Exemplar Unit of Work: KS3 Beliefs and concepts

This unit of work contributes towards the principal aim of RE in Wiltshire: to engage pupils in enquiry into key questions arising from a study of religion and belief, so as to promote their personal and spiritual development.

Step 1: Theme	Beliefs and concepts: the key ideas and questions of meaning in religions and beliefs, including issues relating to God, truth, the world, human life, and life after death.
Step 2: Key	Death: is it the end? Does it matter?
question	 Where does this fit into our Key Stage planning? This unit explores one of the fundamental questions of human existence. Whilst there is a general secular tone to the British media and politics, a high proportion of the population believe in life after death. These beliefs are not always coherent and consistent, but this unit examines the orthodox beliefs of Christianity, Buddhism, and/or Sikhism, and/or Islam; and compares these with non-religious views, whether official Humanist views or less formal general beliefs. It may fit in with lessons in English and art.
Step 3:	We are focusing on Christianity plus one religion (from Buddhism or Sikhism) and
Learning outcomes and assessment	 non-religious views. <i>ask and suggest answers</i> to questions about what happens when we die; explain how, using appropriate vocabulary, religious beliefs and teachings about life after death help believers to make sense of life, <i>expressing their own reasoned insights;</i> iii. interpret and evaluate a range of sources, texts and authorities exploring the nature of life after death from different traditions, <i>expressing their own beliefs and ideas using a variety of forms of expression.</i>
	These learning outcomes are turned into levelled "I can" statements:
	 I can formulate and suggest answers to questions about what happens when we die; relating these questions to my own and others' lives I can explain Christian, Buddhist & Sikh beliefs about life after death, using wide religious vocabulary, expressing my own responses using argument as well as a range of creative media I can explain the impact of believing in resurrection, judgement, heaven and hell on the lives of Christian believers I can explain similarities and differences between the impact of belief in resurrection with Buddhist and/or Sikh ideas of reincarnation I can discern how others' beliefs and my own beliefs about life after death affect the way I live I can express insights into why people believe in different forms of life after death, and my own responses to these reasons I can explain how religious sources, texts and authorities are used to give answers to the question about what happens when we die; express my own responses to some of these sources in a variety of ways.
	 L6 I can give an informed account of Christian, Buddhist & Sikh beliefs about life after death, using religious and philosophical vocabulary; <i>express reasoned insights into the beliefs of others about life after death, and my own ideas</i> I can explain why Christians have different views on what happens after we die, including ways in which sources, texts and authorities are interpreted I can explain why western and eastern religions have different views about life after death I can explain why religious believers and non-religious people respond differently to the idea of death and afterlife; <i>express ways in which such responses affect the way people live</i>

APPENDIX X

	I can evaluate the relevance of the relationship between beliefs in life after death and world issues, e.g. Western materialism; evangelism; peace militancy; terrorism.
Step 4:	reasons for belief in life after death:
Content	 religious teachings on death ideas about life after death from different Christian traditions ie purgatory, heaven, hell; Muslim ideas about Paradise, Day of Judgement Hindu ideas of reincarnation, samsara, karma, moksha Buddhist ideas of reincarnation and nibbana Sikh ideas of immortality of the soul, reincarnation and mukhti the effects of these beliefs on the lives of individuals and communities, eg impact of beliefs about rewards/punishments on moral choices, (including beliefs that may lead individuals to choose to kill others).
Teaching and learning activities	Develop active learning opportunities and investigations, using some engaging stimuli, to enable pupils to achieve the levelled outcomes. Don't forget the skills you want pupils to develop. Make sure that the activities allow pupils to practise these skills.

Please note that this unit of work is detailed in order to provide examples of a wide range of teaching and learning opportunities for pupils in schools. It is not expected that school planning will be as detailed as this; the key is to follow the planning process above to achieve the learning outcomes in the syllabus.

Key question	Key question: Death: is it the end? Does it matter?				
Learning outcomes Teaching should enable pupils to	Teaching and Learning Teachers can select from the following and adapt as appropriate, making sure that the learning outcomes are met and that pupils' learning needs are addressed. This material need not be taught as a whole unit but can be linked to work in other subject areas.	Levelled pupil outcomes: so that pupils can say "I can" to one or more of the statements below.	Notes		
These activities introduce the topic and prepare pupils to encounter religious and non- religious responses to the idea of life after death. Ask and suggest answers to questions about what happens when we die	 Death: is it the end? Select from the following suggestions to introduce the topic: a) Students write their ideas for finishing the statement "Life is" or "Life is like" (Reflect). E.g. Life is like a bookcase – full of stories, some true, some not. Life is like a jewel – too precious to lose. Life is like Tesco – open 24/7. Life is like this pencil – pointless. Life is a journey to an unknown destination. Using these statements, interpret what they tell you about people's attitudes to death. Give students 10-15 statements to classify according to their response. Is death welcome or unwelcome? Is it part of the journey or an interruption? Do they face or ignore the reality of death? If there were no death, would the "life is" statement still be true? b) Use a piece of A4 paper. In the centre, print a small image of a "journey of life" cartoon (e.g. as in Robert Kirkwood's <i>Looking for Happiness</i>; similar available on clipart). Ask students to write either side of the cartoon on the sheet the possibilities for what happened to this person <i>before</i> life began and <i>after</i> it ends. Include their own views. c) In groups, imagine that there is life after death and you can ask questions to a spirit who has been allowed to return to life on earth. What questions do you ask her? Evaluate these questions. Are they important? Why/why not? Each group must evaluate questions and identify their two most important ones. Whole class must evaluate these and identify the most important question to ask. Why is this so important? E.g. is it important because it has some impact on how we should live now? (What difference would it make if <i>God</i> were there to answer your questions rather than simply a spirit.?) 	L4 I can reflect on the possibilities of life after death, giving 3 different ideas and <i>expressing my own</i> <i>views as to which is</i> <i>most likely.</i>	Steve Turner's		

d)	Compare the questions you have raised with those in Steve Turner's poem <i>Heaven.</i> Does he have more important questions? Are his more interesting? How seriously does he take the idea of heaven? Read a short story about life after death. Explore the story/stories. To what extent do they reflect students' own ideas? Do they answer any of the questions raised? Are they satisfying? Why/why not? (Eg. Janet Frame's story <i>Spirit</i> in <i>The Lagoon and other stories</i> : very short and very stimulating; Samuel Beckett's much darker and much more obscure story <i>Ping</i> in Penguin Book of Modern Short Stories, ed. Malcolm Bradbury; more readily available is in <i>Flexi-RE 3</i> Pippa Atken (pub. NelsonThornes 0748763546) p66-7 – Jewish story by Yechiel Tuckachinsky, from www.jewish.com; <i>Flexi-RE 3</i> has an excellent section containing many useful sources for this topic; a longer story is the final chapter in Julian Barnes' <i>A History of the World in 10 ½ Chapters</i> , pub Picador – a hedonistic vision of life after death.)	L4 I can think up 3 good questions about what happens when we die. L5 I can express insights into others' ideas about life after death, and say how they might change my own ideas.	poem available on: www.rejesus.co.uk /expressions/steve _turner/index.html
e)	I recently came across a website which offered to predict the day of my death, based on my birth date, time, place of birth etc, on astrological principles. I didn't try it. If you <i>could</i> know the day of your death, would you want to know? Have a class vote for their initial responses. In pairs, think of at least three advantages and three disadvantages of knowing. What difference would it make to a person's life? (E.g. In the film, <i>Big Fish</i> , Edward Bloom finds out as a child how he is going to die. It makes him very confident when he faces challenges, as he has no fear. It makes him ambitious to seek and find what really matters. However, a similar scenario in <i>Groundhog Day</i> has a different effect: the hero knows that he cannot die because he is caught in a time loop repeating one particular day endlessly; he therefore becomes very careless about his life – jumping off cliffs etc.) Explore different ideas. Have a repeat vote to see if views have changed since evaluating advantages and disadvantages.		
f)	What are the advantages and disadvantages of immortality i.e. not dying? a) if <i>everyone</i> is immortal or b) if <i>you</i> are immortal e.g. Nicholas Flamel in <i>Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone</i> (p215); or Janacek's opera <i>The Makropolous Case</i> .	L5/L6 I can express my own beliefs using at least one form of	
g)	Produce a piece of art work or a poem expressing student's own beliefs and ideas about life after death. Hang on to it to see if it needs to be changed later in the light of their learning about different religious beliefs.	expression other than argument.	

Learning outcomes Teaching should enable pupils to	Teaching and Learning Teachers can select from the following and adapt as appropriate, making sure that the learning outcomes are met and that pupils' learning needs are addressed. This material need not be taught as a whole unit but can be linked to work in other subject areas.	Levelled pupil outcomes: so that pupils can say "I can" to one or more of the statements below.	Notes
Interpret and evaluate a range of sources, texts and authorities exploring the nature of life after death from different traditions, <i>expressing</i> <i>their own beliefs and</i> <i>ideas using a variety</i> <i>of forms of</i> <i>expression.</i>	 What do different people believe about life after death? Select from the following suggestions, as appropriate to your chosen religions. a) Draw a Venn diagram, two circles overlapping. In left hand one, write <i>Birth</i>, in the other, <i>Death</i>. Ask students to explore the possible links between birth and death, being born and dying. (Use task in M H Grimmitt <i>Pedagogies of RE</i>, p 217ff). Allow students to raise the possibilities of a cyclical view as well as a linear view, in preparation for next task. b) Give students a range of images, without titles, expressing beliefs about life after death from Christianity and Buddhism and/or Sikhism. Students to interpret the key features of the images and try to explain some of the key beliefs being expressed. E.g. select from Angelico <i>Last Judgement</i>, Bosch <i>Garden of Earthly Delights</i>; Petrus Christus <i>Last Judgement</i>, Van Eyck <i>Last Judgement</i>, Michael Hensley <i>Ascent</i> and <i>Descent</i>, various images of reincarnation via Google image search, e.g. Setowski; Buddhist paradise images – eastern and western paradise of Abhirati, Tusita, Amita Sutra, Sukhavati; Buddhist wheel of life image e.g. in <i>Buddhistm: a new approach</i> pub. Hodder; Terry Parmelee <i>Buddhist Paradise</i> and <i>Window on Eternity</i>. c) Give students a range of texts from Christian, Buddhist and/or Sikh scriptures/authorities, without saying where they are from. Students try to match the text to the image and then explain the belief expressed, if it is different from their interpretation of the images. Identify any similarities (e.g. idea of judgement; consequences of actions in this life on next life). 	L5 I can interpret at least two key beliefs about life after death, as expressed in various pieces of art. L5 I can explain some similarities and differences between western and eastern beliefs about life after death, and give at least one reason for these differences. L5	M H Grimmitt Pedagogies of RE 2000, McCrimmons, ISBN 0855976217 Lots of these images available on internet; www.artchive.com is a good source o high quality images. <u>http://www.artchive</u> .com/core.html

	 Explain the key differences between western and eastern approaches (e.g. cyclical vs linear ideas.) d) Compare the images with their own expression of their ideas/beliefs. What are the significant differences? What would they say is missing from theirs or these images? Why do the Christian ones emphasise the element of punishment and hell so much? Why do some Christians prefer to believe in the idea of annihilation – that those who do not get into heaven (i.e. who choose to reject God) are wiped out after death? e) Outline Buddhist ideas about rebirth and nibbana/nirvana. Use story about the foolishness of wanting to stay on the overnight train to Edinburgh once it has reached its destination – similarly, we fight death and hold on to life. Buddhist response is that we shouldn't cling on to it so much. (Chris Wright <i>Buddhist mor Today</i> p59). Explore the idea of impermanence. Look back at the "life is like" statements with which you began this unit. See if any reflect this Buddhist belief. (Some other ideas and illustrations in Chris Wright <i>Religion for Today Book 2: What difference does religion make?</i> p92-3). f) Look at Buddhist wheel of life image. Identify the symbols of greed, ignorance and hatred. Give students a list of cravings and blessings arising from the image (e.g. attachment, hatred, delusion, greed, ignorance, ill-will, laziness, agitation; joy, happiness, insight, detachment, loving kindness, compassion, equanimity). Students to give themselves a rating – marks out of ten for each quality they possess. Given their score, what might their disposition be in their next life, if Buddhists are right? Which realm might they return to, if not the human realm? Why? g) Explore idea of nibbana/nirvana, using quotations from Buddhist scriptures. Write a haiku to express Buddhist belief. h) Explore Sikh ideas that each individual has a "divine spark", an immortal soul which is part of God and is returns to union with God once liberated from cycle of	I can explain Buddhist beliefs in nibbana/nirvana and its impact on Buddhists <i>L5</i> <i>I can relate</i> <i>Buddhist ideas</i> <i>about rebirth to my</i> <i>life by considering</i> <i>whether I think life is</i> <i>something from</i> <i>which people should</i> <i>seek release.</i> <i>L5</i> I can explain Sikh ideas about rebirth and mukhti, <i>relating</i> <i>these ideas to my</i> <i>own life by</i> <i>considering whether</i> <i>I think life is</i> <i>something from</i> <i>which people should</i> <i>seek release</i>	Chris Wright Buddhism for Today OUP ISBN 0199172412 Chris Wright Religion for Today Book 2: What difference does religion make? OUP, ISBN 0199148244 http://www.cleo.net .uk/resources/inde x.php?ks=2&cur=1 5 for interactive resources including Wheel of life John Polkinghorne Science & Christian Belief, SPCK, ISBN 0281047146 Frederick
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<i>mai</i> <i>mol</i> rout beli wha	ious barriers to attaining <i>mukhti</i> include <i>maya</i> (illusion), <i>hankar</i> (pride), <i>mmukh</i> (self-willed, self-reliant rather than God-centred - <i>gurmukh</i>), <i>kam</i> (lust), <i>h</i> (worldliness), <i>lobh</i> (greed), <i>karodh</i> (anger). <i>Sewa</i> (selfless service) is the te to good karma and thus <i>mukhti</i> . Devise board game to illustrate these efs. Ensure that it reveals understanding of Sikh beliefs by making it explicit at might lead to bad karma and good karma, e.g. sewa can be divided into be aspects: <i>tan</i> (physical), <i>man</i> (mental) and <i>dhan</i> (material). Explain the difference between Christian ideas of immortality of the soul and	L6 I can explain the difference between immortality of the soul and resurrection in Christian belief and express insights into	Excellent summary of these views in Keith Ward <i>Christianity: a short</i>
1)	the more commonly held Christian belief in resurrection. Explain why most Christians want to claim the resurrection is better than immortality. (Immortality of soul seen as from influence of Plato on early Christian community, suggesting a disembodied existence; biblical picture talks of resurrection of body to new life into " new heavens and new earth".) (Use article from George Carey in <i>Flexi-RE 3</i> p53-4; also summary of this view from John Polkinghorne in <i>Science & Christian Belief</i> , p163).	what difference it might make to my life if I believed in an immortal soul. L6 I can explain how	<i>introduction,</i> Oneworld, Oxford
j)	Explore the New Testament images of life after death, e.g. John 5:24; John 14:2; 1 Timothy 6:7; Revelation 21: 3-4; Luke 24; 1 Corinthians 15: 35ff; Students to use art, video, poem, music to express Paul's idea of life after death from 1Corinthians 15. What difference does it make if Christians say Paul's idea fits in with the description of Jesus after his resurrection in the Gospels? (i.e. some say "spiritual body" in Paul doesn't mean a ghostly body of a spirit, but a transformed incorruptible body, like Jesus' resurrection body.)	Biblical texts answer some of the questions about the nature of life after death.	
k)	Imagine that the Biblical view is presented by a trainee God to their teacher God. What comments might s/he give? What suggestions might s/he offer to improve the ideas?	L5 I can explain the Roman Catholic belief in Purgatory	
I)	Explain the Roman Catholic belief in Purgatory. What are the benefits of this idea of the soul being purged and prepared for eternity with God? Would it be just and fair if people were simply forgiven and get straight in to heaven? How does belief in Purgatory help Roman Catholics cope with death? Is the idea of Purgatory more to comfort relatives of the deceased? Would you actually be you if your soul was cleaned up and free from sin?	and its impact on believers' lives. (L6 how the impact varies)	

m)	Some Christians read the descriptions in the Bible literally, an approach that informed many of the Medieval and Renaissance imagery of the horrors of death and hell, and beliefs held by some that there will be a Rapture, where those who believe and trust in Jesus will be taken up to be with him, suddenly, leaving all the sinners and non-Christians on earth to face destruction. (US bumper stickers include: "Warning: In case of Rapture, this car will be unmanned.") Others see the Biblical stories as myths needing to be demythologised (Bultmann) and made suitable for 21 st century. They then interpret all talk of resurrection and life after death and judgement as metaphorical (e.g. "life after death" is about a "death" of old sinful habits, and turning to new "life" with an unselfish perspective; see Don Cupitt, D Z Phillips). Others sit somewhere between the two – critical interpretation, which sees some descriptions (such as Jesus' resurrection appearances), as literal, but the apocalyptic descriptions in Revelation as metaphorical. If works by Angelico & Bosch represent a literal interpretation, how might someone express the <i>metaphorical</i> interpretation (e.g. Revelation 21:1-5 or 1-8), give them three terms (literal, metaphorical and critical) and three different interpretations. Match them up. Explain what difference it would make to a Christian to believe each of these and why. Which interpretation makes most sense to you and why?	L6 I can explain why Christians have different views about what happens when we die by giving at least two different interpretations of a Biblical passage.	
		text, using correct	

Key question:	Death: is it the end? Does it matter?		
Learning outcomes Teaching should enable pupils to	Teaching and Learning Teachers can select from the following and adapt as appropriate, making sure that the learning outcomes are met and that pupils' learning needs are addressed. This material need not be taught as a whole unit but can be linked to work in other subject areas.	Levelled pupil outcomes: so that pupils can say "I can" to one or more of the statements below.	Notes
Explain how, using appropriate vocabulary, religious beliefs and teachings about life after death help believers to make sense of life, <i>expressing their</i> <i>own reasoned</i> <i>insights</i>	 Believing in life after death – what difference does it make? Select from the following suggestions: a) Give a selections of reasons why people believe in life after death. Sort them and rank them. Students explain which would be most /least persuasive for them. b) Give range of responses to death. In groups/pairs, sort them into categories. individually, which one(s) do you most identify with and why? Select 5, including at least one from each category. What difference would it make to a person's life if they believe this? Give specific examples of how this person would a) treat others b) act day to day c) make choices about career / life direction. c) Compare Shakespeare's <i>Cymbeline</i> Act 4 Scene 2 (in <i>RE in Practice: Living with Change</i>, CEM, p26-7) with Auden's poem <i>Stop all the clocks</i> (found in <i>Flexi-RE 3</i>; as recited in <i>Four Weddings and a Funeral</i>). What different responses to death do they reveal? What might explain the differences? Rewrite either from the perspective of a Christian, Buddhist and/or Sikh. (<i>Living with Change</i> has several good tasks on this.) d) Explore the impact of the idea of facing Judgement on a person's life. Read Matthew 25: 32ff The parable of the sheep and the goats. What effect do the promises of rewards or punishments have on people? What would a literal and a metaphorical interpretation of this parable say? What difference would it make to a Christian? (See <i>Assessed RE</i>, ed P Draycott p12-15 for a very good series of tasks on judgement based on the parable of the sheep and the goats.) 	L6 I can express insights into why people believe in different forms of life after death, and my own responses to these reasons. L6 I can discern how others' beliefs about life after death may affect the way they live. L5 I can explain the impact of believing in resurrection, judgement, heaven and hell on the lives of Christian believers.	Assessed RE, ed P Draycott, pub RE Today Services 2006, ISBN 1904024874

e)	Compare similarities and differences between Christian ideas of personal life after death and eastern (Sikh/Buddhist) ideas of impersonal "life" after death – with no awareness of personhood but being "blown out" or reabsorbed into the Divine. Which view may have a more significant impact on how believers live in this world? What do they say about the differences between eastern and western cultures? Do Christian ideas of life after death encourage a materialistic view of life? Is the idea of maintaining one's personhood after death responsible for the perceived selfishness and image-conscious culture of 21 st C West? Which view might encourage a more moral way of life for its adherents?	L5 I can explain similarities and differences between the impact of belief in resurrection with Buddhist and/or Sikh ideas of rebirth.	
f)	Go back to your piece of artwork or poem about your beliefs in life after death. Write a commentary on it, explaining any changes you would make if you were to do it again after studying religious beliefs.	L6 I can express insights into my own views on life after	
g)	Set up the following scenario: "Imagine that you are a committed religious believer. You believe that your holy book contains the truth about God and life, even though you do not claim that it must be interpreted literally. You live in a secular society where your beliefs are not valued highly and there are lots of secular values to tempt you away from following the path God has given you. The secular society is beginning to limit your religious freedom, imposing its values more and more. You are beginning to see that the truth and purity of your faith is being diluted by these secular influences and polluted by them. God desires purity and holiness. What should you do?" Students should decide what the options are for such believers. Should they follow God or the pressures of society? How will they feel about this situation? Is it enough to try and live their holy life in private, without trying to persuade others? Or should they try to do something about it and clean up the pollution? Give students some texts which emphasise the holiness and wrath of God (eg within Christianity, Ezekiel 7:5ff; Romans 1: 18ff; Romans 2:5-11; Revelation 6:15-17; Hebrews 12:28-29; Psalm 15; Isaiah 6:1-7). Is it better to please God or humans? Given that Christian and Muslim believers say that they will face judgement one day, what should they do? Explore the possibilities: some may turn to fight for God against the "pollution" in violent ways and turn to terrorism. Others see their role as being to stand against the "pollution" in more peaceful ways, e.g. peace activism – e.g. Christian Peacemaker Teams; Norman Kember trying to act out his beliefs by standing against violence in Iraq, despite the risk of kidnap and death. (Philippians 2:14-15; Matthew 5:38ff)	death in the light of my study of religious beliefs L7 I can evaluate the link between beliefs in life after death and how some believers act in the world, giving some explanations for why believers might become terrorists or peace activists.	Christian Peacemaker Teams www.cpt.org

i)	Should people live in the hope of eternal life? Are there things we should be concentrating on here on earth rather than hoping for a life after death where everything will be good? Set an essay or hold a debate: <i>This house believes that belief in life after death is necessary for a fulfilled life.</i> Essay question: <i>How far is belief in life after death necessary for a fulfilled life?</i> This will allow discussion of non-religious beliefs, atheistic and agnostic viewpoints. "Only the fact of death poses the question about the meaning of life in all its depth." Discuss.		
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Resources

Websites

- The National Association of Teachers of RE (NATRE) hosts a web gallery of pupils' art work. Here pupils can look at works of art by other pupils, including images associated with festivals: <u>www.natre.org.uk/spiritedarts</u>
- RE:Quest is a very useful site for learning about Christianity: <u>www.request.org.uk</u>
- CLEO has a collection of excellent video resources for RE in all key stages: <u>www.cleo.net.uk</u>
- The Welsh Virtual Teacher Centre contains some good materials for teaching Easter to this age group: www.ngfl-cymru.org.uk
- REonline is a good gateway site: <u>www.reonline.org.uk</u>
- Rejesus provides a good range of images of Jesus and interesting points of view: <u>http://rejesus.co.uk</u>
- The National Society supports RE with some books and a website on 'Encountering Christianity': www.encounterchristianity.co.uk
- The BBC's Learning Zone Broadband Clips Library provides short clips on a wide variety of RE topics in 6 religions: www.bbc.co.uk/learningzone/clips

Artefacts

- Articles of Faith: <u>www.articlesoffaith.co.uk</u>
- Religion in Evidence: <u>www.tts-group.co.uk</u>
- Local Christian bookshops