

How Are Key Muslim Beliefs Shown In A Mosque?

Year 7

Purpose

The unit aimed to develop our module entitled: Our Spiritual Quest

We intended students to visit two places of worship; one from a tradition other than the Roman Catholic tradition namely an Orthodox Church; the other from another faith, in this case Islam - a mosque

The aim of the visits would be to focus on aids to worship and the reasons why people worship. Students would explore the place of buildings in the particular tradition and community and the function of the religious building. They would investigate different types of religious art and imagery.

Main Assessment Focus

For this assessment, the focus is to develop students' knowledge and understanding of the following key concepts:

- 1.1 Beliefs, teachings and sources
- 1.2 Practices and Ways of life
- 1.4 Identity, diversity and belonging

They would complete two tasks:

- 1. An Essay Style Question
- 2. Students' own presentation using suitable software

Main 'Learning outside the Classroom' Focus

The project planned to include a visit by students to a local Mosque identifying how key beliefs are shown in the building, its architecture and decoration.

Cardinal Pole Roman Catholic School, London Borough of Hackney:
Paul Christian - Advisor: Karl D'cruz

School Profile

Total number of learners	1000
Age range	11-18 years
Specialist status	Science
Level 5 and above in key stage 3 tests (2007)	70%
Five A*-C at GCSE (2007)	62%
Special educational needs	6.9%

Our school is a Voluntary Aided Comprehensive school situated in one of the country's most deprived and diverse boroughs. Cardinal Pole is a Roman Catholic School but attracts students from a wide range of religious cultures with only 49% of its students being Catholic.

All students are taught Religious Education including those in Years 12 and 13. At Key Stage 3 students follow The Way, the Truth and Life Syllabus which follows the Curriculum Directory as agreed by the Bishops' of England and Wales. This syllabus builds on what students have learnt at primary school. At Key Stage 4 all students follow the Edexcel full course in Religious Studies sitting papers in two modules; Mark's Gospel and Religion and Life based on a study of Catholic Christianity. Some students sit their RE GCSE in Year 10 and go on to sit OCR'S Philosophy and Ethics GCSE in Year 11.

In the Sixth form around 20 students opt to study Philosophy and Ethics as an A level course. All Sixth formers have one lesson of RE per week and follow a school devised course recognised by National Open College Network.

Question 1: What are we trying to Achieve?

The main priorities for the project were firstly to introduce a new module on World Religions other than Christianity. Secondly, we wanted to make a link with a local authority advisor – a new initiative as we normally just work with Diocesan advisors. Finally we aimed to plan a visit to a local religious place of worship, outside the Christian tradition and make links and contacts with that community.

What were are learners' like at the start?

Students who attend Cardinal Pole come from across the ability range. They appear interested in religious concepts, like debating topics and are reasonably open to learning about other faiths. We have experienced some problems in talking about other faiths particularly Islam..

What differences did we want to see in our learners?

We wanted students to gain a basic understanding of the core beliefs of Islam through work in the classroom reinforced and extended through a visit to a Mosque. We wanted them to develop observational, evaluation and questioning skills. We wanted them to show empathy and understanding towards those of another faith whilst challenging their own conceptions and preconceived ideas. We wanted students to develop a more positive attitude to studying Islam.

Question 2: How did we organise learning to achieve our aims?

The main focus of the curriculum development was to enable students to:

- explain how the teachings of Islam make a difference to individuals and communities.
- realise that different communities might express their beliefs in a number of ways.
- be able to respond intelligently to other peoples' experiences. They will be able to understand how religious beliefs help others find meanings in their lives.
- be able to respond to the experiences of inspirational people.

We produced new resources and schemes of work for the project and accompanying presentations. All work is differentiated. We aim to have the students achieving levels 5 -6.

We decided to target two year 7 classes in the second half of the summer term. Two teachers piloted the project with the help of a teaching assistant. We used a variety of teaching strategies including group work and team teaching. We have visited the Mosque in Dalston and which is an entirely new venture that has enabled us to make links with a number of people involved in that community.

Students receive two one hour lessons in RE per week. We were able to try this project at a time of the year when the bulk of our current curriculum has been taught. The project allowed for more discussion time with and among the students which enhanced their learning.

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Question 3: How well have we achieved our aims?

The students have been genuinely engaged in their learning. They have gone from being cynical about studying another faith in depth to being more open and interested.

We are currently reviewing are Key Stage 3 syllabus and are introducing three new modules covering three other World Religions. The work prepared for this project has contributed to our review.

The students' work shows engagement at all levels and the less able have been readily involved in all activities. Their work shows progression.

What evidence did we produce?

1. An introduction to Islam lesson plans
2. Muhammad cards
3. End of unit assessment lesson plan
4. Five Pillars homework sheet