

# Religious Education

## *World Religions 3101/3106*



GOVERNMENT OF  
NEWFOUNDLAND  
AND LABRADOR  
**Department of Education**  
Division of Program Development

*A Curriculum Guide*  
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# Section I: Program Overview and Rationale

## Vision Statement

The Newfoundland and Labrador religious education curriculum is shaped by a vision of enabling and encouraging students to grow religiously, spiritually and morally into informed, caring and contributing members of society, who appreciate their own beliefs and values, and the beliefs and values of others, and who understand the contribution that Christianity and other religions make to human life.

## A Rationale for Religious Education

*Because religion plays significant roles in history and society, study about religion is essential to understanding both the nation and the world. Omission of facts about religion can give students the false impression that the religious life of humankind is insignificant or unimportant. Failure to understand even the basic symbols, practices, and concepts of the various religions makes much of history, literature, art, and contemporary life unintelligible. (Warren A. Nord, Charles C. Haynes, *Taking Religion Seriously Across the Curriculum*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 1998, p. 36.)*

Since time immemorial people have had a quest for the spiritual side of existence and the purpose of life. From early humanity up to the present age the religious realm has continued to occupy people's thoughts and influence their behaviour. In the western world our society and culture have been greatly influenced and shaped by the Judaeo-Christian tradition. Beliefs have evolved and traditions have varied but the religious component of humanity has continued to survive. It has been instrumental in determining attitudes toward God (Ultimate Reality) and attitudes and approaches toward the world in which we live. On the cusp of the twenty-first century the majority of the world's population continues to believe in a spiritual side of humanity.

Fundamental questions about life continue to be asked. From a young age, children set out on a quest for answers, not always simple answers but answers relating to the profound questions of life and life beyond. This quest is lifelong and includes a search for answers related to questions about the purpose of life, where we fit into the scheme of things, what is the ultimate mystery which embraces our entire existence, what makes us different from other living things, what the source of suffering is, how happiness can be found, what happens after death, and other fundamental questions. These are questions addressed by all major religions and, because of their importance, should be given attention in a K-12 curriculum. While a religious education program should provide a forum to address such questions, it must be noted that central to the faith development of the young person is the family and faith community. The religious education program should support the role of each, where appropriate. Students should be given structured and unstructured opportunities to search in their own religious heritage for the answers to these questions, and to compare these with the answers or frameworks provided in other religious traditions.

In their search for meaning students should develop an awareness of what it means to be human and the inherent responsibilities which come with this. Out of this realization should come a sense of value for humanity and all of creation. In their personal search for meaning it is important that students acquire the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to interpret religious ideas. They need to see themselves as an integral part of creation. When this conclusion is reached behaviour and attitudes toward all creation will be caring and affirming. The religious education curriculum should help students explore their role in the natural order.

In a world that is truly multi-cultural and multi-faith it is important that each person can value and celebrate his/her own faith (religious heritage or commitment). However, with accurate information about other religions the individual should recognize that others have religious beliefs that they value and celebrate as well. Religious and denominational intolerance will be eliminated only when people are more understanding of the intrinsic worth of religious views and traditions that are not their own. An effective religious education program should give accurate information and demonstrate respect for all world faiths.

Most of the values and morals upheld by any society have their origins in religious teachings. Through discussion and study of various issues confronting society, students will be in a better position to develop a value system and adopt moral standards that give them principles by which to live. Students should come to understand and appreciate that most religions have sacred writings and all teach values, ethics and morals.

There are other considerations for the importance of religious education being included in the curriculum. According to John M. Hull:

- Religion is too important a part of history, culture, and current experience of [humankind] to be left to believers alone. There is a role for the school in preparing pupils to take an informed and thoughtful part in a pluralistic society. When the society contains not one but several religions, the need for a thoughtful study of religion becomes greater, not less. (John M. Hull, "Religious Education in a Pluralistic Society", *Studies in Religion and Education*, London: Falmer Press, 1984, p. 48.)
- Religion has been a determining factor in history and in our cultural heritage. Major decisions have been made in light of religious teachings. While it is true that at times religions have been responsible for conflicts in the world it is also true that they have served to bring about resolutions, peace, and social justice.

M. Stackhouse in *Creeds, Society and Human Rights* writes:

*Persons demand beliefs; societies need convictions; and civilizations require a basic social ethical vision by which to guide behavior.* (M. Stackhouse, *Creeds, Society and Human Rights*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1984, p. 4.)

Our students need to be aware of the role religion has played historically. An effective religious education program will enable the student to understand and appreciate the relationship between religion and history.

- Religion is also a large contributing factor in current national and international events. By coming to a realization of the importance of religion in these events the student will better understand some of the underlying causes and complexities.
- Consideration and recognition should be given to the impact and contributions made by religion in the areas of literature, architecture, art, music, film, and theater.
- Finally, it must be noted that young people develop intellectually, physically, emotionally, socially, and spiritually. It is important to have a religious education component in the school because the school addresses the development and education of the whole child.

*The Atlantic Canada Framework for Essential Graduation Learnings in Schools* states that the mission of Public Education is “to enable and encourage every individual to acquire, through lifelong learning, the knowledge, skills and values necessary for personal growth and the development of society.” In addition to the six Essential Graduation Learnings outlined elsewhere in the Framework, a specific Seventh Learning for Newfoundland and Labrador references: “*Graduates will demonstrate understanding and appreciation for the place of belief systems in shaping the development of moral values and ethical conduct.*” An effective religious education program will be a contributing factor to that mission. There will be aspects of the religious education curriculum that support each of the Essential Graduation Learnings.



## Key Principles Underlying Religious Education

*(For information and theories on spiritual and moral development the following authors are recommended: Fritz Oser, James Fowler, Lawrence Kohlberg and Carol Gilligan.)*

Students should also be aware that religion influences local and global events. It is imperative that they be educated regarding other religions. They should acquire knowledge of the founders, beliefs, main practices, symbols and festivals of various religions. They should also understand the similarities and differences among the religions studied.

Throughout the ages, religion has had an influence on, and has been expressed through, the arts, including music, art, drama, literature, and architecture. As students study religious education, they also study history, music, literature, and vice versa.

This religious education curriculum acknowledges and supports the notion that young people have a spiritual dimension and grow spiritually as well as physically, emotionally, psychologically and intellectually.

This religious education curriculum acknowledges that the essence of all inter-faith dialogue is the awareness that human beings share essential truths and experiences that are much more important than those which divide them.

This religious education curriculum respects the place and role of family and faith communities as primary influences on the faith lives of young people. At the same time it acknowledges the complementary and supplementary role of partnership that the school can play in the spiritual, moral, and faith development of young people.

Through their study, students should come to appreciate the intrinsic worth of each religion for its adherents.

## Meeting the Needs of all Learners

### The Adolescent Learner

Today's high school learners are complex and sophisticated. Adolescents approach their world of diversity and complexity with enthusiasm and trepidation. They encounter clashes of values, personal conflicts and social pressures in developing their sense of social justice and recognition of diversity.

Adolescent learners enjoy questioning and are less likely to accept the status quo in attempting to attain their objectives. This opens opportunities for learning through activities such as investigation, research, debate, discussion and community involvement, locally and globally. Students need to know their opinions are welcomed and can be expressed without fear of ridicule. Furthermore, they need to know their beliefs and practices are respected.

### The Religious Education Learning Environment

An effective learning environment will be one where sensitivity and respect is shown for all religious traditions. The learning environment should be such that it fosters in students a positive attitude towards other people and their right to hold different beliefs. It should prepare students for living in a society of diverse religions. Recognizing students' varying backgrounds and experiences, the religious education instructional environment must incorporate principles and strategies which support diversity while recognizing the varied learning styles, multiple intelligences, and abilities of the individual.

It is not enough, however, that students learn about other faiths. In addition to attending to the cognitive domain, the learning environment must be conducive to, and supportive of, the affective domain.

*Our pedagogy is to actively engage people's whole "being" in place and time - their physical, mental and volitional capacities, their head, heart and action, their intellect, desire, and will, their reasons, memory, and imagination, and enable them to reclaim their past, embrace their present, and take responsibility for their own and other's future. (Thomas H. Groome, *Sharing Faith, A Comprehensive Approach to Religious Education and Pastoral Ministry*, Harper, San Francisco 1991, p. 430.)*

Also, the learning environment has to be appropriate to the age and developmental needs of the student, with activities being student centered. It may include experiences through celebrations, festivals, food, drama and field trips. An opportunity for reflection is important. The learning environment, however, should be sensitive to aspects of any living belief system that can only be experienced and fully appreciated by adherents of that particular belief system. It should never be the intent to turn any of these celebrations or observances into "pretend" sessions. In many instances the teacher will have to decide to what degree practices of celebrations can be facilitated in the school with the sincerity, dignity, and reverence they deserve. Therefore, an effective religious education environment must be:

- student centered
- engaging and relevant
- respectful of diversity

- inviting and inclusive
- participatory, interactive and collaborative
- reflective and celebratory
- integrative
- challenging
- inquiry based

## **The Role of the Teacher**

It is the role of the teacher to create a supportive environment. The teacher of religious education:

- is a facilitator
- is not “all-knowing” about different religions
- uses people from the faith communities as resource people
- is sensitive to diverse religious beliefs
- fosters a sense of acceptance, trust and comfort in the classroom
- demonstrates a valuing of all learners
- helps each student form individual beliefs and attitudes
- allows time for reflection
- challenges students to act upon their learning
- provides time for students to ask questions

While it is understood that each teacher brings his or her own beliefs to the classroom, it should also be understood that a teacher should not make any attempt to promote or denigrate any student’s beliefs. The teacher must not attempt to indoctrinate or proselytize.

## **Instructional Strategies**

There is no one best way to teach. Effective instruction encompasses a variety and combination of approaches - within a program, within a course, within a unit, within a lesson.

Effective instruction facilitates, promotes and results in student learning. Effective teachers know how to adapt their strategies to meet a wide variety of student needs. Effective teachers make decisions about curriculum selection, organization and implementation based on sound research and a wide range of practical and theoretical knowledge. They engage the student in the learning process. Effective instruction begins with the assessment of student learning needs, interests and abilities, continues with planning and delivering instruction in an appropriate manner. It includes monitoring student growth and understanding, concludes with evaluating student progress and achievement in preparation for the next learning experience.

Instructional strategies should vary so that there is opportunity for direct instruction, seatwork, assessment, cooperative small group work, and learning beyond a prescribed text. No matter what the

instructional strategy, evaluation, especially formative evaluation, should be ongoing. The learning activities and instructional strategies occurring in classrooms should promote a school climate where teachers and learners collaborate about learning. The climate teachers create in any class should foster a sense of acceptance by teachers and peers, as well as a sense of comfort and order. Such a climate is enhanced when time is provided for students to ask and answer questions; when teachers restate/rephrase questions for a student; when teachers guide a student in finding solutions to problems assigned; when teachers acknowledge the worth and dignity of a particular response.

It is important that general and specific curriculum outcomes be used as reference points for planning learning experiences. There are many options for instructional strategies that teachers may select and combine in planning learning experiences for whole class, small group and independent learning. These activities should create learning communities that foster complex, creative, critical and ethical thought. Evaluation instruments should complement instructional strategies by encouraging thinking as well as the acquisition of information.

### **Whole Class Learning**

Whole class learning experiences often focus on an individual (teacher or student) or on a specific group. It may be used effectively to present strategies, provide information, or communicate directions. This approach is often used to introduce and support other methods of instruction. For example, instructions and explanations can be given to the whole class before they begin to work in smaller groups. Whole-class learning can also be used when the entire class is involved in a common process, for example, in sharing group or individual experiences, or in planning and making decisions about a class project or other shared learning experience.

Whole-class learning activities include the following:

- questioning and discussion
- demonstrations and presentations
- modelling
- lectures
- mini-lessons
- overviews and outlines
- planning, reflecting on, and evaluating learning

Whole class learning often involves direct communication between a speaker or speakers and an audience by making statements, giving information and directions, or explaining procedures. The

information and directions presented in a whole class setting can provide students with necessary support as they become self-directed learners. Demonstrations, for example, provide students with both verbal and non-verbal information.

Although large amounts of information transmitted by lecture may not always be retained, mini-lessons, which are short periods of whole class instruction, provided as the need or opportunity arises, can challenge the imagination, stimulate reflection, and develop a sense of inquiry. They can provide a forum for critical thinking and challenge students to revise and extend their own knowledge base as they encounter the practices and beliefs of others.

### **Small Group Learning**

Small group experiences should be planned to help students learn how to interact effectively and productively as members of a group or team. Group work will decrease students' dependence on the teacher and increase positive interdependence. As groups take on various learning tasks, students will develop and consolidate the skills, abilities, and attitudes involved in group processes. Group processes require students to:

- participate, collaborate, co-operate, and negotiate
- consider different ways of going about a task
- discuss, brainstorm, react, and respond
- build on their own ideas and extend the ideas of others
- share their own expertise and employ the expertise of others
- establish group goals
- identify and manage tasks
- identify and solve problems
- make decisions
- pace projects, and establish and meet deadlines
- respect varying leadership and learning styles
- be sensitive to non-verbal communication — their own and others
- recognize the responsibilities and dynamics of working in groups and make use of their understanding
- assess their own contributions and use feedback from the group to improve their performance

Small group learning experiences demonstrate to students how their patterns of learning, experience, and expertise are different from and similar to those of others. As students become more aware of their individual strengths as learners, they will become better equipped to deal with the demands placed on them by independent learning tasks.

### **Independent Learning**

Learning is both personal and social. Religious Education recognizes the diverse interests, learning styles, prior knowledge, experiences and beliefs students bring to the classroom. Independent learning is one of

many strategies teachers can use to help students learn. Through the study of various religious beliefs and practices, students will be in a better position to make informed decisions and choices.

Classroom time must be given to allow students to conduct research, confer with peers and with the teacher, prepare reports and presentations, present the results, and evaluate their progress and achievement in independent learning. Such learning experiences will help students to reflect on their own learning strategies and will promote their progress toward becoming independent learners.

### **Indirect Instruction**

Indirect instruction is generally student-centered and involves inquiry, discovery, induction. It seeks a high level of student involvement in observing, investigating, forming hypotheses and drawing inferences from data. Indirect instruction encourages students to generate alternatives and/or solve problems. It frees students to explore diverse possibilities and reduces the fear associated with giving incorrect answers. Indirect instruction fosters creativity, and develops research skills. Learners, because of their explicit contact with subject matter, are better able to understand the material, concepts and ideas under study, and to apply previous learning to new situations. The teacher facilitates the activities, acts as a resource person, arranges the learning environment, provides opportunities for student involvement, and gives feedback to students during the course of their inquiries. Indirect instruction relies on a variety of resources. In order to get optimum results from the indirect method, direct instruction may need to be used to teach requisite skills/processes/procedures.

Indirect instruction includes:

- problem solving
- guided inquiry
- case study
- reflective discussion and questions

### **Direct Instruction**

Direct Instruction is teacher centred and is commonly used to describe a process, present strategies, provide information and to communicate directions. Direct instruction is deductive. It presents the rule or generalization first and then illustrates with examples. Direct instruction can be used to introduce and support other methods and strategies of instruction.

Direct instruction includes:

- lectures
- questioning
- explicit teaching
- guided practice

### **Experiential Learning**

Experiential learning is inductive, student centred, activity rich and multi-sensory. Experiential learning may require the application and consolidation of previous knowledge, skills and values to a new situation and/or may emphasize the acquisition of new knowledge, skills and ideas. Experiential learning can occur both inside and outside the regular classroom setting. It can involve first hand experiences, such as going whale watching, hands-on experiences, reproduce religious symbols with clay and/or vicarious experiences such as exploring art through the Internet. Current technology permits numerous simulations to be shared through various media such as laser video discs, videos, cassettes, and computer programs. School visitations by outside resource people can also provide excellent opportunities for learners to connect learned information to real life situations. Students are more motivated to learn when they actively participate. Experiential learning increases student understanding and retention.

Experiential learning includes:

- role playing
- simulation
- experimenting
- field trips
- learning centres

### **Individualized Learning**

Individualized learning fosters the development of individual student initiative, responsible decision making, self reliance and independence. It encourages learners to effectively organize and pace their learning. This type of learning may be individual or it may include learning in partnership with others. The teacher and/or the student (under the teacher's guidance), may determine the description and conditions of the task(s). Individualized learning allows students to explore in depth personal interests related to educational outcomes. It motivates learners to make connections and see the relevance of what they are learning to their everyday lives. Individualized learning can be used in conjunction with other methods. It requires careful monitoring and regular feedback to the learner(s) to be effective.

Independent learning includes:

- homework
- projects
- reports
- essays
- assigned questions
- learning contracts
- learning centres
- computer assisted instruction

**Interactive Instruction**

Interactive instruction relies on discussion and sharing among participants, and allows students to react to the views, ideas and experiences of others. It permits the generation of alternate ideas and insights, and provides opportunities for students to develop social and interpersonal skills with peers, teachers and others. Interactive instruction encourages the organization of thoughts and the development of rational arguments. It allows students to learn to refine their observation, listening, interpersonal and intervention skills. The success of interactive learning depends on the skills of the teacher in structuring and facilitating the activity and responding appropriately to the characteristics and dynamics of the group(s). Interactive learning permits a range of groupings.

Interactive instruction includes:

- whole group discussion
- small group discussion
- conferencing
- mentoring
- dialogue
- brainstorming
- interviewing

**Selected Instructional Strategies*****Problem Solving***

- application of knowledge, skills, ideas, resources and processes to generate one or many solutions to a problem
- may follow the scientific method
- can be a practical skill
- may include strategies such as “trial and error”, “brainstorming”, “what if/I suppose”, “attribute listing”, “forced relationships”, “idea check list” and “imaging”.

***Concept Attainment***

- students are provided with data about a particular concept generated by themselves or their teacher and are encouraged to classify or group the information and to give descriptive labels to their groupings.
- students link the examples to the labels through their own reasoning and form their own understanding of the concept.
- students participate actively in their own learning
- students organize and manipulate information
- students create new and expanded meaning of their information

***Inquiry***

- elements of inquiry include thinking, reflecting, developing relevant questions and planning appropriate strategies for generating answers and explanations



- allows students to experience and acquire processes through which they can gather information about the world in a variety of ways from a variety of sources.
- allows for a high level of interaction among the learner, teacher, the area of study, available resources and the learning environment
- allows students to act upon their curiosity and interests
- encourages students to formulate questions and analyse situations/problems/information
- calls upon prior learning
- encourages hypothesis development and testing (new questions and hypotheses often emerge as the inquiry continues)
- students make inferences and propose solutions
- students realize that there is often more than one answer to a question; more than one solution to a problem.

### *Questioning*

- can be used to diagnose recall and comprehension skills
- can be convergent and/or factual
- may draw on prior learning experience
- can determine the extent to which lesson outcomes are being achieved
- provides practice
- aids retention of information or processes
- stimulates thinking
- encourages expression
- can be empirical
- can be conceptual

### *Explicit Teaching*

- direct telling
- making statements
- giving information or directions
- explaining procedures
- is largely teacher-centred
- can be large group or small group
- can be used to motivate the learner
- may stimulate reflection
- can challenge the imagination
- may develop curiosity and a sense of inquiry
- may include teacher talk; lecture approach; mini-lessons; instruction giving

### **Cautions:**

- not all students learn well with this technique
- lectured content is often rapidly forgotten

***Demonstrations***

- can provide verbal and non-verbal information, techniques and procedures
- can illustrate the end product of a process
- can provide a model for reproducing a procedure or creating a product
- can involve the collection and organization of materials
- allow students to receive information through tactile and visual means

***Guided Practice***

- can be individual, student centred and needs based
- may be small group
- used to monitor student performance and practices (e.g., signs of respect, appropriate behaviour)

***Simulation***

- allows for types of experiments/activities that cannot take place in the real environment
- an artificial problem situation or event is presented which represents some aspect of reality
- removes risk and reduces safety considerations
- the level of complexity is purposefully reduced so that students may become directly involved with underlying concepts
- may involve the use of models, game formats, structured role play or an interactive video or computer program

***Authentic Experiences***

- are real life learning experiences that require careful planning
- factors such as safety, liability, weather, transportation costs, time and availability have to be considered
- may include field trips, school visitations by outside resource people, surveys, and field observations

***Role Play***

- is the spontaneous or practiced response to a given situation or theme where the learner attempts to speak, feel, behave like the character they portray
- is designed to illustrate situations in which the behaviour of individuals is the critical factor
- can be part of a game or simulation activity
- is an approach to addressing interpersonal problems and practicing social and communication skills
- allows for high level of student engagement
- promotes independent and self-determined behaviour

- promotes increased understanding of the views, positions and feelings of others
- facilitates attitudinal and behavioral change
- encourages cooperation and sharing
- can be used to resolve decision-making dilemmas, resolve conflict, determine appropriate behavioral responses
- teachers must define the problem situation and problem clearly as well as give very clear instructions

**Cautions:**

- some students may feel self conscious or threatened
- may not be appropriate for large groups
- may not be appropriate for all learners

***Field Trips***

- involve teaching/learning activities at a site other than the classroom
- involve activities that are appropriate for learning outcomes
- require careful planning in order to make the link to learning outcomes
- should spark student interest, discussion, questioning,
- may provide “hands on” experience
- may involve application of previous knowledge or acquisition of new knowledge
- should involve follow up such as reports, discussions, and/or evaluation
- reflect the real world and put learning in the context of the community
- broaden the student’s view

***Assigned Questions***

- students are provided with a set of questions related to new or previously learned material
- may be a component of problem solving
- may be a component of critical thinking
- may be used for reflection and self-evaluation
- may be an element of programmed instruction
- may be used in guided inquiry
- may be used as the starting point for cooperative group learning
- may be used to guide/direct learning, exploration, experimentation, and/or observation

***Projects***

- teachers should provide examples of any projects required and clearly discuss all guidelines

- include assigned tasks that provide an opportunity for all learners to consolidate/synthesize learning from a number of disciplines or experiences
- usually involves learners, alone or in small groups, working on a task for an extended time period (the actual time frame may depend to some degree on the ages of the learners involved), usually to produce a tangible product such as a model, a demonstration, a report or a presentation
- may be used to relate knowledge to their own experiences and/or to the broader community
- may involve research
- usually involves extending/enriching/reinforcing learning
- should be focused (e.g., subject matter concept, interdisciplinary theme, action projects)
- should include clearly defined task descriptions such as: interview, compare opinions, make a model, find contrasting views on, create a dramatic presentation
- should include a criteria for planning and evaluation
- students should clearly understand the requirements of the project
- should include clear time lines, and ongoing progress reports

#### *Computer-Assisted Instruction*

- an instructional mode which incorporates the computer into the lesson plan
- can include word processing, drill and practice, tutorial, problem solving, critical thinking, creativity, simulation
- may be an independent or cooperative small group learning
- may be appropriate for individualizing instruction
- fosters active involvement
- allows for independent and collaborative decision making
- appropriate for programmed instruction

#### *Learning Contracts*

- teacher may initially provide terms and conditions, identify resources and set basic timelines
- the student, parents and other professionals may be involved in designing the contract (such as expectations, conditions, evaluation criteria, time frame, consequences)
- provide a method of individualizing instruction
- can be designed so that students operate at the academic level and the pace most suited for them
- can help students make reasoned choices, become increasingly independent learners and take responsibility for their own learning.

#### *Conferencing*

- occurs when teachers meet with individual or small groups of students to discuss learning tasks or concerns

- encourages students to talk about their work in a non-threatening low-risk environment where points of view are shared and respected
- allows for an open exchange of ideas between the teacher and the learner
- teachers can guide students and provide feedback
- encourages students to reflect on their learning, engage in self-assessment and make decisions on how to approach tasks
- is an appropriate setting for encouraging independence and promoting self-confidence.

### *Brainstorming*

- a process of rapidly generating ideas or responses
- all contributions are accepted without judgement or comment (this includes nods of agreement) and without editing the words of the contributor (this includes “you mean to say....., or this is the same as....)
- a means of extending boundaries and encouraging creative ideas
- a means of quickly getting a wide range of ideas on a topic or issue
- can be used as a precursor to refining or categorizing ideas/ responses
- is intended to capitalize on the varied experiences, knowledge, and ideas of the group
- can be playful with zany ideas encouraged and accepted

### *Cooperative Small Group Learning*

- an approach to organizing classroom activity so that students can work collaboratively and build on one another’s strengths and ideas
- group members share clearly defined roles and are interdependent in achieving the main goal
- students learn the importance of respecting individual views and maintaining group harmony
- students must be working towards a common goal
- success at achieving the goal depends on the individual learning of all group members
- the teacher’s role is primarily that of facilitator in guiding students as social groups and learning teams as they engage in activities such as identifying problems, generating solutions and practicing skills
- successful use of this method requires professional development and practice

### *Interviewing*

- involves individuals, pairs or small groups collecting information from peers, younger students, older students, and adults
- involves focused thought and active thinking to develop questions and explore ideas

- requires interpersonal and listening skills; the student must listen respectfully, react to, and interpret the views and experiences of others
- uses language to articulate and clarify one's thoughts, feelings, and ideas
- allows exchange of ideas, increased understanding and new awareness of a previous knowledge
- involves follow up activities

***Personal or Self-reflection/Journaling***

- allows individuals to think about their level of knowledge, their beliefs and values
- facilitates personal goal setting and planning
- supports privacy
- respects the personal quality and uniqueness of the individual
- allows students to reflect on what they have learned or are about to learn
- allows students to pose questions and react to learning experiences

*"Links to Other Disciplines"*. Students should be encouraged to find strategies to link their learning in this Religious Education course to their studies in other courses. This might be accomplished, for example, through interdisciplinary research and presentations that are developed and presented in collaboration with teachers in other courses for which students are registered. For specifics regarding these links to other disciplines refer to the notes in the two page spreads.

## Effective Assessment and Evaluation Practices

### Defining Assessment and Evaluation

Although assessment and evaluation are terms often used interchangeably, they are not the same. *Assessment* refers to the broader activity of gathering information on the full range of student learning in a variety of ways, so that a clear and valid picture emerges of what students know and are able to do in Religious Education. This assessment process should provide a rich collection of information that reflects students' progress in working toward achievement of learning outcomes and guides future instruction, where data from a variety of sources is collected. *Evaluation* involves reflecting on what students have learned for the purpose of sharing this information with them and with their parent(s), caregiver(s), and school administration.

Student evaluation is a process basic to teaching. Evaluation is not an add-on feature of instruction but an integral part of it, since the information it provides allows teachers to make adjustments to instruction and teaching methodologies.

Evaluation must be student-centered where the process and subsequent decisions reflect a genuine concern for each student.

Teachers have a responsibility to provide accurate, reliable and justifiable evaluations which do not undermine the integrity, self-confidence, or enthusiasm of students. Comprehensive evaluation involves the use of a variety of sources, is referenced to specific learning outcomes and ensures that the total growth of every student is recognized. (Adapted from *The Evaluation of Students in the Classroom: A Handbook and Policy Guide*)

### Understanding Process and Product

#### *Guiding Principles for Assessment and Evaluation:*

- Assessment and evaluation processes and techniques should:
  - determine whether the outcomes have been achieved.
  - reflect the stated outcomes for the course.
  - be an integral part of the teaching and learning process and of each component of the course.
  - give all students the opportunity to demonstrate the achievement of outcomes.
  - provide positive, instructive, and supportive feedback to students.
  - invite and encourage student self-assessment and active participation.
  - allow for a range of options to accommodate students' abilities to demonstrate the achievement of outcomes.

Evaluation deals with both process and product. Religious Education places emphasis on the affective domain and the process is as important as the product.

Product can be thought of as the *what* of learning. *What* is it students should know? *What* is it they should be able to do? These whats are typically spelled out in outcomes, whether they are based on a program, a course, a unit or a lesson. In a teaching episode which is focused on product, the ends may be evaluated without reference to the means.

Process refers to the procedure which students go through as they come to know, to value, and to be able to do. The emphasis in teaching shifts from a passing on of “*the what*” to the methods by which it is acquired and utilized. Students are taught to find information, to become autonomous thinkers, and to use knowledge to solve new problems and make decisions for themselves.

In the *two-page spreads* section of this curriculum guide there are specific suggestions for teaching and learning as well as suggestions for assessment. Many of these suggestions can be interchanged and used either as learning activities or assessment activities or both.

## **Diverse Learners**

Each student is unique. Within any group of students a range of differences in rates and ways of learning, in experiences and in interests are expected and respected. Individual differences should be celebrated and built upon. A viable goal for each individual is to have equitable opportunity to experience success as he or she works toward the achievement of designated outcomes and a personal best. Improving performance and realizing potential is more important than competition and comparisons to others.

## **Identifying the Activity**

In planning for assessment the key question is: “What is the student expected to accomplish?” The answer to this question enables the teacher to choose or design appropriate means that allow the student to demonstrate this. The student will be expected to demonstrate knowledge, skills and abilities. The means can be multiple and varied: presentations; producing videos; writing essays or plays; charting or graphing information; locating and displaying information; demonstrating a skill, designing a product or a plan; drawing or graphing a concept, a process, or an idea. The choice of means will depend on available resources including time and the type of learners and their strengths.



## Assessment Strategies

Teachers are encouraged to use assessment and evaluation practices that are consistent with student-centered instructional practices:

- negotiating and making explicit the criteria by which performance will be evaluated
- designing assessment tasks that help students make judgements about their own learning and performance
- designing assessment tasks that incorporate varying learning styles
- individualizing assessment tasks as appropriate to accommodate students' particular learning needs
- providing feedback on student learning and performance on a regular basis.

*There may be times when, through summative testing, teachers will want to provide students the opportunity to demonstrate growth in knowledge and understanding. Summative testing, however, must reflect the intention of the SCO's and must not be the only means of evaluation.*

Assessment activities, tasks, and strategies include, but are not limited to, the following:

- anecdotal records
- audiotapes
- checklists
- conferences
- demonstrations
- exhibitions
- interviews (structured and informal)
- inventories
- investigations
- learning logs/journals
- media products
- observation (formal and informal)
- peer assessments
- performance tasks
- portfolios
- projects
- questioning
- questionnaires
- self-assessments
- seminar presentations
- surveys
- tests
- videotapes
- work samples
- written assignments

Evaluation in Religious Education, is concerned with the development of the whole person in the cognitive, psychomotor, and affective domains.

The affective domain deals with feelings and emotions and is exemplified through students' attitudes, interests, value systems and appreciations. There is little doubt this is a more difficult area to evaluate than either the cognitive or psychomotor domains. For this reason, it is generally inappropriate and undesirable to attach percentage values to affective outcomes. This does not, however, diminish the importance of the affective domain, since values and value systems are central to the learning and evaluation process. It is important to keep the three domains separate for evaluation purposes. This is important since it is possible for progress to be uneven across the different domains. Even though a student might have a negative attitude toward school, it is possible for that student to achieve at a high level in the cognitive domain.

One of the most effective sources of data for use in evaluating outcomes in the affective domain is observation. This method, utilizing appropriate recording devices such as rating scales, checklists and anecdotal records, enables the teacher to focus upon and record achievement in the affective domain. Other sources of evaluation data for the affective domain include self-reporting devices such as an attitude scale, where students respond on a continuum ranging from favourable to unfavourable, and individual inventories where students check their preference for, or attitude toward, an idea or activity. Student reports or terms papers can be evaluated from an affective point of view if they are designed so the student is required to take a stand on a certain issue. Personal interviews and discussions can also be used to evaluate affective growth if care is taken to use indirect questions so that students cannot guess which answer the teacher would like to hear.

To become lifelong learners, students need to develop internal motivation. They are more likely to perceive learning as its own reward when they are empowered to assess their own progress. Rather than teachers asking, 'What do you want?', students should be encouraged to ask themselves questions such as, 'What have I learned? What can I do now that I couldn't do before? What do I need to learn next?' Assessment must provide opportunities for students to reflect on their progress, evaluate their learning, and set goals for future learning.

In recognizing and valuing the diversity of students, teachers might consider ways to:

- provide a climate and design learning experiences to affirm the dignity and worth of all learners in the classroom community
- redress educational disadvantage - for example, as it relates to students living in poverty

- model the use of inclusive language, attitudes, and actions supportive of all learners
- adapt classroom organization, teaching strategies, assessment strategies, time, and learning resources to address learners' needs and build on their strengths
- provide opportunities for learners to work in a variety of learning contexts , including mixed-ability groupings
- identify and respond to diversity in students' learning styles
- build on students' individual levels of knowledge, skills, and attitudes
- design learning and assessment tasks that draw on learners' strengths
- ensure that learners use strengths as a means of tackling areas of difficulty
- use students' strengths and abilities to motivate and support learning
- offer multiple and varied avenues to learning
- celebrate the accomplishment of learning tasks that learners believed were too challenging for them

# Section II: Curriculum Design and Components

## Introduction

This section provides

- information on the curriculum outcomes framework
- essential graduation learnings
- general curriculum outcomes statements
- key-stage curriculum outcomes statements
- an overview of the connection between essential graduation learnings and key-stage curriculum outcomes
- specific curriculum outcomes statements for high school religious education
- suggestions for teaching approaches, learning tasks, and experiences, and assessment strategies and activities

## Curriculum Outcomes Framework

### Essential Graduation Learnings

Essential graduation learnings are statements describing the knowledge, skills, and attitudes expected of all students who graduate from high school. They are

- cross-curricular
- the foundation for all curriculum development
- found on pages 22-24

### General Curriculum Outcomes

General Curriculum outcomes are statements identifying what students are expected to know and be able to do upon completion of study in religious education. These statements

- contribute to the attainment of the essential graduation learnings
- are connected to the key-stage curriculum outcomes for religious education
- are found on page 25

### **Key-Stage Curriculum Outcomes**

Key-stage curriculum outcomes are statements identifying what students are expected to know and be able to do by the end of grades 3, 6, 9, and 12 as a result of cumulative learning experiences in religious education. The key-stage outcomes

- contribute to the achievement of the general curriculum outcomes
- are found on pages 25-28

### **Specific Curriculum Outcomes**

Specific Curriculum Outcomes are statements identifying what students are expected to know and be able to do at a particular grade level. These outcomes

- contribute to the achievement of the key-stage outcomes
- are found on pages 33-47

### **Meeting the Essential Graduation Learnings Through Religious Education**

Essential Graduation Learnings are statements describing the knowledge, skills and attitudes expected of all students who graduate high school. These Learnings describe expectations not in terms of individual school subjects but in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes developed throughout the curriculum. They confirm that students need to make connections and develop abilities across subject boundaries if they are to be ready to meet the shifting and ongoing demands of life, work and study today, and in the future. Essential Graduation Learnings serve as a framework for the curriculum development process.

For graduates of the religious education program, the following connections to the Essential Graduation Learnings apply:

### **Aesthetic Expression**

Graduates will be able to respond with critical awareness to various forms of the arts and be able to express themselves through the arts. Religious education will provide the opportunity for students to develop a growing appreciation for some of the great works of art, architecture, artifacts, literature, and music. In religious education classes students will be encouraged to express their views on religious and social topics through various avenues which would be classified as aesthetic expression. The religious education program will provide opportunities for students to experience and appreciate artistic works from various ages and cultures. Opportunity will be given for reflection, critical responses and expressions of appreciation.

**Citizenship**

Graduates will be able to assess social, cultural, economic, and environmental interdependence in a local and global context. Graduates will be able to show an awareness of the importance and contributions of various religions to the global community. In the religious education program, it will be recognized that there is often a relationship between people's actions and lifestyles and their religious beliefs. Human rights, social justice, freedom of religion, and value systems will figure prominently in the religious education program. By considering various views on these topics, students will better understand what it means to live in a pluralistic multi-faith society.

**Communication**

Graduates will be able to use the listening, viewing, speaking, reading, and writing modes of language(s) as well as mathematical and scientific concepts and symbols to think, learn, and communicate effectively. Religious education requires students to consider many perspectives and beliefs on a wide range of topics. It also requires them to think critically about many current issues. Because of the very nature of the religious education program and the objectives for the courses in which students will be involved, various methods of communicating will be used, such as oral discussion, written responses, art work and the application of technology.

Some levels of discussion will be at an informal level while other discussions will be more formal in design. There will also be creative writing as well as response papers and research papers at particular grade levels. Many of the courses will encourage the use of media and other forms of modern technology as means of communicating.

The very nature of some of the topics discussed will require students to be precise and clear in their writing and in their oral presentation. Developing the skill of appropriate expression of thoughts and opinions and responding appropriately to others' thoughts and opinions will be an integral part of the religious education program.

**Personal Development**

Graduates will be able to continue to learn and to pursue an active, healthy lifestyle. Personal development is an area of great importance for the religious education program. Students will be in a position to be given information and be required to reflect on, and discuss, moral and ethical issues. Recognition will be given to the fact that students are collaborative as well as independent learners. However, this program will challenge them to see what it means to live in community with others while developing a personal system of beliefs by which to live.

**Problem Solving**

Graduates will be able to use the strategies and processes needed to solve a wide variety of problems, including those requiring language, mathematical, and scientific concepts. An important component in the religious education program is the interpretation of information in a critical manner in order that students will be in a position to make informed decisions. The nature of many of the topics covered will require students to acquire knowledge on a given topic or issue and take a position. The problem solving process will take many forms in religious education, including reading, discussion, debate, reflection, research, observation and media viewing.

**Technological Competence**

Graduates will be able to use a variety of technologies, demonstrate an understanding of technological applications, and apply appropriate technologies for solving problems. There will be many opportunities for students to use a range of technologies in the religious education program and to reflect on and discuss the ethical issues around the use of much modern technology. Opportunities will be given for students to use computer and media technology in various areas of the program.

**Spiritual and Moral Development**

Graduates will demonstrate understanding and appreciation for the place of belief systems in shaping the development of moral values and ethical conduct. A vital component of the religious education program will be the spiritual and moral development of the individual. Development of values, morals, and ethics will be fostered in this program. Being able to express one's beliefs and values while having the ability to listen to and understand other people's beliefs and values contributes to an improved society. The art of expressing and defending appropriately one's own beliefs without degrading or negating those of others is an important part of personal development.

The program will help students understand the belief they are an important part of an unfolding creation with a caring Creator who sustains and interacts with all that has been created. It will support the idea that each person must take responsibility for his/her actions and that a person's actions have direct and indirect effects on both the individual and the community as a whole. Key to the total program will be the recognition of the belief that the human being is a spiritual being whose life can encompass religious principles.

## **General Curriculum Outcomes for Religious Education**

**General Curriculum Outcomes** are statements which describe the contribution (K-XII) of a curriculum area to the Essential Graduation Learnings by defining what students are expected to know, value and be able to do as a result of completing the program in that curriculum area.

The General Curriculum Outcomes for religious education follow:

1. Students will be expected to examine the historical impact of religion on beliefs, cultures and traditions.
2. Students will be expected to develop an understanding of the beliefs, principles and practices of Christianity and other living belief systems.
3. Students will be expected to examine the meaning and relevance of sacred texts.
4. Students will be expected to demonstrate an appreciation for personal search, commitment and meaning in life.
5. Students will be expected to examine moral and ethical issues and teachings.
6. Students will be expected to develop an appreciation for the connectedness of all creation.
7. Students will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between religion and science.
8. Students will be expected to examine the influence of religion on contemporary issues and events.

## **Key-Stage Curriculum Outcomes**

Key-stage curriculum outcomes for the end of grades 3, 6, 9, and 12 reflect a continuum of learning. While there may appear to be similarities in outcomes across the grade levels, teachers will recognize the increase in expectations for students according to

- the nature of learning language processes
- students' maturity of thinking and interests
- students' increasing independence as learners
- the complexity and sophistication of ideas, texts, and tasks
- the range of language experiences and the repertoire of strategies and skills students apply to those experiences



The following key-stage curriculum outcomes describe what students should know and be able to do in religious education by the end of grade 12. It should be noted that students work toward achieving these key-stage curriculum outcomes in grades 10 and 11, as well as in grade 12.

*Students will be expected to examine the historical impact of religion on beliefs, culture and traditions.*

*By the end of grade 12, students will have achieved the outcomes for entry-grade 9 and will also be expected to*

- demonstrate an understanding of the historical development of living belief systems (e.g., Christianity, Islam, Hinduism).
- demonstrate an understanding of the lives and key teachings of religious founders (e.g., Jesus, Muhammad, Buddha).
- develop an understanding of the influence of living belief systems on family, community and society.
- examine, from an ethical perspective, social, political and economic forces that have shaped the past and present.
- demonstrate an understanding for, and an appreciation of, the ways in which various living belief systems have influenced the individual's world view.

*Students will be expected to develop an understanding of beliefs, principles and practices of Christianity and other living belief systems.*

*By the end of grade 12, students will have achieved the outcomes for entry-grade 9 and will also be expected to*

- critically examine the fundamental tenets of various religions.
- examine the diversity among Christian denominations and other belief systems.
- assess the nature of relationships among various religions.
- explore the nature of the relationship between the individual and God for various religions.
- critique the responses of various religions to stewardship and issues of social justice (e.g., Christianity, Hinduism).

*Students will be expected to examine the meaning and relevance of sacred texts.*

*By the end of grade 12, students will have achieved the outcomes for entry-grade 9 and will also be expected to*

- evaluate the significance of sacred texts, both oral and written (e.g., Bible, Qur'an, Tripitaka).
- demonstrate an understanding of the meanings and relevance of sacred texts for adherents.
- examine the origins, organization and development of sacred texts (e.g., Biblical Canon, Qur'an).
- develop an appreciation for various interpretations of sacred texts (e.g., King James Version of the Bible, New Revised Standard Version of the Bible).
- develop a knowledge of key figures, events and themes from sacred writings.

*Students will be expected to demonstrate an appreciation for personal search, commitment and meaning in life.*

*By the end of grade 12, students will have achieved the outcomes for entry-grade 9 and will also be expected to*

- demonstrate an appreciation of how adherents of living belief systems seek religious meaning and expression.
- examine the concept of commitment and its meaning in living belief systems.
- recognize that conflicts can arise between one's personal beliefs and the teachings of one's religion.
- understand the importance of spiritual growth.

*Students will be expected to examine moral and ethical issues and teachings.*

*By the end of grade 12, students will have achieved the outcomes for entry-grade 9 and will also be expected to*

- evaluate moral and ethical teachings from various belief systems (e.g., Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism).
- explore the implications of the acceptance of responsibility for their decisions and actions.
- evaluate society's influences on the moral and ethical decisions of individuals.
- develop an understanding of an approach to life based on religious principles and moral convictions.

*Students will be expected to develop an appreciation for the connectedness of all creation.*

*By the end of grade 12, students will have achieved the outcomes for entry-grade 9 and will also be expected to*

- deepen their appreciation for the mystery and beauty of creation and the interrelationship within it.
- demonstrate a commitment to, and respect for, the sacredness and dignity of human life and all creation.
- demonstrate an understanding that humanity must take a responsible stance through stewardship.
- critique the ways in which selected religions have viewed humanity's responsibility in creation (e.g., Judaeo/Christian concept of stewardship).

*Students will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between religion and science.*

*By the end of grade 12, students will have achieved the outcomes for entry-grade 9 and will also be expected to*

- understand that religion and science address some of the fundamental questions of life and creation.
- examine the stance of selected world religions towards scientific interpretation (e.g., Christianity, Islam).
- develop an understanding of ethical issues related to scientific development and technological advances (e.g., Christianity and genetic engineering).

*Students will be expected to examine the influence of religion on contemporary issues and events.*

*By the end of grade 12, students will have achieved the outcomes for entry-grade 9 and will also be expected to*

- critique the relevance of organized religion for personal living as it relates to contemporary issues and events.
- demonstrate an understanding of the impact of various world religions on peace, social justice and respect for the sacredness and dignity of human life in relation to contemporary issues and events (e.g., peace issues, aboriginal rights, sexuality).

## Section III: Course Description

World Religions 3101 and 3106 are one credit courses. World Religions 3101 is not a prerequisite for World Religions 3106. Students may choose to complete one or both courses.

If Religious Education 3101 and 3106 are taken as a two credit course or back-to-back, the Introduction and Overview should be included only once.

### World Religions 3101

World Religions 3101 is a study of the living belief systems identified in the box below. Students explore the nature, place and function of these world religions within contemporary Canadian society.

World Religions 3101
Introduction and Overview
Aboriginal Spirituality
Early Religions: Zoroastrianism, Jainism, Taoism, Confucianism and Shinto
Hinduism
Buddhism

### World Religions 3106

World Religions 3106 is a study of the living belief systems identified in the box below. Students explore the nature, place and function of these world religions within contemporary Canadian society.

World Religions 3106
Introduction and Overview
Judaism
Christianity
Islam
Sikhism
Religion Today: various topics and reference to Baha'i



## Section IV: Specific Curriculum Outcomes

### **Overview of Specific Curriculum Outcomes**

The following pages provide an overview of the specific curriculum outcomes for World Religious 3101/3106.



## **World Religions 3101/3106**



**Students will be expected to examine the historical impact of religion on beliefs, cultures and traditions.**

*World Religions 3101/3106*

Specific Curriculum Outcomes	Sample Activities/Teaching Strategies
<p><i>By the end of the course students will be expected to</i></p> <p>1.1 examine various living belief systems regarding their views on creation, birth, death, god, destiny and afterlife</p> <p>1.2 identify how living belief systems are affected by the following factors: social unrest, advances in technology and changing values</p>	<p>Teachers could:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• place terms as listed in SCO 1.1 , creation, birth, death, god, destiny and afterlife on chart paper and post around the room. Have the students brainstorm about each term within the context of the selected living belief systems. After a short period of time rotate the groups. After all groups have contributed to each chart, students should present their findings to the class.</li> <li>• organize with students a visit to one or more places of worship/ meditation in the local area to gain knowledge of the origins of symbols, vestments, and furnishings.</li> </ul> <p>Students could:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• choose one of the factors from SCO 1.2 and create a concept web to illustrate how this factor continues to shape or influence a living belief system.</li> <li>• assume the role of a reporter to a national newspaper where the editor has assigned the task of preparing an article of how one of the factors from SCO 1.2 is a current influence on a selected living belief system.</li> <li>• create a KWL chart to establish what they know, what they want to know and what they learned on creation, birth, death, god, destiny and afterlife in a religious context.</li> </ul>

**Students will be expected to examine the historical impact of religion on beliefs, cultures and traditions.**

*World Religions 3101/3106*

Sample Assessment Activities	Notes/Vignettes						
<p>Student products:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• presentation</li> <li>• web-page</li> <li>• bulletin board</li> <li>• newspaper article</li> </ul> <p>Observation</p> <p>Questioning</p>	<p>For the first activity, found under Sample Activity/Teaching Strategies on the previous page, teachers should save these charts to be revisited throughout the course.</p> <p>It is important that the terms from SCO 1.1 be examined within the context of the selected living belief systems to set a foundation for further study.</p> <p>Early in the school year would be an appropriate time to organize, with students, a visit to one or more places of worship/mediation in the local area to gain knowledge of symbols, vestments and furnishings. This may stimulate discussion or inquiry regarding creation, birth, death, god, destiny and afterlife.</p> <p>Also, early in the school year might the most appropriate time to have students begin the KWL chart. KWL charts are effective in helping students to draw on their prior knowledge and generate questions to guide their learning.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="703 1425 1466 1617"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="703 1425 959 1488">K</th> <th data-bbox="959 1425 1211 1488">W</th> <th data-bbox="1211 1425 1466 1488">L</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="703 1488 959 1617"></td> <td data-bbox="959 1488 1211 1617"></td> <td data-bbox="1211 1488 1466 1617"></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>KWL charts will draw on students' knowledge and experiences from life and from the religious education curriculum.</p> <p>The chart could be an ongoing activity. The learning questions (third block) would be completed by the end of the unit.</p>	K	W	L			
K	W	L					

**Students will be expected to develop an understanding of beliefs, principles, and practices of Christianity and other living belief systems.**

**\* The Christian component of this GCO is met in World Religions 3106.**

*World Religions 3101/3106*

Specific Curriculum Outcomes	Sample Activities/Teaching Strategies
<p><i>By the end of the course students will be expected to</i></p> <p>2.1 demonstrate a knowledge of influential persons and their contributions to living belief systems</p> <p>2.2 examine key beliefs and events of living belief systems</p> <p>2.3 develop an understanding of the rituals and festivals of living belief systems</p> <p>2.4 explore the significance of religious symbolism within living belief systems</p>	<p>Students could:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• prepare a biographical sketch of an influential person within a living belief system. Included should be important dates, events and major contributions as they relate to the person being studied. Some suggestions are: Abraham, Baha'ullah, Jesus, Confucius, the Dalai Lama, Guru Nanak, Moses, Muhammad, Siddhartha Gautama, Zoroaster</li> </ul> <p>Suggestions to help students share information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• website creation</li> <li>• poster</li> <li>• presentation ( multimedia/oral)</li> <li>• role play</li> <li>• diorama</li> <li>• re-enactment</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use various resources to develop a portfolio of key beliefs and events of selected living belief systems (e.g., Pesach, Jihad, Resurrection, ahimsa, revelation, salvation, navjote, Baha'i Feasts and Holy Day Celebrations).</li> <li>• illustrate and present symbols depicting key beliefs of selected living belief systems (e.g., the cross in Christianity, the Star of David in Judaism, fire in Zoroastrianism, the nine pointed star for Baha'is).</li> </ul>



**Students will be expected to examine the meaning and relevance of sacred texts.**

*World Religions 3101/3106*

Specific Curriculum Outcomes	Sample Activities/Teaching Strategies
<p><i>By the end of the course students will be expected to</i></p> <p>3.1 expand their understanding of sacred texts and oral teachings of selected living belief systems</p> <p>3.2 examine the influence of sacred texts on life in modern society</p>	<p>Students could:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• read from the authorized resource, <i>Exploring World Religions: The Canadian Perspective</i>, excerpts of sacred texts studied in this course (e.g., p. 46, 67 and 75) and, either orally or in writing, give their interpretation of the passage.</li> <li>• identify the sacred texts associated with selected living belief systems and share knowledge they have about any of them.</li> </ul> <p>Teachers could:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use selected sacred texts to engage students in discussion on one of the following: dietary laws, societal laws, religious creeds and good and evil.</li> </ul>

**Students will be expected to examine the meaning and relevance of sacred texts.**

*World Religions 3101/3106*

Sample Assessment Activities	Notes/Vignettes
<p>Discussion            Observation            Questioning            Oral and written responses</p>	<p>Teachers could use local faith community leaders as resource persons when examining sacred texts. It would be important, if possible, to draw on more than one faith community. It would also be important for the teacher to inform invited guests that their purpose for coming into the classroom is to provide information as it relates to their faith community. It is not the purpose to proselytize or to make comparisons and contrasts with other faith communities.</p> <p>Not all sacred text excerpts will address each of dietary laws, societal laws, religious creeds and good and evil.</p>

**Students will be expected to demonstrate an appreciation for personal search, commitment and meaning in life.**

*World Religions 3101/3106*

Specific Curriculum Outcomes	Sample Activities/Teaching Strategies
<p><i>By the end of the course students will be expected to</i></p> <p>4.1 explore questions associated with personal search, commitment and meaning in life</p> <p>4.2 examine the role of faith for adherents in living belief systems</p>	<p>Students could:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify questions associated with personal search, commitment and meaning in life.</li> <li>• research individuals who, because of their faith, acted to influence their community or society at large. Present their findings to the class.</li> <li>• use available resources to prepare a biographical sketch of a person whose faith plays an important role in his/her life.</li> </ul> <p>Teachers could:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• organize a panel discussion to discuss evidence of the influence of sacred texts on the laws, ethics and morals of contemporary society.</li> <li>• pose questions to initiate a reflective discussion (e.g., What motivates people to be altruistic?).</li> <li>• have students who are adherents of a belief system reflect on their thoughts, words and actions for a 24 hour period. They will then be given time to write their reflections on how their faith has been a determining factor in the choices they made. If students are not adherents of a belief system they would be asked to reflect as well and to consider what factors determine their thoughts, words and actions.</li> </ul> <p>These reflections will be sealed in separate envelopes and distributed to the students at the end of the course. Students would then be asked to reflect on their own growth during the course.</p>

**Students will be expected to demonstrate an appreciation for personal search, commitment and meaning in life.**

*World Religions 3101/3106*

Sample Assessment Activities	Notes/Vignettes
<p>Discussion</p> <p>Student products:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• research</li> <li>• presentation</li> <li>• biographical sketch</li> </ul> <p>Questioning</p> <p>Observation</p>	<p>Where possible students can join local groups that encourage personal search through the practice of yoga, tai chi, meditation or martial arts. This would offer numerous opportunities for research, visitations and experiences.</p> <p>The authorized resource includes a section titled “Living My Religion” that could be useful for class discussion around SCO 4.1.</p> <p>The authorized resource includes a section titled “Portraits” and “Community Study” that could be useful in helping students meet outcome SCO 4.2.</p>



**Students will be expected to examine moral and ethical issues and teachings.***World Religions 3101/3106*

Specific Curriculum Outcomes	Sample Activities/Teaching Strategies
<p><i>By the end of the course students will be expected to</i></p> <p>5.1 expand their understanding of how living belief systems use their teachings to address moral and ethical issues</p>	<p>Students could:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify a moral or ethical issue and in a short essay discuss if faith plays a part in their views on this issue. If not, what does play a part?</li> <li>• develop concept webs about the influences on their world views.</li> <li>• choose one moral/ethical issue and prepare a report in the media of their choice on how a particular living belief system addresses this issue.</li> <li>• do a media search of moral and ethical issues of interest to people of their age. Have them select one issue and write a brief essay including why this moral and ethical issue is important to them and their position on the issue.</li> </ul>

**Students will be expected to examine moral and ethical issues and teachings.**

*World Religions 3101/3106*

Sample Assessment Activities	Notes/Vignettes
<p>Student products:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• presentation</li> <li>• report</li> <li>• multimedia presentation</li> <li>• essay</li> </ul> <p>Discussion</p> <p>Questioning</p> <p>Observation</p>	<p>The authorized resource includes a section titled “Exploring Issues” that could be useful in helping students meet SCO 5.1.</p> <p>While it is important for teachers to encourage students to bring moral and ethical issues to the classroom, teachers need to be sensitive to the possibility that some students may be dealing with these issues at a personal level.</p>

**Students will be expected to develop an appreciation for the connectedness of all creation.**

*World Religions 3101/3106*

Specific Curriculum Outcomes	Sample Activities/Teaching Strategies
<p><i>By the end of the course students will be expected to</i></p> <p>6.1 explore the teachings of living belief systems regarding the place of humanity in creation</p>	<p>Students could:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• research the teachings of living belief systems regarding humanity’s role in creation. From their research create a Venn diagram illustrating the results.</li> <li>• research a teaching of a living belief system regarding the place of humanity in creation. Through a collage, picture(s), work of art or through symbols they will represent this teaching.</li> <li>• create and operate a school-based environmental group.</li> </ul>

**Students will be expected to develop an appreciation for the connectedness of all creation.**

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Sample Assessment Activities	Notes/Vignettes
<p>Student products:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Venn diagram</li> <li>• collage</li> <li>• picture(s)</li> <li>• work of art</li> </ul> <p>Student responses</p> <p>Discussion</p> <p>Questioning</p> <p>Observation</p>	<p>The spirituality of the world's Aboriginal peoples and those of the Eastern faiths, e.g., Taoism, Hinduism, Zoroastrianism is particularly helpful in studying the connectedness of humanity in creation. (e.g., the concept of stewardship in religion).</p>

**Students will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between religion and science.**

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Specific Curriculum Outcomes	Sample Activities/Teaching Strategies
<p><i>By the end of the course students will be expected to</i></p> <p>7.1 examine the influence of science on living belief systems today</p>	<p>Teachers could:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have students brainstorm areas of tension and harmony between religion and science (e.g., medical research).</li> <li>• have students select one issue of tension and/or harmony between religion and science and in an essay describe the tension and/or harmony that exists between the two views.</li> <li>• organize a panel to discuss how a living belief system has adapted to, or has approached, a specific question relating to science, technology and religion.</li> </ul>

**Students will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between religion and science.**

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Sample Assessment Activities	Notes/Vignettes
<p>Student product:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• panel discussion</li> <li>• essay</li> </ul> <p>Student responses</p> <p>Questioning</p> <p>Observation</p>	<p>When discussing religion and science, the teacher is cautioned not to present a biased view on the topics being discussed. Students should be encouraged to think about various topics and after examination and reflection draw on their conclusions. The teacher should not present a particular viewpoint as being right or wrong.</p> <p>The authorized resource includes a section titled “Exploring Issues: Cloning”, pp. 272-273, that could be useful in helping students meet SCO 7.1.</p> <p>For the second activity found under Sample Activity/Teaching Strategies, teachers can take this to a higher level by having students, in their essay, take a position on the topic and defend it.</p>

**Students will be expected to examine the influence of religion on contemporary issues and events.**

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Specific Curriculum Outcomes	Sample Activities/Teaching Strategies
<p><i>By the end of the course students will be expected to</i></p> <p>8.1 explore the political, economic, social, and ideological impact of a living belief system on a specific culture</p> <p>8.2 analyse the influence of a living belief system on artistic expression in a culture</p> <p>8.3 examine how religious pluralism is reflected in Canadian society and culture</p>	<p>Students could:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• collect clippings from newspapers, magazines and journals on an issue of interest relating to SCO 8.1. They could develop an information package in a media of their choice and share this with the class.</li> <li>• collect images to build a collage or presentation to reflect the influence of a living belief system on artistic expression.</li> <li>• research religious pluralism in Canadian society and present their findings to the class. Various methods of presentation are encouraged (e.g., drama, music, arts).</li> <li>• draw on community resources, (e.g., cultural societies from various ethnic communities, and have them organize a multicultural event).</li> </ul>

**Students will be expected to examine the influence of religion on contemporary issues and events.**

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Sample Assessment Activities	Notes/Vignettes
<p>Student products:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• information package</li> <li>• presentations</li> <li>• collage</li> <li>• multicultural event</li> </ul> <p>Student responses</p> <p>Discussion</p> <p>Questioning</p> <p>Observation</p>	<p>Besides examining differences, to promote a sense of shared values, emphasize similarities among groups.</p>





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## Section V: Appendix

### Bibliography

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- Stackhouse, M. *Creeds. Society and Human Rights*, Grand Rapids, Michigan: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1984.

### Recommended Reading

- Breuilly, Elizabeth, O'Brien, Joanne and Palmer, Martin. *Religions of the World: The Illustrated Guide to Origins, Beliefs, Traditions and Festivals*. New York: Ferleigh Books, 1997.
- Ingham, Michael. *Mansions of the Spirit: The Gospel in a Multi-Faith World*. Toronto: Anglican Book Centre, 1997.
- Scott, Susan L. *Stories in my Neighbour's Faith*. Toronto: United Church Publishing House, 1999.
- Wright, Andrew and Brandon, Ann-Marie. *Learning to Teach Religious Education in the Secondary School*. New York: Routledge Falmer, 2000.

