

# Skilful Primary RE

## Discussion activities linked to *What is RE?*

### a short film from NATRE



## Skilful and creative RE

- Provide colleagues with a list of RE skills such as that provided here or from your Agreed Syllabus or faith community guidelines (aided schools).
- Use stills from the film as visual clues to support talk about the kinds of RE learning activities that can help children develop these important skills.
- Use the activity: 'What RE skills are pupils developing?' to help colleagues reflect on the quality of RE learning in your own school. Identify any requiring more focus.

## Skills links:

The grid below will help you locate clips to use as visual clues for particular RE skills

<b>Skills</b>	<b>Film clip</b> <small>timings can be seen if film is viewed using Windows Media player</small>
<b>Knowledge and understanding</b> of beliefs, lifestyles and religions	0.40 (listening to children section) 2.16-3.27 (benefits for children section) 4.24- 4.42 (parents and teacher section)
<b>Questioning</b>	0.43 0.57 (listening to children section)
<b>Ethical decision making</b>	1.22f (in classrooms section)
<b>Application</b>	(in classrooms section) 1.28 (application of learning in RE (Ten Commandments) to everyday life) 1.40f (what would it be like if people lived by those rules?)
<b>Responding and expressing</b>	(in classrooms section) 1.48f (using creativity to express own ideas in response to their learning in RE) 3.52 (responding to a sense of thankfulness through giving )
<b>Reflection</b>	3.40–4.00 (example: thinking again about thankfulness in light of their learning about harvest).

## Skilful Primary RE

### Skills and the eight-level scale of achievement in RE

The chart\* below picks out the 'skill words' from the eight-level scale in the *Non-Statutory National Framework for RE* (QCA 2004). Many local Agreed Syllabus and faith community guidelines make use of this scale or a version of it.

Good RE enables children and young people to develop and use the skills specified here. Activities developing some of these skills are shown or referred to in the films.

#### Activities:

- **After watching the film/s, give colleagues a copy of the chart below and ask them to suggest which activities they have seen link with the following skills.** (Further explanation of these skills can be found on following pages.)

*Note:* If pupils are given opportunities to increasingly develop and use the skills specified, the standards of their RE work will be good, they will be challenged and they will make progress. Their achievements can be monitored and assessed in a straightforward way.

\*This chart is from *A Teacher's Handbook of Religious Education*, 3rd edn, ed. Rosemary Rivett, p.30. ISBN 978-1-904024-95-8 available from RE Today ([www.retoday.org.uk](http://www.retoday.org.uk)).

Level	Learn about religion	Pupils could.....	Learn from religion	Pupils could.....
8	Analyse / Contextualise		Justify views	
7	Account for...		Evaluate	
6	Interpret		Express insight	
5	Explain		Express views	
4	Show understanding		Apply ideas	
3	Describe		Make links	
2	Retell	<i>e.g. Retell a faith story</i>	Respond sensitively	
1	Name		Talk about	

# What RE skills are pupils developing?

Look through the following activities and decide with a partner which RE skills are developed by each. Are some less skilful than others?

Tick any activities you have used during the last term.

As a group - agree on and respond to a key question	Use music / sound or song to express thoughts/ feelings/ experiences	Highlight important information on a handout		Clarify questions to be asked	Take part in a stilling/ reflective activity & express responses	Plan an enquiry into a question about a religion or belief
Hear, talk about, explore religious stories	Agree/ disagree activity – responding to statements	Design a game to help younger children learn about a religious festival or teaching		Role play/ freeze frame /thought tap key moment	Talk about the meaning of an artefact and how it is used	Design a questionnaire
Complete sentence stems	Draw a picture	Do a word search		Write a poem to express own insights / beliefs	Visit a local place of worship	Write a news report/ broadcast
Tell a faith story from another person's point of view	Record ideas on speech bubbles/ sticky notes	Read prayers and explain what they show		Talk about the meaning of a picture/ symbol/faith story	Find out what it means to belong to a religion or to hold a belief	Comprehension exercise
Sort out pictures e.g. matching artefacts to faiths/beliefs	Report of a visit	Produce a presentation about a big question or a belief		Watch/listen/ make notes from DVD/ website	Prepare questions for a visitor	Talk about an object in a mystery/feely bag
Prepare questions for a faith visitor	Group work	Take part in a quiz		Use colour, collage, diagrams, to express ideas	Explain the meaning of words	Take part in a guided visualisation
Use creativity to express knowledge/ understanding/ ideas	Respond to a case study or dilemma	Sequence events in a faith story/ festival		Write a commentary for a video or PPT images	Work out a dance to express an important idea or belief	Use a thinking skills strategy e.g. odd one out/ fortune line
Match quotations to different faiths	Explain pictures and posters with RE themes and ideas	Produce a story board		Identify spiritual values such as love, hope, forgiveness, in a story or case study.	Respond to multi-sensory experiences linked to learning in RE– taste/ touch/ sight/ sound/ smell	Discussion structures: e.g. Pair and share; snowball discussion, jigsaw discussion.

# Skills

## Context

Progress in Religious Education is dependent on the application and developing use of general educational skills and processes.

The following skills are central to Religious Education and are reflected in a wide range of agreed syllabuses, programmes and approaches. Teachers should plan to enable pupils to make progress in the use and application of these skills through each key stage.

RE skills	Examples of teaching and learning activities
<p><b>Investigate</b> – this includes the ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>gather</b> information from a variety of sources</li> <li>• <b>ask</b> relevant questions</li> <li>• <b>know</b> what may be appropriate information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Use a widening range</b> of sources to pursue answers</li> <li>• <b>Highlight</b> important information on a handout</li> <li>• <b>Watch/listen</b> and make notes from video/audio/website</li> <li>• <b>Clarify questions</b> to be asked and write/email for information</li> <li>• <b>Prepare questions</b> for a visitor</li> </ul>
<p><b>Interpret</b> – this includes the ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>draw meaning</b> from artefacts, symbols, stories, works of art and poetry</li> <li>• <b>interpret</b> religious language</li> <li>• <b>suggest</b> meanings of religious texts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Explain</b> the meaning of words/actions/artefacts/symbols</li> <li>• <b>Respond</b> to questions such as: What do you think it is? What is going on (in a picture)? What issues does the story raise?</li> <li>• <b>Use</b> figures of speech or metaphors to speak about religious ideas</li> <li>• <b>Read</b> prayers and <b>explain</b> what they show about the person's beliefs and feelings</li> </ul>
<p><b>Reflect</b> – this includes the ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>ponder</b> on feelings, relationships, experience ultimate questions, beliefs and practices</li> <li>• <b>think and speak</b> carefully about religious and spiritual topics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Provide opportunities</b> for pupils to describe how atmosphere and actions make them feel</li> <li>• <b>Take part</b> in stilling/guided visualisation activities</li> <li>• <b>Use music</b> to explore feelings/thoughts</li> <li>• <b>Write</b> a prayer a Jewish/Christian/Muslim child might use</li> <li>• <b>Make</b> a 'wall of wisdom' to record pupils' insights</li> <li>• <b>Express feelings/insights</b> in a reflective poem (or prayer?)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Empathise</b> – this includes the ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>consider</b> the thoughts, feelings, experiences, beliefs and values of others</li> <li>• <b>see</b> the world through someone else's eyes</li> <li>• <b>develop</b> the power of the imagination to identify feelings such as love, forgiveness, sorrow, joy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Respond</b> to a case study</li> <li>• <b>Role-play</b> and freeze-frame, drama/mime activities</li> <li>• <b>Fortune line or feelings graph</b> for one character, e.g. Peter in Holy Week</li> <li>• <b>Write</b> thought bubbles or captions to pictures or slides</li> <li>• <b>Tell a story</b> from another person's point of view</li> <li>• <b>Hot seat</b>, i.e. answer questions in role of another person</li> <li>• <b>Read or hear or watch or talk</b> about a real-life case study</li> <li>• <b>Take part</b> in a guided visualisation</li> </ul>

RE skills	Examples of teaching and learning activities
<p><b>Analyse</b> – this includes the ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>draw out</b> essential ideas, distinguish between opinion, belief and fact</li> <li>• <b>distinguish</b> between key features of different faiths</li> <li>• <b>recognise</b> similarities and differences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Highlight</b> key words or beliefs on a handout</li> <li>• <b>Sort out</b> pictures of religious artefacts and symbols, matching them to the correct faith or festival</li> <li>• <b>Identify</b> the ‘odd one out’, e.g. a Hindu artefact within a set of Christian artefacts</li> <li>• <b>Match</b> quotations to different faiths studied</li> <li>• <b>Identify</b> differences and similarities between religious practices of different faiths studied using, for example, a triad activity</li> </ul>
<p><b>Synthesise</b> – this includes the ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>link</b> significant feature/s of religion together in a coherent pattern</li> <li>• <b>make links</b> between religion and human experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Talk</b> about prayers, texts, places of worship and festivals, drawing conclusions about similar beliefs, values and practices</li> <li>• <b>Identify</b> similarities and differences within religions, e.g. between different Christian denominations and between different religions</li> </ul>
<p><b>Express</b> – this includes the ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>explain</b> concepts, rituals and practices</li> <li>• <b>identify</b> and <b>express</b> matters of deep concern by a variety of means, not only through words</li> <li>• <b>respond to</b> religious issues through a variety of media</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Creative:</b> drama, role-play, dance, mime, add percussion or actions to religious story or song; make a game</li> <li>• <b>Visual:</b> use of collage, colour, charts, diagrams, digital video, photography, IT presentation (e.g. PowerPoint)</li> <li>• <b>Oral:</b> use of audio recording or presentation or debate</li> <li>• <b>Written:</b> poetry or reflective diary or letter or email or narrative story or newspaper report; questions for interview or visit</li> </ul>
<p><b>Apply</b> – this includes the ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• apply what has been learnt from a religion to a new situation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Write</b> a story to be acted out showing the meaning of a faith story or religious teaching in a different context</li> <li>• <b>Design</b> own symbols</li> <li>• <b>Respond to</b> a case study or dilemma, for example, think about what Jesus, Guru Nanak, Buddha might do or say; what a Muslim might do</li> </ul>
<p><b>Evaluate</b> – this includes the ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>draw conclusions</b> by reference to different views and using reason to support own ideas</li> <li>• <b>debate</b> issues of religious significance with reference to experience, evidence and argument.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Use sorting and ranking</b> strategies, such as diamond ranking statements according to what pupils think or what a Muslim/Christian/Jew/Buddhist/Sikh/Hindu might think</li> <li>• <b>Contribute</b> personal responses to statements relating to topics in RE (e.g. ‘can of worms’ activity)</li> <li>• <b>Respond</b> to points of view on a scale of 1–10, followed by discussion, for example, a continuum or human bar chart activity.</li> </ul>

This is an extract from *A Teacher’s Handbook of Religious Education*, 3rd edn, ed. Rosemary Rivett. ISBN 978-1-904024-95-8 available from RE Today ([www.retoday.org.uk](http://www.retoday.org.uk)).