>unkind not nice thief</p>	<p>kind friendly good nice</p>  <p>humble sharing brave</p>

Zacchaeus was a nice man once he had met Jesus.
Before he met Jesus he was a thief.



Tony, only 7 (!), created this amazingly expressive image of the story of Zacchaeus. This traitorous, Roman~ collaborating tax collector persuaded by Jesus to repent of his selfish and avaricious way of life. Tony said:

“I did Jesus and Zack looking happy at the end of the story, but all the other people were cross with Jesus for being friends with him. No one liked him except Jesus. At the end he gave all his money away, so Jesus changed his life.”

The disdainful jealousy of the onlookers is particularly well expressed in their wax crayon faces!

Harley, age 7, and other pupils

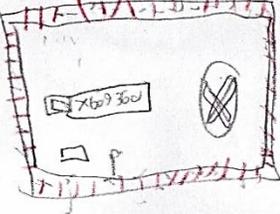
Treasure and Money

- The children used a story of the Prophet to think about this Hadith: 'Generosity is near to Allah, near to Paradise, near to the people ... Miserliness is far from Allah, far from Paradise, far from the people.'¹ They also heard a story of Jesus and thought about his sayings: 'Give expecting nothing in return' and 'Sell what you have and give to the poor and come and follow me.'
- This is an example of good, independent thinking around two texts in RE – one from Islam and one from Christianity.
- The teacher emphasised the importance of pupils using the 'box fill in' sheet to express their own thoughts around whether there are things which are more valuable than money and the work is evidence that 6-7-year-olds can engage with some very big questions and formulate their own ideas.

Questions:

How could your school use a task like this to show progress in RE?
 In what ways does this work show good RE in action?
 What opportunities are there in your setting for younger children to develop their own responses to key passages from sacred texts?

Coins and gold
 Treasure and money: what's the difference? Harley

<p>The greatest treasure in my family</p>  <p>FAMILY</p>	<p>Here is something of mine I would not sell for any money:</p> <p>x £100 300</p> 	<p>Having money matters because:</p> <p>Food Water poor</p>
<p>Something that is worth more than any money</p> <p>my baby to sell</p> 	<p>If I had £100, I would:</p> <p>Save up</p> 	<p>Being generous matters because:</p> <p>to help people and cheer them</p>

Having money matters because:

cos I cud sayk my family on a Crocus



Something that is worth more than any money

The Muslims holy book,
 The Quran



If I had £100, I would:

Share it to my mum, Dad and my brother and charity



¹ Al-Tirmidhi

Puja, age 9. Wanted Messiah! Excellent use of Theological terms

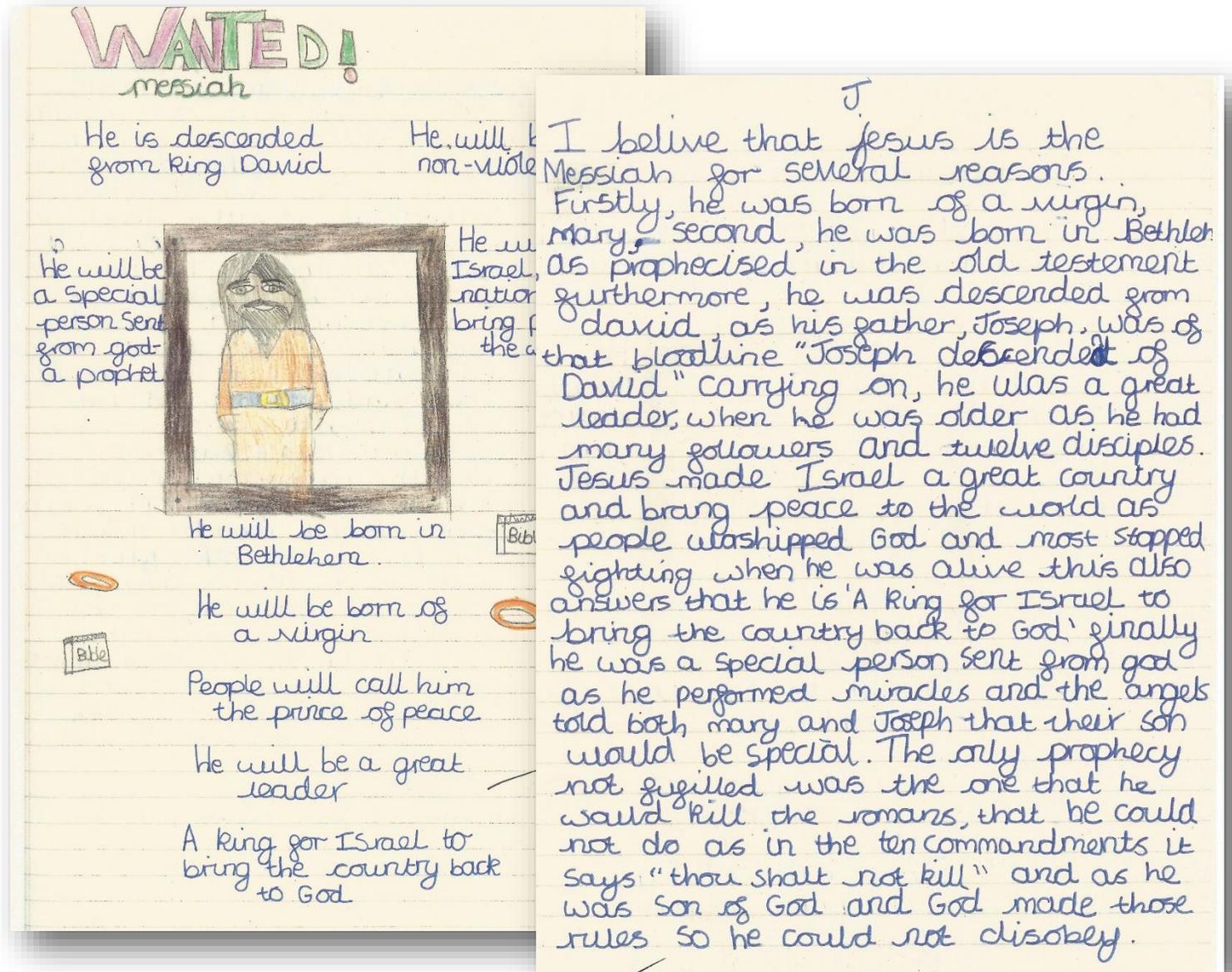
- Puja explains the core Christian use of the concept of 'Messiah' using examples from the Bible and can make connections between beliefs and practices.
- Prior learning is key- previously, pupils had found out about the concept of the 'people of God' in the Old Testament and looked at some of the prophecies of the messiah that many Christians believe are found in the Book of Isaiah. This work built on their understanding of incarnation.
- One key quality of this work is her clear understanding of the biblical texts she has explored.

Questions:

How could your school use a task like this to show progress in RE?

Can your pupils explain key theological terms this clearly?

In what ways does this work show good RE in action?



WANTED!
messiah

He is descended from King David

He will be a special person sent from god - a prophet



He will be born in Bethlehere

He will be born of a virgin

People will call him the prince of peace

He will be a great leader

A king for Israel to bring the country back to God

I believe that Jesus is the Messiah for several reasons. Firstly, he was born of a virgin, Mary, second, he was born in Bethleher as prophesied in the old testament furthermore, he was descended from David, as his father, Joseph, was of that bloodline. Joseph descended of David' carrying on, he was a great leader, when he was older as he had many followers and twelve disciples. Jesus made Israel a great country and bring peace to the world as people worshipped God and most stopped fighting when he was alive this also answers that he is 'A King for Israel to bring the country back to God' finally he was a special person sent from god as he performed miracles and the angels told both Mary and Joseph that their son would be special. The only prophecy not fulfilled was the one that he would kill the romans, that he could not do as in the ten commandments it says 'thou shalt not kill' and as he was son of God and God made those rules so he could not disobey.

Tarandeep and Tiya, age 9 Islamic ideas about God

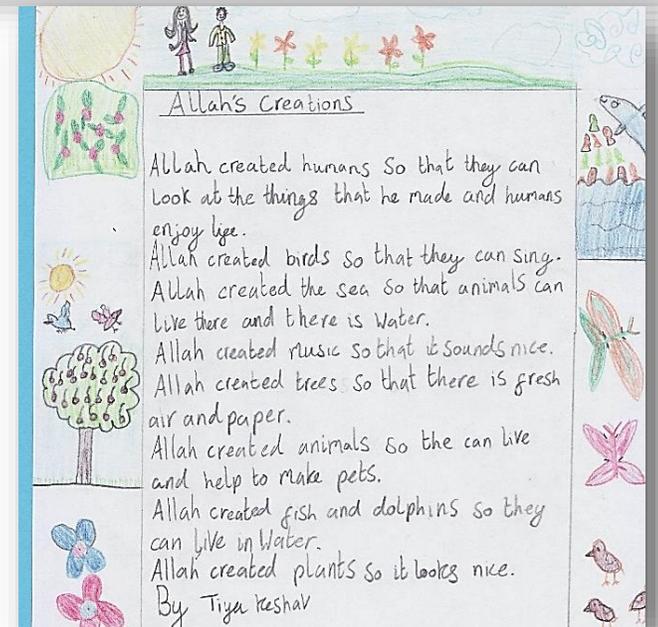
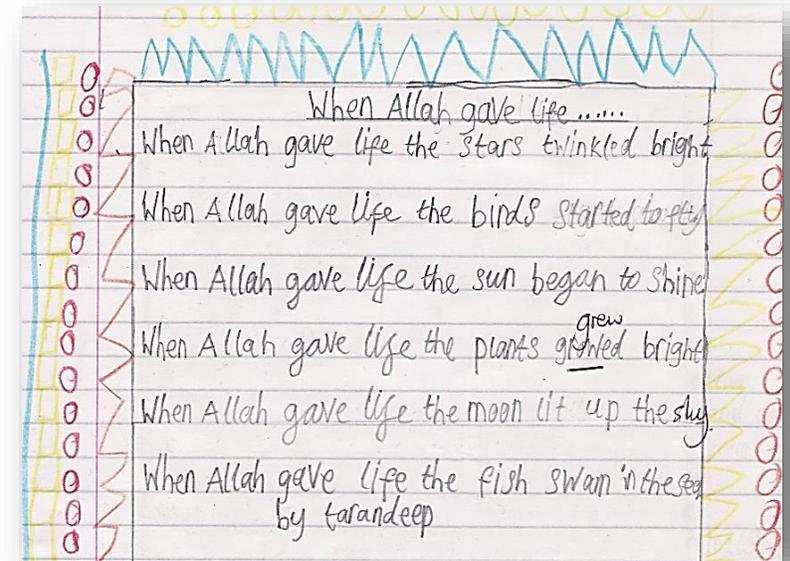
- These two good quality, but quite different pieces of work demonstrate that learners can understand what it means to Muslims to believe that Allah is beneficent, and the Lord of the World. Clearly, Tarandeep and Tiya can both make links between the Muslim beliefs and their own ideas, expressing their thoughts clearly.
- Pupils were encouraged to connect their learning about the Muslim belief in God as creator with their own appreciation of the natural world. The pupils learnt that many Muslims believe Allah is good to humanity (beneficent) and is the creator, the Lord of our world. Prior to this, they had studied the idea that Jews, Christians and Muslims share some ideas about the one God they believe in.
- This example of work shows an imaginative teaching strategy: pupils listed some of the things they love about our natural world, then considered why Muslims praise and thank Allah/God for these things. They were given time to think about the ways in which a verse from the Qur'an (31.10) makes a difference to how Muslims see the world, then they were invited to write poems explaining some details about how many Muslims see God as creator.
- This work helps clarify Muslim belief for the learners, whilst giving pupils an open opportunity to express the main ideas of the lesson in their own terms.

Questions:

How could your school use a task like this to show progress in RE?

How might you design or re-design tasks to maximise the potential of tasks to hit multiple objects for your students in RE?

In what ways does this work show good RE in action?

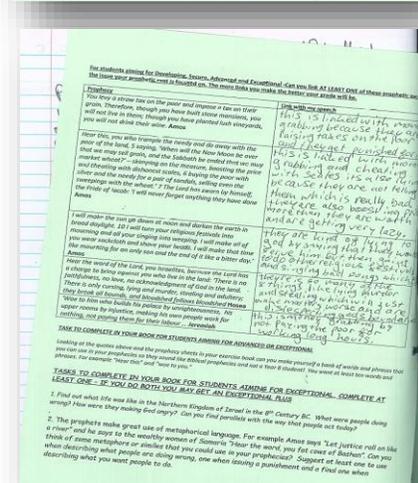
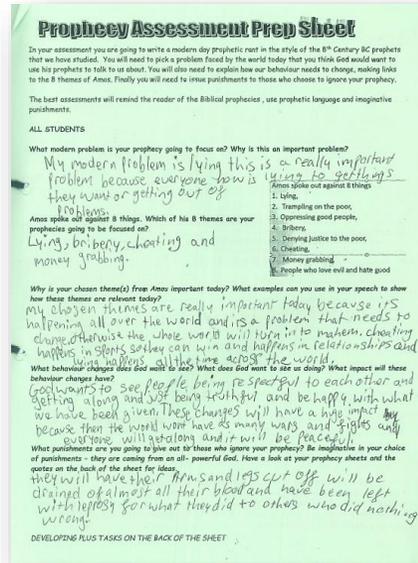


Adam, age 12 Prophetic Rant: Calling for Justice

- This pupil has been able to reflect the style and content of biblical prophets' calls for justice, showing awareness of the covenant agreement between God and his people. He has been able to apply these to a contemporary context, showing their continuing relevance for many today.
- The class has been following the Understanding Christianity unit 3.4 'Does the world need prophets today?' exploring the place of the prophets within the 'big story' of the Bible, and analysed the themes and language of Amos in terms of his dramatic calls for the people of God to stop sinning and return to the covenant by practising justice.
- This pupil has applied the prophetic call for justice in eighth-century Israel to the twenty-first century, challenging prejudice and discrimination against others, hate crimes, trafficking or even killing people.
- Quoting from Hosea, and reflecting the concerns of Amos, he has used the style appropriately, with vivid similes ('Let love cover the world like a blanket') and pertinent punishments. The close study of ancient texts in the classroom connected to some issues of today.

Questions:

- How could you design tasks around ancient texts to bring out their relevance to today's world?
- Do you need to consider setting more challenging tasks which stretch pupils' abilities?
- In what ways does this work show good RE in action?



Prophecy Assessment

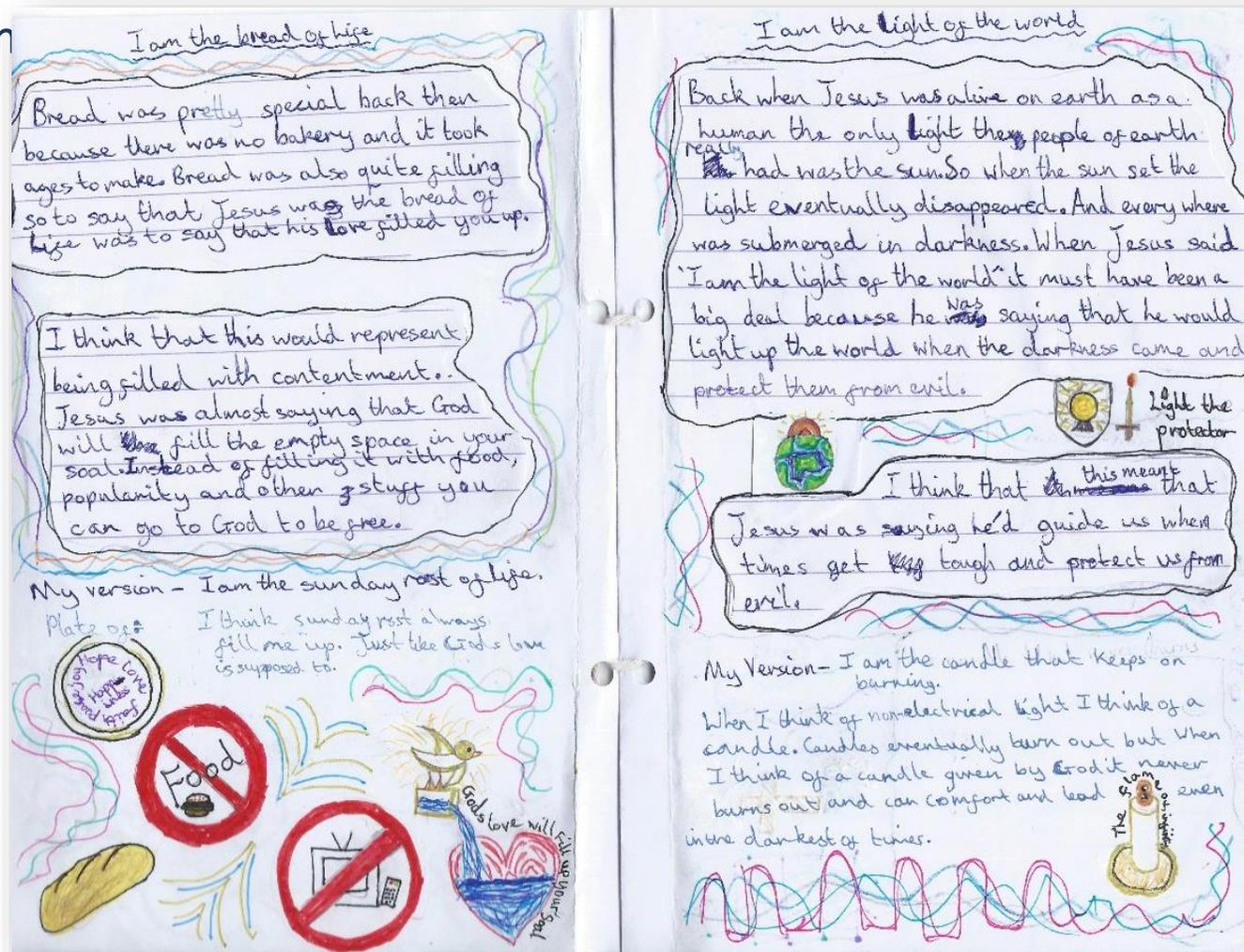
Hear this, you vicious killers, your violent actions are wrong, they are a disgrace to the world of where we live. All citizens ~~deserve~~ ^{they} have the right to live their life no matter their shape or size, their beliefs ^{beliefs} or religion, ~~that~~ their gender or race. They should all be treated with the same respect. Treat others how you would like to be treated. Good people don't deserve bad things. They don't deserve to be killed, attacked or any other cruel actions. They deserve good things in life. You kill like its second nature. That is wrong. You should love and be kind. Let love cover the world like a blanket. ^{Love} Now take this punishment like you took their lives. You must slave to the families that you have taken a loved one from. You must do it with love and kindness. Hosea and Amos had already informed you yet you chose to ignore. ~~now~~ Now you must face your consequences for your iniquity. You shall never be allowed out in public ^{or} as you abused this privilege. Hosea had said 'There is no faithfulness, no love, no acknowledgement of God in the land. There is only cursing, lying and murder, stealing and adultery'. This is true to your actions. **WOE TO YOU.**

Lois, 13 Using Metaphor to Explore the Incarnation

- The class have been studying the Understanding Christianity unit 3.6 'Why do Christians believe Jesus is God on earth?' Having analysed the use of the name 'I am who I am', applied to God in Exodus 3:14, they looked at the seven 'I am' statements used to describe Jesus in John's Gospel and considered the challenge of expressing complex, abstract ideas about God.
- Lois is aware of the first-century context when interpreting the Gospel texts and recognises how metaphors work in conveying complex ideas, in this case about Jesus as God incarnate.
- Drawing together their ideas in a booklet pupils show a 'visual gospel of John', they think about the context of the time, interpreting the metaphors appropriately before considering comparable twenty-first century equivalents. The pupil here has recognised that interpreting biblical texts requires an understanding of the historical context out of which the text comes, so that she takes account of human dependence upon and vulnerability to nature. She has some simple suggestions for contemporary metaphors.
- Her teacher noted that the best students could support their metaphors with clear reasons showing some real grasp of the underlying Christology, and had some pertinent insights.

Questions:

- How could tasks be designed to use devices such as metaphor to deepen and assess pupils' responses?
- How does knowledge of historical and/or cultural context of sacred writings help pupils to understand key concepts?
- In what ways does this work show good RE in action?



Lord Krishna says ...

I am the taste of water.

I am the light of the sun and moon.

I am the original fragrance of the earth.

I am the heat in fire.

I am the life of all that lives.

Of lights I am the radiant sun.

Among stars I am the moon.

Of bodies of water I am the ocean.

Of immovable things I am the Himalayas.

Of trees I am the banyan-tree.

Of weapons I am the thunderbolt.

Among beasts I am the lion.

Of purifiers I am the wind.

Of fishes I am the shark.

Of flowing rivers I am the
Ganges.

Of seasons I am flower- bearing
spring.

Of secret things I am silence.

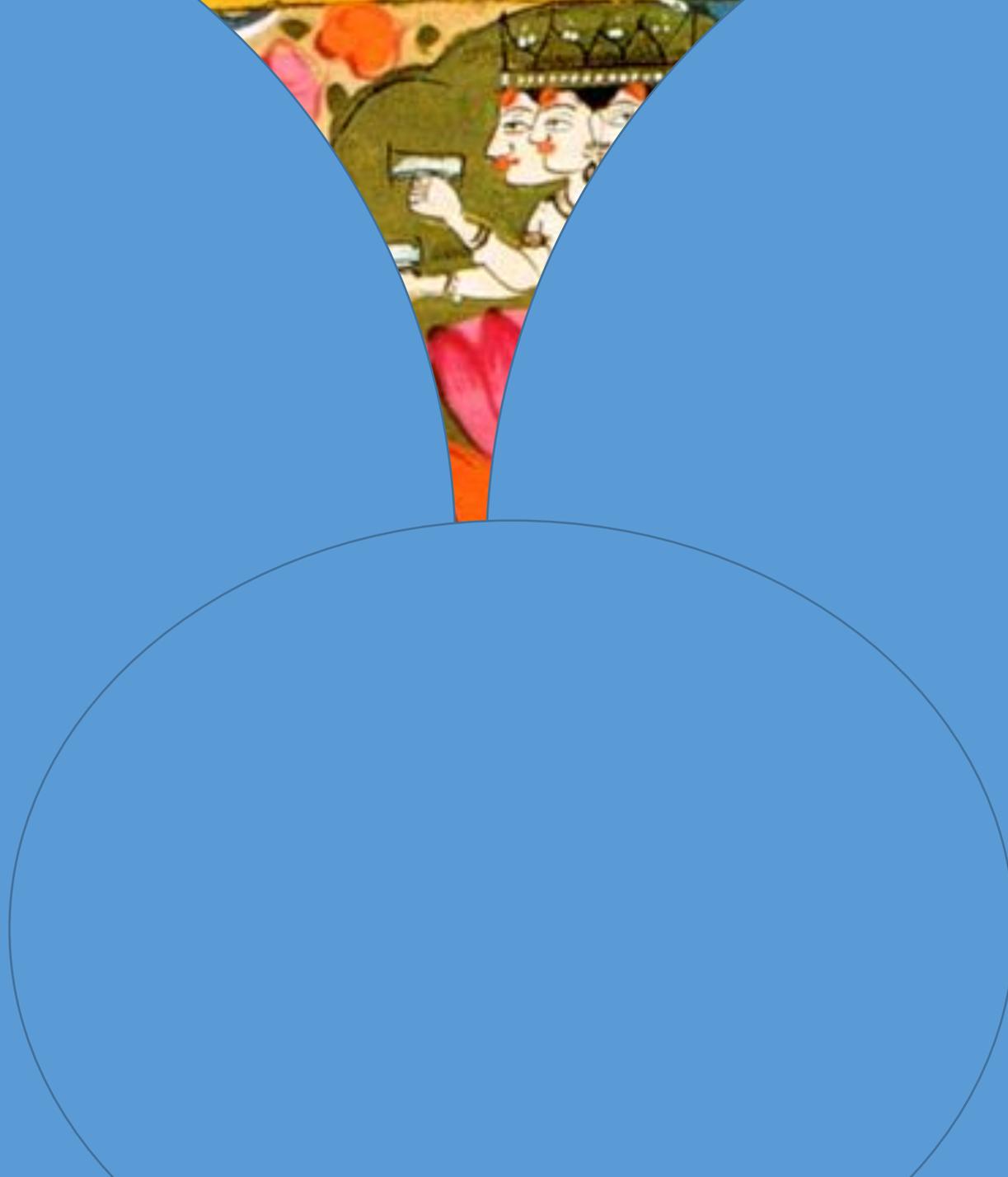
Know that all opulent, beautiful
and glorious creations

Spring from but a spark of my
splendour.

Based on the Bhagavad Gita
chapters 7 and 10

A Hindu story of creation

- On the next slide, you will see a picture which tells a story.
- Your challenge is to look hard at the picture, notice everything there is to see about it and try to work out the story. Not easy!
- You won't see the whole picture straight away – guess what is hidden before you see it.

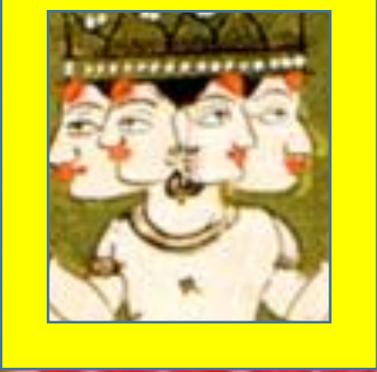
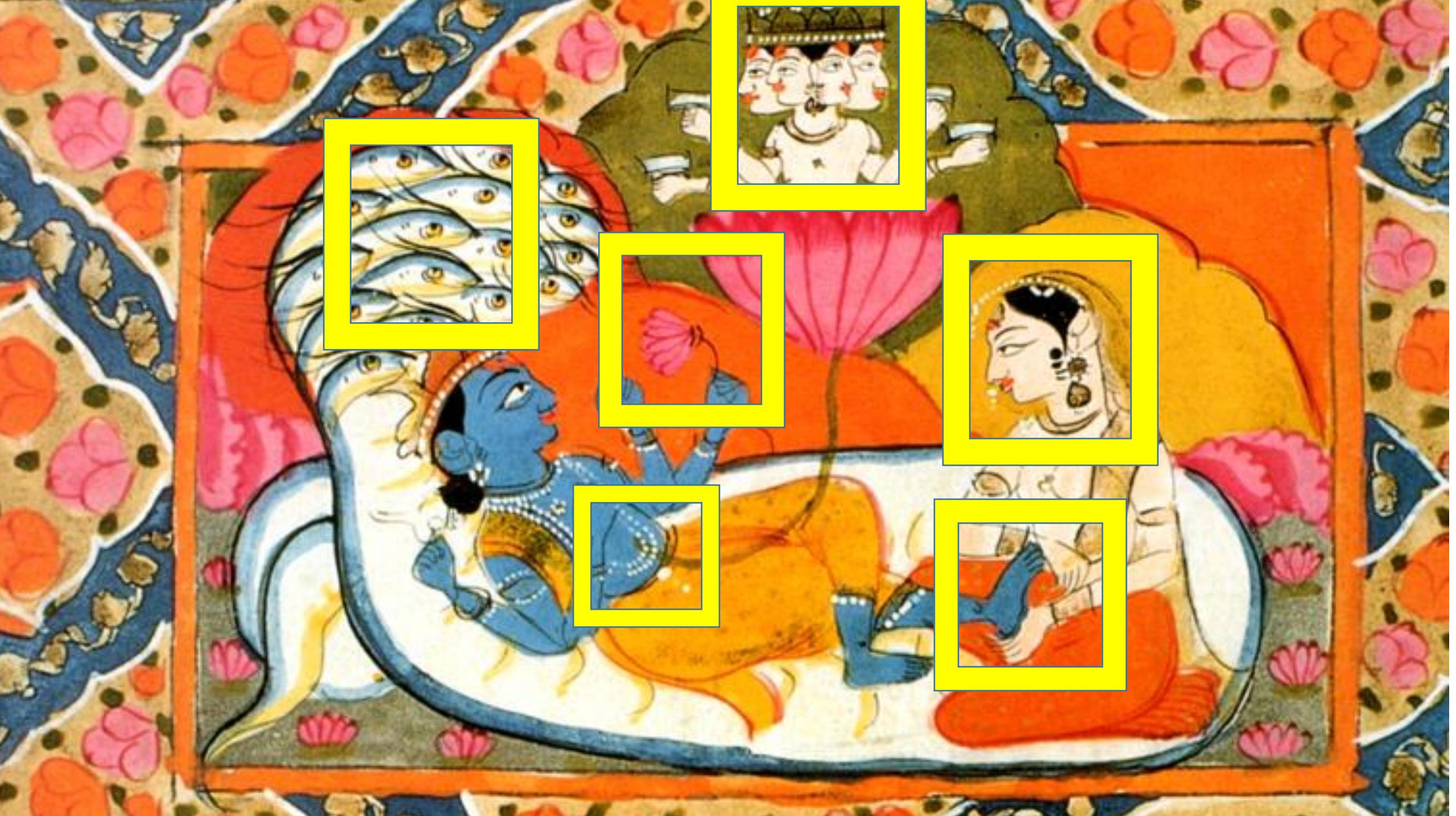


Some details from the Hindu creation story

Clues to help you make sense of the picture

- “The god Vishnu lay on the ocean before this universe began, floating gently.”
- “Many cultures and religions have stories of the beginning of the universe. They are not meant to be scientific, but tell us important ideas about our place in the world”
- Lakshmi is the goddess of new beginnings
- Belly buttons: are they a reminder of our birth?
- The lotus flower: “out of the mud grows something beautiful”
- “The god of creation, Brahma, has four heads, so he sees everything – including the past and future”
- Dreams are often used in creation stories.

Do the clues help to explain the picture?





This Hindu creation myth sees the universe as the dream of the Divine. In dreams, anything can happen. We live presently inside one of these cycles of creation, and this means Hindus believe that Brahma has done his task for the moment. So there are very few temples in the whole of India dedicated to Brahma, even though he is such an important god, the creator of all.

In the Vedas (Rig Veda 10:129.1-7) after the telling of one creation story, the writer concludes with these fine words:

“In the beginning darkness was swathed in darkness.

All was liquid and formless. God was clothed in emptiness.

Then fire arose within God; and in the fire arose love.

This was the seed of the soul.

And this is how the Universe was made.

Or perhaps it was not

Indeed God alone knows

Or perhaps he does not.

(Rig Veda, here simplified for pupils)

In Hindu understanding, this universe is just one of many. In between 'Universes', the cosmic and primeval ocean continues in total tranquility, and the unending snake Ananta lies coiled on the ocean.

- Lord Vishnu lies on the coils of the mighty serpent as if on a floating couch. Vishnu embodies the energy of preservation. As he lies, he sleeps and dreams. Vishnu's consort, the goddess Lakshmi, sits with him, gently holding his foot.
- In Vishnu's dream, a lovely lotus flower comes growing from his belly button, petals luminous with the light of the heavens, and as the lotus unfolds, you will see in it the god Brahma, the creative. His four heads face in all directions at once, to the north, south, east and west. His four hands hold the four Vedas, the scriptures. From his four hands he gently creates earth, air, fire, water. A new universe is beginning.

Here are four suggestions about the meaning of this story.

Ask pupils to discuss them in pairs, and then to rank them in order: which ones do they think make best sense of the myth?

A] This ancient story is meant to show us that life moves round and round in cycles and the forces of preservation and destruction are balanced at any one time.

B] This myth of creation shows that Hindu religion encourages us to be thankful to higher forces for the life, the energy, the order and the beauty of the planet we find we live on.

C] This story is very knowing: no one can be sure of how it all began, but the story says: “it began with a dream, not by accident. There is a purpose!”

D] Ancient creation myths often use a flower, a belly button, a dream, an ocean, a snake and similar symbols to explore our sense of where we came from. This one uses all these symbols. We come from the gods and goddesses, says Hinduism.

Artistic comparison

Look online for some more images of this scene from a Hindu story – there are many. Searching ‘Vishnu Lakshmi Brahma Lotus’ will find them. Compare three images and chose a favourite, saying why. What do they all have in common? What is different about each?

This work connects to planned study of various common RE topics, including sacred texts, big questions, symbolism, interfaith issues and the meaning of life!

The RE Today editor is interested in work your pupils do on this theme: contact him and share your pupils’ responses on lat@retoday.org.uk

- Thanks to Goodwill Art for this lovely image, a 20th century mural from a palace in Rajasthan, reproduced here by kind permission. Teachers of Art and RE will love their site:
<http://www.goodwillart.co.uk/Worldreligions/religions.html>
- Goodwill Art have provided postcard sets of art from the world religions for many years, but now you can buy their collections as digital downloads for use on the whiteboard or in other ways.



A Hindu creation story, in a picture

The modern picturing of ancient narratives in this Hindu example is powerful because it suggests that the Hindu communities continue to find meaning and points of reflection through the new forms of expression in relation to their scriptures. What do we see here? From the figure of Vishnu, asleep on the primeval ocean, a lotus flower blossoms – from his belly button. This only happens when the goddess massages his feet. Within the lotus, the divine creator Brahma is revealed and he begins his work of world-making.

The scriptural narrative:

Then even nothingness was not, nor existence,
There was no air then, nor the heavens beyond it.
What covered it? Where was it? In whose keeping?
Was there then cosmic water, in depths unfathomed?

2. Then there was neither death nor immortality
nor was there then the torch of night and day.
The One breathed windlessly and self-sustaining.
There was that One then, and there was no other.

3. At first there was only darkness wrapped in darkness.

All this was only unilluminated cosmic water.
That One which came to be, enclosed in nothing,
arose at last, born of the power of heat.

4. In the beginning desire descended on it -
that was the primal seed, born of the mind.

The sages who have searched their hearts with wisdom
know that which is kin to that which is not.

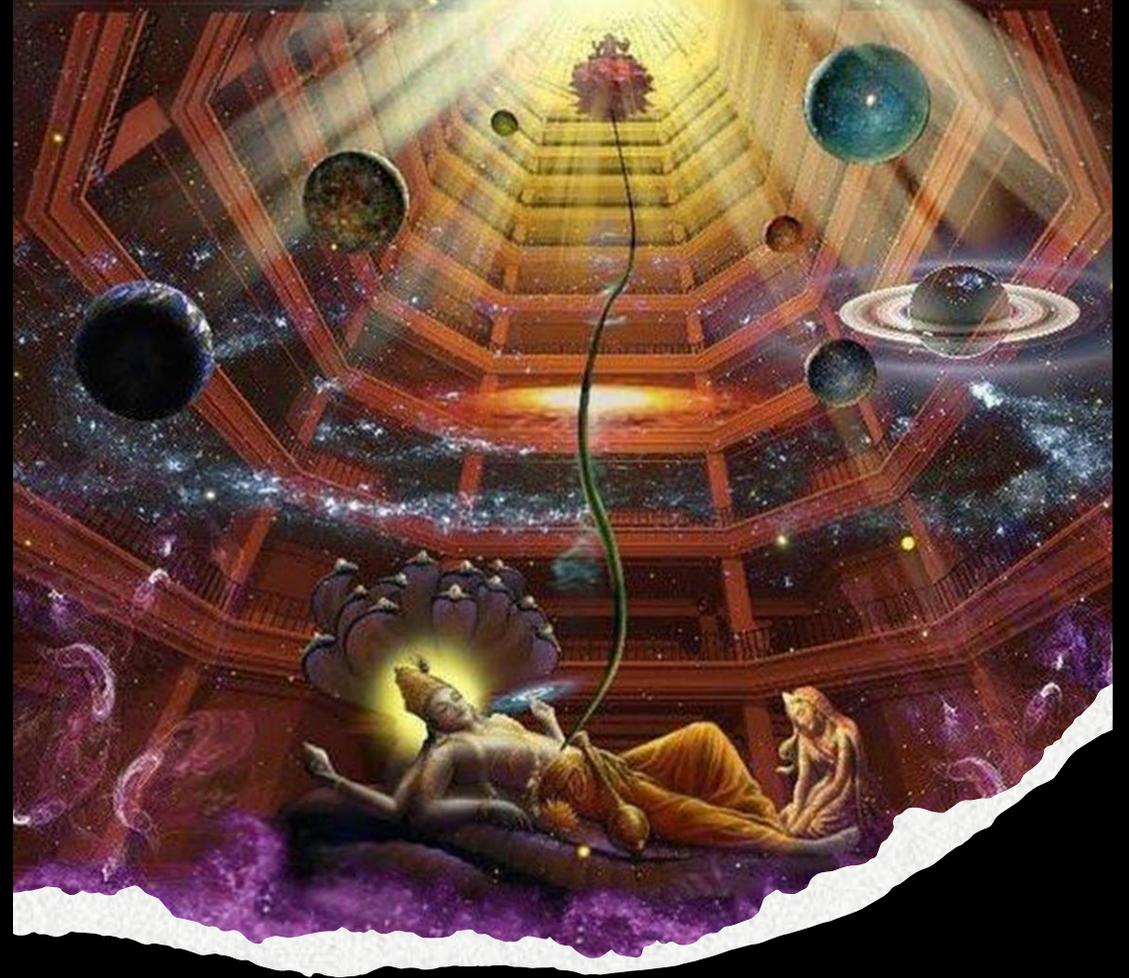
5. And they have stretched their cord across the void,
and know what was above, and what below.

Seminal powers made fertile mighty forces.
Below was strength, and over it was impulse.

6. But, after all, who knows, and who can say
Whence it all came, and how creation happened?
the gods themselves are later than creation,
so who knows truly whence it has arisen?

7. Whence all creation had its origin,
the creator, whether he fashioned it or whether he did not, the creator, who
surveys it all from highest heaven, he knows — or maybe even he does not know.

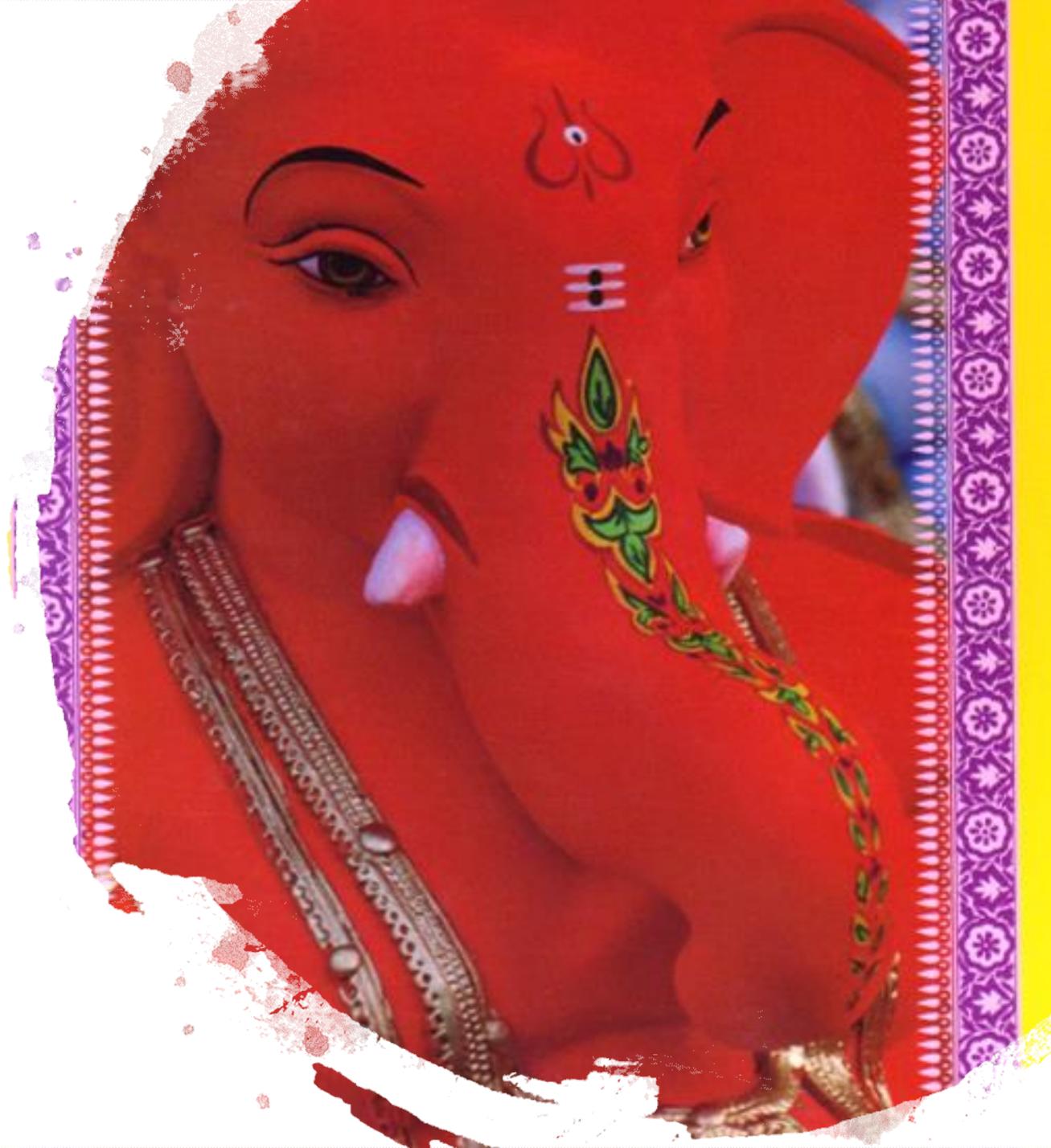
- And that is how the universe was created.
- Or perhaps it was not.
- In truth, God alone knows.
- Or perhaps he does not.









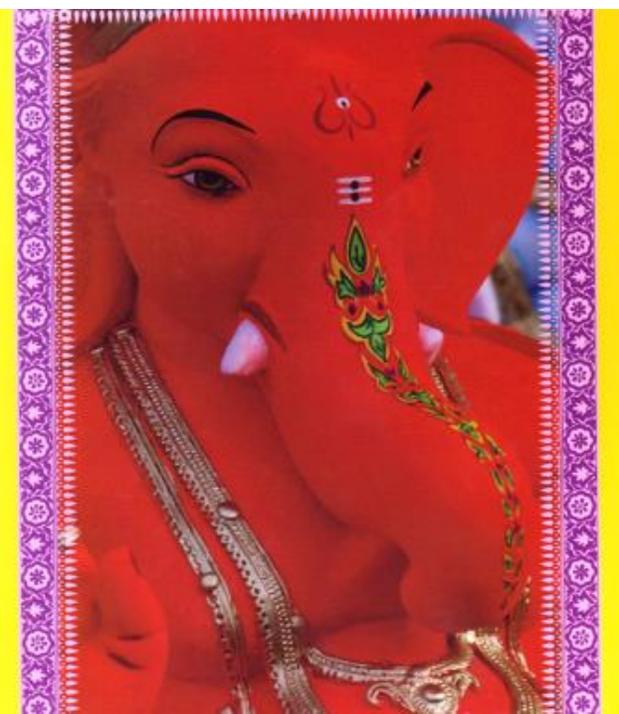
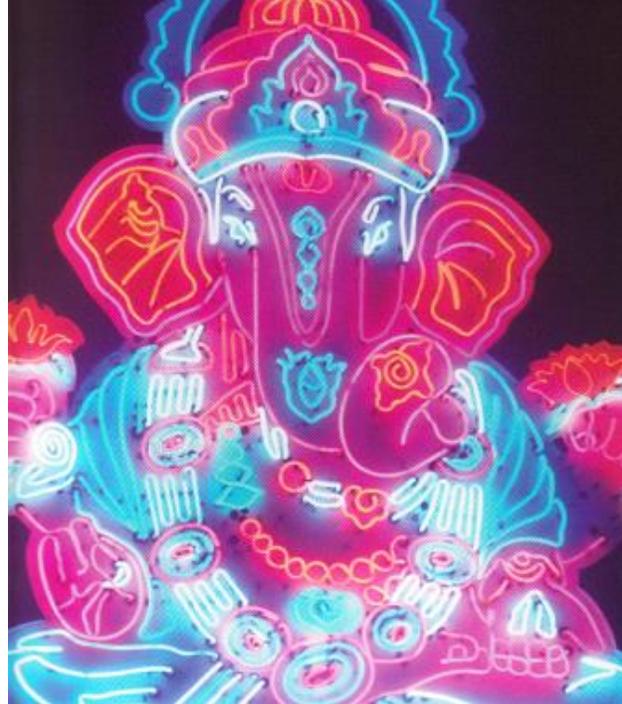






Pictures from 'Eternal Ganesha'
Gita Mehta, Thames Hudson
2006





- So how do these physical expressions of Ganesh-worship in the contemporary Hindu communities teach us about the meaning and vibrancy of the traditions?
- Ganesha – god of good fortune, remover of obstacles, bestower of blessings – what kind of spirituality goes with this worship?
- What do Hindu people say when they pray to Ganesha? Use texts to discover the spirituality...

Some words of prayer to Lord Ganesh, popular with Hindu devotees (translated into simple English here)

“Pure and peaceful doer of all good. Take away my fear and anger.

Let me see You everywhere and at all times.

Show me the truth.

Remove all barriers in my mind to understanding, true trust and love.

Guide me to a harmonious life.”

“O keeper of the gate to life, open that gate for me.

Let me feel Your intricate mind moving all things toward the divine

Open the gate for me to a life of continuous worship.

We do not ask for anything, but simply offer our feelings of love and recognition to Lord Ganesh

The more we worship and come to understand Him, the more we realize the greatness of His work in our life and see His presence all around us.

Thank You, Ganesh, for the wonderful fulfillment You have brought into my life.

I show gratitude by giving generously at the temple where You received and answered my prayers.

Your energy is the blossoming origin of love.

Praise to You who are the source of all sweetness.

I take refuge in grateful surrender at Your holy feet.

Which prayer do you think might be said by a person who is scared, who is full of worship, leaving school or getting married? Why? Can you suggest other occasions in Hindu life when the prayers might ‘fit’? What examples of connections to other spiritual traditions and communities of prayer strike you from these texts?

I believe Allah is the greatest. I believe this because Allah created everything ~~to~~ in life. One day I was sitting in my garden, and I looked around, I looked at all the wonderful plants and trees, I looked at the clouds in the sky, then I looked at myself. I thought to myself, this is the creation of Allah for me. If I look deep into nature I ~~and~~ my love for God increases and I appreciate ~~and~~ thank him ever more.

- Boy, aged 12, answering a question on belief about God.

“I believe in one God, ALLAH. I don't know what my God looks like because in the Muslim religion we are not allowed to see any pictures of 'him'. As a Muslim I think Allah is the most powerful 'thing' as I don't know what 'he' is like. I respect my God very much.”

Girl, 14

“I think God is... well... God, I guess. God is God, our creator, and He is very powerful. That all I can say. He is not something you can measure.”

Girl, 15

“I am a Muslim so my beliefs about God are fairly orthodox. I believe God is an entity which is beyond the scope of human perception (which is pretty limited to say the least...), God is within all of us, He is the voice which guides us down the path of goodness, The Hand of God is on all of us - it's our choice whether to take it or

not.” *Boy, 15*

“I feel that Allah (God) is with me and looking at me wherever I am. I think Allah is the real God. No one can see him but he can see us. He is one, he has no partner and he wasn't born. When you pray you feel closer to God You are thanking him for what you have got. I think religion completes your life. Without it you can get lost and confused.”

Boy, 11

Al Fatihah – the first surah of the Qur'an

“In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

Praise be to Allah, the Cherisher and Sustainer of the worlds;

Most Gracious, Most Merciful;

Master of the Day of Judgment.

You do we worship, and Your aid we seek,

Show us the straight way,

The way of those on whom You have bestowed Your Grace, those whose (portion) is not wrath, and who go not astray.”

Allah: by the medieval Muslim theologian Al-Ghazali

“He in his essence is one, without any partner.

Single - without any similar

Eternal - without any opposite.

Separate - without any like

He is one - prior with nothing before him

From eternity without any beginning

Abiding in existence without any after him

To eternity - without an end

Subsisting - without ending

Abiding - without termination

Measure does not bind him

Boundaries do not contain him.”



Al-Ghazali

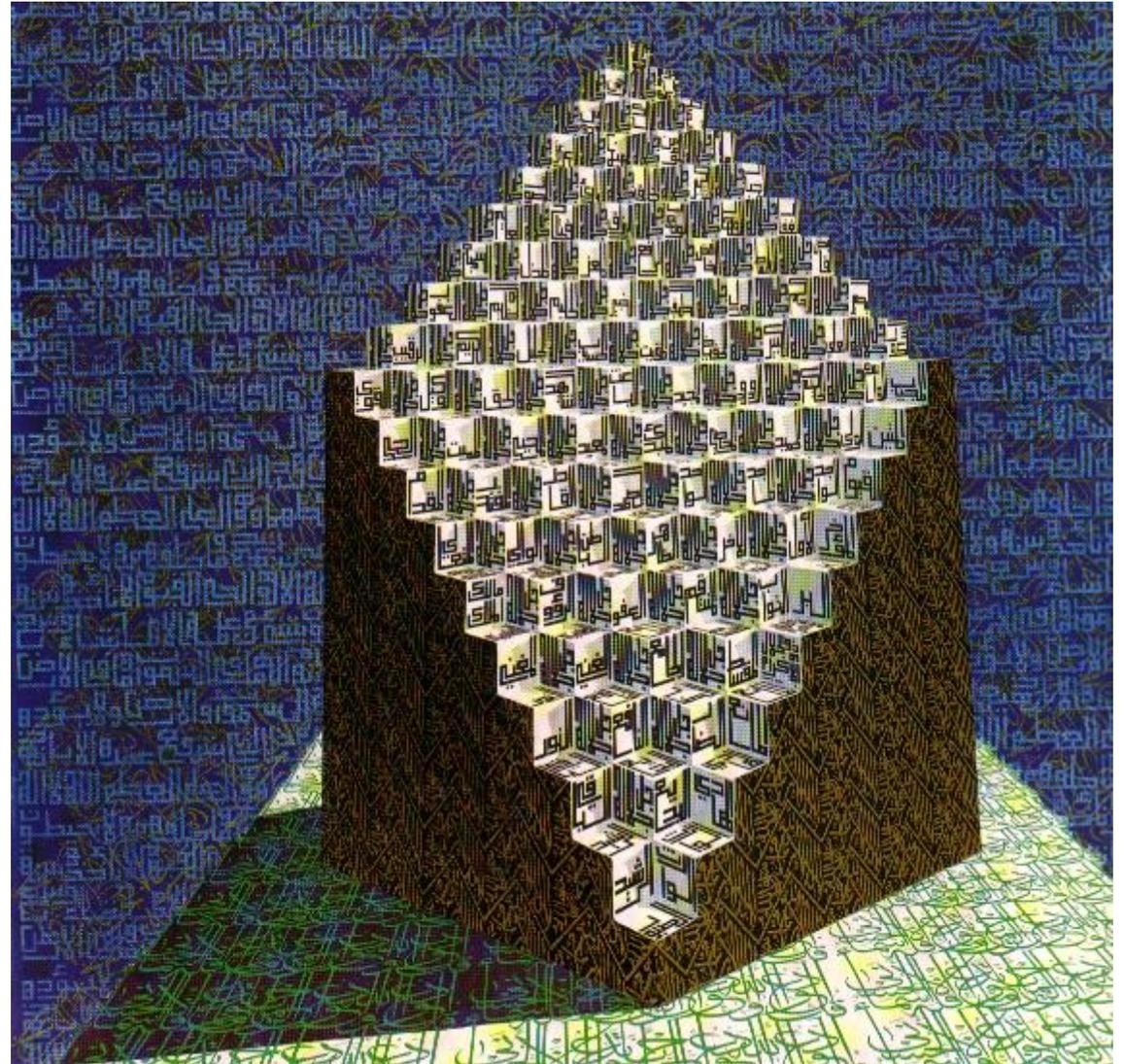


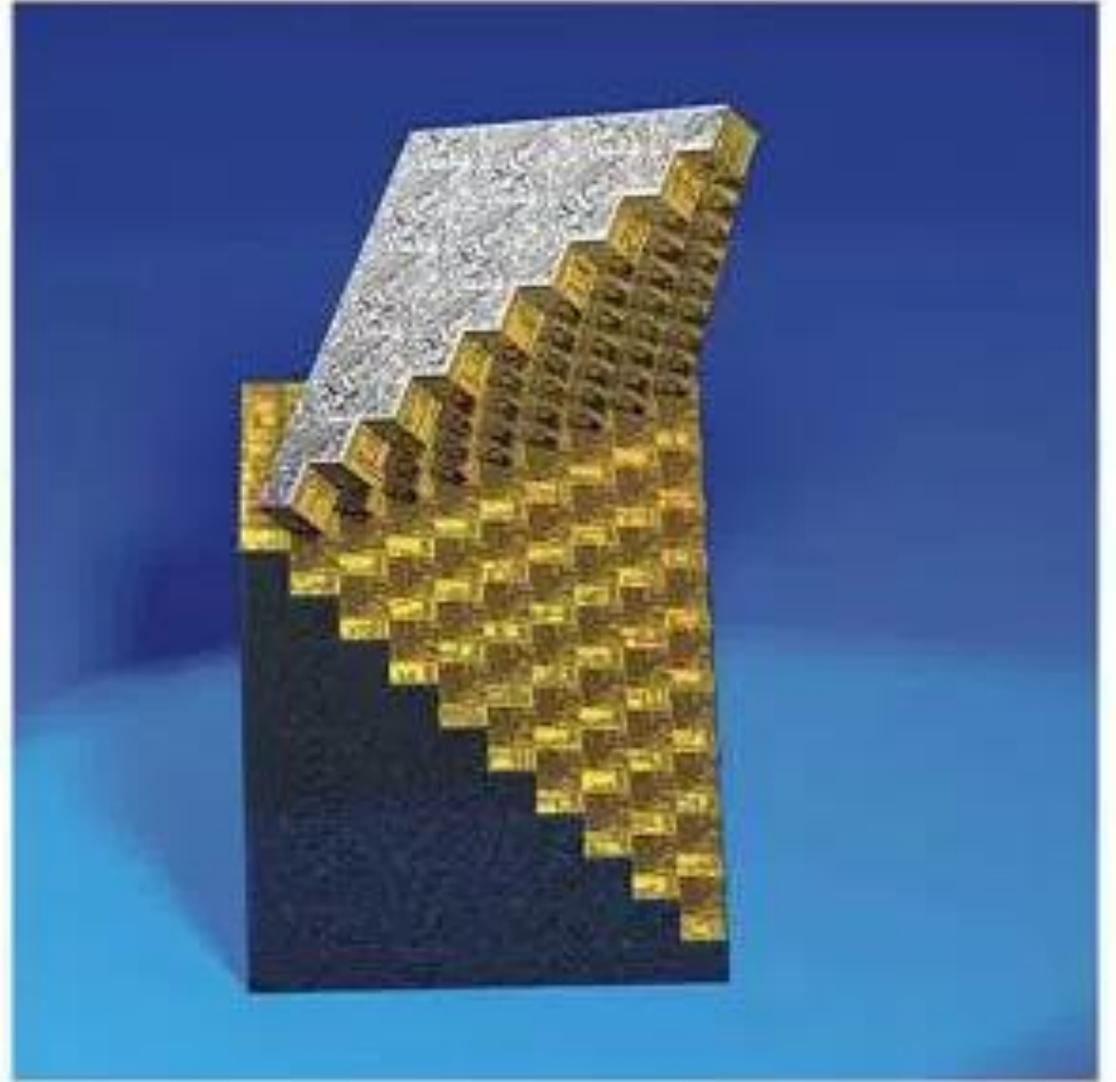
Declare your jihad on thirteen enemies you cannot see - Egoism, Arrogance, Conceit, Selfishness, Greed, Lust, Intolerance, Anger, Lying, Cheating, Gossiping and Slandering. If you can master and destroy them, then will be ready to fight the enemy you can see.

(We reproduce by kind permission)

Ahmed Moustapha's excellent image
'The attributes of Divine Perfection'.

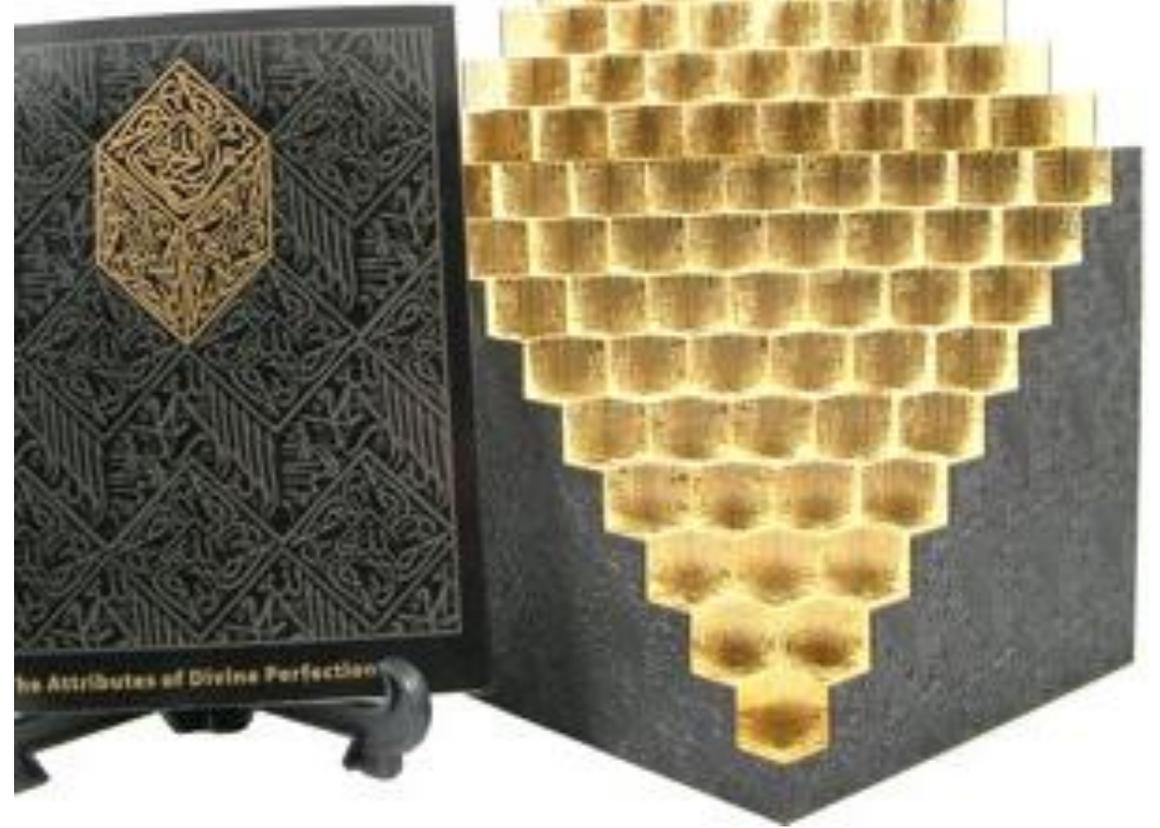
This image is used in this work to support and develop pupils' understanding of Muslim concepts of God. It incorporates 99 geometric shapes, each written with one of the beautiful names of Allah, thus expressing an Islamic understanding of the divine without making an image.

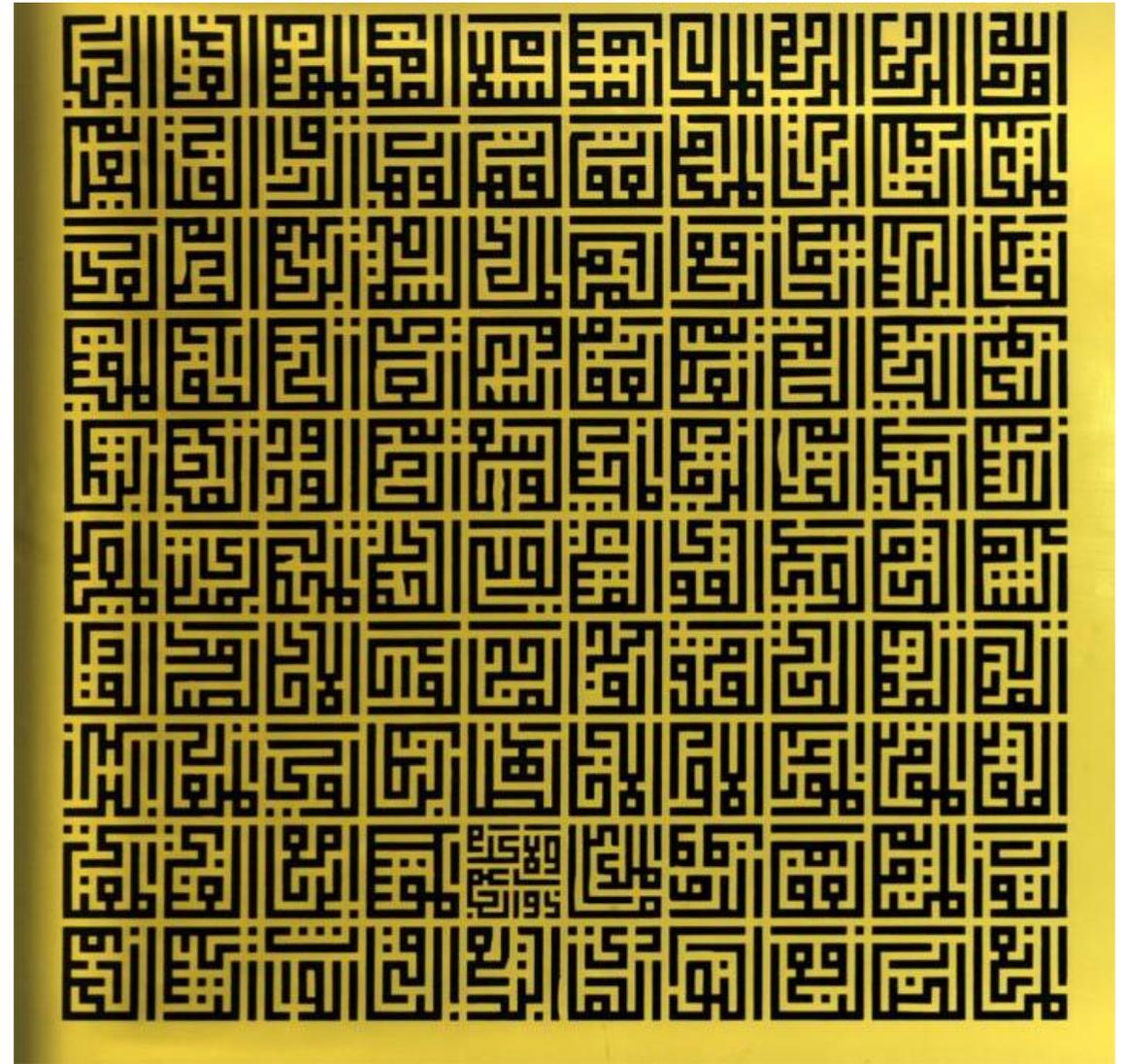


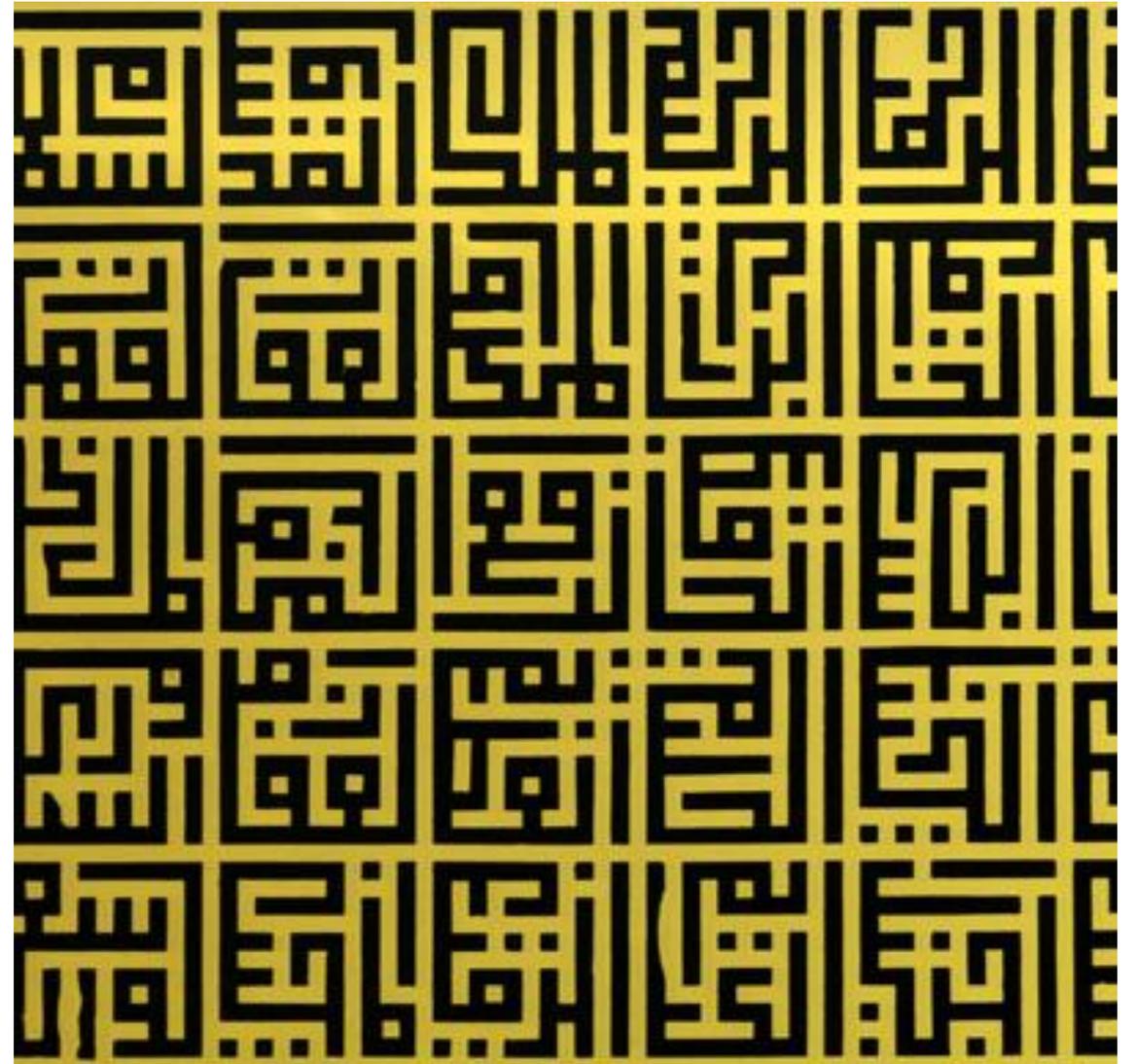






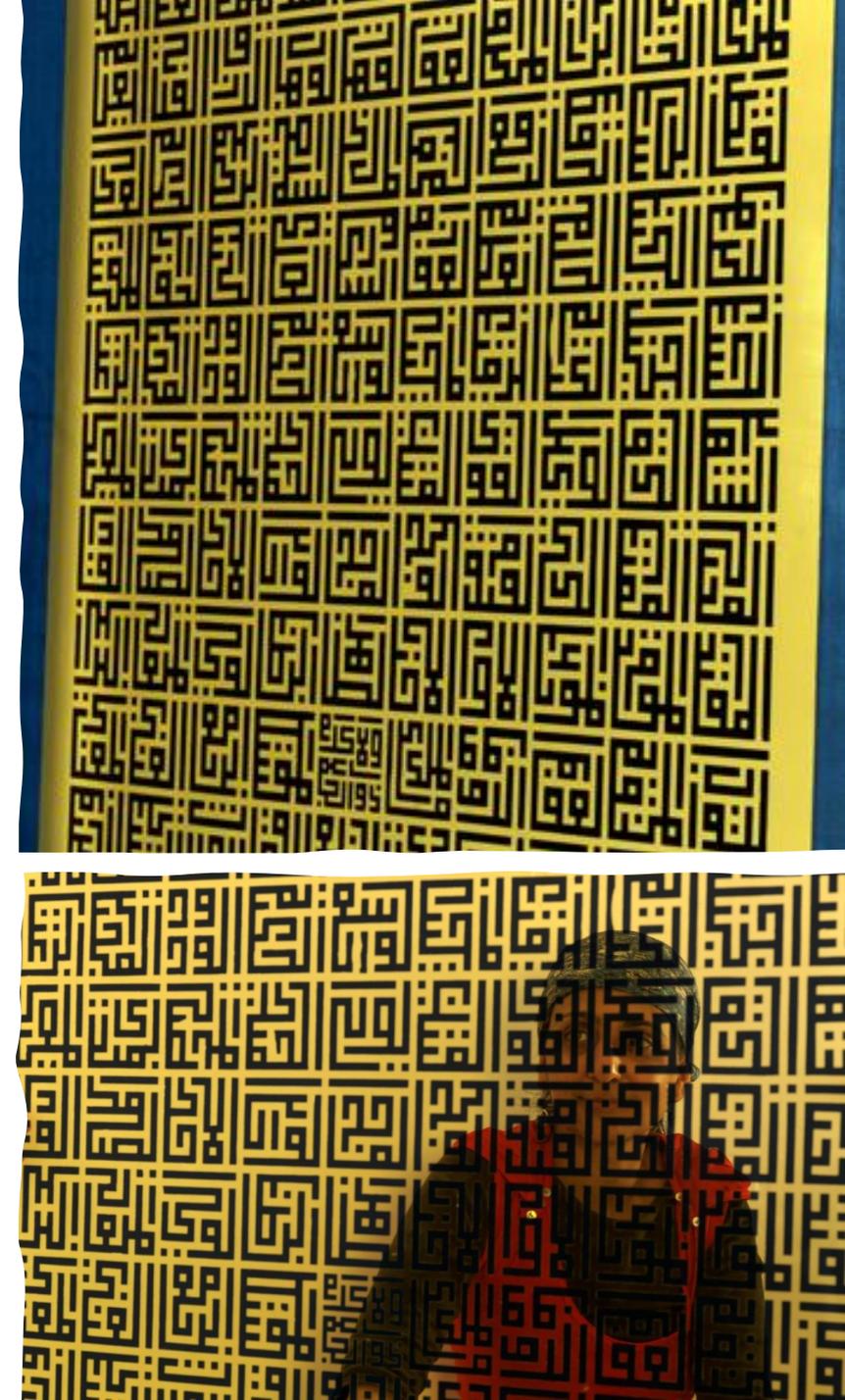


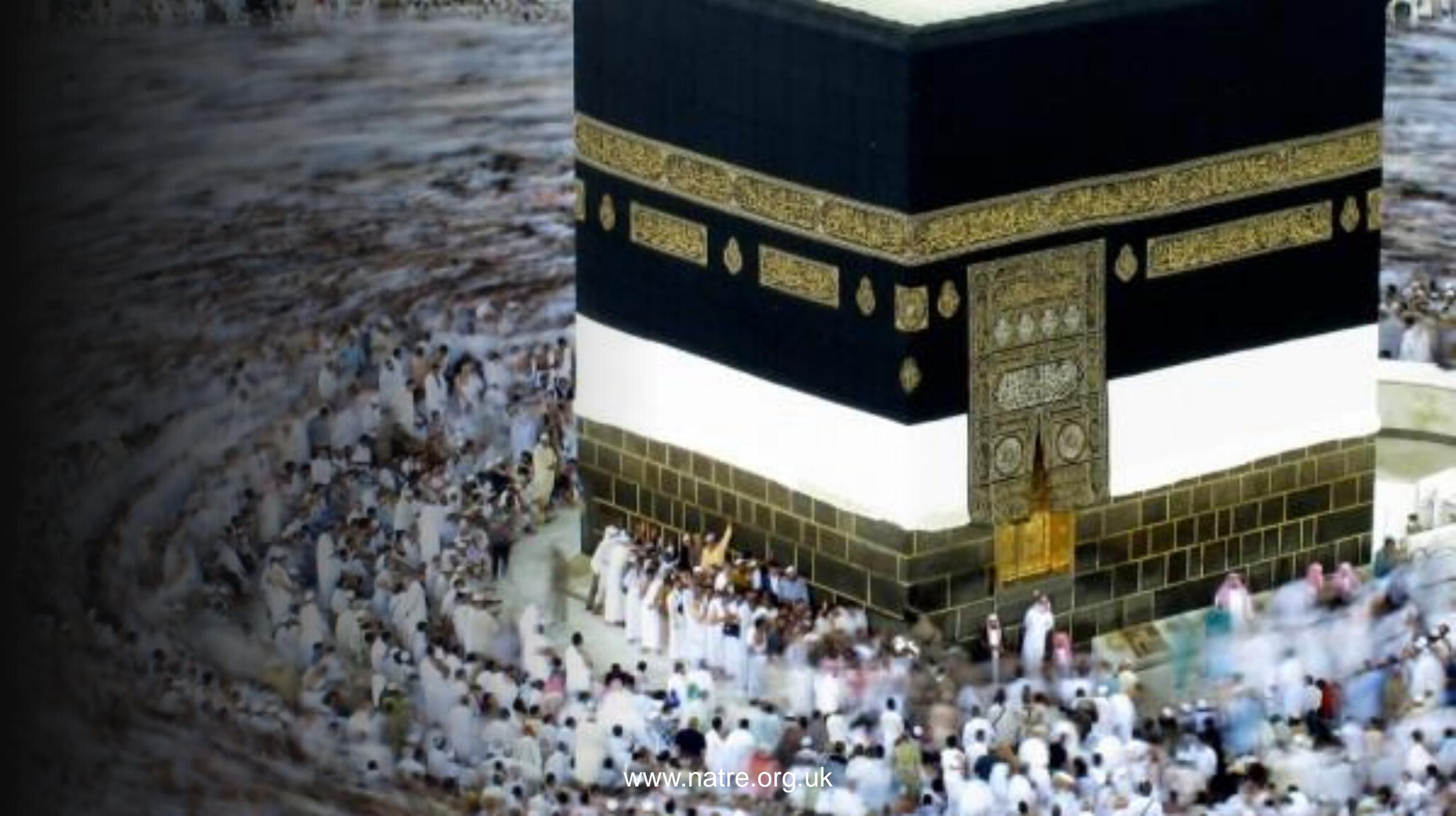






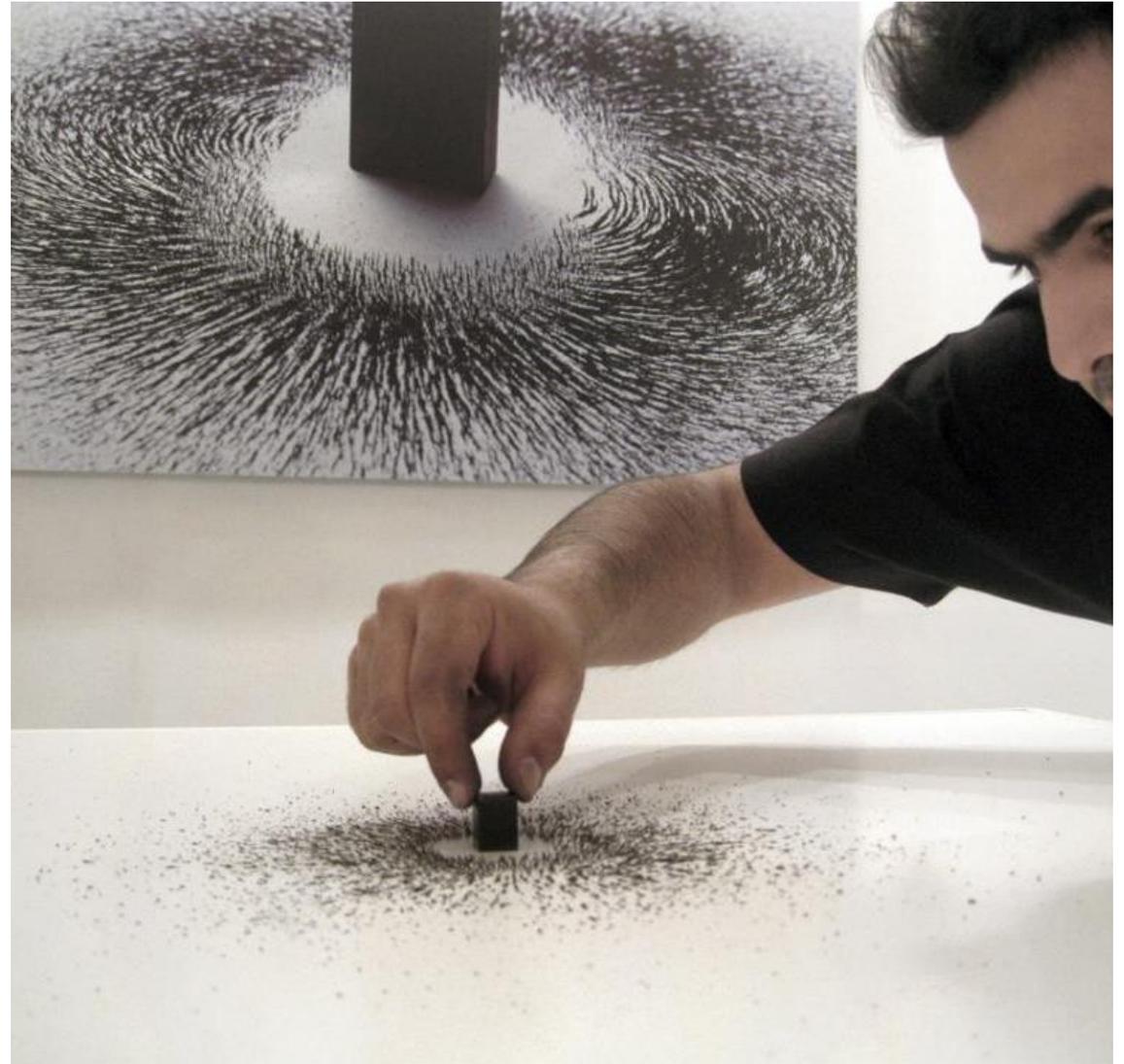
-
- “I have worked with the concept that “we are created in the Image of God” and that the 99 names or attributes of God are reflected within us. So when the viewer looks at the “99 names” s/he sees the Self reflected in the mirror, and is reminded of the 99 attributes within one’s own self.” Yasmin Kathrada.

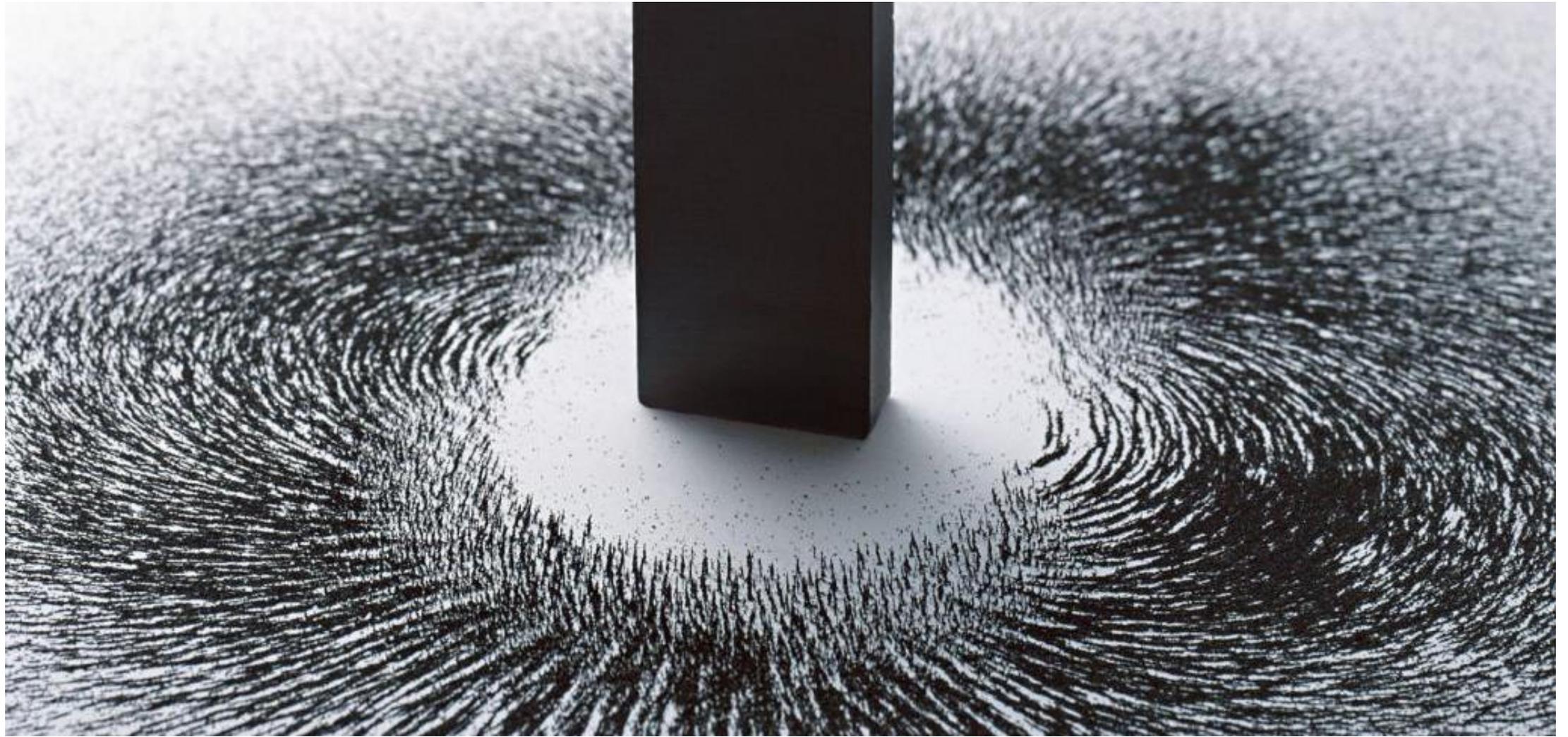


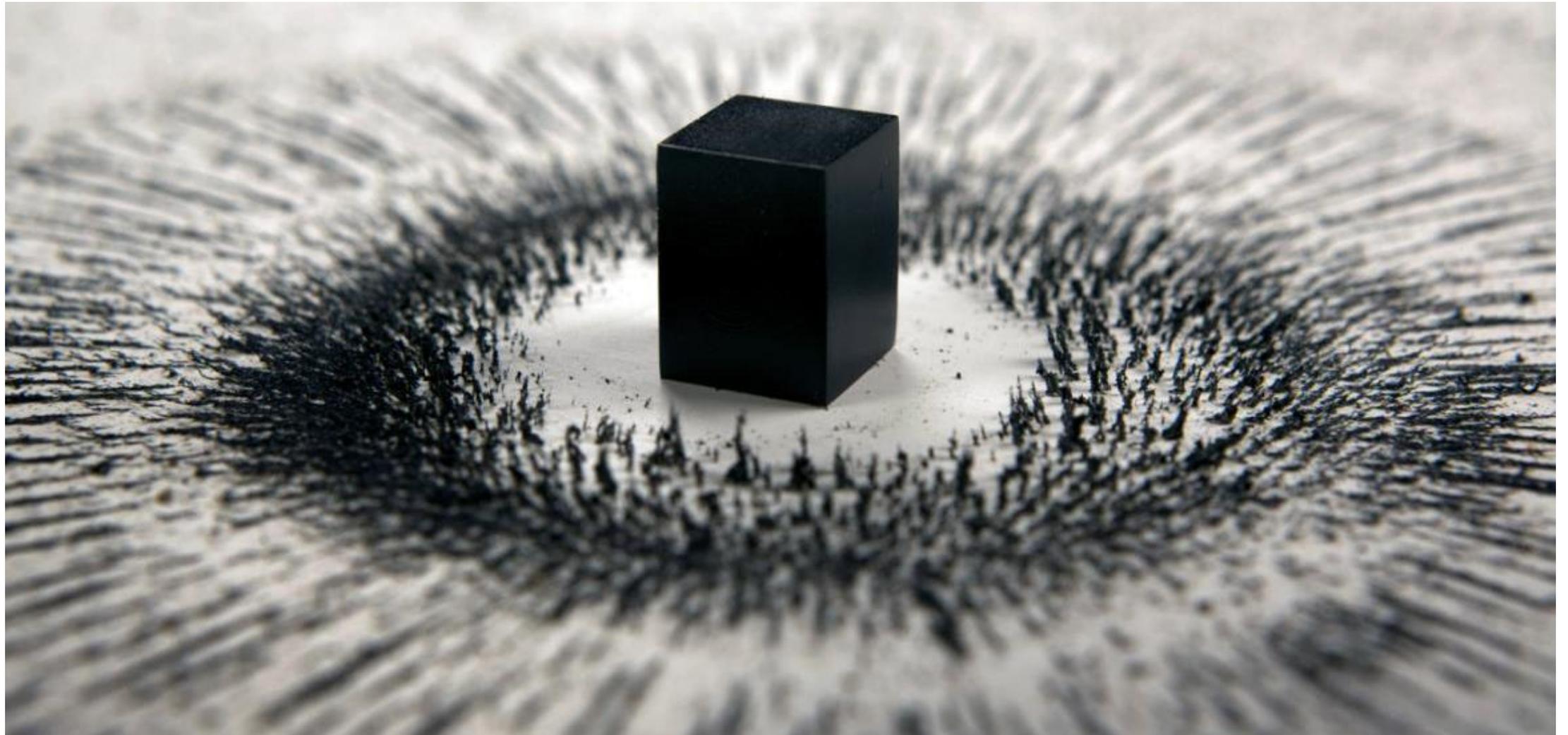


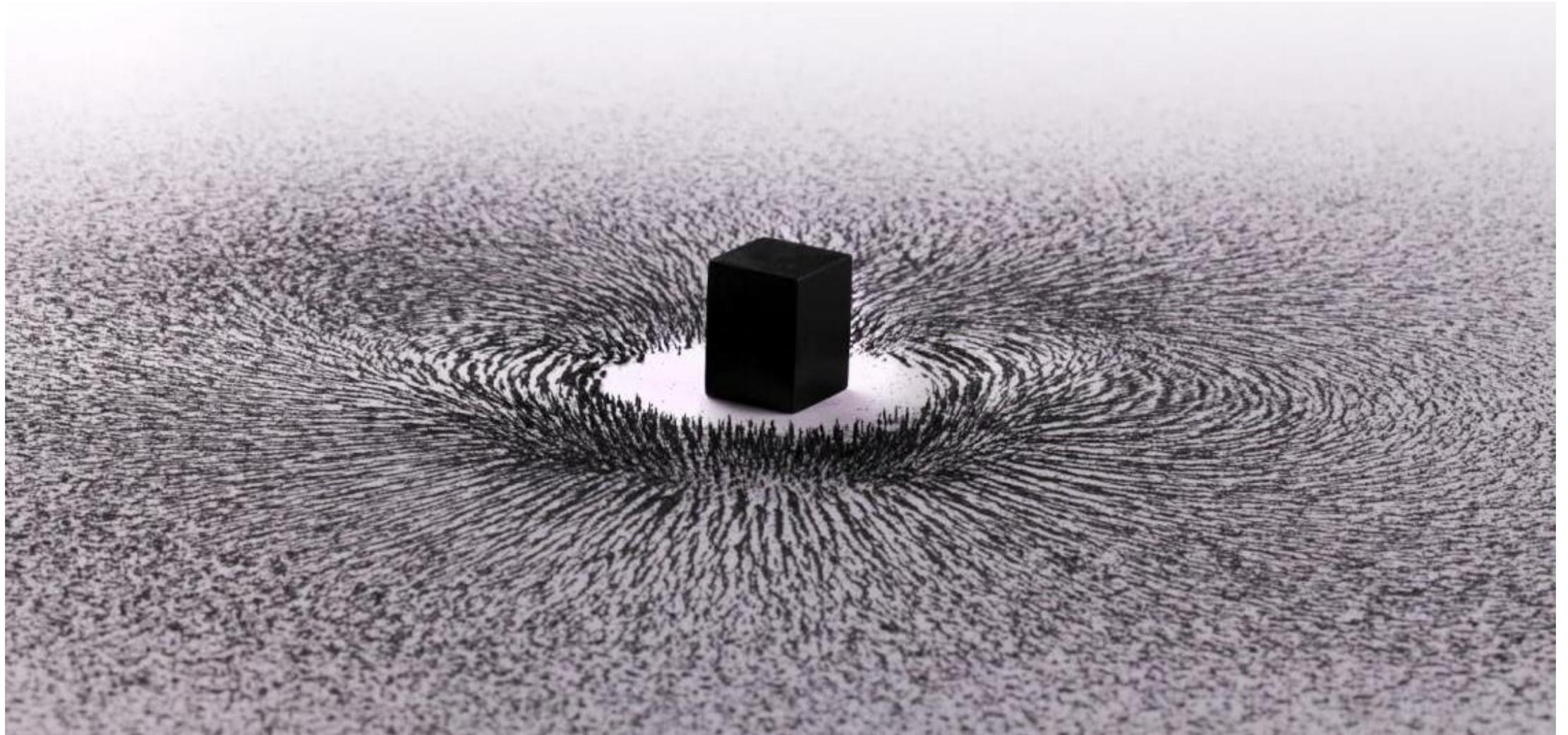


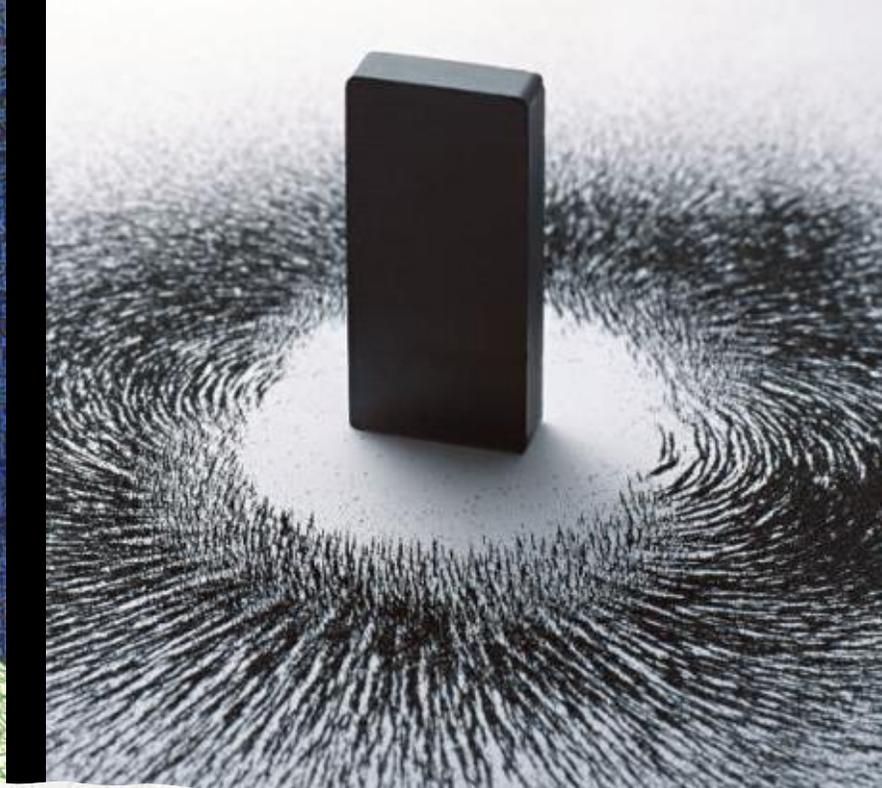
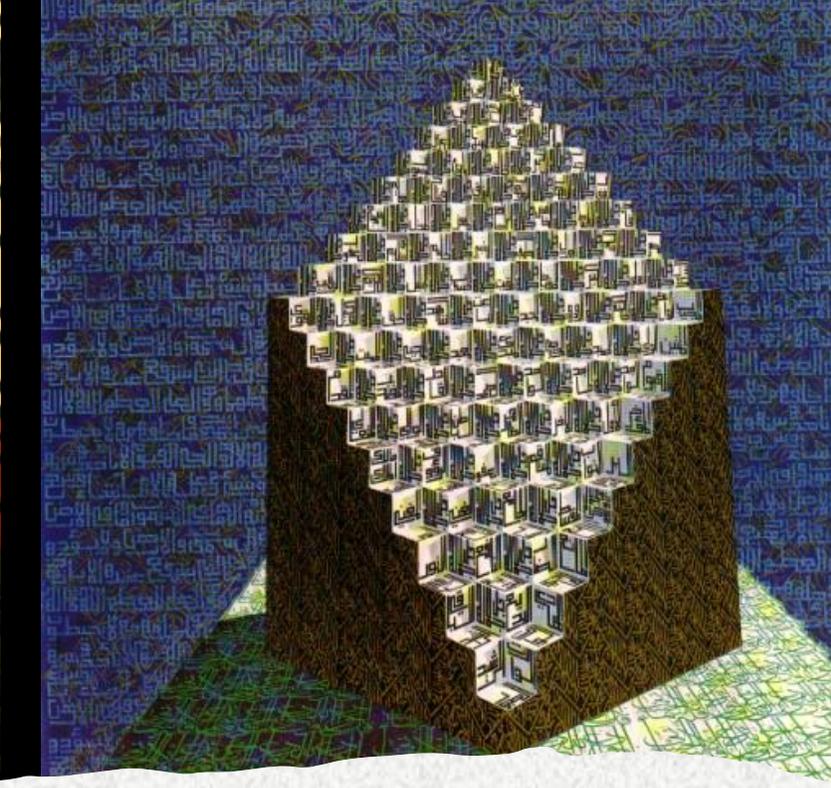
- Muslim artist Ahmed Mater uses iron filings and a magnet block to create the swirling effect of this work of art.











Is it Ahmed Moustapha, or Yasmin Kathrada, or Ahmed Mater, who has best expressed the Muslim understanding of God / Allah?

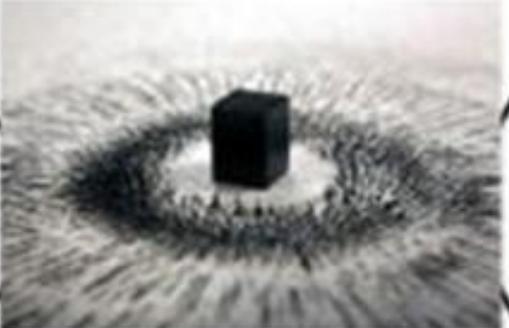
Which one best illuminates the meaning of the Muslim texts?

Ask pupils to write at length about the three art works, the artists, the first Surah and the Muslim idea of God. Provide a variegated writing frame.

**3 Paintings –
Similar and different**

This is unique because...

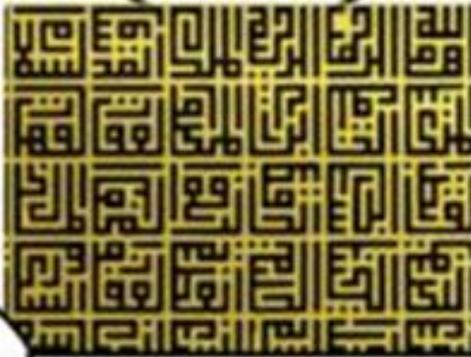
These 2 share...



These 2 share...



All three share...



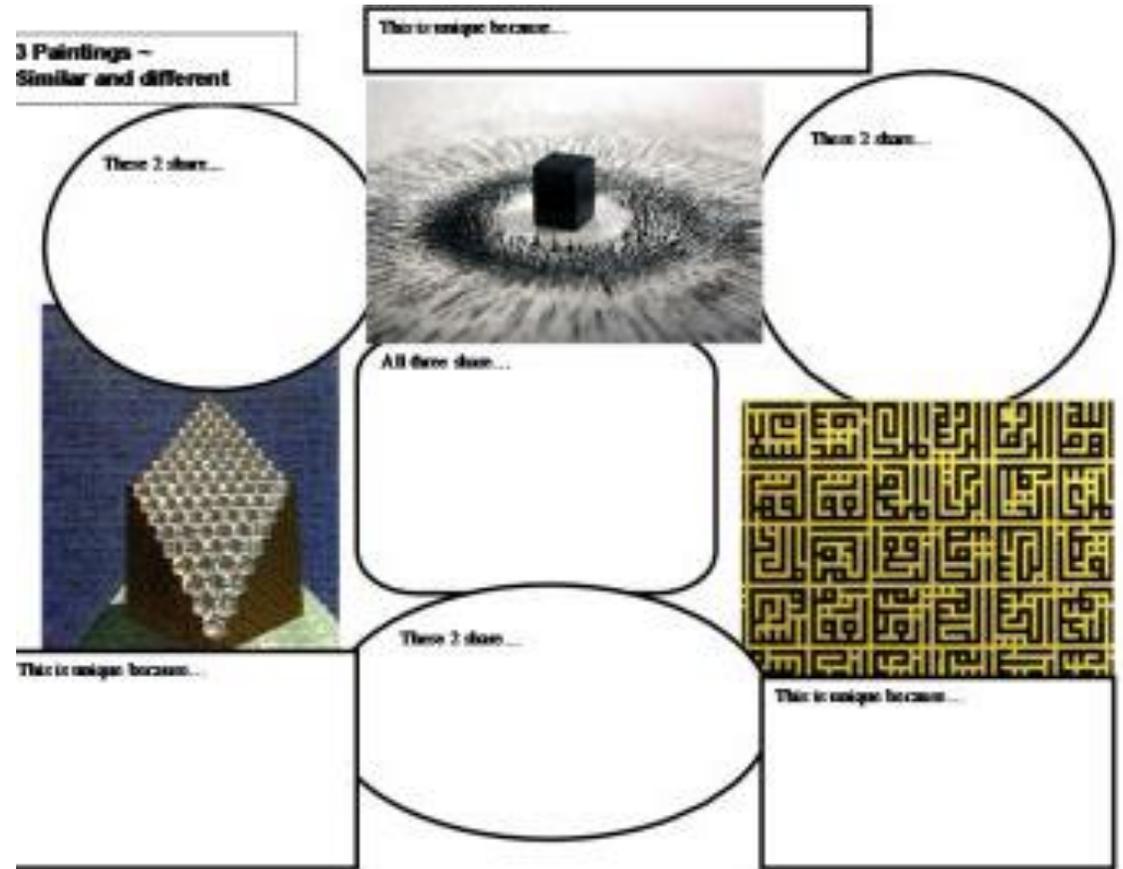
This is unique because...

These 2 share...

This is unique because...

Take the triad sheet...

- With a partner, discuss the similarities and differences between the works of art
- Write into the bubbles on your page things that are similar about each pair.
- What is unique about each one?
- What do all three have in common?
- Think. Give reasons. Discuss.



The Holy Name of Allah

Jade, 8

Jade was inspired to make this by using a repeater pattern from the ICT equipment. Muslims are inspired by the holy name of Allah, Lord of the World. The painting uses Islamic rules, and doesn't picture the divine.



Box of the Revelation

Chidi worked on his own, creating a box of crumpled paper that shows the presence of the holy as little shards. These came about by drawing light around a human figure and then cutting out the beams of light and rearranging them, his own idea. He said he was thinking about God when he did it.

Chidi is 14. from an SEND school

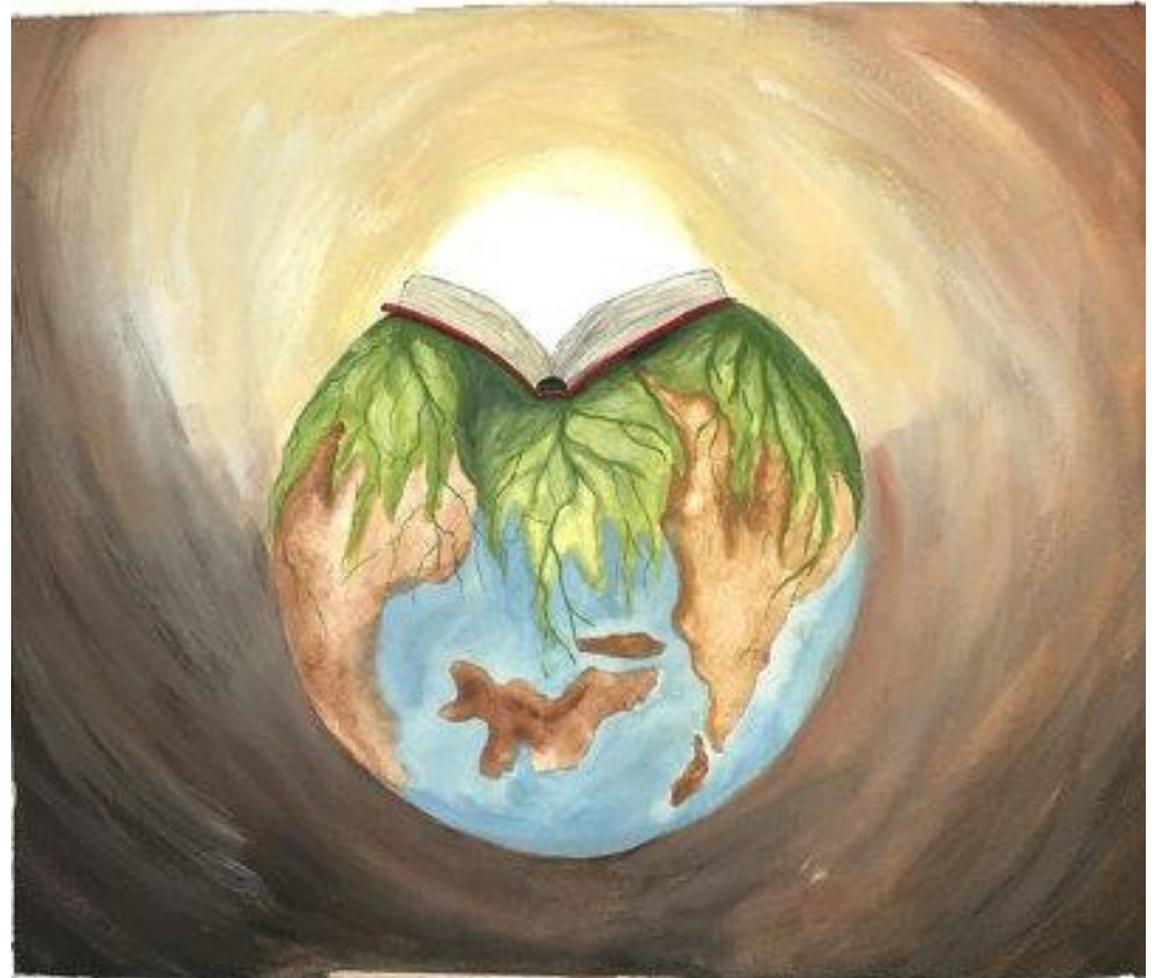
This piece comes from a selection of work achieved by children with a range of difficulties including autism, speech and communication difficulties, behavioural difficulties, dyslexia, cerebral palsy and Downs' syndrome. Some are among the least able children in their school.



God is Everywhere in the World

Shadan, 12

“My painting is called God is everywhere in the world! I chose to do a world and a book on top and that book represents the Quran (or Bible). The bottom of the world represents dirt: the thoughts of people that don't have any religion, the thoughts of people that don't believe in God. At the top of the world there is a light (coming from the holy writings) and that light is growing to show that God is growing.”



Breakout

Conversation and discussion points:

- Which of these examples are you likely to use in class?
 - In what ways can our visions and intentions for RE be framed by creative use of texts?
 - Do you already run a lot of text-based RE? Best bits to share?
 - RE's key skills: making, sense, seeing meaning, interpretation
 - 'Creative RE and rigorous RE can be closely connected' Agree?
-
- Also – email me to join NATRE – bronze membership is £80 the year, for ten big benefits. £6.75 monthly on direct debit for personal members lat@retoday.org.uk



Six kinds of Biblical genre – we do OK at story and law, maybe not bad at history. Understanding Christianity sought a broader diet of learning from Bible text...

6 kinds of Bible writing (some core RE knowledge?)

Laws	“Do to other people what you would like them to do to you.”
Poems & Songs	“Love is patient, Love is kind, Love is not jealous, Love does not boast, Love always hopes, Love always keeps going, Love never fails”
Visions	“I saw a new heaven, and a new earth, and the old heaven and earth passed away... The tree of life grew there, to heal all the nations...”
Stories from history	When Mary’s baby was born, she cradled him in an animal feeding trough: there was no room in the hotels of Bethlehem...
Made up stories	“A man was attacked by thieves on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho, and lay wounded on the ground. 3 people walked along...”
Letters	“Dear Timothy, I am writing to encourage you to keep on following your Christian faith...”

As pupils develop their understanding of the riches that Christian people find in their ancient wisdom, the learner may also be able to articulate and explore sources of wisdom which they find compelling

What stories do you think are worth telling over and over? Why?

What rules and laws do you think humanity should live by? Why?

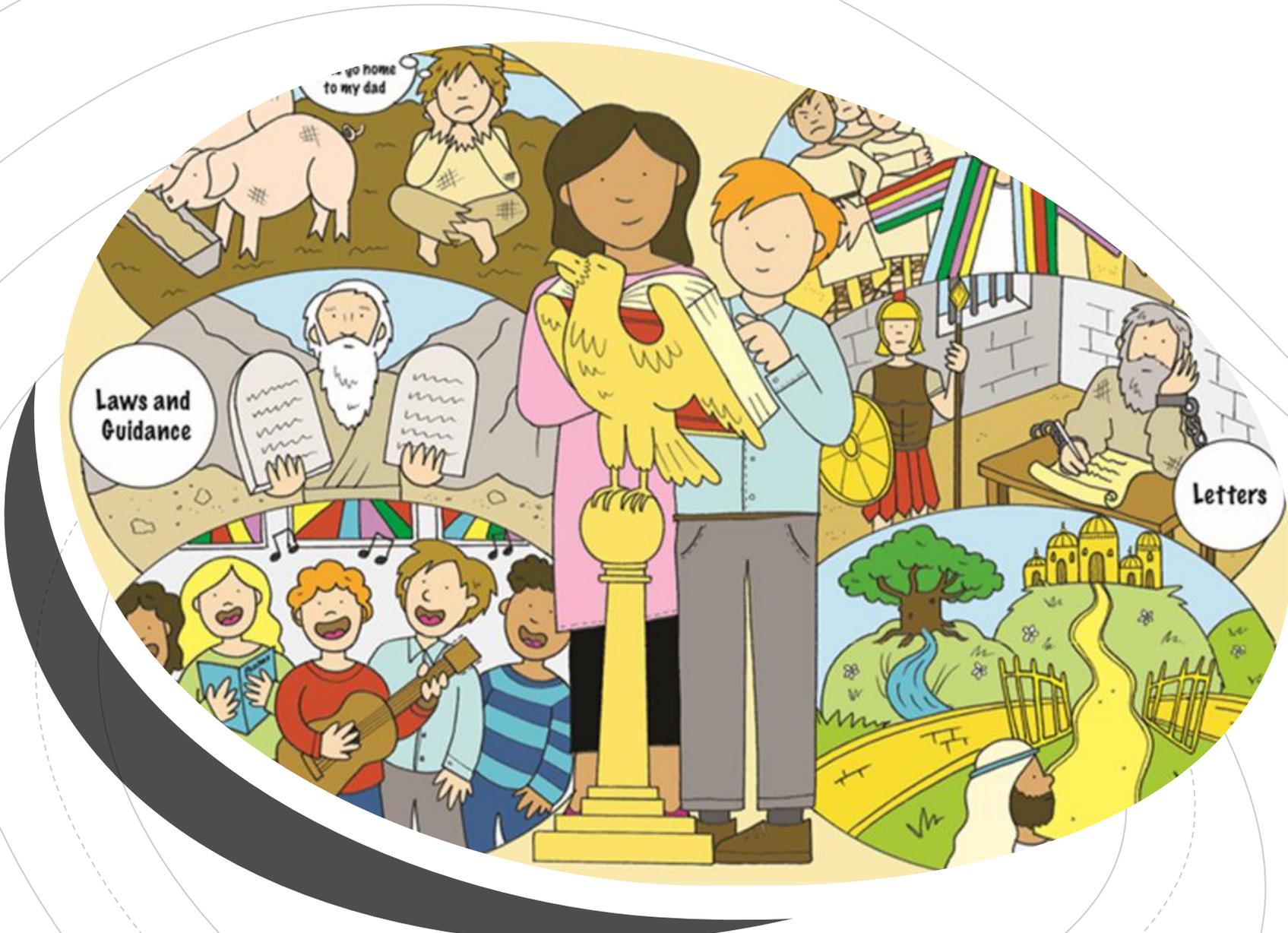
What songs inspire you? Why? Are they similar to themes of Bible-song?



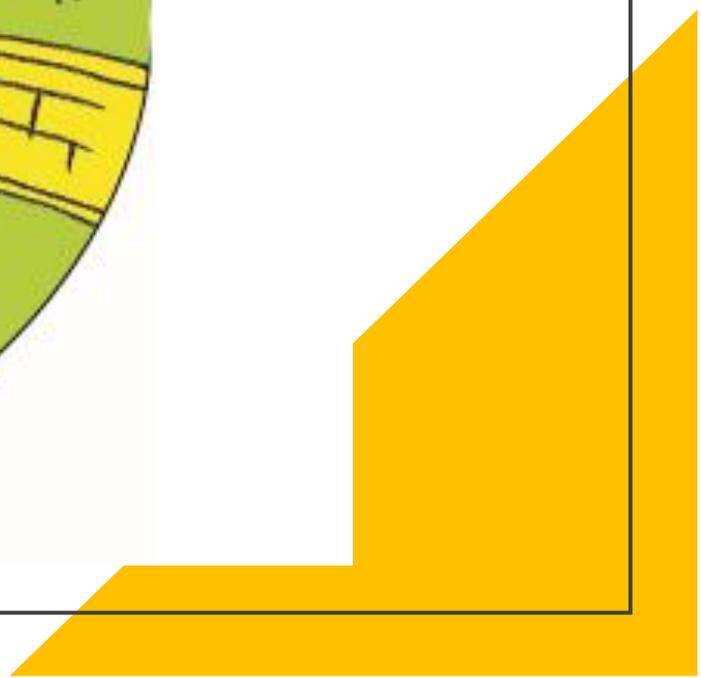
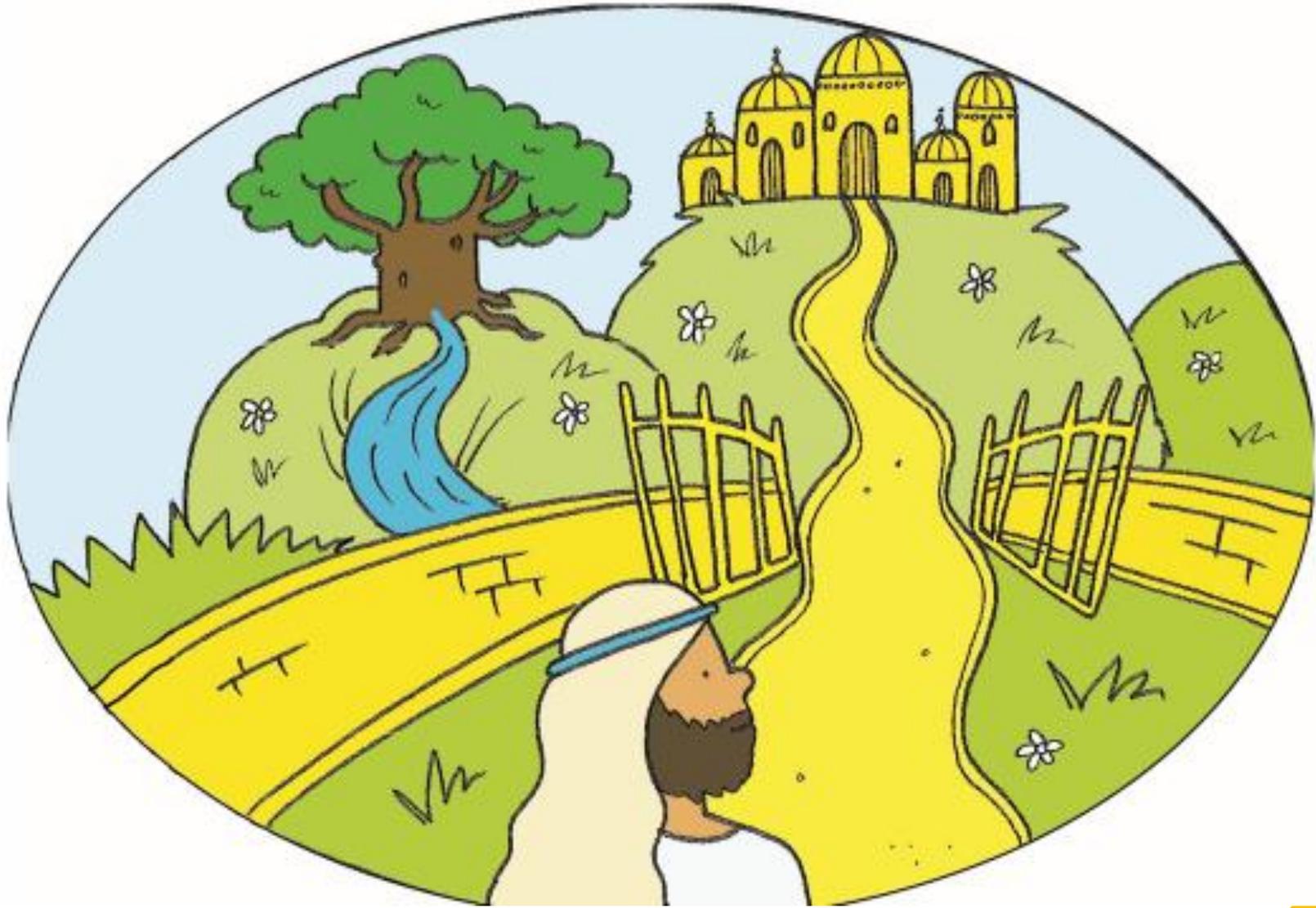
What history, what in the past, has shaped you? How and Why?

What do you like and dislike about Saint Paul's advice? Why?

What is your vision of the future? Can it happen? How?



**Hardest one to teach?
Visions?
"Teaching from
Revelation is the best
way to engage children
with the destiny of love
that Christianity teaches
will be realised on earth."**



Saint John wrote this in the Bible.

“I saw a vision

I saw a vision of the future

I saw the new Jerusalem coming down to Earth from Heaven,

Pure like a diamond, clear like a crystal

Gates of gold, open to all

I saw the River of Life flowing out of the city

And in the centre of the city I saw the Tree of Life

And every leaf on the tree was for the healing of the nations.

There was no crying there. Every tear was wiped away.”

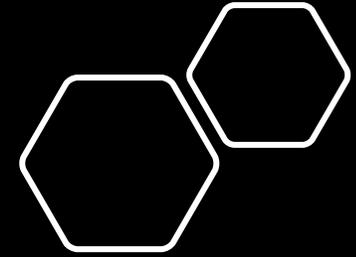
(Simplified from Revelation 20-22)

Try reading this aloud in some different styles: dreamy and peaceful? Loud and passionate? Precise and sharp? Which seems to fit the words best?

**Imagining
a perfect
future for
the place
where you
live.**

-
- Look at the image in the drawing of Saint John's vision. He imagines the city he lived in – Jerusalem – turned into something perfect. Like most cities, in reality it was a stinky, dirty overcrowded and dangerous place.
 - Imagine your city, town or village, turned perfect. What would it be like?
 - Write your own vision of the 'Perfect Town' for where you live.
 - What would it look like?
 - What would it be made of?
 - What would it be similar to?
 - Would it be like the New Jerusalem?
 - What would grow there?
 - What would flow there?





Phoebe is 10.

I saw a vision
I saw the new Grimsby
It was like a dream
It was as peaceful as heaven
As beautiful as a butterfly
The entrance was an archway made of
flowers and vines.
In the middle was the fountain of love
And around the town stood five trees of
hope, peace, respect, kindness and faith.
In the river of truth floated dozens of
lily pads . . .
And every lily filled the town with honesty
And all the people were happy, making friends
and helping others
There was no more ill people
There was no more suffering
And all the people's lives were filled
with good.



“I saw a paradise, in my thoughts
I saw the new Liverpool, a place of wonder and
delight...
As pure as water: no hidden secrets, no lies...
Transparent for all, a window of truth...
A portal to a new life...
Colours spread across the city
Darkness was nowhere...
There was no more hatred or poverty...
There was no more hunger and discrimination...
Everyone would feel loved
And have hope for the future
This is a thought.
It's not impossible.”

Sam goes to school in Liverpool. He's 11

My Town Turned Perfect

I saw a paradise in my thoughts,
I saw the new Liverpool, a place of wonder and delight.
It was like a fantasy a place like never before.
It was as pure as water, no hidden secrets no lies
or deceit. Transparent for all to see like a window of truth,
or a portal to a new life.

The place was bright and full of light, a vast amount
of colours spread across ^{the town} city. darkness was nowhere to
be seen.

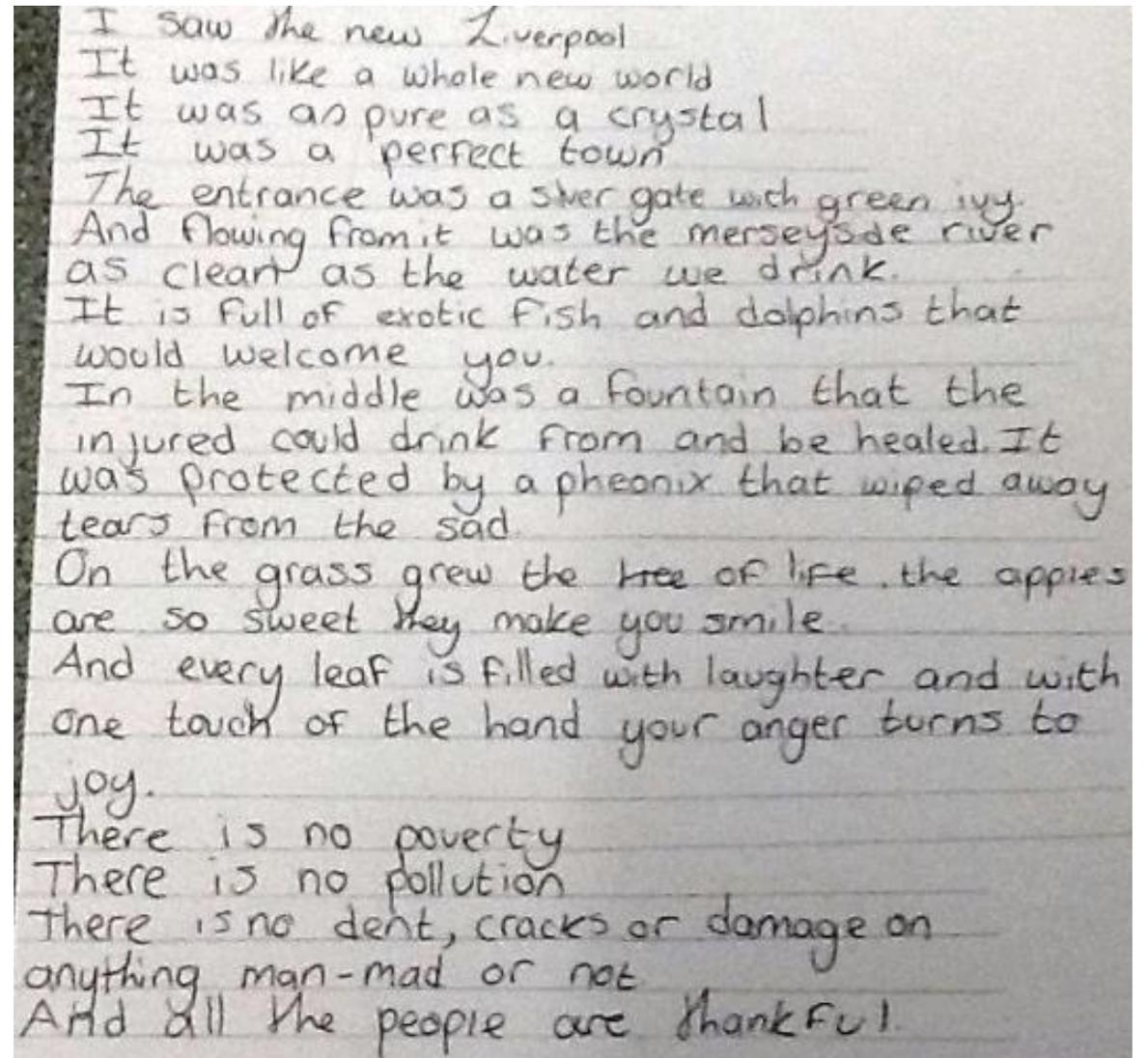
Myths were no longer myths, ^{dragons} ~~monsters~~ and sea-monsters roamed
our streets, our people lived in peace and harmony.
In the middle was the subtlest pearl rose which shone
as bright as a star. Flaming from it came liquid gold
capable of healing anyone. Whether it's a broken heart
or a painful wound. From the flowers leaves came new
life, from sprouting tiny plants to new born babies.

There was no more hatred or poverty, people would have
homes and families.
There was no more hunger or discrimination. Equality
was vital.

Most importantly everyone would feel loved and have hope for
the future. Although this is a thought it's not impossible.

11 year old Elizabeth wrote
this last term.

Inspired by sacred text?

A photograph of a piece of lined paper with handwritten text in cursive. The text describes a fantastical city called Liverpool, inspired by sacred text. It mentions a silver gate with green ivy, a river as clear as drinking water, exotic fish and dolphins, a healing fountain protected by a phoenix, a tree of life with sweet apples, and a world with no poverty, pollution, or damage, where everyone is thankful.

I saw the new Liverpool
It was like a whole new world
It was as pure as a crystal
It was a perfect town
The entrance was a silver gate with green ivy.
And flowing from it was the merseyside river
as clear as the water we drink.
It is full of exotic fish and dolphins that
would welcome you.
In the middle was a fountain that the
injured could drink from and be healed. It
was protected by a phoenix that wiped away
tears from the sad.
On the grass grew the tree of life. the apples
are so sweet they make you smile.
And every leaf is filled with laughter and with
one touch of the hand your anger turns to
joy.
There is no poverty
There is no pollution
There is no dent, cracks or damage on
anything man-made or not
And all the people are thankful.

-
- Grace, 11
 - My Town Turned Perfect

 - Inspired by the Revelation to Saint John

A vision of pure beauty
It was a place made of golden ~~light~~ ^{and precious} gems
In the center of the city was a tree
Not a big tree but a tree covered in leaves
representing each individual person
The river mersy wound its self around
and was ~~at~~ clear enough to see to
the bottom.

And when night came it wasn't a
sussocating blanket of darkness that people
geared, it was lit up with thousands
of stars, sparkling like silver coins tossed
into the sky.

It was so clean the floor was free
of chewing gum or cigarettes.
But best of all was the people.
The people were kind and considerate,
They were devoid of hate, anger, and sadness.
There ~~was~~ was no prejudice and all
language barriers were torn down to
make room for love.

Outcomes – suitable for 11 year olds

- Pupils consider questions about religion and the purpose of life, community and vision;
- Pupils engage with, understand and apply ideas from sacred text;
- Pupils express their own ideas and insights into religious and spiritual questions with increasing depth and clarity;
- Pupils explore and express their own values, hopes and visions in the light of their learning from religious text.

Text in RE: 7 blooming flowers

- 1. Texts energise religion creatively. They can do the same for RE**
- 2. Narrative theologies communicate religious ideas very effectively**
- 3. Story telling is a central RE teaching skill: find your JK Rowling**
- 4. Aim to enable children to interpret**
- 5. Don't ask 'what is the moral?' Ask: what hidden messages can you see?**
- 6. Don't dumb down, or imagine it's too hard: text may need wrestling, but your pupils like wrestling. Give it time**
- 7. Religious authenticity and pupil profundity unite here. Space for great RE.**

