

# Year 7 Religion & Society - What brings us together?

## Unit 2: RE – Introducing religions and worldviews

### Part 1: How do we study religions and worldviews?



#### 1. What is a religion and how do we study them?

- From the Latin *religio*, meaning to bind or connect,
- Historically, humans have always asked big questions about their place in the universe and what it means to live a good life whilst we are here in this world.
- Over time, religion has developed in response to these questions about life, truth and meaning.
- Religious belief can significantly shape a person's worldview and the way they live their lives.
- Though hard to define, religion seems to be a universal experience and need.
- Religion, at its heart, is supposed to be a great uniter that enables all who participate in it to seek and experience a sense of truth, purpose and belonging.
- There are many famous examples of individuals and groups inspired by the religious faith who have been a force for good in the world in which we live.
- However there has also been examples of where individuals and groups have come into conflict with one another due to contrasting religious beliefs.
- The study of religion is made up of several branches of knowledge: theology, philosophy, social sciences, each of which offers a different lens through which to study religion and worldviews.
- One of the ways we can learn about belief in our changing society is through the census, which is a survey that every household completes every 10 years in England and Wales.

#### 2. What is a worldview and how are they formed?

- Our worldview relates to the beliefs, values and stories that collectively inform the way we live and behave.
- We all have a worldview even if we are not religious or don't believe in God, as we all stand somewhere and nobody stands nowhere, meaning we have all been shaped by our influences.
- A person's worldview can be formed by beliefs about:
  - The purpose of life
  - What we mean by a 'good life'
  - The values we should live by and the skills and qualities that we should have
  - How we should spend our time
  - How we should treat loved ones - How to treat strangers or enemies
  - How to treat animals, the earth and the environment
  - God, religion, spirituality, ghosts - Views about life, death, afterlife
  - Views about wealth, poverty, charity
  - Views about the laws of the land and how the communities we live in should be run.
- A person's worldview can be shaped by many different influences including: age, family and upbringing, friends, where they live, culture, life events, experiences, education, media and of course religion, which can also have a significant influence on many of these other factors.
- One aspect of a person's worldview is whether, or not, they believe in a God.
- We might describe ourselves as:
  - **Theist** - Someone who believes in God(s)
  - **Atheist** - Someone who does not believe in God(s)
  - **Agnostic** - Someone who is unsure if there is a God(s)

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### Part 2: What religions have shaped the UK? (Religious Literacy)



#### **3. What are the Abrahamic Faiths?**

- Judaism (1st - 1500BCE – 3500 years ago)
- Christianity (2nd - 30CE – 2000 years ago)
- Islam (3rd - 610 CE – 1400 years ago)
- Symbols of each faith

#### **How are the faiths connected?**

- Monotheistic – all 3 religions believe in 1 God
- Traced back to Abraham (Patriarch) & the Hebrews
- Revelations or prophecy is important to each religion
- Linked through the city of Jerusalem
- The person of Jesus connects the faiths although each religion has different beliefs about him
- All three believe God is:
  - omnipotent (all-powerful)
  - omniscient (all knowing)
  - omnibenevolent (all loving)
- The story of creation is an example of a story that believers might say, show all 3 of these values

#### **4. What are key features of the Abrahamic Faiths?**

**Judaism:** Followers referred to as Jews – Famous holy book is the Torah - Founder is Abraham - Place of worship is synagogue – Festivals include Pesach & Rosh Hashanah

**Christianity:** Followers referred to as Christians - Famous Holy book is the Bible - Founder is Jesus – Place of worship is a church - Festivals include Christmas & Easter.

**Islam:** Followers referred to as Muslims - Holy book is Qur'an - Founder is prophet Muhammad - Place of worship is a mosque – Festivals include Eid-ul-Fitr / Adha

#### **5. What are the Dharmic Faiths?**

- Hinduism (1st - 2000-3000 BCE - 4k to 5k years ago)
- Buddhism (2nd - 560 BCE - 2500 years ago)
- Sikhism (3rd - 1500 CE - 500 years ago)
- Symbols of each faith
- The oldest of the 6 world religions we will study is Hinduism and the youngest is Sikhism

#### **How are the faiths connected?**

- All three originate from the Indian sub-continent
- The concepts of Dharma, Samsara, Karma

#### **6. What are key features of the Dharmic religions?**

**Hinduism:** Followers referred to as Hindus - Famous holy book is the Vedas - No known founder - place of worship is a Mandir - Festivals include Diwali & Holi.

**Buddhism:** Followers referred to as Buddhists – Famous holy book is the Tripitaka – Founder is Prince Siddhartha Gautama (The Buddha) – Place of worship is the Buddhist Temple or Monastery – Festivals include Wesak & Bodhi Day.

**Sikhism:** Followers referred to as Sikhs – Famous holy book is Guru Granth Sahib - Founder is Guru Nanak - Place of worship is Gurdwara - Festivals include Vaisakhi