



# Religious Studies

GCSE

## Religious Studies B

Delivery Guide

Unit B601 Philosophy 1 (Deity, Religious and Spiritual Experience, End of life)

Version 1 September 2014



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# Introduction

Delivery guides are designed to represent a body of knowledge about teaching a particular topic and contain:

- Content: A clear outline of the content covered by the delivery guide;
- Thinking Conceptually: Expert guidance on the key concepts involved, common difficulties students may have, approaches to teaching that can help students understand these concepts and how this topic links conceptually to other areas of the subject;
- Thinking Contextually: A range of suggested teaching activities using a variety of themes so that different activities can be selected which best suit particular classes, learning styles or teaching approaches.

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## KEY



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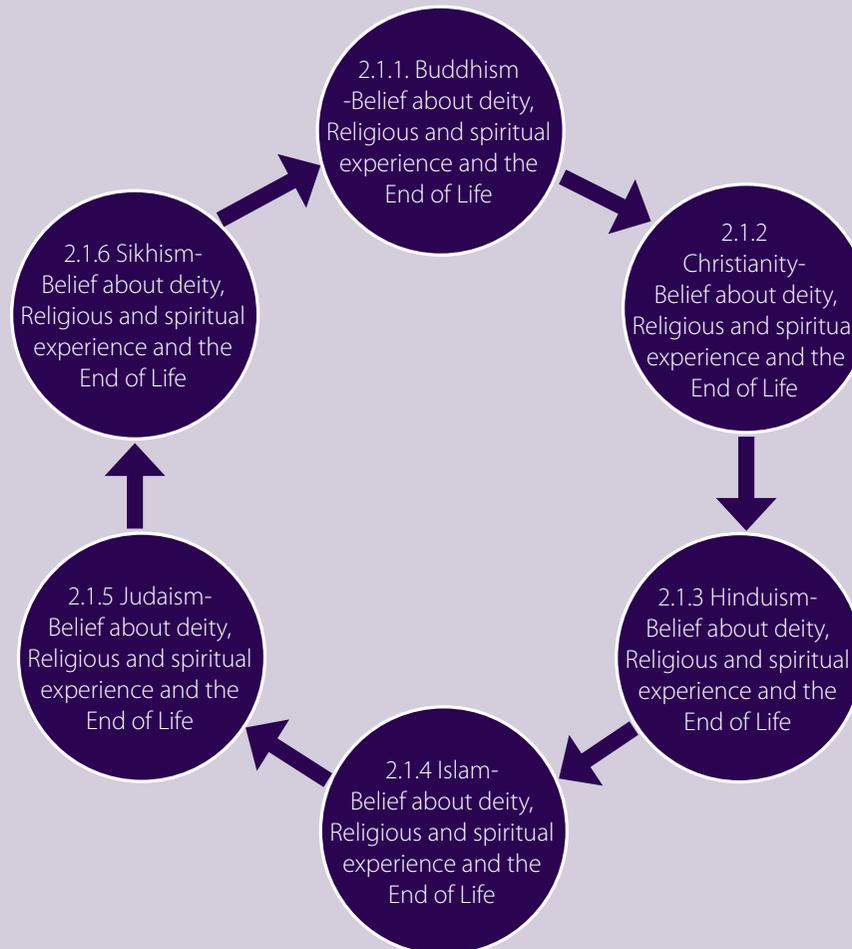


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# Curriculum Content

There are three elements – these are laid out schematically on page 12

1. Specification content



# Curriculum Content

## 2. Religious Studies Skills Set.

The concept of this delivery guide is to support the teacher in enabling the learner to acquire knowledge using a set of key skills – this list which is given in detail later in the guide is not exhaustive but can be added to by the teacher.

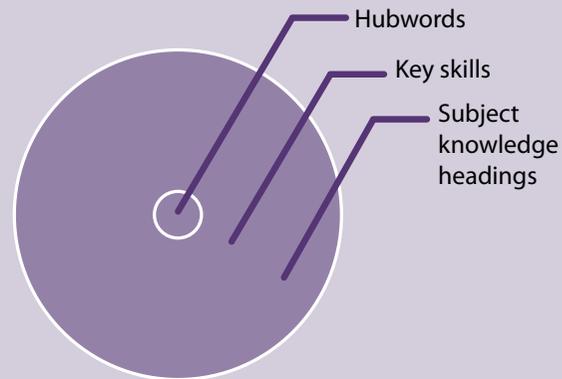
Religious Studies Skills set								
Analyse	Apply/ Develop	Research / investigate	Discuss	Discern	Justify	Reflect	Question	Empathise

## 3. Hub words

This list is not comprehensive but can be added to by the teacher.

Worship, Deity, Miracles, Soul (atman), Prayer (meditation) Fasting, Funeral and belief.

Three element model



# Thinking Conceptually

The learning activities given below each focus on one of the hub words, they also incorporate different religious studies key skills. These activities can be adapted to focus on different hub words or on more specific religious concepts.

The activities are intended to allow students to consider the concept contained within the hub word in a broad way before narrowing that focus to particular religion(s) and specification areas. Approaching the subject in this way means that the hub word and the associated learning can be returned to as a platform for other specification areas where relevant.

Conceptual approaches inherently require the development and deployment of RS skills. Beginning with an exploration of students' own understanding of what a particular concept means or involves encourages self-awareness; creating tasks which enable them to engage with and challenge the views of others and justify their own enables the development of reflective and discursive skills; and introducing related ideas from other sources such as religious teachings or practices, helps build understanding and empathy.

Exploring concepts can also help students tackle the complex question of how attitudes to an issue or question are formed; many of the issues in the specification do not result in a universal consensus of views, even within a single religious group and it is important that students are able to understand and apply their knowledge in a way that enables them to make sense of this. Conceptual work allows different understandings of an idea. The sources of these ideas can be encountered directly and the knowledge to be applied in different ways. Relativist approaches to moral or philosophical issues can enable students to engage with philosophical ways of thinking, to consider issues of value, consequence and competing authority, which can be contrasted with absolutist viewpoints and the sources from which these draw. Considering the reasons why there is general consensus within a religion on some concepts (e.g. the nature of God), and there is not on others (e.g. sexual relationships) can also open up means of understanding sources of religious authority and the way in which these work.

# Thinking Conceptually

Hub word	Religious studies key skill(s)	Learning opportunity	Ideas for resource
Worship	Research	<p>Places of worship often have particular features required – these might be furniture, elements of the layout or necessary facilities.</p> <p>Students should find out what these are in relation to the religion being studied – you could give them a list of key terms or core questions as a focus for their research or make it more of a comprehension/understanding exercise by giving them material which contains the relevant information; if there are differences between branches of the religion (for example orthodox and liberal) then you could divide up the group.</p> <p>They could use their research to create a floorplan or virtual tour of a place of worship which would inform visitors not of that religion about the significant aspects of the place and what they mean.</p>	<p><a href="https://www.truetube.co.uk/holy-buildings">https://www.truetube.co.uk/holy-buildings</a></p>

# Thinking Conceptually

Hub word	Religious studies key skill(s)	Learning opportunity	Ideas for resource
Deity	Discuss Reflect Justify	<p>The issue of whether or not there is such a thing as God is probably the religious studies question which gets the most attention.</p> <p>Give the students a range of statements about God, these could focus on the existence question, on the attributes and qualities God is said to have or they could be a mixture. Ask the students to decide how far they agree with each statement on a scale of 1 to 10.</p> <p>They could then compare their views with the definition of different belief stances (atheist, agnostic, humanist etc), or with a summary of what the religion being studied teaches on the matter.</p>	God statements
Miracles	Discuss	<p>Have a 'goldfish' bowl debate on the issue of miracles. Begin with a group of 4 students, and have a fifth chair left empty. Ask the students to discuss the statement 'There is no such thing as a miracle' – students who are not used to discussion tasks might benefit from further structure such as working around the circle making a response to the previous comment and/or beginning each comment with 'I agree/disagree with that because...'</p> <p>When a member of the audience has a point to make they take the fifth chair and the discussion moves on from their point. Others can join in by tapping the debater they disagree with on the shoulder and replacing them in the circle.</p>	Starter statement for debate

# Thinking Conceptually

Hub word	Religious studies key skill(s)	Learning opportunity	Ideas for resource
Soul	Reflect Develop	<p>'Soul' is a familiar English word but the concept it covers is complex and ambiguous.</p> <p>Give students a selection of questions to which they must answer only yes or no – make it clear that this is about their opinion!</p> <p>The questions should focus on different ideas about the soul and what it is for (e.g. 'Do you believe you have a soul?'; 'do you think all human beings have souls?'). Students can use these answers and their thoughts about what they have said to write a paragraph about their understanding of the soul.</p> <p>They could also compare their answers with other students and discuss their views and the reasons for them, or relate the questions to religious teachings about the issue to consider how answers in the religion studied might differ from theirs.</p>	Questions about the nature, existence and purpose of the soul
Prayer	Question Empathise Discern	<p>Give the students a selection of different prayers, from different occasions and with different purposes.</p> <p>In pairs or small groups students should read through the prayers and use them to answer core questions about the nature and purpose of prayer – for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is prayer for?</li> <li>• Are there different kinds of prayer? How would you categorise them?</li> <li>• Are all prayers addressed to a deity?</li> <li>• When do people pray?</li> </ul>	Sample prayers

# Thinking Conceptually

Hub word	Religious studies key skill(s)	Learning opportunity	Ideas for resource
Fasting	Apply	<p>Give the students a selection of reasons why people might engage in fasting. Students could rank these from best to worst reasons, or sort them into good ones and bad ones as a preliminary.</p> <p>Follow this with a summary of religious teachings about fasting – either a paragraph to read and digest or a selection of relevant teachings and/or principles. Using these the students should re-rank the reasons from the perspective of a religious believer.</p> <p>These two summaries could be used as the foundation of an e part style response to a statement such as 'Fasting has positive effects'</p>	
Funeral	Reflect Empathise Discern	<p>Use a collection of images of different kinds of funeral to collect different ideas about funerals and their purpose.</p> <p>Students could identify ritual, symbolic, comforting and/or religious items or elements in the pictures. These could then be researched later.</p> <p>They could identify emotions among the people involved – you could give them a list to match up with the pictures or leave this open. This opens discussion on what funerals achieve for the bereaved. Students can also add thought or speech bubbles to people in the pictures.</p> <p>A selection of pictures from within one religion or culture could be matched with descriptive titles to create a funeral timeline.</p>	Images of different kinds of funeral

# Thinking Conceptually

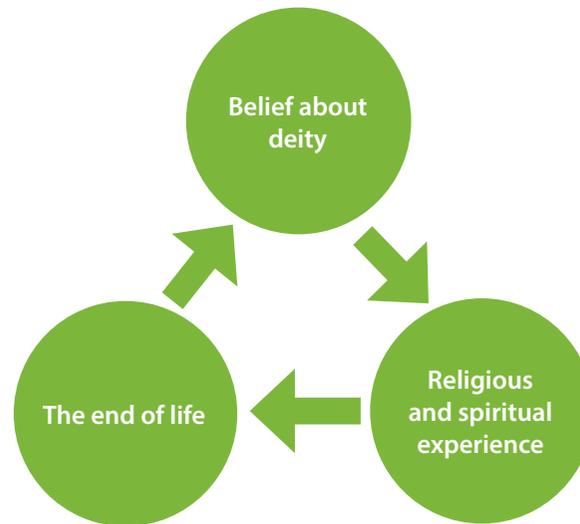
Hub word	Religious studies key skill(s)	Learning opportunity	Ideas for resource
Belief	Question	<p>Belief is an ambiguous concept, which is far broader than religious issues. One way to begin is with a selection of things which rely on belief (or inductive reasoning); ask the students which they find believable and which unbelievable and make a collection of the reasons they give. This provides a means of identifying the elements which inform belief – ideas of teaching, upbringing, evidence, comfort, liking and disliking an idea can come out of this exercise depending on the selection of concepts or statements you offer to begin with.</p> <p>You can make this more structured by asking them to pick the three most believable and the three least believable, or asking them to separate out concepts they regard as matters of knowledge rather than belief.</p>	

# Thinking Conceptually

## Approaches to teaching the content

The Delivery Guide aims to help the teacher deliver GCSE RS World Religions B.

This approach is guided using the three content elements. Each numbered delivery guide covers Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism. Common to all units are the Subject content headings – the specific content within the subject headings will vary for each delivery guide. The commonality of the subject headings across B601 facilitates the three element style of delivery.



# Thinking Conceptually

Due to the flexibility of this specification the teacher is able to select a unit or units that are most suitable for their learners. Teachers are the professionals best placed to make this decision based on the starting point or base knowledge of their learners. The individual learners will need to acquire a set of Religious Studies skills that they can use to understand any element of the common subject headings; it is proposed that they do this by looking at a set of Hub Words which can be looked at in the context of the common subject headings.

## **Religious Studies Skills set**

The Religious Studies skills set is not an attempt to mimic Blooms Taxonomy; but acknowledges that learners need to develop not only lower levels of “thinking skills” but also specifically for this subject, need to be allowed to develop their metacognitive knowledge. The list of thinking skills is not comprehensive and can be added to by the teacher.

The delivery guides aims to allow the teachers opportunities to stretch and or stimulate the learners in intellectually stimulating activities and specifically to allow teachers at appropriate points in the lesson to ask thought provoking questions. This approach will allow for a deeper exploration of the subject content and make the study of GCSE Religious Studies B (Philosophy and applied Ethics) relevant to a learner in the 21st century.

Religious Studies Skills set								
Analyse	Apply/ Develop	Research / investigate	Discuss	Discern	Justify	Reflect	Question	Empathise

# Thinking Conceptually

## Hub Words

The suggested Hub words will enable the learner to develop the key Religious studies skills and allow the teacher to start and exit a unit(s) at any point. This will allow the teacher for greater flexibility when planning delivery. The Hub Words illustrate concepts which run throughout a section of the unit, and which also connect with other sections across the specification. The Hub word should be the focus to develop the subject skills, knowledge required and content of the subject headings.

**Worship**

**Prayer (meditation)**

**Deity**

**Fasting**

**Miracles**

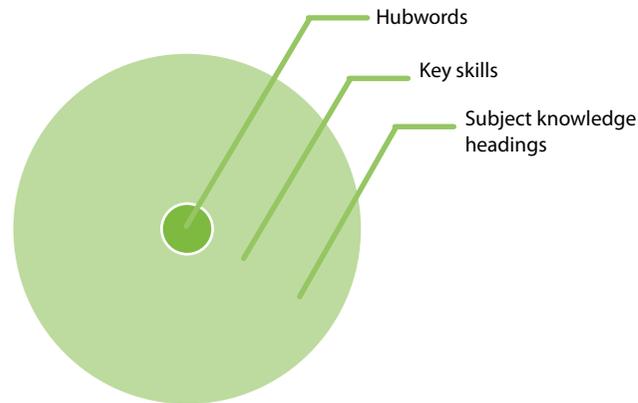
**Funeral**

**Soul (atman)**

**Belief**

# Thinking Conceptually

The three element model



## Common misconceptions or difficulties students may have

Misconception and confusion can be related to the specification content or in relation to the tackling of questions in the exam itself.

Areas of content given in the B601 specification commonly confused by candidates are:

Life after Death: Candidates sometimes seem vague as to what this term concerns – they have the knowledge of religious specific teachings such as heaven and hell or the cycle of samsara but for some reason do not recognise that these ideas come under the heading of 'life after death'.

Common misconceptions in relation to tackling the exam questions are:

C part questions: These do not require extended, discursive answers. Candidates need to ensure that they deal directly with the concept specified in the question in a succinct manner. Dealing with two or more beliefs or teachings where the question specifies one is also common, and it will not gain any additional marks.

D part questions: responses are often wholly descriptive, but the command word is always explain. Candidates should be

# Thinking Conceptually

encouraged to connect the knowledge they deploy back to the question which has been asked in order to demonstrate understanding.

E part questions: these are intended to be discursive and evaluative and to encourage personal engagement with the issue by the candidate. Giving candidates too rigid a structure to adhere to when practising these questions can prove restrictive, resulting in a response that consists of several blocks of knowledge but little engagement with that knowledge.

The requirement for multiple views in relation to a given issue is not a requirement for opposite views – many candidates are encouraged to do this and some even strive to find opposite viewpoints within the religion they are studying (which may sometimes be possible, but by no means always!) Different complementary views are perfectly acceptable and can even give stronger answers for some questions.

Increasingly in recent years we have seen more philosophy coming out in these responses; while it is great that candidates have this knowledge and can use it these questions do specify a requirement for religious content – candidates should be aware that even a strongly written and sophisticated philosophical answer cannot attain the highest levels without any reference being made to the religion specified in the question.

## **Conceptual links to other areas of the specification – useful ways to approach this topic to set students up for topics later in the course.**

The nature of religion means that religious concepts useful in one area of the specification are also often useful in other areas as well – for example a single moral rule can be applied to a wide range of ethical issues, provided the students have the skills to enable such application. The same skills, and some of the same knowledge, can apply to all the papers on the specification, so a candidate can use what they learned about moral decision making for B602 to help them answer a question about what happens after death on B601.

Areas in B601 which share a pool of knowledge with other units on the specification include:

- The nature of deity; understanding deity within a religion can help to understand teachings about many other aspects of that religion not only issues like 'Good and Evil' but ethical issues as well – attitudes towards animals (B603 and B602), to the environment (B602) and towards other people (B604) are likely to differ depending on whether or not a religion teaches that divinity is immanent in all living things or has a special connection with humanity.

# Thinking Conceptually

- Body and soul; As well as being required for understanding life after death teachings about the relationship between body and soul have implications for understanding the role and importance of humanity which is a part of the 'Religion and Science' section of B602 and the sanctity of life, which is relevant to 'Medical Ethics' on B603 and 'Peace and Justice' and 'Religion and Equality' on B604.
- Public and Private Worship; the ways in which people seek connection and communication with the divine are relevant to issues such as 'coping with suffering' in the 'Good and Evil' section of B602 and also connect with the ways in which religious people address ethical issues in the world around them such as prayers offered for peace.

Due to the common content headings the student will be able to use/transfer their set of skills to other units in this series. Learners are required to complete the study of four units for a full GCSE (subject to the restrictions cited in the specifications) and study two units for a short course qualification (subject to restrictions cited in the specification).

The specification allows learners the opportunity to express not only their personal view but also their understanding of other religions including Humanism, Bahai, Jain and Zoroastrianism.

The skills learnt will also transfer to other aspects of the curriculum and allow learners to develop an understanding of cultural issues in more depth.

**Religion Studied:** *Christianity*

**Hub word:** *Prayer*

*Christianity*

*Christian prayers can be used to identify a wide range of Christian beliefs, including beliefs about the nature of God and the way in which Christians build and sustain their relationship with God. A good selection of different prayers can be used in a range of ways.*

*There are many websites offering a range of Christian prayers, some organise them into prayers for specific purposes <http://www.christianaid.org.uk/resources/churches/prayer/> While others are more general <http://www.beliefnet.com/Faiths/Prayer/Inspiring-Christian-Prayers.aspx?p=3>*

*You can also find prayers with a practical focus on a specific issue, like this selection focussed on ending poverty <http://www.christianaid.org.uk/resources/churches/prayer/ending-poverty.aspx>*

*Develop Skills:*

*Analyse what the wording of prayers can tell us about other areas of Christian thought, such as the nature of God, by giving students a selection of prayers to pick information from.*

*Question the purpose or value of prayer, either for the individual or on a larger scale. Christians engage in prayer; categorise different prayers according to their purpose, find out about favourite prayers or prayers with special meaning for groups or individuals or investigate how prayer groups pray and what sort of things they pray for.*

# Thinking Conceptually

*Understand and Apply* the concept of prayer to other issues, such as comforting the bereaved or the role of prayer in worship.

*Reflect* on the difference between formal or ritual prayer and personal prayer; think about the different purposes different kinds of prayer might serve and how the experience of prayer might be different in different circumstances.

*Empathise* with the importance of prayer for Christians, explore ideas of connection, relationship and support and the benefits which might result from that for the individual and for the religion as a whole. Consider questions like whether prayer is just talking to God, the issue of unanswered prayer and prayer as a practical means of influencing the world today.

**Link to topic areas:** Prayer is a relevant concept in Belief about Deity (B601, Religious and Spiritual Experience (B601) Coping with Suffering (part of Good and Evil - B602), Religion, Reason and Revelation B602), Concern for Others (part of Religion, Poverty and Wealth, B603), Social Injustice (part of Religion Peace and Justice, B604) and Forgiveness and Reconciliation (part of Religion and Equality, B604).

Prayer can also be connected with other concepts such as immanence and transcendence, the Holy Spirit and miracles.

# Thinking Contextually

## ACTIVITIES

RS involves a broad portfolio of transferable skills which can be developed in various ways through the specification content. Given the inter-connected nature of the subject content of these four papers the development of skills such as application are particularly important to enable students to apply material from one section to another where it is relevant to do so. But the skill of application rests on a foundation of other skills, such as analysis, reflection, empathy and self-awareness.

The activities given below are intended to develop one or more RS skills. These activities are presented in detail and the resources for them are provided. Following each 'core activity' is a series of potential development activities which are less detailed and suggest ways of taking the students' learning forward.

Buddhism		
RS Skill	Hub Word	Content
Apply Develop	Miracles	<p>Within Buddhism 'miracles' as a concept tends to focus on people with special powers such as levitation; ask the students to imagine the reactions a person with this ability might get, or the potential consequences of being able to do it. They could also imagine what they would do if they woke up in the morning with a miraculous ability like this – ideas like fame, pride, wealth and admiration are likely to come out of this; you could give specific scenarios and questions as a means of focussing in this way.</p> <p>Identify core Buddhist ideas such as detachment, maya, anicca, kamma, skilful action, the Middle Way and the absence of supreme deity; give the students a short summary of the teachings and ask them how they think it might affect Buddhist attitudes to miracles (for example a belief in anicca might mean a Buddhist would not value fame as they know it cannot last). For groups which are not practised at this kind of thinking you could make this a matching up exercise, pairing the teaching with a connection to miracles.</p> <p>Use this information as the basis for a practice exam question.</p>

# Thinking Contextually

Christianity		
RS Skill	Hub Word	Content
Deity	Discuss	<p>One of the most contentious religious topics in the contemporary world is the question of the existence of God.</p> <p>Give students a selection of reasons that may be offered for belief and/or proofs of God's existence. Ask them to pick the one they think is most likely to carry weight with someone who has no religious belief.</p> <p>Set up a small group discussion around the reasons they have chosen – the person who goes first reads the reason they think is the best, and gives a justification for it they then pick someone else in the group to respond to what they have said. That person begins by agreeing or disagreeing, offers a justification and then chooses the next person. The discussion continues until they run out of points to make, at that point the group could vote on whether this is a good or bad reason before going onto the reason someone else chose as the best.</p>
Hinduism		
RS Skill	Hub Word	Content
Analyse Develop	Funeral	<p>Students should read through a description of a Hindu funeral, this should include information about what happens and why it happens, symbolic meanings behind particular things and the beliefs associated with them.</p> <p>They should also have a frame for structured note-taking – there are a number of forms this could take but a good one for this example is a table of columns heading 'Event', 'People', 'Reason', 'Belief' and 'Other'.</p> <p>As they read students should identify the events of the funeral and note these into the events column, people involved in the people column and so on.</p> <p>They could use these notes to write an exam-style question, they could create diagrams or illustrations or use their notes to write descriptive captions for illustrations you provide, or you could give them a true-false style quiz to check the completeness of their record.</p>

# Thinking Contextually

Islam		
RS Skill	Hub Word	Content
Apply Reflect Empathise	Fasting	<p>The Ramadan fast is well known in the West as a Muslim tradition, and students may also be familiar with the idea of the Five Pillars of Islam and the role fasting plays in that. In order to tap into and reflect on this knowledge provide students with a detailed list of the rules of behaviour to be observed during Ramadan.</p> <p>Ask them to apply these rules to a day or a week in their own lives to see how they would be affected; you could also ask them to place themselves in specific situations such as sitting an exam, working in a restaurant or caring for others.</p> <p>This could be developed into a discussion about what the rewards or benefits of fasting might be.</p>
Judaism		
RS Skill	Hub Word	Content
Discern Analyse	Belief	<p>In a religious context many beliefs are written down and described in sources such as prayers, hymns, scriptures and philosophical writings. Collect a range of extracts from Jewish writings about G-d, humanity, the Jewish people and human behaviour.</p> <p>The students should see how many different beliefs they can identify from these writings.</p>

# Thinking Contextually

Sikhism		
RS Skill	Hub Word	Content
Develop Justify	Prayer	<p>Give students an assortment of information about God and the human relationship with God in Sikhism; the information should be in short 'bites'. Include concepts such as being gurmukh and manmukh, jivan mukti, maya, nam and haumai. It could take the form of the word and its definition, or a short sentence incorporating the concept.</p> <p>These pieces of information are for use in constructing a response to an exam-style question; you could focus on one section (d or e is probably best) or you could give all parts of the question. The students need to select the material they think gives them the best response to the question(s) you have given them.</p> <p>This can be developed into a writing task, using the information they have selected.</p>



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