

## **Creative Assessment in RE at Seven Kings High School**

### **Who is Jesus? What are the key teachings of Jesus for Christians today?**

Year 8

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of the project was to bring a more creative assessment task into the year 8 curriculum that would incorporate learning outside of the classroom.

One focus of the school improvement plan is to look at Key Stage three assessment in line with the redesign of the curriculum and QCA's Big Picture of the Curriculum. When the project began, the departmental assessments were all extended writing tasks. The aim of this project was to offer opportunities for assessing students in a more creative way and also to devise new assessments tasks which can be assessed to level using the 'I can statements' and the intended outcomes shared with students.

#### **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
- 1.3 Expressing meaning

Also, this assessment is introducing the 'I can' statements, which the department will be introducing in the next academic year. It is hoped that this will allow students to understand more about their own attainment and help them to make further progress. In order to differentiate the work for the class, the model to be used for planning will be:

Level 3: All students will:

Level 4: All students should:

Level 5: All students could:

Level 6: Some students who have progressed even further could:

## **Main ‘Learning Outside the Classroom’ Focus**

Students have repeatedly requested experiences outside of the classroom and so, through this assessment, students will gain the opportunity to visit two local churches in the area. In this way, this experience aims to stimulate, inspire and improve motivation.

## **School profile**

Total number of learners	1402
Age range	11-18
Specialist status	Technology, MFL & Training School
Level 5 and above in key stage 3 tests (2007)	89%
Five A*-C at GCSE (2007)	84%
Special educational needs	5.3%

Seven Kings High School is a heavily oversubscribed 11-18 co-educational, multi-cultural, comprehensive school situated in the north of the London Borough of Redbridge. Pupils follow the Redbridge locally Agreed Syllabus balancing a thematic and systematic study of key questions and beliefs.

## **Question 1: What are we trying to achieve?**

The aim of this project is for the department to develop new methods of assessment and incorporate other styles of learning and teaching, especially those that can take place outside of the classroom. Currently, the department has only taken key stage 5 students on trips. We believe that visits would help develop an awareness of diversity to students’ assessments in RE and also allow us to forge links with members of our community. This creative assessment task breaks away from our current practice because currently assessment is always through extended writing.

## **What were our learners like at the start?**

At the start of this project learners were very clear about the three step approach to assessment in RE and that these assessments take place on a termly basis. This approach involves students drafting an extended piece of writing in response to a task, having it peer assessed and then writing up a final version to be assessed by the teacher. Assessment is viewed, by many learners, as an end of unit necessity rather than a positive learning experience.

## **What differences did we want to see in our learners?**

**Our aim is:**

- for students to be able to acquire knowledge and understanding from a primary source and through their own experience rather than that of others.
- that the use of 'I can' statements will embed our Assessment for Learning practice even further by empowering students to recognise the strengths and weakness in their own and others' work
- that students will recognise the importance of assessment as a learning experience and will see that extended writing is not the only medium through which they can convey knowledge and understanding in Religious Education

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

The key question for this curriculum development is how will the department engage learners in assessment in a creative way, whilst also introducing the 'I can...' statements?

This assessment is part of new scheme of learning centred on the teachings of Jesus and how these teachings may be reflected in places of worship. The focus of this study is the *Manga Bible*, which includes selected sections of the New Testament expressed in a distinctive style of comic-book artwork that originates from Japan. The assessment task involves students to creating their own Manga character who guides the reader through a Church explaining how the key teachings of Jesus are reflected in the building.

By taking our students out of the classroom we are adopting a different approach to teaching and learning. This approach is based on requests from students as well as teachers and it is therefore hoped that this will be a positive and successful change that the department can build on. The style of the assessment also represents a new creative approach; the students are being encouraged to use their imagination inspired by the Manga style approach rather than an extended piece of writing.

**Question 3: How well have we achieved our aims?**

**What differences are evident? What impact have we made on our learners?**

We have achieved what we intended at the start. The only real difficulty has been the pressure of time (or a lack of it) to get out and visit places of worship, and to work on the new SOW, and resources to support the SOW. More than 2 days was probably needed for us to do all that we wanted to, but we are pleased with what we have achieved.

We are now using and writing new 'I can' Level's across Key Stage 3, so the impact has been much more than I expected when we started out on this project. Also we are now planning more trips to places of worship, something which I have never had the confidence to do before in my career as a teacher.

Students are pleased with the changes and once we have their work we are confident that we will see them attaining very high marks in the assessment piece.

**What evidence did we produce?**

- Scheme of work – overview sheets
- Marking criteria for the teacher (if different from above)
- Pupils' work marked to level
- Digital photographs
- Worksheets
- Assessment worksheet