

Q

QUR'AN



Sacred texts – similar and different, like most things religious. It's impossible in a couple of minutes to introduce them all properly, so do some research to find out more.

What's it all about? The Islamic Qur'an and the nature of sacred writing.

What makes a book holy? Why do some books get the status of scripture? What makes them different from other texts? Factually, begin with the Qur'an – which Muslims read, recite and learn by heart in Arabic, and was first written down nearly 1500 years ago. Islamic belief says it was given from Allah via the Angel Jibril, to Prophet Muhammad [PBUH] through a series of revelations. It is highly respected. Then take the Christian Bible – two testaments, a total of 66 smaller books put together over a period of hundreds of years. It is the world's bestselling book – 5 billion copies.

Then note that the Jewish Torah, the 5 books of the revelation to Moses, is a holy telling of the formation of the Jewish community from the freed Hebrew slaves in Egypt, events from about 3400 years ago. To the Sikhs, Guru Granth Sahib is not just a book – it is treated as a human guru, never placed on the floor, even put to bed at night. It contains not just the teachings of the Ten Gurus, but also of some wide examples of Hindu and Muslim writers too.

Which religions and beliefs?

- Christian
- Jewish
- Muslim
- Sikh

Key Questions

- Why do many religions have books that are called 'holy' or 'sacred'?
- Are the key messages of these texts similar?
- Does a book become holy because it is revealed by God or by Angels, or is it holy because millions of people find it inspiring?
- Just imagine (for a moment) that you were starting a religion: would you have a holy text in the new religion? Why? What would go in it?

Clip available here: www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/religious-education-ks3-a-z-of-religion-and-beliefs-q-is-for-quran-holy-books/z6kcwty

Classroom or homework task: signs of love, symbols of respect.

Here are nine signs of respect for and love of holy texts. Which ones go with which religion? Which show most respect? Make an annotated and ranked list of them.

Some people love their scriptures so much they memorise them off by heart	Many religions have annual festivals to remember key stories from their holy texts.	One religion treats its holy book like a living person, including going to bed at night.
Some scriptures are written out by hand to symbolise the significance of every copy.	One religion has a charity that puts free copies of its holy book in millions of hotel rooms all over the world.	One holy text is written by hand onto special paper on rolled scrolls and kept in the holy building.
Sacred texts are read with rituals to go with them, e.g. stand up, keep silence, wash first, use a silver pointer and many more examples.	One religion gives people who learn the whole scripture by heart the new name of 'Hafiz'.	Some say that the best way to respect your holy text is to do what it says – e.g. serve God, love others, pray, make peace.

Suggested outcomes: students can...

- Give an informed account of two or more sacred texts from different religions
- Give reasons for their views about the idea of revelation in a book: do sacred texts become holy because they are revealed, or because they are revered?
- Handle information and ideas effectively by ranking and annotating the list of signs and symbols of respect.

Q is for Qur'an

(And some other holy scriptures)

In the four sections below, can you give four key facts (using the right words) about holy writings in the four different religions? The clip will give you what you need.

Christian

Sikh

Muslim

Hindu

From the 9 signs of respect in the table on the previous page, which ones do you think show the most reverence for the holy words and why? Answer by making a list in the box.

Select your top three or four signs of respect.

Just imagine (for a moment) that you were starting a religion: would you have a holy text in the new religion? Why? What would go in it?