

ABOUT THIS UNIT:

This unit presents activities that can be used in exploring the relationship between science and religion. Its religious focus is on Christianity and Buddhism, but it could be adapted to feature key concepts of other faiths.

The unit starts with a general exploration of what truth means by differentiating between knowledge and belief. This leads to an examination of what constitutes truth in religion and science. The conflict that this may cause is looked at as well as the points on which religions and science agree. The second part of the unit is an investigation of how Buddhism answers some fundamental questions about the nature and purpose of life.

Students have opportunities to interpret religious texts, present and analyse arguments, and evaluate a range of opinions.

Estimated time for this unit: 10 – 12 lessons

Focused Religions: Christianity, Buddhism

Where this unit fits in:

This unit has a specific link with Theme 3g in the Agreed Syllabus (religion and science), and it touches on aspects of 3a (beliefs and concepts) and 3k (global issues).

It builds on students' learning in Key stage 2 about religious teachings about God, the world, human life, and what people believe about life after death. It provides a background to Unit 3 in Year 9 (global issues), especially religions and the environment.

KEY LEARNING OUTCOMES

1d analyse and compare the evidence and arguments used when considering issues of truth in religion and philosophy

1e discuss and evaluate how religious beliefs and teachings inform answers to ultimate questions and ethical issues

2a *reflect on the relationship between beliefs, teachings and ultimate questions, communicating their own ideas and using reasoned arguments*

2d *reflect and evaluate their own and others' beliefs about world issues such as peace and conflict, wealth and poverty and the importance of the environment, communicating their own ideas*

KEY STRANDS ADDRESSED BY THIS UNIT

- 1a beliefs, teachings and sources
- 2e *values and commitments*

LINKS TO THE EVERY CHILD MATTERS AGENDA

- **Being healthy** – mind and spirit
- **Enjoyment and achievement**
- **Making a positive contribution**

CONTRIBUTIONS TO PUPILS SPIRITUAL, MORAL, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

SPIRITUAL

Discussing and reflecting upon key questions of meaning and truth
Learning about and reflecting upon important religious and scientific concepts
Considering how religions perceive relationships between phenomena
Developing students' own views and ideas on religious and spiritual issues
Considering what is of ultimate value through studying key beliefs and teachings

SOCIAL

Considering how religious and other beliefs lead to particular actions and concerns

CULTURAL

Considering the relationship between religion and culture

KEY SKILLS

Reflection, Enquiry/investigation, Interpretation, Reasoning, Analysis/Evaluation

KEY ATTITUDES

Self-awareness, Respect, Open-mindedness/sensitivity, Appreciation and wonder

Prior learning	Vocabulary	Resources
It is helpful if pupils have: Been encouraged to think about religion and science and the relationship between them	In this unit, pupils will have an opportunity to use words and phrases related to: Epistemology <i>e.g. knowledge, truth</i> Christianity <i>e.g. creation, intelligent design</i> Buddhism <i>e.g. dukkha, anicca</i>	Helpful resources are indicated in the Links/Points to Note

EXPECTATIONS at the end of this unit:

Nearly all can: (at level 4)

- describe one view that might be held by a Christian or an atheist about the origins of the universe and human beings (AT1)
- describe similarities and differences between the different views on creation, life and the origins of life (AT1)
- *ask and suggest answers to some ultimate questions (AT2)*
- compare their own ideas with some of the ideas they have studied in this unit
- make links between religious sources and beliefs about the origin of the universe and the origin and nature of human life. (AT1)

Many can: (at level 5)

- explain different views that may be held by Christians and atheists about the origins of the universe and human beings (AT1)
- suggest reasons for similarities and differences between the different views on creation, life and the origins of life (AT1)
- *express their own and others' views on creation, life and the origins of life (AT2)*
- *relate religious ideas about the origin of the universe and the nature of life with their own thoughts about life's meanings (AT2)*
- explain how religious sources are used to provide answers to questions about the origin of the universe and the origin and nature of human life. (AT1)

Some pupils will have progressed further and can: (at level 6)

- explain reasons for the diversity of views within and between religions and other world views about the origins of the universe and human beings (AT1)
- give an informed account of how Christian and atheist scientists might comment on the idea that God created the universe, and explain the reasons for diversity between their views (AT1)
- *use reasoning and examples to express insights into their own and others' views on questions of truth in relation to science and religion (AT2)*
- *express their views about the origin of the universe and the nature of life in the light of their learning about religious and non-religious world views, using arguments and examples (AT2)*
- interpret religious sources, explaining how different groups use information from them in different ways. (AT1)

Key questions	LEARNING OBJECTIVES Pupils should learn:	Teaching and Learning Activities	Assessment Opportunities	Links / points to note
<i>What is truth?</i>	- what belief, knowledge and truth mean - how truth can take different forms - that not all truths are empirically verifiable	- Ask students to write a list of five things they know and a list of five things they believe (but do not know). They should discuss their lists in pairs, attempting to answer the question, <i>What is the difference between knowing something and believing it?</i> - Give students examples of statements of knowledge and statements of belief. They should use the criteria of truth and evidence to decide which is which. - Present students with statements and ask them whether or not they are true. Ask them how they would decide whether or not they are true. - Ask students to categorize the statements according to whether they are scientific, historical, moral or spiritual. - Students could write definitions of each of the types of truth. - Ask students in which categories they would put the statements <i>God exists</i> and <i>There is life after death</i>.	Assessment opportunities are related to learning outcomes, through which students demonstrate that they have met the learning objectives. Students: - compare statements of knowledge with statements of belief - explain the differences between knowing and believing - classify truth statements	- Knowledge may be defined as <i>justified true belief</i>, i.e. a belief that is true and can be evidenced. - Use some problematical examples, such as <i>The sun will rise tomorrow</i> or <i>All people are born equal</i>. - Use examples of scientific truths (e.g. <i>Water is made of hydrogen and oxygen</i>), historical truths (e.g. <i>Henry VIII had six wives</i>), - Use moral truths (e.g. <i>It is wrong to steal</i>) and spiritual truths (e.g. <i>there is a purpose to life</i>).

Key questions	LEARNING OBJECTIVES Pupils should learn:	Teaching and Learning Activities	Assessment Opportunities	Links / points to note
How are religious and scientific truths different?	- the differences between the concerns of religion and those of science - how religion and science have made both positive and negative contributions to the world - how to evaluate on the basis of evidence.	- Ask students whether the following questions are scientific or religious: <i>Does God exist? How was the universe created? Why was the universe created? How did human beings come about? Is there life after death? What is death? What is love?</i> - Students should think of further examples of scientific truths and religious truths. They then compare the two and describe the defining characteristics of each. - Present students with examples of the contributions that religion and science have made to humanity and the world. Using this information, they should evaluate the relative worth of science and religion.	Assessment opportunities are related to learning outcomes, through which students demonstrate that they have met the learning objectives. Students: - compare religious with scientific questions - define religion and science - evaluate religion and science.	Include both negative (e.g. <i>Religion has been the cause of wars; Science gave us atomic weapons</i>) and positive (e.g. <i>Religion has inspired great art; Science has given us the X-Box</i>) examples of the contributions of religion and science.

Key questions	LEARNING OBJECTIVES Pupils should learn:	Teaching and Learning Activities	Assessment Opportunities	Links / points to note
Why do religion and science disagree?	- a range of views on the value of religion and science - arguments that support these views - how to evaluate others' points of view.	- Present students with quotations about religion and science from a Christian scientist (i.e. a scientist who is a Christian!), a Christian non-scientist, and an atheist. Ask students to match the quotations to the speakers. - Ask students to respond in each of the three roles to the following questions: <i>Which is more important, science or religion?</i> <i>Why?</i> - Ask students to say which view they would agree with, and why. They could go on to evaluate the others. - Students could role-play a television interview with one of the three speakers, or discussion between them.	Assessment opportunities are related to learning outcomes, through which students demonstrate that they have met the learning objectives. Students: - differentiate between and explain points of view - evaluate different points of view - argue for their own points of view	Richard Dawkins is, famously, an atheist scientist. www.srsp.net www.bl.uk/learning/cult/sacred

Key questions	LEARNING OBJECTIVES Pupils should learn:	Teaching and Learning Activities	Assessment Opportunities	Links / points to note
Can religion and science agree?	- humanist and religious answers to some ultimate questions - how Christians interpret the Bible differently - similarities and differences between humanist and Christian accounts of the birth and development of the universe - a liberal Christian interpretation of the biblical story of the creation.	- Students should research answers to the following questions: <i>How did the universe come into being? How did human beings come about? What happens to people after they die?</i> Encourage them to find a range of answers for each question. - Students should divide their answers into religious answers and scientific ones. - Tell students that Christians interpret the Bible in different ways. Give them examples of ways in which literalist and liberal Christians interpret Biblical passages. - Ask students to read accounts of the Big Bang and the theory of evolution, and then the account of the creation of the universe from Genesis 1-3. They should write a detailed comparison of the two accounts. - Explain to students what is meant by <i>intelligent design</i>.	Assessment opportunities are related to learning outcomes, through which students demonstrate that they have met the learning objectives. Students: - investigate a range of answers to ultimate questions - compare different accounts of the creation of the universe - interpret biblical narrative from a liberal Christian perspective	

Key questions	LEARNING OBJECTIVES Pupils should learn:	Teaching and Learning Activities	Assessment Opportunities	Links / points to note
		Use relevant questions to guide students in answering the question, <i>How might liberal Christians interpret the biblical creation story?</i>		Relevant questions may include: <i>Who was responsible for the creation of the universe? In which order were things created? What does the story say about humans and animals?</i>
How do Buddhists answer scientific questions?	- what they Buddha means to Buddhists - why some questions are unanswerable - why the Buddha was not concerned with some ultimate questions - the areas of concern for Buddhists.	- Remind students of the questions common to religion and science: <i>How did the universe come into being? How did human beings come about? What happens to people after they die?</i> - Ask students to research the question, <i>Who was the Buddha?</i> They should understand that, for Buddhists, the Buddha was (is) not a god, but a human with profound wisdom. - Tell students the Buddha's story of the arrow in the eye and its meaning. They should analyse the analogy. Ask them, <i>Why did the Buddha refuse to answer these questions?</i>	Assessment opportunities are related to learning outcomes, through which students demonstrate that they have met the learning objectives. Students: - conduct an investigation on the significance of the Buddha for Buddhists - analyse the Buddhist analogy of the arrow - propose some ultimate questions - suggest answers to ultimate questions	The most pressing question for Buddhists is, <i>How can we overcome suffering?</i> This overrides all other questions.

Key questions	LEARNING OBJECTIVES Pupils should learn:	Teaching and Learning Activities	Assessment Opportunities	Links / points to note
		• Ask students, in pairs, to write lists of unanswerable (ultimate) questions. They could then exchange their lists with other pairs, and attempt to answer the questions, giving evidence where possible. • Tell students that Buddhism is concerned with answering these questions: <i>What is life? What is a human? Why must people suffer? How are things connected? How are past, present and future connected? How can people be permanently and deeply happy?</i>		

Key questions	LEARNING OBJECTIVES Pupils should learn:	Teaching and Learning Activities	Assessment Opportunities	Links / points to note
What is life?	- how to write definitions - the Three Universal Truths of Buddhism - the significance of <i>dukkha</i> for Buddhists.	- Students should discuss in small groups the questions, <i>What is life? What do all living things have in common?</i> They should try to identify the components that define life. - Explain the Three Universal Truths (Marks of Existence). - Focus on <i>dukkha</i> (unsatisfactoriness). Ask students to list those things that bring them the greatest happiness. Now ask them how those same things could make them unhappy. Students could evaluate the Buddhist notion of <i>dukkha</i> by answering the following questions: <i>Is it true that suffering cannot be avoided? Make a list of different kinds of suffering. Are there any that are beyond human control? Can suffering ever be a good thing? Give examples. Why might suffering be unavoidable? What causes suffering? Can it be overcome?</i>	Assessment opportunities are related to learning outcomes, through which students demonstrate that they have met the learning objectives. Students: - define the conditions of life - explain the significance of <i>dukkha</i> - evaluate the Buddhist notion of <i>dukkha</i>.	The evaluation of <i>dukkha</i> could be made by using a writing frame based on the questions.

Key questions	LEARNING OBJECTIVES Pupils should learn:	Teaching and Learning Activities	Assessment Opportunities	Links / points to note
Are things connected?	- what Buddhists mean by <i>anicca</i>. - why phenomena are thought to be impermanent - how to write a haiku.	- Tell the students the story of the meditation student and his teacher. Ask them to explain what it means. - Students could discuss the idea that everything is impermanent, nothing lasts forever. Can they think of anything that never changes? - Ask them. <i>Why does everything change?</i> - Explain the Buddhist concept of <i>anicca</i> (impermanence through interconnectedness). - Ask students to give examples of ways in which phenomena are linked. - Students could find out about the Gaia hypothesis, and link it to <i>anicca</i>. - Students could write a haiku on impermanence and interconnectedness.	Assessment opportunities are related to learning outcomes, through which students demonstrate that they have met the learning objectives. Students: - explain <i>anicca</i> and its significance for Buddhists - give examples of <i>anicca</i> in the natural world - express their own thoughts and ideas through haiku.	- A student went to his meditation teacher and said, "My meditation is terrible! I get distracted, or my legs ache, or I'm constantly falling asleep. It's just horrible!" "It will pass," the teacher said. A week later, the student came back to his teacher. "My meditation is wonderful! I feel so aware, so peaceful, so alive! It's just wonderful!" "It will pass," the teacher replied. - Climate change is an example of change through causal links (<i>anicca</i>). - Guidance on teaching haiku writing can be found on: http://www.haiku.insouthsea.co.uk/

Key questions	LEARNING OBJECTIVES Pupils should learn:	Teaching and Learning Activities	Assessment Opportunities	Links / points to note
What is a human being?	• what Buddhists mean by <i>anatta</i> • how <i>anatta</i> is explained in Buddhist writings • how a belief in <i>anatta</i> might affect a Buddhist's life.	• Ask students to bring in photographs of themselves as babies. Shuffle them together, and see if the class can recognize individuals. Otherwise, collect photographs of celebrities today and of them as babies, and get students to match them up. • Ask students, <i>Are you the same person today as you were ten years ago?</i> • Students should read the passage from the <i>Questions of King Milinda</i> about the components of a chariot. Ask them what the passage means. • Ask students, <i>How might a belief in no individual identity affect a Buddhist's attitudes to those around him/her?</i> • Students could demonstrate their understanding of the passage from the <i>Questions of King Milinda</i> by rewriting it using a more modern example than a chariot. ▪ Find further examples of stories that illustrate Buddhist ideas about <i>dukkha</i>, <i>anicca</i>, and <i>anatta</i>. Ask students to match the stories to the concepts.	Assessment opportunities are related to learning outcomes, through which students demonstrate that they have met the learning objectives. Students: • explain what Buddhists mean by <i>anatta</i> • interpret Buddhist writings • link Buddhist belief in <i>anatta</i> with their social and moral behaviour.	• Google Images is a quick way of finding photographs. • The <i>Questions of King Milinda</i> can be found online at http://www.buddhanet.net/pdf/file/milinda.pdf.

Key questions	LEARNING OBJECTIVES Pupils should learn:	Teaching and Learning Activities	Assessment Opportunities	Links / points to note
What is time?	- what <i>karma</i> means for Buddhists - that, for Buddhists, karma links past, present and future - how a belief in <i>karma</i> might affect a Buddhist's actions	- Ask students, <i>if Buddhist teaching on anatta is correct, then how can a person be held responsible for their previous actions?</i> - Present students with a range of short scenarios. Ask them, <i>what happens next?</i> Then, <i>what happens now?</i> Students could present their responses in a flow diagram. - Explain Buddhist beliefs about <i>karma</i> to students. - Ask them, <i>How might a belief in karma affect the life of a Buddhist?</i> - Students should evaluate the notion of <i>karma</i>, presenting arguments both for and against it. - Use extracts from the <i>Dhammapada</i> to illustrate the consequences of Buddhist beliefs in <i>karma</i>. Students should explain them, using examples.	Assessment opportunities are related to learning outcomes, through which students demonstrate that they have met the learning objectives. Students: - explain what <i>karma</i> means for Buddhists - explain how a belief in <i>karma</i> might affect the life of a Buddhist - evaluate the Buddhist idea of <i>karma</i> - interpret Buddhist writings.	

Key questions	LEARNING OBJECTIVES Pupils should learn:	Teaching and Learning Activities	Assessment Opportunities	Links / points to note
What happens after death?	• why the question of what happens after death is important to people • what Buddhists believe about death and rebirth • what Christians believe about life after death • to explain their own views using linked arguments	• Ask pupils, <i>if causes have effects (karma), then what happens to karma after death? and if God takes an interest in a person's moral behaviour, then when do they have to account for it?</i> • Students conduct research into Buddhist beliefs about rebirth in <i>samsara</i> and Christian beliefs in the resurrection. • They could go on to outline and explain their own views about life after death. • Students could compare beliefs about life after death, and present their findings using PowerPoint.	Assessment opportunities are related to learning outcomes, through which students demonstrate that they have met the learning objectives. Students: • research beliefs about death and life after death • explain religious beliefs about death using a variety of media • present a view using linked arguments	

APPENDIX 1

What is truth?

Write *five* things you know in the first column, and five things you *believe*, but don't know, in the second. A couple have already been put in to give you the idea.

Underneath, write down your thoughts about the differences between knowing something and believing it.

Things I know	Things I believe
I know that Paris is in France. I know that grass is green.	I believe that my cat loves me. I believe that there is intelligent life on other planets.

APPENDIX 2

How are religious and scientific truths different?

'Science makes life better; religion makes it worse.'

Some of the statements at the bottom of the sheet support this point of view, and some oppose it. Write them into the appropriate column.

Supporting statements	Opposing statements

Religion has caused many wars throughout history.

ory.

Science has found cures for many diseases.

Science is responsible for nuclear weapons.

Religion gives people dignity, self-respect, hope and courage.

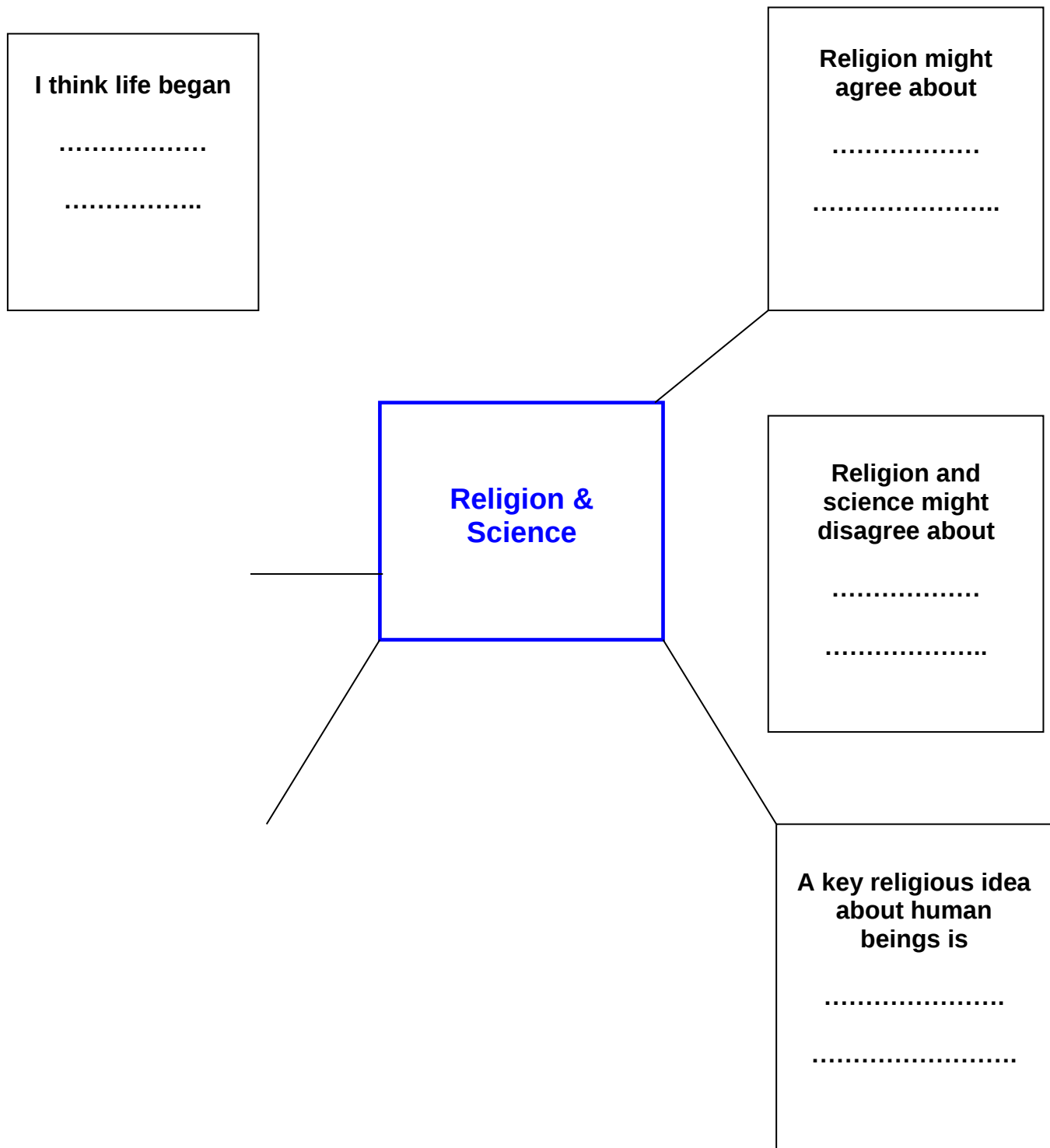
Science is responsible for a lot of pollution in the world.

Religion has inspired great works of art.

Religion has inspired terrorism.

Science has enabled us to live lives of luxury.

FORMATIVE GRID



SUMMATIVE GRID

