

*Public District School Board Writing Partnership*

# Course Profile

## **World Religions: Beliefs, Issues, and Religious Traditions**

Grade 11  
University/College Preparation  
HRT3M

• *for teachers by teachers*

This sample course of study was prepared for teachers to use in meeting local classroom needs, as appropriate. This is not a mandated approach to the teaching of the course. It may be used in its entirety, in part, or adapted.

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## Course Overview

### World Religions: Beliefs, Issues, and Religious Traditions, Grade 11, HRT3M

#### Course Description

This course enables students to discover what others believe and how they live and to appreciate their own unique heritage. Students learn about the teachings and traditions of a variety of religions, the connection between religion and the development of civilization, the place and function of religion in human experience, and the influence of a broad range of religions on contemporary society. This course also introduces students to skills used in researching and investigating world religions.

#### Course Notes

As students enter the final two years of high school, they become more aware of their world, and cognizant of differences and similarities between people. This expansion of horizons often creates curiosity about what others believe and the customs and practices which form part of others' religious observances. In an increasingly global society, students will encounter people of various religious backgrounds. A course such as World Religions allows students to develop some understanding of the ways in which religious traditions affect the decision-making and way of life of others.

In this course, the more traditional "historical," religion by religion, approach has been abandoned. Instead of studying each religion individually a more thematic approach is adopted. Examining each religion as an historical narrative often resulted in students being given extensive detail about matters in the distant past, rather than being taught much about how the adherents of the religion are influenced by that belief on a day-to-day basis, in the contemporary world. In teaching those religions with a lengthy history, being bound by chronology often resulted in either a disproportionate time being spent on the study of one religion, or the history of that religion being truncated. Finally, the approach taken by some teachers in the past is seen by many as too euro-centric, with the Judeo-Christian viewpoint taken as the norm, and all others receiving short shrift. All of these are significant objections to a traditional approach.

On the other hand, the learning expectations of the policy for this course are global, rather than specific to one religion, and any attempt to cover a variety of religions using the strategies of the past might easily become highly repetitive. Also, due to the global nature of the expectations, these might possibly be fulfilled by the consideration of only one or two religions in depth. Since the object of this course is to learn about "a broad range of religions", this obviously would violate the policy, in spirit at least. This course has been designed to address such concerns, as far as is possible.

The course profile is designed around five thematic units, with the culminating activity of the course devoted to a student-selected case study of a significant issue. There are points of contact or similarity between the themes, but each is distinct enough to be treated separately. Some educators may feel intimidated by a thematic approach, but this model best addresses the concerns noted above and suits the needs and interests of students, based on our experience teaching World Religions. Each unit allows students to examine the ways in which beliefs, issues, tradition, and practice are entwined. As the course progresses, students build a repertoire of skills and knowledge that are needed to undertake the case studies of Unit 6.

Within each unit, the teacher should select two religions for study. Specific religions have been designated for each unit in this profile, but factors may dictate that other religions be substituted for the ones suggested. A list of religions, which lend themselves to study in particular units, has been included in an appendix. This list is not exhaustive but presents a good range of possibilities for study. Factors that influence selection include: the specific knowledge or expertise of the teacher; the religious profile of the class, the school, or the community; and the prominence of a given religion in current events, among other things. No religion should be selected for study in more than two units. This allows as many as ten different religions to be examined during the course; while it is not necessary to achieve that number, at least six or seven religions should be studied, however. In a multicultural and multi-religious society such as Ontario, this number seems advisable.

It is important that the teacher create a class atmosphere in which every religious point of view is treated equitably. Students must be encouraged to share their own insights, and to respect the views of others, even when representatives of that religion are not present in class. Activity 1.1 may help in establishing this atmosphere early in the course. In the past, many teachers have used the terms major, minor, primitive, etc., to describe religions; these terms can be seen as pejorative and often give a distorted impression of the significance or prevalence of individual religions. Such language should be avoided, and non-judgmental language should always be used. The particular vocabulary of religious studies should be introduced early, and reinforced often.

It is suggested that students be given a brief overview of salient features of each religion, as it is first introduced in the course. The teacher might prepare overviews ahead of time, if they are not part of possible texts used in the class. A synopsis of the central sacred story of each religion should also be assigned to students, if the story does not form part of the material covered directly in the unit's activities.

### Units: Titles and Times

Unit 1	Temples of Wisdom	12 hours
* Unit 2	The Idea of Deity	20 hours
Unit 3	The Relationship between Deity and Humanity	20 hours
Unit 4	The Relationship between Deity and the Individual	20 hours
Unit 5	Person and Community	12 hours
Unit 6	Case Studies	26 hours

\* This unit is fully developed in this Course Profile.

## Unit Overviews

### Unit 1: Temples of Wisdom

**Time:** 12 hours

#### Unit Description

Activity 1.1 should employ brief ethical statements derived from a number of religions (see Resources) to stimulate students' understanding. Students or pairs could be assigned one of these statements and asked to interpret it, assess how it could be used in daily life, etc. Then interpretations could be shared and a class discussion developed.

The ways in which human needs are fulfilled both through relationships with the natural world and with the supernatural are explored (Maslow’s hierarchy of needs might provide a framework for this discussion). The connection between individual and community needs should also be explored using an organizer, or similar technique. The nexus between our need, desires, and vulnerability to events beyond our control is examined in a jigsaw activity using First Nations, Aboriginal, or Animistic spirituality as an example. Different roles of religion are considered, and students are called on in a “fishbowl” lesson to defend one or more of the roles. At this point the teacher might tie the introductory activity to the discussion of the roles of religion, e.g., that humans are themselves part of a natural world and that ethical treatment of each other is a vital subset of ethical relationships with the rest of creation. (Note: Activity 1.1 should be a stand-alone introduction, if a teacher decides to use a different unit as the first unit of study.)

**Unit Overview Chart**

Act.	Expectations	Assessment	Focus/Activity
1	RBV.02, HEV.01, RB2.01	Thinking Understanding	Ethics: <i>analysis of the “golden rules”</i>
2	RBV.01, HE1.02, HE4.02	Inquiry Knowledge	Individual and community needs explored: <i>organizer</i>
3	RBV.03, RB1.01, HEV.01, HEV.02, IS2.04	Application Understanding	How religions are created to fulfill human needs: <i>the impact of events beyond our control - jigsaw</i>
4	RB2.01, HEV.02, HE1.02, IS2.03	Inquiry Application Knowledge	Roles of religion: <i>fishbowl lesson/defending an argument</i>
5	SS1.04, SS1.05, ISV.05, ISV.06, IS1.04, IS1.06, IS2.05	Inquiry Application Understanding Communication	Holy places, Holy rites

**Culminating Activity**

Students research and express their understanding of a religion’s holy places or sacred rites. This activity invites visual, kinesthetic, and sensory learners to perform at a high level. For example, students create a visual representation of a Mayan temple, Shinto shrine, etc. and explain how this structure relates to the individual/social needs and religious belief of the people who built it. Or, students research the sacred Mayan Ball game and demonstrate to the class how it was played using the school gymnasium as the court. (This might be a cross-curricular assignment with Physical Education.). Students should be given an opportunity to peer-assess their classmates’ efforts, using a teacher-generated rubric.

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## Unit 2: The Idea of Deity

Time: 20 hours

### Unit Description

This unit is the most complex and is explored in detail as the sample unit. Students explore how two radically different religions view the concept of deity. The first sub-unit (2.1-2.3) considers Zoroastrianism. While this is a monotheistic religion it is sufficiently different from Judeo-Christian beliefs to stimulate students' thoughts about the constituents of a monotheistic religion. The second sub-unit (2.4-2.6) deals with Hinduism. The teacher should emphasize that, within a polytheistic belief system, monism can thrive. If the teacher so desires, some other representative monotheistic and polytheist religions may be compared. The Internet should be introduced as an aid in studying World Religions, during this unit. (**Note:** Unit 2 is fully developed in this profile.)

### Unit Overview Chart

Act.	Expectations	Assessment	Focus/Activity
1	RB1.01, RB2.10, SSV.01, HE4.01	Understanding	Good and Evil: <i>compare and contrast</i>
2	RBV.03, RB2.04, RB2.09, ISV.05, ISV.06	Communication	One Single God: <i>Ahuramazda's role organizer</i>
3	RB1.04, RB2.01, RB2.02, RB2.03	Knowledge	The Role of the Amesha Spentas and Yazatas: <i>report</i>
4	RBV.01, RB1.01, RB1.02, RB1.03, RB2.09, RB2.10, SS1.03, HEV.01, HE1.01, HE3.02, HE4.01, HE4.02, ISV.06, IS1.06	Knowledge Application Thinking/ Inquiry	Hinduism – The Endless Cycle: <i>case studies (biographies)</i>
5	RB2.02, RB2.03, HEV.04, HE3.01, IS1.04	Understanding	Messengers, Avatars, Incarnations: <i>compare and contrast</i>
6	RB2.01, RB2.05, RB3.03, SSV.02	Thinking	The Portrayal of Deity in Art and Poetry: <i>analysis</i>
7	RBV.02, ISV.02, RB2.02, BR2.04, HE2.02, IS1.01	Thinking/ Inquiry Application Understanding	"Recipe" for a Religion

### Culminating Activity

Students create a "recipe" or "formula" for religion, taking into account the several different approaches to spirituality examined so far in the course. They then apply this "recipe" to a sample religion to see if it meets the criteria established. Brainstorming and class discussion are used to create a list of five to ten essential "ingredients" (e.g., has a divinity or divinities; has a basic code of conduct or ethics; has an explanation for creation, etc.). Students generate an organizer and, using materials supplied by the teacher, examine Jainism to see how well it fits the "recipe." Jainism specifically should be used, since it may challenge some preconceptions students have. In a final report they explain how it did or did not meet expectations, and draw a conclusion about the usefulness of preconceived ideas when dealing with religion.

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### Unit 3: The Relationship between Deity and Humanity

Time: 20 hours

#### Unit Description

This unit examines the different ways in which religions have seen the connection between deity and human beings. Judaism and Islam are considered and a contrast is drawn between concepts of this relationship as based on a covenant, and as based on submission. The unit is divided into sub-units on Judaism (3.1-3.4), and Islam (3.5-3.8). There are major activities at the end of each sub-unit. The Internet should be used as a research tool in this unit whenever the opportunity presents itself, and certainly in section 3.8. Section 3.9 includes the unit culminating activity and synthesizes the material covered in the two sub-units. Learning activities in this unit invite visual, kinesthetic, and sensory learners to perform at a high level.

The Judaism sub-unit gives opportunities to examine primary and secondary materials and to use debating, dramatic, and kinesthetic skills to present the student's findings. The history and impact of the idea of the Covenant are traced and presented graphically.

#### Unit Overview Chart - Judaism Sub-unit

Act.	Expectations	Assessment	Focus/Activity
1	RBV.02, RBV.03, RBV.04, RB1.03, RB1.04, RB2.04, RB2.06, RB3.02, HE3.01, ISV.06, IS1.04	Thinking Understanding Communication	The Sacred Story - the sacrifice of Abraham in Judaism and Islam: <i>debate</i>
2	RBV.01, RBV.04, RB2.08, RB2.06, HEV.01, IS1.04	Inquiry Knowledge	One Type of Relationship: The Covenant: <i>chart/timeline</i>
3	RBV.04, RB2.06, RB3.02, IS1.04	Application Understanding	The Connection between Sacred Writings and Practice: <i>re-enactment of Passover or Purim</i>
4	RBV.01, RB1.04, RB2.09, SSV.01, HEV.01, HE4.03, ISV.01, ISV.06, IS1.04, IS1.05, IS2.02	Thinking Knowledge/ Understanding Communication	Breach of Promise - does God keep the Covenant?: <i>mock trial/report</i>

#### Sub-unit Culminating Activity: 3.4

Where is God when He is needed? Students, having developed some understanding of the relationship between God and the Jews being based on a covenant, are asked to consider whether God's side of the bargain has been kept. The teacher should introduce readings from the Book of Job or material from the Jewish "Death of God" movement and divide the class into plaintiff and defendant legal teams and a jury. After both sides have presented their cases, the summations and jury's decision are presented as written reports. Students, with teacher assistance, should be given the opportunity to develop a rubric for assessing the presentation.

Students are given an opportunity to learn about prejudice and stereotypes and to use research as a method to refute them, as they explore Islam. The origins and spread of this religion are highlighted using poetry and historical documents well as other (secondary) sources. The Five Pillars are explored, and students develop a presentation based on one of them.

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### Unit Overview Chart - Islam Sub-unit

Act.	Expectations	Assessment	Focus/Activity
5	SSV.01, SS1.02, SS1.07, HEV.02, HE2.02, ISV.03	Inquiry Understanding	Identifying Images of Islam: <i>organizer</i>
6	RBV.01, RB1.03, RB2.06, HE3.02, SSV.02, SS1.01, SS1.03, SS1.02	Knowledge Communication	The Origins and Growth of Islam: <i>map/timeline/poetry analysis</i>
7	RB3.02, ISV.O5, IS1.04, IS1.05	Thinking Application Communication	The Five Pillars – Submission to God’s Will: <i>presentation</i>
8	SSV.01, SSV.O4, SS1.07, HEV.02, HE2.02, ISV.03, IS1.05	Thinking Application Knowledge	Images Reconsidered: <i>research assignment</i>
9	RBV.02, RB2.09, SSV.04, SS1.02, HE3.02, HE4.03	Understanding Communication	Covenant and Submission Compared: <i>short essay</i>

#### Sub-unit Culminating Activity: 3.8

Students select one or two of the images of Islam generated in 3.5 and, using their class notes and further research, attempt to discover what lies behind this perception. The learning here should come from students’ discoveries, not from teacher input. A rubric could be developed which allows students to score well for their research skills and summation of the material, not on their success in proving or disproving the image. Peer assessment could be used as a component of the activity.

#### Unit Culminating Activity: 3.9

Students write a (750- to 1500-word, depending on the academic strengths of the class) argumentative essay on their perception of the benefits or obstacles to a community of a relationship with Deity based on Covenant or Submission.

### Unit 4: The Relationship between Deity and the Individual

**Time:** 20 hours

#### Unit Description

This unit gives students the opportunity to examine the sources of religious beliefs, sacred texts, myths, and stories in greater depth and to come to an understanding of the meaning of key concepts, such as salvation and religious codes of conduct. Through the research and performance of a religious ritual, students demonstrate their understanding of the reasons for rituals and the various ways in which various religions communicate with the divine. Thus the connection between religious beliefs and individual actions in one’s daily life is further reinforced. Learning activities in this unit invite visual, kinesthetic, and sensory learners to perform at a high level.

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### Unit Overview Chart

Act.	Expectations	Assessment	Focus/Activity
1	RB1.04, RB2.09, RB2.10	Thinking Knowledge	The Meaning of Salvation: <i>compare/contrast</i>
2	RB2.10, SS1.07, HE1.01, HE3.01, HE3.02	Inquiry Understanding	Religious Ethics and Religious Role Models: <i>research assignment</i>
3	RB3.02, HE4.01, ISV.04, ISV.06, IS1.03	Inquiry Communication	Deity in the Daily Lives of Individual Adherents: <i>interview/report</i>
4	RBV.04, RB3.02, RB3.03, SS1.07, HE4.01, ISV.04, ISV.06, IS1.06	Inquiry Application Understanding	Rituals, Worship, and Lifestyle: <i>performance/re-enactment</i>
5	RBV.02, RBV.03, RBV.04, RB1.04, RB2.09, RB2.10, RB3.02, RB3.03, SSV.03, SS1.04, SS1.07, HEV.01, HEV.03, HE1.01, HE3.01, HE4.01, ISV.05, IS1.06	Thinking Application Knowledge Communication	“The Religious Game of Life”: <i>design of a board game</i>

### Culminating Activity

Students research the relationship between deity and the individual in a selected religion and use their knowledge and skill to create a board game. The object of the game is for the adherent to live her/his life by the code of conduct for the chosen religion. The board must reflect modern society, and the game must be designed so the players face realistic moral/ethical challenges (the result of a class brainstorm). The board should demonstrate students’ understanding of the key concepts in the religion, sacred text or stories, knowledge of role models, the code of conduct, knowledge of sacred rituals and forms of worship, connecting with the unseen world, and the “ultimate goal” of the adherents. It is strongly suggested that teachers devote 45 minutes of class time in directing students in the development of a rubric, which will be used to evaluate this activity. This will enable students to further develop their self-assessment skills and clearly define performance expectations.

## Unit 5: Person and Community

**Time:** 12 hours

### Unit Description

An individual who practises a given religion has many complex interactions with her/his religious community. They provide the background against which many of life’s key moments are lived. In this unit, students examine what constitutes a community, the roles necessary for a fully functioning community life, how “belonging” to a particular community is expressed, and the effect of community expectations on the individual in regard to gender roles and milestones such as marriage and divorce. They also examine their own community and compare it to others in Ontario to see how the mix of religious affiliations can vary from place to place, and from year to year.

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### Unit Overview Chart

Act.	Expectations	Assessment	Focus/Activity
1	RB1.02, RB1.04, RB2.01, RB2.02, RB3.01, RB3.03, SSV.04, SS1.08, HEV.02, HE1.01, ISV.05, ISV.06	Thinking Understanding	What Makes a Community?: <i>analysis</i>
2	RBV.01, RB1.02, SSV.01, SS1.01, SS1.03, HEV.04, HE1.03, ISV.04, IS1.01, IS1.02, IS1.05, IS2.02	Inquiry Knowledge Communication	Religious Affiliation in Ontario Communities: <i>compare/contrast small and large centres, and one centre over time</i>
3	RB1.05, RB2.01, SS1.02, SS1.03, HEV.01, HE2.04, HE4.01, HE4.03, IS1.01, IS1.04, IS1.06, IS2.04	Application Understanding	Belonging - how issues such as marriage outside the community can effect adherents of a religion: <i>research</i>
4	BRV.03, RB1.02, RB1.04, SSV.03, SS1.07, HE2.02, HE2.03, HE3.03, ISV.05, ISV.06, IS1.02, IS1.04, IS1.05, IS2.04	Knowledge/ Understanding Communication	Women and Men - gender roles and religious communities: <i>debate</i>

### Culminating Activity

The teacher introduces the topic of gender roles and religion by doing a word association with the class and highlighting the patterns of gender bias, which emerge. The class should discuss where such stereotypes come from (e.g., scripture, religious tradition, social conventions, etc.). Two or more questions for debate should also be proposed and pro and con sides should be assigned. Students research their positions and present their cases using strict timelines. Following closing arguments, the audience can be polled for their decision as to which side won the debate. The debate should be evaluated using a rubric that is informed by awareness of the informal logical fallacies, which should be explained to students prior to the debate.

## Unit 6: Case Studies

**Time:** 26 hours

### Unit Description

Religion often serves as a nexus in conflict. Understanding of how religion affects issues in society is developed through case studies. Three sample case studies are introduced and taught separately by the teacher, with materials supplied to students. Students are shown how to analyse the information they research, create a thesis, map out an argument to support a thesis, and synthesize the results of these activities into a final presentation and report. Upon completion of the introductory activities in this unit, students are well prepared to both identify and investigate a critical issue in World Religions. Activities 6.1-6.3 lead into the culminating activity for the whole course (6.4).

### Unit Overview Chart

Act.	Expectations	Assessment	Focus/Activity
1	RBV.03, BRV.04, RB1.05, RB2.06, RB2.10, SSV.03, SSV.04, SS1.01, SS1.02, SS1.03, SS1.07, HE1.01, HE2.02, HE4.01, ISV.06, IS1.05, IS2.04	Thinking Understanding	Divorce in the Jewish Community - the Great Agunah Debate: <i>evaluation and analysis</i>
2	RB1.01, RB1.04, RB2.04, RB2.06, RB2.09, RB2.10, SS1.08, HEV.03, HEV.04, HE1.02, HE2.01, HE4.04, ISV.01, ISV.02, ISV.05, IS1.04, IS1.05, IS2.03, IS2.04	Inquiry Knowledge	Creationism and Science – ever since Scopes: <i>thesis statement and outline of argument</i>
3	RB1.02, RB1.03, RB3.03, SSV.04, SS1.02, HEV.04, IS 1.01, IS1.04, IS2.04, IS2.05	Thinking Application Knowledge Communication	The Sikh Community in Conflict: <i>multi-paragraph essay</i>
4	RB1.02, RB1.03, RB1.04, RB3.03, SSV.04, SS1.02, HEV.04, ISV.01, ISV.03, ISV.05, IS1.01, IS1.04, IS2.01, IS2.02, IS2.04	Thinking/Inquiry Application Knowledge/ Understanding Communication	Individual Case Study: <i>position paper/ storefront display</i>

### Culminating Activity

Students work in pairs to identify a socio-religious issue of current significance. They thoroughly investigate this issue, using research methodologies appropriate to their case study, and write an individual position paper in which they outline their findings, select an approach, which could be taken to resolve the issue, and defend their solution. Finally, students communicate their findings using a storefront display in a “Critical Issues in World Religions Forum.” This format allows students to communicate their specific case study findings while gathering information on a variety of other case studies. Students, with minimal teacher input, should develop a rubric for peer assessment of the storefront display component of the activity; each display should be assessed by at least two students, and each student should be responsible for assessing two displays by his/her peers. Completion of these assessments should be included in the overall mark for the activity.

### Teaching/Learning Strategies

Teachers use a variety of teaching/learning strategies in presenting this course. Although this subject is weighted toward the written word, a major concern has been that sufficient learning activities be presented to enable visual, kinesthetic, and sensory learners to perform at a high level. As designed, this course provides an excellent opportunity for students to develop intelligences on multiple levels. Overall, students should be encouraged to think critically, work cooperatively, conduct research using both primary and secondary sources, and synthesize rational positions.

In Unit 1 students begin to learn the vocabulary of religious studies and to employ it in small group and class discussions. Jigsaws and organizers can be used to investigate the relationship between human needs, the natural world, and supernatural agencies.

In Unit 2 students employ compare and contrast skills; audio-visual and multimedia materials can be used to enrich their understanding of the portrayal of deity.

In Unit 3 debates, re-enactments, and mock trials give several opportunities for students to develop and employ their subject vocabulary. Map exercise and timelines increase visual learning, and poetry analysis should stimulate non-linear thinking.

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In Unit 4, person-to-person interviews and performance/re-enactments are employed, as well as skills in visual presentation and conceptualization (rules of play, design of game, etc.).

In Unit 5 numeric/statistical analysis is employed. Debates here deepen analytical ability and stimulate logical processing.

Throughout, frequent use is made of brainstorming, fishbowl discussion, and problem solving, etc., as indicated. Guest speakers, audio-visual materials, field trips, Socratic lessons, and guided Internet searches, should be used as appropriate, to make the material more accessible.

Teachers should use regular formative quizzes as an aid to students, allowing them to check how well they have assimilated the factual content presented in each unit.

In order for the peer assessment element of the course culminating activity to be successful, students should be given several opportunities, in various units, to assist in developing rubrics that will be used to evaluate their work.

### **Assessment & Evaluation of Student Achievement**

Assessment and evaluation in this course are based on the Achievement Chart categories found in *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 11 and 12, Social Sciences and Humanities*.

Summative assessment of the final culminating activity comprises 30% of the overall course evaluation. The performance expectations of each unit are directly connected to the performance criteria in the culminating activity in regard to all areas of the Achievement Chart. For example:

In Unit 1, students explore the origins and implications of religious inspiration, human needs, and religious goals. Skills emphasized in this unit include note taking, discussion, organization of information, and the proper use of religious terminology. Of critical importance in this unit is the focus on defending an argument in Activity 1.4.

In Unit 2, students learn to interpret source documents and to extrapolate religious doctrine from them. Their understanding of religious terminology is extended through discussion of the critical topics of monotheism and polytheism. Students expand their skills in organizing important information, comparing and contrasting abstract concepts, analysis, and report writing. In Activity 2.4, case studies are first introduced to ensure students have familiarity with them when the culminating activity is reached.

In Unit 3, students are introduced to key concepts regarding the relationship between human beings and deity. The importance of exploring the historical origins of religious belief and practice is underlined. Skill in using primary (sacred texts) and secondary (commentaries and interpretations) materials is applied and enhanced. More use is made of the Internet, and students should be given criteria to evaluate the appropriateness of this material.

In Unit 4, students are asked to make the connection between religious beliefs and individual actions in daily life. Research methods are further developed with the introduction of oral interviews. Emphasis is placed on creatively communicating the results of inquiry. The culminating activity enables students to develop their visual presentation skills and apply their research findings to a modern setting.

In Unit 5, the concept of community is explored, and some of the ramifications of being an individual within a broader community are examined. There is more use of primary materials and statistical analysis is introduced, broadening the possible avenues of research methodology students might employ in the culminating activity.

Finally, in Unit 6, three case studies are broached and investigated collectively to give students a chance to develop greater familiarity with this approach to studying a religion. The activities associated with Activities 6.1-6.3 help students refine in detail the skills and techniques necessary to tackle the culminating activity.

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In preparing this profile, assignments have been suggested for all units rather than summative tests. However, teachers may choose to substitute up to two summative tests for unit assignments, if constraints of time, etc., make this necessary. It should be noted that no exam is envisaged for this course. The culminating activity is, of itself, an authentic performance of students' learning throughout the course. Seventy per cent of the grade will be based on assessments and evaluations conducted throughout the course. Thirty per cent of the grade will be based on a final evaluation in the form of an examination, performance, essay, and/or other method of evaluation.

## **Accommodations**

The study of world religions is a textual study, in the main. This presents a significant barrier to achievement if students have specific learning disabilities, such as dyslexia and dysgraphia, or where English is the student's second language. The teacher should refer to the student's IEP (Individual Education Plan) when considering accommodations. Individualized accommodations are included in each student's IEP, which should provide an excellent source of strategies to deal with learning exceptionalities. Some possible accommodations include:

- Student reading comprehension level should be assessed early.
- A range of materials should be offered in any language-based activity (e.g., Activity 4.1).
- Whenever possible, vocabulary lists should be made available.
- Context clues and related vocabulary should be discussed.
- Reading material should be the subject of follow up to clarify students' difficulties.
- Teachers should model through skills when expecting students to draw inferences, conclusions, or assess the implications of case study material (e.g., Activity 2.6).
- Main ideas and new information should be mapped out and organized via charting, blocking, graphing, categorization, paraphrasing, and highlighting (e.g., 2.1).
- ESL students may benefit from being allowed to prepare their arguments for debate (e.g., Activity 3.1) or mock trial (e.g., Activity 3.4) in their first language.
- ESL students may need support in completing peer assessments.
- Students with visual impairment may need alternate assignments for activities involving graphic representations (e.g., Activity 3.3).
- Students with significant motor dysfunction (e.g., cerebral palsy) may need adjustments in performance-based components (e.g., Activities 1.5, 4.4).
- A slow rate of speech, pausing frequently in a natural way, should be modelled for activities requiring oral presentations (e.g., Activity 3.4).
- The ability to criticize constructively and accept constructive criticism should be discussed with students, and modelled, before peer-evaluation exercises are attempted (e.g., Activity 1.5).
- Open-ended activities should be provided whenever possible.
- Alternate units beyond the regular curriculum could be made available.

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## Appendix A

### Religions Suggested for Study (by Unit)

This is not an exhaustive list and teachers could ensure the religions covered include as many alternatives as possible, depending on class, school, or community religious profile. Distinct religions and sects exist within many of these categories, but are not explicitly listed here in each case. The teacher should endeavour to be as specific as possible in choosing religions to teach, wherever possible, e.g., Yoruba Religion, not just “African”; Theravada, not just “Buddhism”; Anabaptism, or even Amish, rather than “Christianity.”

**Unit 1:** Native North American Spirituality, Mayan religion, Aboriginal Religions, Animism, Shintoism, Wicca/Neo-paganism, Jainism, Zoroastrianism.

**Unit 2:** Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Hinduism, Ancient Paganism, African Religions, Jainism, Shakerism, Rastafarianism, Mormonism, Theravada Buddhism.

**Unit 3:** Judaism, Islam, Mahayana Buddhism, Ancient Paganism, Zoroastrianism, Eastern Orthodoxy, Reformation Protestantism, Baha’ism, and Mormonism.

**Unit 4:** Recent Protestantism, Hinduism, Orthodox Judaism, Baha'ism, Sikhism, African religions, Wicca/Neo-paganism.

**Unit 5:** Sikhism, Amish/Mennonite/Anabaptism, Shintoism, Rastafarianism, Mormonism, Animism, African religions, Judaism, Roman Catholicism, Islam, Zoroastrianism.

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## Appendix B

### Resources

#### Books

*Atlas of the World's Religions*. Oxford University Press, 1999. ISBN 0195214498

A good source for giving some idea of the scope of various religions.

Brooks, Geraldine. *Nine Parts of Desire: The Hidden World of Islamic Women*. New York: Doubleday, 1995. ISBN 0385475772

Vignettes of the life of Muslim women.

Breitowitz, Irving A. *Between Civil and Religious Law*. Greenwood Publishing Group, 1993  
ISBN 0313284717

Deals with Jewish laws regarding marriage and the difficulties faced by individuals without a Get.

Breuilly, Elizabeth, et al. *Religions of the World: The Illustrated Guide to Origins, Beliefs, Traditions and Festivals*. New York: Facts on file, 1997. ISBN 081603723x

This excellent resource presents each religion in up-to-date language and images. Glossary.

Canada and the World, eds. *Religion A to Z*. Waterloo: R/L Taylor Publishing Consultants Limited, 1999.  
ISBN 1-896490-42-5

Dawood, N.J., trans. *The Koran*, Penguin Books, 1956, 1990. ISBN 0140445587

Ellis, Marc H. *Unholy Alliance: Religion and Atrocity in Our Time*. Fortress Press, 1997.  
ISBN 0800630807

*The Encyclopaedia of Man, Myth and Magic: The Illustrated Encyclopaedia of Mythology, Religion and the Unknown*. Vol. 1-21. Marshall Cavendish, 1995. ISBN 1122083092

This encyclopaedia covers in depth the religions of the world, the myths of mankind, and the supernatural. Wonderful illustrations.

*The Encyclopaedia of Women and World Religion*. Two volumes. Prentice-Hall Canada, 1998.  
ISBN 0028646088

Comparative study of religious issues such as mythology, ordination, afterlife; also includes the study of art in religion, literature, and science; biographies of religious leaders.

Freke, Timothy. *Encyclopaedia of Spirituality: Information and Inspiration go Transform Your Life*.  
New York: Sterling Publishing, 2000. ISBN 0806999055

Divided into three sections: spiritual traditions, which cover ancient religions to new age, spiritual practices, and Spiritual teachings. Shows links between traditional religion and new movements.

Harlan, Lindsey, and Paul B Courtright, eds. *From the Margins of Hindu Marriage: Essays in Gender, Religion, and Culture*. Oxford University Press, 1995. ISBN 019508117X

Haynes, Stephen R. and John K. Roth, eds. *The Death of God Movement and the Holocaust: Radical Theology Encounters the Shoah*. Greenwood Press, 1999. ISBN 0-313-30365-7

The challenges posed by the Holocaust to Jewish theology spawned this movement (useful for Unit 3).

Jacobs, William Jay. *Great Lives: World Religions*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995.  
ISBN 0684197030

Brief biographies of religious leaders from ancient religions to the present. Very readable for students.

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## Appendix B (Continued)

Kinsley, David R. *Hinduism: A Cultural Perspective*, 2nd ed. Prentice Hall, 1993. ISBN 0-1339-5732-2  
Kolitz, Zvi. *Yossel Rakover Speaks to God: Holocaust Challenges to Religious Faith*. Ktav Publishing House, 1995. ISBN 0881255262

Matthews, Peter and Linda Schele. *The Code of Kings: The Language of Seven Sacred Mayan Temples and Tombs*. Touchstone Press, 1999. ISBN 0-6848-5209-8

Matthews, Reader Ian. *A Simple Guide to Shint*. Tallman Company, 1997. ISBN 1-8603-4003-2

Nelson, John K. *A Year in the Life of a Shinto Shrine*. University of Washington Press, 1996. ISBN 0-2959-7500-8

John Bowker. *The Oxford Dictionary of World Religions*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1997. ISBN 0-1986-6242-4

A comprehensive and authoritative reference work. Highly recommended as a teacher resource.

Philip, Neil. *Myths and Legends: Annotated Guides*. Toronto: Firefly Books, 1999. ISBN 0789441179  
Beautiful book combines world myths and legends with painting, artefacts, and concise annotation.

Prime, Ranchor. *Hinduism and Ecology - Seeds of Truth*. Cassell Publishers Ltd., 1992. ISBN-0-304-32313

Smith, Huston. *The Illustrated Worlds Religions: A Guide to Our Wisdom Traditions*. Harper-Collins, 1994. ISBN 0060674407

A renowned authority on the subject of world religions.

*Tanakh, Student Edition*. Jewish Publication Society, 1991. ISBN 0-8276-03665

A good edition of the Jewish Bible, suitable for use by students.

Tedlock, Dennis, trans. *Popul Vuh: The Mayan Book of the Dawn of Life*. Simon and Schuster, 1996. ISBN 0-6848-1845-0

A good translation of the Mayan story of creation. A good source for information on the Sacred Ball Game.

Thomas, David. *Marriage & Life Choices: The Catholic Experience*. Glencoe/MacMillan McGraw Hill, 1993. ISBN 0026559110

### Series

#### *Oneworld Series*

Scholarly look at each religion, which includes the schools of thought, doctrines, and practices. May be difficult for students with low reading skills. A good teacher resource.

Cohn-Sherbrok. *Judaism: A Short Introduction*. Oxford, England: Oneworld, 1999. ISBN 1851682074

Klostermaier, Klaus. *Buddhism: A Short Introduction*. Oxford, England: Oneworld, 1999.

ISBN 1851681868

(There are other books in this series)

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## Appendix B (Continued)

### Videos

*Beyond the Veil.* CBC, 1996.

Correspondent Anna-Marie Tremonti spoke to Islamic women about gender issues in their religion.

*Faith & Belief: Five Major World Religions.* Knowledge unlimited, 1992.

This video compares and contrasts five different world religions.

*Five Pillars of Islam.* R.M. Productions, 1988.

*God @ heaven.com: Is God in cyberspace?* High tech culture series #03, Omni Film Production, 1995.

Religious leaders from six different faiths address questions about sin and salvation on-line.

*How Beliefs and Values Define a Culture.* Duncan Landaas Ltd, McIntrye, 1997.

This explores how religion and other elements define a culture.

*Lord of the Dance.* Thirteen-WNET, 1993.

The Hindu creation myth is presented. A look at sacred and secular dance.

*The Spirit of Tibet: Journey to Enlightenment, the Life, and World of Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche.*

National Film Board, 1998.

The fascinating story of Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche, one of Tibet's spiritual leader.

*The Spirit Within.* National Film Board, 1989.

Native prisoners learning about their spiritual roots from their elders.

*Holy Land, Holy People Series*

"The Children of Abraham." Villagers Media Production in association with Vision TV, 1997.

Jews, Muslims, and Christians share the same God. This film traces the spiritual roots of each religion.

"Covenant and Reality." Villagers Media Production in association with Vision TV, 1997.

This film examines the struggles of people who live in accordance with religious ideals.

"The Desert." Villagers Media Production in association with Vision TV, 1997.

Role of the desert in these three religions is explored.

(Other titles are available in this series)

*Religions Of The World Series*

Ben Kingsley narrates this series that covers history, founding leader(s) and cultural influences.

"African and African-American Religions." Liberty International Entertainment, 1998.

"Ancient Religions of the Mediterranean." Liberty International Entertainment, 1998.

"Native American Spirituality." Liberty International Entertainment, 1998.

"Religions of Small Societies." Liberty International Entertainment, 1998.

(Other titles are available in this series)

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## Appendix B (Continued)

### Websites

**Note:** The URLs for the websites have been verified by the writers prior to publication. Given the frequency with which these designations change, teachers should always verify the websites prior to assigning them for student use.

Encyclopaedia Mythica – <http://www.pantheon.org/mythica/>

On-line encyclopaedia of mythology folklore and legend. Hard to beat as a quick source for student use.

Gender equality in Islam – [http://www.mwlnusa.org/pub\\_gender.shtml](http://www.mwlnusa.org/pub_gender.shtml)

Deals with issues involving the role of women in the Muslim community: divorce, human rights, etc.

Ontario Consultants on Religious Tolerance – <http://www.religioustolerance.org/>

One of the best sources for unbiased information about various religions available on the Internet.

Patterns of Religious Attendance – <http://www.statcan.ca/english/indepth/indepth.htm>

A PDF file from Statistics Canada's *In-Depth* magazine, Winter 2000. Useful for Activity 5.2; Statistics Canada also has material on the religious breakdown of many Ontario communities.

Religion and Philosophy – <http://www.digital-librarian.com/religion.html>

A list of links that relate to all aspects of world religions.

World religion resources – <http://www.refdesk.com/factrel.html>

This site links to 116 sites related to all different religions. Very comprehensive.

### Other

The Traveling World Religions, which is organized from Guelph, is an excellent resource.

The speaker provides much visual material along with superb commentary.

Contact Larry Windland, tel: 519-822-4150, fax: 519-822-1230, e-mail: [lwindland@rlds.ca](mailto:lwindland@rlds.ca)

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# Coded Expectations, World Religions: Beliefs, Issues, and Religious Traditions, Grade 11, University/College Preparation, HRT3M

## Religious Beliefs

### Overall Expectations

**RBV.01** · summarize the major historical influences on and events in the development of various religions;

**RBV.02** · analyse the similarities and differences between the central beliefs of various religions;

**RBV.03** · analyse and describe the connection between the human experience and sacred writings and oral teachings;

**RBV.04** · demonstrate how practice, ritual, and symbolism are external representations of the beliefs and principles of religion.

### Specific Expectations

#### Historical Background

**RB1.01** – identify the origins of various religious beliefs regarding creation, birth, death, god, destiny, and afterlife;

**RB1.02** – identify the major influences in the development of various religions (e.g., social unrest, advances in technology, changing mores);

**RB1.03** – identify influential personalities (e.g., Abraham, Baha'ullah, Christ, Confucius, Dalai Lama, Guru Nanak, Moses, Muhammad, Siddhartha Gautama, Zoroaster) and summarize their contributions to the development of selected religions;

**RB1.04** – evaluate the impact of key concepts and events (e.g., ahimsa, resurrection, jihad, Pesach, fundamentalism, revelation, salvation) on contemporary religions;

**RB1.05** – demonstrate an understanding of the development of the institutions that govern and promote the religious life of a religion's adherents (e.g., Sanhedrin, Universal House of Justice, Papacy, Qadis).

#### Systems of Belief

**RB2.01** – identify common problems and questions associated with the search for spiritual meaning;

**RB2.02** – specify the responses of some religions to these common problems and questions;

**RB2.03** – demonstrate an understanding of the concept of the supernatural in various belief systems (e.g., those of Native peoples);

**RB2.04** – describe the role of faith in systems of belief;

**RB2.05** – summarize the relationship religious symbolism has to these systems of belief in various religions;

**RB2.06** – identify significant sacred writings and/or oral teachings from various religions;

**RB2.07** – explore the origins and development of sacred writings;

**RB2.08** – compare and contrast the roles sacred writings and oral teachings have in various religions;

**RB2.09** – identify key principles from relevant passages of sacred writings and oral teachings in various religions;

**RB2.10** – examine the influence of sacred writings and oral teachings from various religions on life in modern society.

#### Practices, Rituals, Symbols, and Festivals

**RB3.01** – categorize the practices and rituals of various religions (e.g., adhan, almsgiving, asceticism, atonement, anointing, covenant, sacrifice, holy days, dietary laws, vision quest);

**RB3.02** – identify the origin and significance of various practices, rituals, symbols, and festivals;

**RB3.03** – demonstrate an understanding of the role of sign and symbol in various religions.

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## Social Structures

### Overall Expectations

- SSV.01** · summarize the ways in which religions and the development of civilizations are interconnected;
- SSV.02** · analyse the influence of religion on artistic expression;
- SSV.03** · describe the influence that differing gender-role expectations have had on the development of religion;
- SSV.04** · demonstrate an understanding of religious pluralism as a defining feature of contemporary Canadian society.

### Specific Expectations

- SS1.01** – review the political, economic, social, ideological, or geographic impact of religion on at least one culture;
- SS1.02** – demonstrate an understanding of how religious beliefs influence the development of the policies and practices of social institutions;
- SS1.03** – describe the relationship of religion and the state, and its historical transformation in specific cultures;
- SS1.04** – identify ways in which symbolic meaning is incorporated into civil practices that are commemorated in a solemn fashion (e.g., through flags, the national anthem, observances on Remembrance Day);
- SS1.05** – identify ways in which religion is reflected in specific works of art, architecture, music, literature, dance, and in dress and cuisine, and interpret their religious significance;
- SS1.06** – identify how and why different religions express their beliefs through distinct cultural media;
- SS1.07** – analyse the role of gender stereotypes in the development of religious institutions and practices;
- SS1.08** – identify the diverse religions represented in Canada, and analyse how the high degree of religious pluralism in the population is reflected in Canadian society and culture.

## Religion and the Human Experience

### Overall Expectations

- HEV.01** · identify the function of religion in human experience;
- HEV.02** · demonstrate an ability to recognize prejudices associated with, and misconceptions about, various religions, beliefs, and traditions;
- HEV.03** · analyse the significance of religion or other belief systems in the lives of various historical figures;
- HEV.04** · speculate on the present and future roles of religion.

### Specific Expectations

#### Place and Function of Religion in Human Experience

- HE1.01** – identify the basic role and/or responsibility of the individual adherents of a religion;
- HE1.02** – demonstrate an understanding of a variety of belief systems (e.g., secular humanism, materialism, agnosticism, atheism);
- HE1.03** – analyse demographic data to predict the direction of religious change in contemporary society.

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### **Prejudices and Misconceptions**

- HE2.01** – identify religious leaders who used religion to oppose prejudice and discrimination (e.g., Martin Luther King Jr., Mohandas K. Gandhi, Marcus Garvey, Jesus Christ, Guru Nanak, Muhammad), and describe the ways in which they did so;
- HE2.02** – analyse attitudes, biases, and prejudices held by adherents of various religions;
- HE2.03** – analyse how positive and negative attitudes within religious traditions have been used to justify local and global prejudices and biases;
- HE2.04** – demonstrate an understanding of differences among traditional religions, sects, cults, and other types of religious expression.

### **Significant Figures**

- HE3.01** – identify significant figures from a range of belief systems;
- HE3.02** – describe how significant individuals have been motivated by the belief systems studied to influence events, create movements, and challenge the status quo of their day;
- HE3.03** – demonstrate an understanding of the characteristics, functions, and roles of selected religious leaders (e.g., reformer, civil activist, politician, founder, monastic, minister, missionary, prophet, guru, liberator, diplomat).

### **Present and Future Roles of Religion**

- HE4.01** – demonstrate an understanding of the influence of religion on individuals in society;
- HE4.02** – explain how the “religious impulse” can be expressed outside formal religion;
- HE4.03** – evaluate religion’s place in a highly technological and scientific age;
- HE4.04** – define the concept of civil religion and give examples from various societies and eras.

## **Research and Inquiry Skills**

### **Overall Expectations**

- ISV.01** · use appropriate theories and analyses of religion in preparing an independent study;
- ISV.02** · distinguish between fact and opinion, belief and religion, and theory and practice, as they apply to the study of religion;
- ISV.03** · identify the implications of different research methodologies in the study of religion;
- ISV.04** · employ at least one of the following research methodologies in an independent study: opinion survey, demographic study, in-depth interview, database search, exploration of primary sources;
- ISV.05** · communicate the results of these inquiries effectively;
- ISV.06** · demonstrate effective collaborative group skills.

### **Specific Expectations**

#### **Using Research and Inquiry Skills**

- IS1.01** – identify problems in the study of religion that require specific methods of quantitative and/or qualitative research;
- IS1.02** – compile a demographic study of the various religions and traditions within their community, using personal research methodologies (e.g., interviews, surveys) and/or Statistics Canada data;
- IS1.03** – conduct an in-depth interview, using an appropriate interview format, with an individual who has dedicated his or her life to a specific faith or belief system;
- IS1.04** – explore and employ primary and secondary research material appropriately in completing an assignment;
- IS1.05** – demonstrate an ability to organize, interpret, and evaluate the validity of information gathered through research;

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**IS1.06** – use the Internet and other available technologies as tools in researching topics in the study of religion, and in establishing appropriate communication with people of different faiths, as identified by the teacher.

**Communicating Results**

**IS2.01** – record information and key ideas from their research, and document sources accurately, using correct forms of notation;

**IS2.02** – effectively communicate the results of their inquiries, using a variety of methods and forms (e.g., graphs, charts, diagrams, oral presentations, written reports, essays, newspaper-style articles, videos);

**IS2.03** – defend a thesis, using appropriate style, structure, argument, and documentation;

**IS2.04** – use an appropriate research format to investigate a socio-religious issue or problem, and present the methods, results, discussion, and conclusion as part of a larger group assignment;

**IS2.05** – use communications technology appropriately to produce and disseminate the results of their research.

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## Unit 2: The Idea of Deity

**Time:** 20 hours

### Unit Description

The concept of deity is central to most popular constructs of religion, so this area needs to be explored in depth before students move on to consider the relationships between deity and humanity (in general) and deity and the individual. Students explore how two radically different religions view Deity. The first sub-unit (2.1-2.3) considers Zoroastrianism. While this is a monotheistic religion, it is sufficiently different from Judeo-Christian beliefs to stimulate students' thoughts about the constituents of a monotheistic religion. The second sub-unit (2.4-2.6) deals with Hinduism. The teacher should emphasize that, within a polytheistic belief system, monism can thrive. If the teacher desires, other representative monotheistic and polytheist religions may be compared

The unit begins with a consideration of the question of good and evil and moves to a consideration of monotheism and polytheism, and the similarities and differences between them. The unit concludes with a culminating activity in which students create a "recipe" for religions and compare test cases to the recipe they have devised.

The expectations are grouped into clusters, which reflect the significance of sacred writings and oral traditions in conveying the basic understanding the adherents of a religion have of deity, and the common nature of many of the human responses to the supernatural.

### Unit Synopsis Chart

Activity	Time	Expectations	Assessment	Tasks
2.1: Good and Evil	120 min	RB1.01, RB2.10, SSV.01, HE4.01	Understanding	compare/contrast
2.2: One single God – Ahuramazda's Role in Zoroastrianism	60 min	RBV.03, RB2.04, RB2.09, ISV.06, ISV.05	Communication	jigsaw acrostics exposition
2.3: Role of the Amesha Spentas and Yazatas	180 min	RB1.04, RB2.01, RB2.02, RB2.03	Knowledge	jigsaw reflection
2.4.1: Background to Hinduism	40 min	RBV.01, RB1.01, RB1.02	Knowledge	map completion quiz
2.4.2: Deity and the Caste System in Hinduism	60 min	RB2.09, SS1.03, HE2.02	Application	reading/questions
2.4.3: Dharma: A Rule to Live By	60 min	HEV.01, HE1.01, ISV.06	Inquiry	re-enactment organizer/summary
2.4.4: Three Paths to Salvation	80 min	RB1.03, HE3.02, HE4.02, IS1.06	Thinking	exposition
2.5: Introduction to Avatars/Incarnations/Messengers	180 min	RB2.02, RB2.03, HEV.04, HE3.01, IS1.04	Understanding	exploration reflection
2.6: Portrayal of Deity	120 min	RB2.01, RB2.05, RB3.03, SSV.02	Thinking	oral report multi-paragraph essay
2.7: A "Recipe" for Religion	300 min	RBV.02, ISV.02, RB2.02, RB2.04, HE2.02, IS1.01	Understanding Thinking/Inquiry Application	group work organizer report

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## Activity 2.1: Good and Evil

**Time:** 120 minutes

### Description

How are humans supposed to understand the presence of evil in the World? If deity is good, why do so many bad things happen? To some, these questions lie at the heart of religious experience. Using excerpts from *Avesta* and other writings, including the *Gathas*, *Bundahishn*, and *Vendidad*, students understand the difference between good and evil in Zoroastrian theology (see Appendix 1 for a brief overview of Zoroastrianism), and the relationship of Ahuramazda to both. Understanding of the complete opposition between Ahuramazda and Ahriman should be fostered. By the end of this activity students should be able to produce a compare/contrast paragraph or chart showing the main ideas of Zoroastrian dualism.

### Strand(s) & Learning Expectations

RB1.01 - identify the origins of various religious beliefs;

RB2.10 - examine the influence of sacred writings and oral teachings from various religions on modern society;

SSV.01 - summarize the ways in which religions and the development of civilizations are interconnected;

HE4.01 - demonstrate an understanding of the influence of religion on individuals in society.

### Prior Knowledge & Skills

Students can draw on their own experience and knowledge of the distinction between good and evil to supply examples. Students should have prior exposure to compare/contrast type assignments (e.g., Grade 10 History).

### Planning Notes

Some words and passages in the *Avesta* are translated conjecturally, due to the age of the language, and the vagaries of war and nature, which have left us with fragmentary manuscripts in many cases. The teacher could consult a reference work on Zoroastrianism, to understand the difference between the *Gathas*, which are the words of Zarathustra himself, the *Bundahishn*, which is an interpretation of Zarathustra's teaching, and the *Vendidad*, which is a priestly book of religious law. The teacher should be prepared to explain this and the language problem to the class. A vocabulary list may be helpful.

### Teaching/Learning Strategies

1. Brainstorm: What is evil? What are examples of evil? What are examples of good? It may also be necessary to explain that moral relativism does not play a role in most religions at this point.
2. The teacher introduces the idea of the opposition of good and evil and leads the class in a discussion of whether deity can be evil.
3. The Zoroastrian religion is briefly introduced, using an overview sheet (see Appendix 1) or text. The teacher then explains that students will examine source documents to decide how Zoroastrians view the opposition between good and evil.
4. The class is divided into pairs. Excerpts from the *Gathas*, *Bundahishn*, and *Vendidad* are distributed, one reading to each pair. Students are asked to read the material and decide what is significant to the discussion of good and evil. The teacher should remain at hand to assist with difficulties with language and obscurities in the texts.
5. Each group should now be called on to report its findings. The teacher should check the accuracy of the reports as they are made. Summaries should be written on the board and the students should take note of each other's findings.

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6. Students should prepare a report or chart synthesizing what they have learned with the enrichment of the other students' reports.
  7. The question: What significance does this total opposition of good/evil give to the individual choices and decisions of a Zoroastrian? should be assigned for homework.

### **Assessment & Evaluation of Student Achievement**

- Formative evaluation of the compare/contrast assignment.
- Summative evaluation of the homework assignment for students understanding of the concepts of good/evil.

### **Accommodations**

Students with learning disabilities or ESL may be given alternative materials in place of the primary sources. Refer to students' IEPs.

## **Activity 2.2: One God – Ahuramazda's Role in Zoroastrianism**

**Time:** 60 minutes

### **Description**

Students examine primary sources such as hymns and prayers as a way to draw inferences about the meaning of the deity Ahuramazda to Zoroastrians. Through this analysis of deity in this key monotheistic religion, students will demonstrate their ability to interpret the unique language of hymns and prayers, infer meaning, and make a connection between human experience of deity and sacred writings.

### **Strand(s) & Learning Expectations**

RBV.03 - analyse and describe the connection between the human experience and sacred writings and oral teachings;

RB2.09 - identify key principles from relevant passages of sacred writings and oral teachings in various religions;

RB2.04 - describe the role of faith in systems of belief;

ISV.06 - demonstrate effective collaborative group skills;

ISV.05 - communicate the results of inquiries effectively.

### **Prior Knowledge & Skills**

Students have a basic understanding of the historical origins and core beliefs of Zoroastrianism. Students are familiar with the Avesta and other sacred writings. In addition, students have worked in the jigsaw cooperative activity structure.

### **Planning Notes**

In the expert groups, students should be encouraged to read hymns and prayers out loud. In home groups, students should also be encouraged to communicate verbally, rather than copying the written information from one another.

### **Teaching/Learning Strategies**

1. Brainstorm: What is god? (e.g., Prime Mover, Judge of the World, Love, etc.)
2. The teacher introduces the concept of Ahuramazda and reviews the cosmic dualism introduced in Activity 2.1. This activity enables students to better understand who/what Ahuramazda is in Zoroastrianism, as they examine sacred hymns and prayers.

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3. The teacher explains the role of hymns and prayers, and explains they are an excellent primary source of information about religions. Zoroastrians believe that there is one true, universal god called Ahuramazda.
  4. The teacher sets up the jigsaw structure by creating home groups and expert groups.
  5. Working in expert groups of four students, the teacher asks each group to analyse one or two hymns or prayers using an organizer (see Appendix 3). Students analyse the readings for the following: emotions conveyed, qualities/attributes of Ahuramazda (try to find ten), forms of worship mentioned, key concepts (e.g., generosity, kindness), and ideas from Zoroastrian cosmology.
  6. In their home groups students share information and complete their organizers.
  7. As a homework assignment, the teacher provides students with a handout listing the 101 names for Ahuramazda (see Resources). Students must consult the handout and their organizers to create an acrostic poem on Ahuramazda. Students must explain/justify their choices for the poem in a short expository essay on the meaning and qualities of Ahuramazda.

### **Assessment & Evaluation of Student Achievement**

- Formative evaluation of: ability to stay on-task, cooperation, communication, and listening (see Appendix 2).
- Formative evaluation of Organizers and Acrostic Poems for completeness and the student's ability to communicate information/ideas using Ahuramazda's attributes/qualities and his role in Zoroastrianism.

### **Accommodations**

Students who require enrichment may enhance their understanding of the content by researching the psalms and prayers in Christianity to examine attributes/qualities of God. ESL students should be afforded extra time to complete the acrostic poem and its accompanying written assignment, or should be allowed to work in pairs.

### **Activity 2.3: Role of the Amesha Spentas and Yazatas**

**Time:** 180 minutes

#### **Description**

In many religions the gulf between humanity and deity is bridged by a variety of intermediary figures. The significance and roles of the intermediaries (known as Amesha Spentas and Yazatas) in Zoroastrianism are explored through the use of primary and secondary sources in a jigsaw activity. After the students have gained familiarity with the concept of intermediaries and the specific nature or function of some of the different Amesha Spentas and Yazatas, they prepare a short, written report on them. A jigsaw activity is used with this activity to reinforce the technique introduced in 2.2

#### **Strand(s) & Learning Expectations**

- RB1.04 - evaluate the impact of key concepts on contemporary religion;
- RB2.01 - identify common problems and questions associated with the search for spiritual meaning;
- RB2.02 - specify the responses of some religions to these common problems and questions;
- RB2.03 - demonstrate an understanding of the concept of the supernatural in various belief systems.

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## Planning Notes

The teacher may wish to become familiar with intermediary figures in some other religions to afford comparisons to students (e.g., the Virgin Mary and the saints in Roman Catholic and Orthodox Christianity). The teacher could introduce the Internet as a resource to assist students in gaining more understanding of intermediaries.

## Teaching/Learning Strategies

1. Discussion of intermediaries in everyday life: Why do people feel more comfortable turning to a secondary figure instead of the “person in charge”?
2. The teacher should make the connection between the roles of these secular figures and the roles of ancestral spirits in animism, or other intermediaries in religions represented in the class.
3. The class is divided into expert groups of two or three. Each group is assigned an Amesha Spenta or Yazata to examine and is provided with primary and secondary source material to help them complete an organizer outlining different figures’ roles. A minimum of two Amesha Spentas and two Yazatas should be examined by the class.
4. After recombining into home groups, students share information and complete their organizers.
5. Students are responsible for producing a reflection on the role of intermediaries using the completed organizer and any class notes. The reports may be either written or oral.

## Assessment & Evaluation of Student Achievement

- Formative evaluation of the jigsaw participation.
- Summative assessment of reports for knowledge of facts and terms, using a teacher-generated rubric.

## Accommodations

Students with language difficulties, as documented in students’ IEPs, could be paired with students who have strong language skills for this activity.

## Activity 2.4: Hinduism, The Endless Cycle

**Time:** 240 minutes (Total)

### Description

For many religions an ideal is acceptance, at a deep level, of deity (or an element of the single underlying reality) as part of oneself. Hinduism represents this idea both spiritually, in its cosmology and stories, and in temporal fashion through the caste system and the acceptance of one’s temporal place. The third eye becomes the means to move between the two and is developed through three “paths”: the Path of Works, Path of Knowledge, and Path of Devotion. The key here is that Hindus may arrive at acceptance any of the three ways. This is important to reinforce when one is examining the idea of deity and allows for an introduction to the many different forms of worships presented in the course.

### Activity 2.4.1: Background to Hinduism

**Time:** 40 minutes

### Description

This lesson establishes the required background information for understanding the role of Hinduism in Indian society. Key topography, vocabulary, and concepts are introduced as a means to advance an understanding of the diversity of practice within Hinduism and how Hindu perceptions of Deity while polytheistic in appearance, are for the most part actually monistic in practice.

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### **Strand(s) & Learning Expectations**

RBV.01 - summarize the major historical influences on and events in the development of various religions;

RB1.01 - identify the origins of various religious beliefs regarding creation, birth, death, god, destiny and afterlife;

RB1.02 - identify the major influences of various religions.

### **Prior Knowledge & Skills**

Students recall Unit 1 work on animism and any prior knowledge of the Indian subcontinent. Students born on the Indian subcontinent may be called upon to recount their own experiences of India.

### **Planning Notes**

The teacher determines the reading and relevant map from the text (see Resources) or creates a summary sheet including key terms and beliefs. The teacher could point out how the subcontinent has been the homeland or refuge for many religions discussed in this course (e.g., Buddhism, Sikhism, Zoroastrianism, etc.), during the discussion.

### **Teaching/Learning Strategies**

1. The teacher introduces the geography and population of India today using appropriate resources. The size of the subcontinent, population issues, susceptibility to natural disasters, and reverence for nature and rivers (e.g., Himalayas, Ganges, ancient Sarisvati River) should all be considered. Students complete an outline map with relevant information.
2. Students speculate on the possible characteristics of religions in this area based on their knowledge of religions studied previously.
3. A teacher-led discussion of religious terms traditionally associated with Hinduism (e.g., sacred cows, reincarnation, caste). This exercise is a springboard for introducing concepts such as karma, dharma, samsara, caste, Vedas, and Upanishads (full discussion occurs later in the unit). The teacher draws a comparison between the linear view of history (straight line – as in western religions) and the cycles of creation (Circle – Hindu view).
4. The teacher may stress the diversity of practice within Hinduism. There is not one sacred text nor do all people worship in the same manner.

### **Assessment & Evaluation of Student Achievement**

Formative evaluation of the map assignment. Summative quiz to test knowledge of facts and terms.

### **Accommodations**

Refer to the student's IEP for individualized suggestions.

### **Activity 2.4.2: Sources of Wisdom: Deity and the Caste System in Hinduism**

**Time:** 60 minutes

### **Description**

After briefly reviewing the structure of the caste system in India, students read the story of Shankara as a way to explore the idea that structures such as the caste system may interfere with one's ability to experience deity and/or to acquire wisdom. This story introduces students to the concept that deity may be present in everything. In the culminating activity students will be invited to demonstrate their understanding of this concept as they examine the elements of a religion.

### **Strand(s) & Learning Expectations**

RB2.09 - identify key principles from relevant passages of sacred writings and oral teachings in various religions;

SS1.03 - describe the relationship of religion and the state, its historical transformation in specific cultures;

HE2.02 - analyse attitudes, biases, and prejudices held by adherents of various religions.

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### **Prior Knowledge & Skills**

Students should have a basic understanding of the origins and structure of the caste system in India. This activity builds on their ability to infer and draw meaning from sacred stories. In addition, students are encouraged to develop their ability to work with abstract concepts.

### **Planning Notes**

Intellectual understanding of material is key. This must be emphasized before interpretations and personal responses.

### **Teaching/Learning Strategies**

1. The teacher asks students to create a list of people who taught them key life lessons. The teacher asks students to identify how they have arrived at their own wisdom; how they come to know what they know about themselves and the world. The teacher may pose the question: Have you ever learned something from an unexpected source such as nature, your pet, younger siblings, or even circumstances?
2. The teacher reviews the caste system with students. It may be necessary to provide greater detail than in previous discussions.
3. As a class read “The Master and the Untouchable” (Brodd, p. 54). Students should be given questions on the reading.
4. After discussing student responses, allow students to revise their answers before handing them in for evaluation.

### **Assessment & Evaluation of Student Achievement**

Questions are evaluated for Application of key ideas, quality of personal responses, comprehension of the story, interpretation of information, and completeness.

### **Accommodations**

ESL students could be given more time to complete the question sheet.

### **Activity 2.4.3: Dharma: A Rule to Live By**

**Time:** 60 minutes

### **Description**

Dharma is (briefly) the duty, obligation, or proper role for each person. This activity invites students to understand the place of dharma in the daily lives of Hindus. Students consult a simulated source of dharma and, as much as possible, live by this statement in their lives over a three-day period.

### **Strand(s) & Learning Expectations**

HEV.01 - identify the function of religion in human experience;

HE1.01 - identify the basic role and /or responsibility of the individual adherents of a religion;

ISV.06 - demonstrate effective collaborative group skills.

### **Planning Notes**

Students may resist the idea of “living out” the assigned dharma statement. The teacher may need to give some thought about ways to encourage them in this assignment. See Brodd, p. 51 (Resources) for Dharma statements.

### **Teaching/Learning Strategies**

1. The teacher reinforces information on the caste system emphasizing that caste is one of the key factors in determining the dharma that governs a person’s actions.
2. The teacher introduces the concept of dharma, and explains how its ethics are based on the concept of divine order, providing Hindus with a standard by which they can judge the rightness or wrongness of actions. Dharma is not easily defined or found in a single source.
3. The teacher gives each student a brief statement about dharma, which is a sort of rule of life (e.g., “I must always tell the truth,” “I must help others”). Students reflect on their individual dharma statement using a handout or similar resource.

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4. Students are asked to live by the dharma statement for two to three days. Over this period, students must create and complete an organizer to chart the results of the activity. The chart may include headings, such as event, possible courses of action, possible outcomes, chosen course of action, and result. The organizer must be submitted for evaluation.
  5. On the day the assignment is due, the teacher breaks the class into groups of four. Students are encouraged to share their dharma statements and their responses to the questions.
  6. The teacher leads a full class discussion of the questions: Do you think your written responses agree with your dharma statement? Why or why not? Each student must complete a written response to this debriefing to be handed in for evaluation the following class.

### **Assessment & Evaluation of Student Achievement**

Formative assessment of cooperative learning skills (see Appendix 2); formative evaluation of critical- and creative-thinking skills via the written assignment and the organizer from the three-day extended activity.

### **Accommodations**

Refer to the student's IEP for individualized suggestions.

### **Activity 2.4.4: The Three Paths to Salvation**

**Time:** 80 minutes

### **Description**

This activity introduces students to the three paths to salvation in Hinduism. The focus is on encouraging students to understand the connection between human personalities and various ways, or paths, humans use to connect to the divine. The study of individuals gives students an opportunity to develop their inquiry skills and build on their understanding of the intermingling of Indian history, society, and spirituality. This activity prepares students to assess a variety of aspects of behaviour critically, in preparation for their examination of what constitutes a religion in the culminating activity.

### **Strand(s) & Learning Expectations**

RB1.03 - identify influential personalities and summarize their contributions to the development of selected religions;

HE3.02 - describe how significant individuals have been motivated by the belief systems studied to influence events, create movements, and challenge the status quo of their day;

HE4.02 - explain how the "religious impulse" can be expressed outside formal religion;

IS1.06 - use the Internet and other available technologies as tools in researching topics in the study of religion, and in establishing appropriate communication with people of different faiths, as identified by the teacher.

### **Prior Knowledge & Skills**

Students need a good understanding of Hindu deities and the concepts of dharma, karma, samsara, and moksha, and Library/Resource Centre and Internet research skills.

### **Planning Notes**

Instead of the song, the teacher may begin with a reading on the three paths to salvation. The homework assignment emphasizes students' ability to apply the three paths to salvation to a real-life figure. The biographical sketch of this character is of secondary importance in the written assignment. The teacher should encourage students to use the Internet as an aid in completing this assignment.

### **Teaching/Learning Strategies**

1. The teacher introduces the concept of moksha (salvation), explains the three paths (Bhakti Marga, Jnana Marga, Karma Marga) to moksha, and discusses the particular human tendencies related to each path.
2. Students are to answer the following question: If you were a Hindu, which path would you follow? Explain the reasons for your choice? How would following this path change your life?

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3. The travelling Indian guru, arriving in foreign lands with messages of liberation and enlightenment, has become a familiar image of Hinduism. Gurus teach a path of self-denial, contemplation, and the liberation of the soul from the grasp of matter. Students must complete a brief biographical sketch (200- to 300-word expository essay) of the guru and identify which path(s) he/she follows using evidence to support their conclusion. This could be done as homework. Possible topics: Mahatma Gandhi, Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, Sai Baba, Rajneesh, Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, Dr. Ananda Coomaraswamy, Sister Nivedita (Margaret Nobel), Raja Rammohan Roy, Ram Manohar Lohia, Madana Mohana Mzalaviya, Nandalal Bose, Dhondo Keshava Karve or Dadheechi.
  4. On completion, the teacher places students in groups according to the paths they chose. The groups exchange information about the gurus and their paths as a vehicle to allow students to understand the many ways the paths to salvation operate.

#### **Assessment & Evaluation of Student Achievement**

The expository essays are evaluated for students' Inquiry skills as applied to their investigation of the paths to salvation.

#### **Accommodations**

Refer to the student's IEP for individualized suggestions.

### **Activity 2.5: Introduction to Avatars/Incarnations/Messengers**

**Time:** 180 minutes

#### **Description**

The role of intermediaries was introduced in Activity 2.3. Students now examine some of the various avatars of deity which occur in Hinduism and which fulfill a similar role as the Amesha Spentas and Yazatas do in Zoroastrianism. They also examine the *Bhagavad Gita* for some of the key messages that Krishna (an avatar of Vishnu) brings to humanity.

#### **Strand(s) & Learning Expectations**

RB2.02 - specify the responses of some religions to these common problems and questions;  
RB2.03 - demonstrate an understanding of the concept of the supernatural in various belief systems;  
HEV.04 - speculate on the present and future roles of religion;  
HE3.01 - identify significant figures from a range of belief systems;  
IS1.04 - explore and employ primary and secondary research material appropriately in completing an assignment.

#### **Planning Notes**

The teacher determines the textbook selections that relate the main premise of the *Bhagavad Gita* and its teachings. The teacher may order a video production of the *Bhagavad Gita* or *Mahabharata* to enrich understanding of the role of incarnations and Avatars.

#### **Prior Knowledge & Skills**

Students should have studied dharma and the role caste plays in asserting the various duties involved in fulfilling one's dharma. The *Bhagavad Gita* may have already have been shown as a means to introduce the role of deity within Hindu scripture.

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## Teaching/Learning Strategies

1. The teacher introduces the following questions: How many of you feel good when you do what you are “supposed” to do? How many of you have felt at least a little guilt when you disobeyed the rules?
2. Using examples from the *Bhagavad Gita* or *Mahabharata*, the teacher reads one or two passages to students. Students identify why the person(s) in the example felt guilty, and suggest ways to overcome that guilt.
3. The teacher reviews dharma, stressing the related principle that one should not feel guilt as long as one performs an act out of duty and remains disinterested in the fruits of that act. The teacher solicits possible examples of this from students and the class discusses the question: What type of determination is required of people to truly follow a destructive dharma?
4. Arjuna and Krishna’s debate on the topic of following the duties of one’s caste and dharma from the *Bhagavad Gita*, is assigned for homework or class work. Following the reading, small groups discuss it using questions such as the following as foci: What is the major problem faced by Arjuna? What test must Arjuna pass in order to understand about the process of rebirth? Describe the arguments Krishna presents to Arjuna for taking action.
5. The teacher then addresses the role of avatars or incarnations in Hinduism, noting that the Incarnation of Krishna in the *Bhagavad Gita* is not unique. Multiple examples may be provided, and the teacher could draw students’ attention to the roles/purposes of the various incarnations (e.g., Vishnu takes the form of a Matsya to save the world from a flood).
6. Students brainstorm a list of possible messages that an incarnation of Vishnu would deliver to the world today. In three or four analytical paragraphs, students consider some/all of these messages. They also reflect on what people need to find within themselves to help enact this message or this change. Using Arjuna’s story as reference, what forms of actions need to be taken and how should people approach this “mission from god” (e.g., works, contemplation, devotion).

## Assessment & Evaluation of Student Achievement

Formative evaluation of the analysis of messages, based on students’ understanding of the following: applicability to present-day issues, the difference an individual can/can not make in the world, and the story of Arjuna and Vishnu.

## Accommodations

Allow students with weak analytical skills to pre-submit paragraphs. Refer to the student’s IEP for individualized suggestions.

## Activity 2.6: Portrayal of Deity

**Time:** 120 minutes

### Description

This lesson facilitates a discussion of the common problems and questions that arise with an anthropomorphic deity and a religion’s decision to portray or not portray deity. Students examine various means of understanding polytheism and write about how a cosmology based upon polytheism may help people understand deity.

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## Strand(s) & Learning Expectations

RB2.01 - identify common problems and questions associated with the search for spiritual meaning;  
RB2.05 - summarize the relationship religious symbolism has to these systems of belief in various religions;

RB3.03 - demonstrate an understanding of the role of sign and symbol in various religions;

SSV.02 - analyse the influence of religion on artistic expression.

## Planning Notes

Preparation of a list of phrases used to describe various deities noted above. Prepare visuals of the main gods in Hinduism: i.e., Shiva, Brahma, Vishnu, Agni, Sarasvati, etc. Prepare handouts with written interpretations of individual deities to be used by students to supplement their own thoughts. The teacher must understand that a monistic religion can take on a polytheistic appearance in the effort to rationalize an omnipotent deity.

## Teaching/Learning Strategies

1. The teacher may begin by asking: Why would some religions not try to portray their deity? What would be the function of portraying deity? Or, what would be the reason for not portraying deity? The class engages in a short discussion of the merits of both positions. In pairs, students are asked to brainstorm the various ways a deity could be portrayed and to justify the reasoning behind why various interpretations would be established.
2. Students report their findings and ideas in a short board note/organizer. The teacher discusses the value of metaphor within religious belief and tradition, and asks students to consider questions such as: How can we portray deity? Is this too simple an approach to take? If most faiths say that deity is “more than human,” how can deity be shown as human, etc. Many possible interpretations may arise. The teacher adds key comments regarding the value of metaphor to the board note summarizing student extrapolations.
3. The teacher introduces the various gods in Hinduism using appropriate visual resources. Students decipher what particular aspects of Shiva, for example, could mean and the teacher debriefs student responses. Students are divided into small groups and assigned one or two Hindu deities per group for analysis of what they see, and what it may signify.
4. Students are provided with more background on the gods they have examined and combine their thoughts with the additional material and present that information to the class. Or, students are given a reading regarding puja that discusses a shrine to an individual Hindu’s deity. Students re-examine the examples of deity in their groups and suggest the elements that might make up a similar shrine in the puja of this deity. Students present their findings and thoughts.
5. For homework, students recall and suggest further reasons behind the symbolic/ polytheistic nature of Hindu cosmology in two paragraphs.

## Assessment & Evaluation of Student Achievement

- Formative assessment of the oral report by peers, using a checklist.
- Summative assessment of two-paragraph examination of polytheism for critical-thinking skills.

## Accommodations

Encourage ESL students to use their first language in preparation of their initial interpretations of the Hindu deities. Gifted students may wish to examine the lyrics to Joan Osborne’s “One of Us” as part of the initial exercise.

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## Activity 2.7: A “Recipe” for Religion: Is It Possible? (Culminating Activity)

Time: 300 hours

### Description

Throughout the unit, students have explored two radically different conceptions of deity: Zoroastrian and Hindu. The culminating activity invites students to initially explore their conceptions of what is the essence of a wide range of traditional religions, sects, cults, civic activism, social movements, political movements, popular culture, sports, and other forms of social group expression in the form of a comparison. With the assistance of the teacher, students are now able to demonstrate their understanding of effective approaches to the study of religions by creating a refined recipe/formula for religion. A combination of individual and cooperative learning activities enables students to demonstrate that religion and, in fact, deity is much more than the “traditional” understanding of god(s)/goddesses. The debate activity is an authentic format in which students demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of what constitutes religion. By the end of the activity, students recognize that there are exceptions to every rule.

### Strand(s) & Learning Expectations

RBV.02 - analyse the similarities and differences between central beliefs of various religions;  
ISV.02 - identify the implications of different research methodologies in the study of religion;  
RB2.02 - specify the responses of some religions to these common problems and questions;  
RB2.04 - describe the role of faith in systems of belief;  
HE2.02 - analyse attitudes, biases, and prejudices held by adherents of various religions;  
IS1.01 - identify problems in the study of religion that require specific methods of quantitative and or qualitative research.

### Prior Knowledge & Skills

- Students should know the concepts developed earlier in the unit e.g., dualism, polytheism, and monism.
- Students should know debating procedures.

### Planning Notes

Prepare a number of test cases (e.g., Hockey, Fascism, Communism) for Activity 2.7.3. Consult the Ontario Consultants on Religious Tolerance website (<http://religioustolerance.org>) for guidance regarding cults. Prepare material on Jainism.

### Teaching/Learning Strategies

1. The teacher introduces the concept of creating a “recipe” or formula for religion. The recipe will establish criteria by which students may challenge some of their preconceptions about religion and a means by which to study consistent concepts/practices within many different religions.
2. Students brainstorm a list of 10 to 15 possible “ingredients.” The features of the ingredient are then put to debate in small groups, and a list of five to seven key ingredients is decided upon. The teacher may choose to further refine the list in order to establish one “recipe” for the whole class or may allow for several different recipes to be developed. Students create an organizer in their notebooks, leaving space for the ingredients and space for discussion notes for a trial run of the recipe.
3. The teacher introduces an historical phenomenon such as the cult of personality about figures such as Stalin or Hitler which, while not considered a religion, has been followed by many people as closely as any form of religion. Students debate the applicability of the phenomenon being discussed to the “recipe”. Students may need to revise their criteria in light of this discussion, debate further the suitability of the organizer and adapt/refine wording to better comprehend the essential ingredients of a religion.

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4. The teacher introduces material on Jainism and discusses the final individual written report and the procedure for this report (e.g., proper citation, etc.). Students examine and explain how Jainism relates to one of three positions: the recipe for Jainism works and meets the following expectation, the recipe for Jainism does not work, or the recipe for Jainism must be left to the taste test of individuals. Students should also comment on the usefulness of preconceived ideas when dealing with religion.

### **Assessment & Evaluation of Student Achievement**

- Formative assessment of initial group work.
- Summative assessment of report (see Appendix 4) for understanding of relationships, critical and creative thinking, research and inquiry skills, and making connections.

### **Accommodations**

Refer to the student's IEP for individualized suggestions.

### **Resources**

#### **Textbook**

Brodd, Jeffrey. *World Religions, A Voyage of Discover*. Saint Mary's Press, 1998. ISBN 0884893707

#### **Books**

Bahree, Patricia. *The Hindu world*. Macdonald and Co., 1982. ISBN 0 356 07521 4

Boyce, Mary. *Zoroastrians: Their Religious Beliefs and Practices*. Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1987. ISBN 0-7100-0156-7

A good introduction to what is, for many, an unfamiliar religion. Boyce is a world-renowned authority on Zoroastrianism and lived for more than a year with a Zoroastrian community in Iran.

Boyce, Mary, ed. *Textual Sources for the Study of Zoroastrianism*. University of Chicago Press, 1990. ISBN 0-226-06930-3

A handy collection of excerpts from key texts, with explanatory comments from Boyce.

Kanitkar, V.P. *Bhagavad Gita Selections*. Heinemann Educational Ltd., 1994. ISBN 0-43530353-8

Waterstone, Richard. *India: Belief and Ritual, The Gods and the Cosmos, Meditation and the Yogic Arts*. Toronto: Little, Brown and Company, 1995. ISBN 0-316-90307-8

#### **Internet Resources**

101 Names of Ahuramazda – <http://coulomb.ecn.purdue.edu/~bulsara/ZOROASTRIAN/101names.html>

An on-line version of a traditional devotional aid, this site lists the many names of Ahuramazda.

200 short questions and answers – <http://www.ozemail.com.au/~zarathus/short33.html>

Quick answers to some of the more common questions about Zoroastrianism, written by a Zoroastrian priest.

Angels in Zoroastrianism – <http://www.avesta.org/angels.html>

Quick explanation of the role of the Yazatas and Amesha Spentas as intermediaries. Links to other sites about angels (in other religions).

The Basic Daily Prayers – <http://www.stanford.edu/group/zoroastrians/prayers.shtml>

The kusti prayers of Zoroastrians in translation. These contain reminders both of what Zoroastrians believe (creeds) but also reminders of what they should do.

Basics of Jainism – [http://www.jcnc.org/reference\\_title.cfm?category=Basics%20of%20Jainism](http://www.jcnc.org/reference_title.cfm?category=Basics%20of%20Jainism)

Good information for the culminating exercise. Particular use should be made of the section “Universe, God, Jainism, Multifold Aspects, and Substance.”

The Bundahisn – <http://www.avesta.org/pahlavi/bund1.html>

A detailed Zoroastrian account of creation and the fundamental war between Ahuramazda and Ahriman.

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Cults aka New Religious Movements – <http://www.religioustolerance.org/cultmenu.htm>  
The Ontario Consultants on Religious Tolerance provide a variety of information about cults. A good site to visit for information, which can be used in the culminating activity.

God in Hindu Dharma and Temples – <http://www.hindunet.org/god/>  
Contains good information on representations of deity in Hinduism, avatars, etc.

Dharma – [www.hinduism.co.za/dharma.htm](http://www.hinduism.co.za/dharma.htm)  
A good introduction to a complicated topic. The section on “Kinds of Dharma” may be useful for the assignments in Activity 2.4.3.

Dualism – <http://www.pyracantha.com/Z/dualism.html>  
A good overview of the concepts of good and evil in Zoroastrianism.

Homage unto Ahura Mazda – <http://www.zarathushtra.com/z/article/dhalla/ch1/ill.htm>  
An influential Zoroastrian high priest, Dastur Dr. M. N. Dhalla gives a lengthy exposition on his feelings toward Ahuramazda and his religion in general. Also good devotional information about the Yazatas and Amesha Spentas, Zoroaster, etc.

India’s Religions –  
[http://www.lib.utexas.edu/Libs/PCL/Map\\_collection/middle\\_east\\_and\\_asia/India\\_Religions87.jpg](http://www.lib.utexas.edu/Libs/PCL/Map_collection/middle_east_and_asia/India_Religions87.jpg)  
Map was produced by the CIA to explain the diversity of India’s religious makeup to government officials.

Nature of Evil – <http://www.comparativereligion.com/evil.html>  
An essay which considers the views of evil held by a number of different religions.

Ohrmazd Yasht – <http://www.avesta.org/ka/yt1sbe.htm>  
Verses 1-23 are a hymn to Ahuramazda, which details many of His attributes and qualities.

Vohuman.Org: An Educational Institute – <http://www.vohuman.org>  
Many articles on Zoroastrianism, its influence and significance. Updates regularly.

Yasna 30 – <http://www.avesta.org/yasna/y28to34b.htm>  
This chapter of the Gathas deals with the fundamental opposition between good and evil.

Zoroastrian Ethics and Morals – <http://www.ozemail.com.au/~zarathus/deen33i.html>  
Gives some specific information on how the fundamental opposition of good and evil influences Zoroastrians on a day-to-day basis.

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## Appendix 1

### Sample Religion Overview Sheet – Zoroastrianism

Founded by the prophet Zarathustra (in Greek Zoroaster) about 1800-1600 BCE. Zoroaster was a priest among his people, but became convinced of the need for religious reform when he was in his teens. When he was 33, he had a vision, and spent the next 20 years trying to convince others of his message with little success. Eventually, he convinced Kavi Vishtasp, a local ruler, of the correctness of his teaching and he converted the whole royal family and court. Zarathustra died in his 70s, when he was slain by a soldier from an invading army.

The Zoroastrian religion was the official religion of the Persian Empire, probably from the time of Cyrus the Great (c. 600 BCE) until the Muslim conquest of Persia (c. 632 CE). At the height of its influence, the Zoroastrian religion was practiced in an area stretching from Armenia to Southern Arabia, and from Palestine in the west eastward to India, and into Central Asia.

The deity of Zoroastrians is Ahuramazda (or Ormazd), which means “The Wise Lord.” For this reason, Zoroastrians call their religion Mazdayasna (the Worship of [Lord] Wisdom). Zoroastrians are sometimes called fire worshippers, but this is a misunderstanding of the reverence they have for fire as a symbol of the divine.

The holy writings of the Zoroastrians are known as the *Avesta*. Much of the *Avesta* was written after Zarathustra’s time and is written in a different language from the one he spoke. The parts written by Zarathustra himself are known as the *Gathas*. As time passed the language of the *Avesta* became difficult for people to read and commentaries (known as the *Zand*) were composed for each book of the *Avesta*, explaining it in more understandable language. Due to the wars, and particularly due to the Muslim conquest of Iran, many of the books of the *Avesta* were lost. In some cases the *Zand* was preserved (e.g., the Bundahishn is preserved in its *Zand* only).

Several centuries after the Muslim conquest of Iran, a group of Zoroastrians fled persecution by sailing to India. In India, the Zoroastrian community were called Parsees (Persians), and they eventually settled in the area around Mumbai. The Zoroastrians who remained in Iran are sometimes called Iranis to distinguish them from the Parsees. In recent times, Zoroastrians have established thriving communities in many countries, including Britain, Canada, and the United States. Estimates vary, but there are probably about 250,000 Zoroastrians in the world today.

Traditionally, Zoroastrians are very concerned about purity. A devout Zoroastrian will take considerable care to prevent the spread of pollution. The forms of pollution which concern Zoroastrians could be something as simple as sewage in a river or protecting themselves from contact with blood, puss, or carrion.

Zoroastrian children enter into formal observance of their religion usually around age eight, when the Navjote or Sudre-Pushn is celebrated. At this ceremony, the child is given a white shirt to wear, and a sacred cord. Traditionally, the shirt and cord would be worn daily for the rest of the Zoroastrians life, but in many instances today they are only worn when going to worship.

Until recently, most Zoroastrians were neither buried (on land or at sea) nor cremated. Instead the bodies were exposed in Dahkmas, or “Towers of Silence”, where vultures would eat the flesh from the bones. In this way, Zoroastrians felt, their deaths would not pollute the fertile earth, the pure water, or the fire, which is a symbol of Ahuramazda.

## Appendix 2

### Class Checklist for Cooperative Learning Skills

(Activity 2.4.3)

Put a ✓ beside the student's name, when an observed behaviour occurs during cooperative learning activities.

Student's Name																			
Stays on task																			
Fulfills assigned role																			
Contributes ideas and insights to the group																			
Listens to others																			
Encourages others																			
Shares with others																			
Shows interest and involvement																			
<i>other</i>																			
<i>other</i>																			
<i>other</i>																			

## Appendix 3

### Ahuramazda Organizer

Hymn or prayer	Emotions conveyed	Qualities/ attributes	Nature of worship	Cosmology	Other observations

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## Appendix 4

### Suggested Report Rubric

The following rubric could be used for assessing understanding, thinking/inquiry, and application of learning in the assignment for Activity 2.7: A “Recipe” for Religion.

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Level 1 (50-59%)</b>	<b>Level 2 (60-69%)</b>	<b>Level 3 (70-79%)</b>	<b>Level 4 (80-100%)</b>
<b>Understanding</b> of relationships among principles behind religions	- demonstrates a limited comprehension of relationships among the principles behind religions	- some comprehension of relationships among the principles behind religions	- considerable comprehension of the relationships behind religions	- demonstrates a thorough comprehension of the relationships behind religions
Critical- and creative- thinking skills	- limited thought about the role/purpose of religion	- some thought about the role/purpose of religion, but limited creativity	- considerable thought about the role/purpose of religion, some creativity	- significant thought about the role/purpose of religion and considerable creativity
Research and inquiry skills (e.g., use of citations)	- applies few of the skills involved in research and inquiry	- applies some of the skills involved in research and inquiry	- applies most of the skills involved in research and inquiry	- applies all or almost all of the skills involved in research and inquiry
<b>Application</b> – making connections	- limited connections made between principles and religion	- some connections made between principles and religion	- effective connections made between principles and religion	- insightful connections made between principles and religion

**Note:** A student whose achievement is below level 1 (50%) has not met the expectations for this assignment or activity.