

Good learning and community cohesion

These active learning and thought provoking materials are written for teachers and youth workers to use with young people aged 7-19. The materials all aim to provide stimulus for learning and thinking about religious aspects of community cohesion issues. They provide opportunities for young people to reflect on their own attitudes, beliefs and experiences, and the attitudes, beliefs and experiences of others.



The jigsaw suggests each religion is distinctive, but all are linked as well.



Touching hands from different experiences in one world: the challenge for community cohesion

3 Targets: a thinking skills strategy for inter faith work on community cohesion issues

This set of activities uses a ranking and sorting activity with a game like dimension to enable pupils to look at religions in a holistic way, seeking insight from within.

Targets: a thinking skills strategy

Use the target board for this group activity which aims to enable pupils in groups to thoughtfully sort and rank some items of significance for Sikhs, Muslims or Christians.

Give them the 20 items for one of the religions (see the next three pages) on cut out cards. Ask them to place them onto the target board in this pattern:

- 1 in the centre that matters most
- 3 in the next circle, that matter very much
- 5 in the next circle that matter a lot
- 7 in the fourth circle, that matter.
- There will be leftovers for the outer circle – these matter less (comparative).

Pupils can play this as a game, taking turns to put one down, but also moving a card if they wish to when it's their turn.

The activity encourages thought about what really matters in a religion, but there are not necessarily a final set of right answers.

The activity works best after pupils have been engaged in a course of study about the religion. It is a good summative judgement task.

Ask pupils to create 25 cards of their own in groups that answer the question 'What matters most to me?' The activity can be repeated with these cards, or with the set (originally devised for teachers) on community cohesion issues below.

What matters most in Islam?

The city of Makkah	The Holy Qur'an	Wudu washing for prayer	Stories of the Prophet	Obeying my parents
Salah Daily Prayer	Learning Arabic	Believing in Angels	The Mosque	Friday Prayers
A clean prayer mat	Celebrating Eid Al Fitr	Paradise	Doing Zakat	Wearing traditional clothes
Being generous with money	Fasting in Ramadan	Becoming Hajji	The Call to Prayer	Doing what Allah commands

What matters most in Christianity?

Worshipping Jesus	Reading the Bible	Loving other people	Trusting in God	Giving to charity
Praying for yourself and others	Keeping Sunday special	Obeying Ten Commandments	Going to church	Celebrating Easter
Trying to have faith	Helping the poor and needy	Not being greedy	Loving God	Celebrating Christmas
Doing good deeds	No sex outside Christian marriage	Hoping for heaven	The resurrection of Jesus	Receiving Holy Communion

What matter most to Sikhs?

Treating people equally	Wearing a sword	Celebrating Vaisakhi	Celebrating Divali	Being generous
Remembering the name of God	Reading Guru Granth Sahib	Listening to the words of the Gurus	Avoiding drink and drugs	Kindness to others
Bravery and moral courage	Never cutting my hair	Wearing a turban	Using a comb for tidy hair	Taking Amrit as a young Khalsa Sikh
Believing in rebirth	Keeping pure relations between the sexes	Trusting God for myself	Wearing the steel band to symbolise faith in God	Going to the Gurdwara

What matters most for community cohesion?

What would do most to build up inter-religious understanding, and pull down the walls between people?

Listening to each other	Visiting another person's holy building	Doing more RE in school	Discussing differences openly	Letting each community have its own schools
Accepting our differences	Community leaders calling for tolerance	Young people respecting each other	Punishing those who show no respect	Teaching children about several religions
People being assertive about their faith	Treating everyone as if they are the same	Making a law against religious discrimination	Fighting out our battles	Communicating better
??	Everyone joining my religion	Everyone avoiding ridicule of others	Being more spiritual but less religious	Getting community leaders together

Writing Respect: a practical activity.

Discuss these eight sentence prompts, and the value of respect in life.

What would some famous people, soap characters or historic figures say to complete the sentences? Try Bart Simpson, Woody and Buzz Lightyear, the Queen, Simon Cowell or anyone in hot news.

What would the pupils say? Get them to write five that they choose.

I disagree with... But I respect her because...	I don't like ... But I try to 'live and let live' because...
Sometimes I get irritated with... But I'm sensitive to him/her because...	I sometimes argue with... But we stay friends because...
I don't always enjoy talking to... But I find she / he makes me...	I have different ideas to... But we like each other because...
My beliefs are not the same as... But we learn from each other about...	I don't share the religion of... But I respect him / her because...

Discussion following:

- What does this activity show about our community?
- Conflict and peace: how can we have less of the first, more of the second?
- Who needs to be different to build world peace?

Expressive art activity: create a 'peace logo' a 'respect badge' or a 'living together shield'.

Thinking Skills: developing the learning, providing opportunities for respect.

If each member of the class writes 5 cards, you'll have 150 altogether.

Split them into 6 random packs of 25 cards each and ask a group of 5 pupils to organise one pack into what they think is 'the right order' The task asks for classification skills and structures to be created. Forbid them to organise the cards in groups which use the same sentence start – that's not allowed. Give a short time – say 4 minutes.

Talk about the orders they chose and devised, asking a spokesperson from each group to say how they did it, and why.

Ask the groups to re-order the cards: which show most respect? Get them to pick 5 and say why.

Reorder again: which ones refer to differences of gender / race / family background / race or other differences? What makes these differences difficult for people? And what impact on the difficulties does respect have?

What is the meaning of respect? And why does it matter? And how can it be built up? Ask pupils (individually or in pairs) to write a 5 point manifesto for a more respectful Britain – it shouldn't just be 'no this, no that', but consist of ideas and practical things that leaders of nations, religions, communities or schools could actually do. And what should happen when people show no respect?

Metacognitive questions:

- This activity was about respect. But did it make people show respect? How?
- Is there a difference between being respectful and showing respect? What is it?
- Where is the idea of respect found, originally? In religions? Politics? Human hearts? Where does it come from?
- How did your group go about this task? Did the thinking get deeper at any point? How?
- Who shared experiences of being respected, or the opposite – being despised? Is it true that you can only know the meaning of respect if you have experienced its opposite?
- What advice would you give to someone about to start this piece of work?