

Key Question: Green religion? How and why should religious communities do more to care for the Earth? A unit plan for education in religion and worldviews focusing on climate, natural world and justice.



Bella, 13, pictures the impact of climate change on the whale and turtle. She asks: can the religions of the world do more to repair the damage we have caused and save the planet?'

Thanks to Luton SACRE, the Westhill Trust, NASACRE and RE Today for the resources and opportunities represented in this plan. Suitable for 9-11s and for 11-14s (teacher can adapt the activities and resources to challenge their pupils appropriately)



This primary pupil, Sam, 8, pictures a turtle in a sea of waste.

The planning provided here might be taught in about 12 hours of RE. We suggest teachers are selective, taking in the lessons that suit their pupils best. Pupils will use disciplines including philosophical thinking, sociology of religion, textual study and theology to enquire into big questions about climate, nature, faith and justice.

Lat Blaylock, working with Luton RE teachers
Lat@retoday.org.uk

Key Question: Green religion? How and why should religious communities do more to care for the Earth?

This investigation enables pupils to learn in depth about the challenges of climate justice issues and about how different religious and spiritual ways of life can contribute to the urgent human need to stop spoiling the environment and the Earth. Pupils will develop a rich knowledge of examples, concepts, sources of wisdom and authority and practice in different religions and worldviews with regard to climate change, environmental care and building a sustainable future. This is a special and original unit of RE and can be used for all pupils at any appropriate point in the age range 9-11. It fits well at the end of Year 5 or Year 6, for example. The unit intends to provide excellent ~~learning in the classroom~~ experiences that encourage pupils to learn about religion and beliefs, environment, climate and justice issues, in challenging ways that promote the wellbeing of 'people and planet'. RE can make a contribution to enabling learners to think through issues about environment, drawing on rich traditions in religions and worldviews about the natural world and human responsibility. Sometimes with social and ethical topics, RE can drift away from providing pupils with rich core knowledge of the religions one by one; in this case, we have really emphasised the religious concepts and knowledge about the topic.

The investigation implements the **principal aim of RE**, which is to engage pupils in systematic enquiry into significant human questions which religion and worldviews address, so that they can develop the understanding and skills needed to appreciate and appraise varied responses to these questions, as well as develop responses of their own.

Step 1: Select a key question	Green religion? How and why should religion communities do more to care for the Earth? Year group: Recommended Year 5 or 6, Year 7 or 8 Religions and worldviews studied here: Non-religious worldviews, Hindus, Christians, Muslims and Jewish people For younger pupils, concentrate on just two of the worldviews. Make sure that you can explain where this unit / question fits into key stage planning e.g. how it builds on previous learning in RE; what other subject areas it links to, if appropriate: clear sequencing for pupil progress is important here	
Step 2: Select learning outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These learning outcomes relate to aims and intentions from RE Today's widely used Agreed Syllabus. • As you plan, select learning outcomes appropriate for the age and ability of your pupils. • Being clear about these outcomes will help you to decide what and how to teach. 	
Emerging <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe some key environmental problems and some key religious teachings about the Earth (A1). • Respond sensitively to examples of green religious practice with ideas of their own (B2). • Find out about two examples of religious projects seeking to have an environmental impact (C3). 	Expected <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make connections between beliefs about the earth and activist behaviour in different religions and worldviews (A1). • Understand the challenges facing the planet and responses from different religions and worldviews (B2). • Discuss and describe their own and others' ideas about the kinds of collaboration, activism and commitment needed to 'save the Earth' (C3). 	Exceeding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain similarities and differences between varied religious and non-religious beliefs about the Earth (A1). • Consider and evaluate the contributions religions can make to environmental protection and to challenging the climate crisis (B3). • Express varied ideas about key questions to do with the need for 'greener religions' and commitments to justice (C3).

Step 3: Select specific content

Overview of the unit of work

- This unit investigation enables pupils to learn in depth about issues of climate change, environmental protection and the future sustainability of the planet, in the light of teaching and practice from 4 different religions (limit this to two or three if you wish, for the clarity you can achieve if time is shorter) and from non-religious worldviews.
- Use a case study about Greta Thunberg to introduce the issues of climate justice. From her story, what can pupils tell about her personal worldview? What matters most to her? Greta is non-religious. Use this case study to enable pupils to think about the meanings of some key questions: whose world is this? Why do humans pollute their own earth? Why do extinctions matter? Can we care better for our planet? Who is most at risk from environmental change? Does the earth belong to God? If some people believe the earth does belong to God, how should they live? What about the beliefs that humans or the powers of nature ‘own the planet’?
- Learn in detail about key concepts such as khalifah (Islam), stewardship (Christianity), Bhumi (goddess in Hindu dharma) and Tu B’Shevat (Jewish) which have implications for care of the earth. Connect these ideas to words and stories from sacred texts about the natural world.
- Learn about the work of projects such as the Jewish Ecological Coalition, Islamic Relief’s tree-planting, the Hindu Bhumi Project, Christian projects such as Eco Church or Operation Noah. Consider some reasons why these projects may need to grow and influence their traditions more strongly. Should religions be greener? How could they be?
- Learn in detail about examples of creative expressions of green spirituality from different faiths in works of art, music, drama, prophecy and activist protests or actions: what are the spiritual roots of such expression, and what impacts can they have?
- Find out about connections between ancient wisdom in holy texts and some ways religious people have become “climate justice activists”.
- Discuss what must happen for people and planet to survive and re-balance the ways humans have exploited the earth.
- What kinds of behaviour, belief and expression does the world need now? Weigh up different responses as we face the crisis of climate justice.

NOTE: This unit of work offers around 10-12 hours of classroom ideas. You need to select from it in order to achieve the learning outcomes set out in Step 2 above. Select with the learning needs of your classes and age group in mind.

NOTE: RE Today is not responsible for content on external websites. Please do always check content before showing to pupils. Links were active and correct at time of publication, but they do not always last.

<p>Step 4: Assessment: write specific pupil outcomes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turn the learning outcomes into pupil-friendly ‘I can’ or ‘You can’ statements. • You might adapt these specific outcomes to form ‘I can’ statements (for pupil self-assessment), ‘You can’ statements (for teacher assessment), and ‘Can you...?’ statements (for next steps or challenge) • Make the learning outcomes specific to the content you are teaching, to help you know just what it is that you want pupils to be able to understand and do as a result of their learning. • These ‘I can’/‘You can’ statements will help you to integrate assessment for learning within your teaching, so that there is no need to do a separate end of unit assessment. 	
<p>Emerging</p>	<p>Expected</p>	<p>Exceeding</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Describe some key environmental problems such as plastic pollution, global warming and climate change ✓ Describe some key religious teachings about the Earth from Christians, Muslims, Hindus and / or Jewish people ✓ Contribute knowledge and information about religions and green issues to a class display ✓ Respond sensitively to examples of green religious practice with ideas of their own ✓ Express their thoughts about ideas such as ‘the Earth belongs to God’ or ‘everyone must work to save the planet’ ✓ Suggest what actions from a particular religion will have a positive impact for a greener future ✓ Find out about and describe some examples of religious projects seeking to have an environmental impact ✓ Gather information about what each religion teaches about the natural world ✓ Discover and use relevant new vocabulary e.g. climate change, climate justice, plastic pollution. God the creator, humans as stewards or guardians 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Make connections between beliefs about the earth and activist behaviour in two or more different religions ✓ Describe the teaching of two or more religions about the natural world using new appropriate vocabulary accurately ✓ Discuss and apply ideas from Islam such as ‘khalif’ or ‘corruption’ to green issues ✓ Discuss and apply ideas from Christianity such as stewardship and the Fall of Humanity to green issues ✓ Discuss and apply ideas from Judaism such as ‘healing the world’ and the new year for trees, Tu B’shevat ✓ Discuss and apply Hindu ideas such as the concept of goddess Bhumi, Mother Earth and ahimsa, harmlessness, to green issues ✓ Understand the challenges facing the planet and responses from different religions ✓ Explains three or more examples of green issues, e.g. plastic waste pollution, rising sea levels, climate change ✓ Link, thoughtfully, the green issues with views of the planet from within religions ✓ Weigh up the responses two or more religions are making to challenging green issues: give a judgement about their likely effectiveness ✓ Discuss and describe their own and others’ ideas about the kinds of collaboration, activism and commitment needed to ‘save the Earth’ ✓ Recognise that there are different points of view about how we respond to climate change issues ✓ Think through and express ideas about how religious communities – numbered in billions (Hi, Chr, Mu) can contribute. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Explain similarities and differences between religious beliefs about the Earth found in two or more different religions ✓ Refer to sacred texts and contemporary religious teaching about the natural world reasonably ✓ Use new and complex language to give clear and reasoned accounts of some green issues and relevant religious teachings ✓ Consider and evaluate the contributions religions can make to environmental protection ✓ Weigh up their own view of projects from two or more different religions designed to ‘green’ the faiths ✓ Express clearly their own ideas about the needs humanity faces to change human behaviour to address green issues ✓ Research religious views of green issues for themselves ✓ Express clear understanding of varied points of view about green issues ✓ Use a wide range of religious ideas and vocabulary to examine key questions to do with the need for ‘greener religions’

Step 5: Develop teaching and learning activities

- Develop active learning opportunities and investigations, using some engaging stimuli, to enable pupils to gather rich knowledge of the ideas in the unit and to achieve the outcomes.
- Don't forget the skills you want pupils to develop, as well as the content you want them to understand.
- Make sure that the activities allow pupils to practise these skills as well as gathering increasingly rich knowledge and building their understanding of religion, nature and issues of climate justice.

INTENTIONS: LESSON OBJECTIVES	Implementation: Teaching and learning ideas and activities	IMPACTS: LEARNING OUTCOMES
Does the Earth belong to God? Or to humanity? Or to every living thing?		
<p>Pupils will learn to:</p> <p>Develop a rich knowledge of issues about greener religious practice and questions of climate justice</p> <p>Use new vocabulary accurately, for example: sustainability / Catholic / Pope / climate change / climate justice / prophet</p> <p>Show sensitivity toward the complex issues of how humans affect the environment and how justice for all can be achieved</p> <p>Consider how people like Greta Thunberg and Pope Francis make their contributions to climate justice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This unit investigation enables pupils to learn in depth about issues of climate change, environmental protection and the future sustainability of the planet, in the light of teaching and practice from different religions. Pupils will find out about Jewish, Christian, Hindu and / or Islamic ideas about the natural world. This is a challenging poem, but use it with 11-14s to start the unit. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wtUmpJw5Onc We live on an amazing planet. Get the pupils excited about this in whatever ways work for your class. You could use clips from ‘Planet Earth’: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> High Speed Dolphins www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0038vhw Jungle growth www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0038s03 Autumn colours www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p00382sp Polar bears emerge www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0036tzz Use a case study about Greta Thunberg to introduce the issues of climate justice. You might begin with an account of her life as a young activist, and show pupils her speech to the United Nations: https://www.theguardian.com/environment/video/2019/sep/23/greta-thunberg-to-world-leaders-how-dare-you-you-have-stolen-my-dreams-and-my-childhood-video Ask the pupils to make a note of the 5 best lines in the speech, and discuss after they have seen it why these were good lines. Consider: what does Greta believe? Connect this activity to one using a photo of Greta Thunberg and His Holiness Pope Francis – here, for example. https://catholicclimatemovement.global/pope-thanks-and-encourages-greta-thunberg-in-her-commitment-to-defend-the-environment/ Teach pupils that Pope Francis in his Circular letter to the world’s billion+ Catholic Christians has called for all Christians to renew their care for nature, as ‘God’s Good Earth.’ You could use a writing frame like this one to enable pupils to think through the meaning of the photograph. From her story, what can pupils tell about her personal worldview? What matters most to her? Greta is non-religious, but has very strong beliefs: humans must be responsible for their actions. Words 	<p>These activities will help pupils to work towards achieving the following expected outcomes:</p> <p>Emerging:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe some key environmental problems and some key Catholic teachings about the Earth (A1). Find out about examples of people seeking to have an environmental impact (C3). <p>Expected:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make connections between beliefs about the earth and activist behaviour (A1). Understand the challenges facing the planet and responses from different religions and worldviews (B2). Discuss their own and others’ ideas about the kinds of commitment needed to ‘save the Earth’ (C3). <p>Exceeding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain similarities and differences between Greta Thunberg and the Pope (A1). Consider and evaluate the contributions religions can make to environmental protection (B3). Express ideas about key questions to do with the need for ‘greener religions and worldviews’ (C3).



<p>Express thoughtful views about whether religious people need to do more to safeguard Planet Earth</p>	<p>without actions are useless. The Earth is precious. The older generations must act to support the younger. What else does she believe?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use this case study to enable pupils to think about the meanings of some key questions: whose world is this? Why do humans pollute their own earth? Why do extinctions matter? Can we care better for our planet? Who is most at risk from environmental change? Does the earth belong to God? If some people believe the earth does belong to God, how should they live? What about different beliefs – the earth belongs to humanity, or to all living creatures equally? • You might teach children that prophets in different religions are not so much people who can predict the future, but people who see what is good and evil clearly and call the community to commit themselves to the side of goodness. Is Greta Thunberg like a prophet? In what ways? • You might ask pupils to write a ‘prophecy’ themselves. This could be drafted now, as the unit begins, and redrafted after several lessons towards the end of the unit. They could use sentence prompts like these: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Listen, World – here is an urgent message... ○ Woe to us! We are in trouble... ○ We have damaged our own home... ○ We have risked everything... ○ Now is the time to... ○ We have to change... ○ Everyone, take action now... ○ Pray for... ○ Then you will see clouds move away... ○ Then your hope will be realised... <p>For more up to date info about religions and communities involved in the climate justice movement see the fine website of Green Faith: https://greenfaith.org/</p>	
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INTENTIONS: LESSON OBJECTIVES	Implementation: Teaching and learning ideas and activities	IMPACTS: LEARNING OUTCOMES
What do Muslims think and do about caring for the earth and working to improve the environment?		
<p>Pupils will learn to:</p> <p>Retell a story from the tradition about the natural world and the environment</p> <p>Develop a rich knowledge of this religion's teaching and practice about nature and the environment, using new vocabulary accurately</p> <p>Consider how effective Muslims can be in contributing to protecting the earth</p> <p>Give reasons for their own ideas about what they have learned in relation to climate and faith</p> <p>Develop and use their skills in gathering and deploying information and ideas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Muslim beliefs about Allah's good earth: Learn in detail about key Islamic concepts such as khalifa which have implications for care of the earth. Connect these ideas to words and stories from sacred texts. • Learn about the work of projects such as Islamic Relief's tree-planting. Consider some reasons why these projects may need to grow and influence their traditions more strongly. Should religions be greener? • Allah: creator of the earth and its beauty. If God made the world beautiful, diverse, self sustaining and fruitful, then these are good things. Every species and every clean stream is part of Allah's creation. This idea of making something beautiful is reflected in Mosque architecture. An unusual and stimulating resource on European mosques can be found here: http://ilmfeed.com/a-photographic-journey-of-europes-mosques/ Another good example is of the eco-mosque designed, built and opened recently in Cambridge: https://cambridgecentralmosque.org/the-mosque/ • Learn in detail about examples of creative expressions of green spirituality from Islam in works of art, and activist protests or actions: what are the spiritual roots of such expression, and what impacts can they have? Ask pupils if they can design a tile based on a favourite flower or leaf that would fit in with some of the mosque designs they have seen. Ceramic tiles that celebrate the beauty of the earth have a long history in mosque decoration – look at examples – pupils could select favourites and research their meanings from: https://www.zazzle.co.uk/islamic+tiles • Humanity: Khalifah of the Creation. A Khalif is a guardian – what does that mean? What can you infer from the idea? The Qur'an says 'It is Allah who has appointed you Guardians in the Earth' (6:135). Green Muslims in the present day think about the meaning of being a guardian: it certainly rules out actions that spoil the earth, which Allah made good. And it suggests a role for Muslims to tackle the negative impacts of climate change on the lives of poor people and the lives of animals: should all Muslims be active for climate justice? • Corruption. The Qur'an teaches that corruption has appeared in the land and sea because of what the hands of people have done. "So Allah may let humanity taste a part of the consequences of what they have done. Then perhaps they will return to righteousness" [Qur'an, 30:42, slightly simplified English for pupils]. What could humans do to 'return to righteousness' as the Qur'an hopes? Make lists of answers. • Respect all that lives. Prophet Muhammad [PBUH] was full of respect for living creatures and for the earth. Among many hadith, stories of the Prophet, Muslims remember how he cared for ants, cats, camels and all that lives. He also told his followers: 'Do not waste water, even though you have the resources of a whole river.' Following his example in the modern world means that many Muslims see it as part of their religion to care about biodiversity, working against pollution and contribute to a green future. • This means that God wants us to notice how we have polluted the good earth and do something about it ourselves! Can we all be guardians and do something to stop the corruption of earth? Should we? • Recap with the class: what did they find out about connections between ancient Muslim wisdom in holy texts (Qur'an, Sunnah) and some ways Muslim people have become "climate justice activists"? What do the children think about different ways Islam is seeking a 'greener future'? 	<p>These activities will help pupils to work towards achieving the following expected outcomes:</p> <p>Emerging:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe some key Muslim teachings about the Earth (A1). • Find out about two examples of Islamic projects seeking to have an environmental impact (C3). <p>Expected:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make connections between Muslim beliefs about the earth and activist behaviour (A1). • Understand the challenges facing the planet and responses from Islam (B2). • Discuss their own and others' ideas about what must be done to 'save the Earth' (C3). <p>Exceeding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider and evaluate the contributions Muslims can make to environmental protection (B3). • Express ideas about key questions to do with the need for 'greener religions' (C3).

INTENTIONS: LESSON OBJECTIVES	Implementation: Teaching and learning ideas and activities	IMPACTS: LEARNING OUTCOMES
What do Christians think and do about caring for the earth and working to improve the environment?		
<p>Pupils will learn to:</p> <p>Retell a story from the Christian tradition about the natural world and the environment</p> <p>Develop a rich knowledge of this religion's teaching and practice about nature and the environment, using new vocabulary accurately</p> <p>Consider how effective Christians can be in contributing to protecting the earth</p> <p>Give reasons for their own ideas about what they have learned in relation to climate and faith</p> <p>Develop and use their skills in gathering and deploying information and ideas.</p>	<p>Green Christians</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See the resources section for useful web links. Stories of Saint Francis of Assisi are a good starting point for the opening up of ideas from Christianity about harmony between humans and the natural world. • Charities such as Operation Noah, Green Christian and A Rocha encouraging people to think about their use of the environment and develop practical ways to care for the planet. Many Christians think of the world as a gift from God, a gift that people have damaged and need to mend and look after better. Can the class think of 10 things that Christians - and everybody - could do to look after the earth. Look at some of the websites from some of the suggested organisations and share some of the suggestions they offer. • Older pupils could write a postcard to the local church asking them how they look after the world and offer one of their ideas. A visitor from the Christian community might come and respond to ideas. • Eco churches. Churches can become 'Eco Churches' if they take actions to teach their members about looking after the environment, pray about the environment, make their church and grounds more environmentally friendly. One church put beehives in their grounds to encourage bees. Another encourages biodiversity in the churchyard. • Ask the pupils to make suggestions of what a church might be able to do to win an award. Pupils could create a certificate to go with the award decorate with their suggestions. Older pupils could choose a suitable bible story or verse to go on the certificate. Have a look at the Eco Church part of the A Rocha website for inspiration. • Learn in detail about key concepts such as stewardship (Christianity) which have implications for care of the earth. Connect these ideas to words and stories from sacred texts, for example the story of Genesis 1. • Learn about the work of projects such as Christian projects Eco Church or Operation Noah. Consider some reasons why these projects may need to grow and influence their traditions more strongly. Should the Christian religion be greener? List ten ways this could happen – what would it be like in practice? • Learn in detail about examples of creative expressions of green spirituality from Christianity in works of art, music, drama, prophecy and activist protests or actions: what are the spiritual roots of such expression, and what impacts can they have? How do these activists use ideas from the Bible? • Find out about connections between ancient wisdom in holy texts and some ways religious people have become "climate justice activists". Design a poster, promotional good and banners that 'green Christians' might want to use to get their messages across. Film a short clip expressing ways in which Christian teachings speak about 'God's good Earth'. <p style="text-align: right;">CONTINUED</p>	<p>These activities will help pupils to work towards achieving the following expected outcomes:</p> <p>Emerging:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe some key Christian teachings about the Earth (A1). • Find out about two examples of Christian projects seeking to have an environmental impact (C3). <p>Expected:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make connections between Christian beliefs about the earth and activist behaviour (A1). • Understand the challenges facing the planet and responses from Christian communities (B2). • Discuss their own and others' ideas about what must be done to 'save the Earth' (C3). <p>Exceeding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain similarities and differences between Christian and other religious beliefs about the Earth (A1). • Consider and evaluate the contributions Christians can make to environmental protection (B3).


Five ideas about Christian green practice

- Joanna is a Christian. She asked her Pastor at church: can Christians do more to help save the planet? What does the Bible teach about this? Here is the Pastor's reply, in five points:
 - “Yes, Christians can do lots more to save the planet, and we must. We haven't been very good at this in the past!
 - The Bible says that God made the Earth good (Genesis 1), but we have often spoiled it. I think Jesus loved the world of nature – he noticed sparrows, doves, pigeons, hens, foxes, flowers, wheatfields and fruit trees. We should follow Jesus and care for the earth too.
 - Some Christians teach that we are God's Stewards. It is God who owns the earth, which he made, and loves, and saves. God gives us the task of caring for the planet, loving the Earth.
 - In the Psalms, one song says ‘The earth is the Lord's and everything in it, the world and its inhabitants too, because God is the one who established it on the seas; God set it firmly on the waters.’ (Psalm 24:1-2).
 - God is pleased, I believe, when humans love the Earth and care for it and protect it.”

Which of the Pastor's 5 points do you think matters most? How many of them do you agree with? Would Muslims, Jewish people and Hindus say similar things or give different reasons for making a 'greener religion'?


INTENTIONS: LESSON OBJECTIVES	Implementation: Teaching and learning ideas and activities	IMPACTS: LEARNING OUTCOMES
What do Hindu people think and do about caring for the earth and working to improve the environment?		
<p>Pupils will learn to:</p> <p>Retell a story from the Hindu tradition about the natural world and the environment, about the goddess Bhumi</p> <p>Develop a rich knowledge of this religion’s teaching and practice about nature and the environment, using new vocabulary accurately</p> <p>Consider how effective Hindus can be in contributing to protecting the earth, e.g. by making divali celebrations less wasteful</p> <p>Give reasons for their own ideas about what they have learned in relation to climate and faith</p>	<p>Bhumi, Ahimsa, Atman and Hindu care for living things</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach the pupils in detail about key concepts such as Bhumi (goddess in Hindu dharma) which have implications for care of the earth. Connect these ideas to words and stories from sacred texts. Ahimsa is the value of non-violence, harmlessness, that leads Hindu people to be vegetarian and to care for all that lives. Teach pupils how this connects to the idea of atman, the divine spark that dwells in every living creature. If you believe in atman, and value ahimsa, how does this affect how you live? • Ask the pupils whether it is ever alright to kill an insect? Discuss some of the different answers and the pupils’ reasons for their ideas. Explain that many Hindus practise ahimsa, which is not harming any living creatures. As a result of this belief almost all Hindus are vegetarians. • Show children the story of the Ahimsa Dairy Foundation’s ‘happy cows’ www.ahimsamilk.org/press_media/Story-of-Ahimsa-happy-cows-Dec-2013.pdf • What is good about caring for animals like this? If you do a farm visit with your class, get children to ask the farmer what she or he does to make the cows and other animals happy. • Big Questions Big Answer Environment from RE Today addresses this in an article by Angela Hill Chipko women in the 70s, the original tree-huggers! Dr Vandana Shiva challenged food production systems that harm our environment. • Lots of people are vegetarians – see if there are any in your class or in your school. Find someone in the school to talk about it and explain why they choose to be vegetarian. Also, why do some people decide not to eat eggs, or to be vegan? Are our choices about what we eat always about good and bad? See the links from the NATRE website to resources about ethical veganism as a philosophical conviction. <p>Bhumi: goddess of the Earth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn about the work of projects such as the Hindu Bhumi Project. Consider some reasons why these projects may need to grow and influence their traditions more strongly. Should Hindu religion be greener? • Priya is a Hindu girl. She asked a priest at her Mandir ‘Can our divali celebrations be less wasteful? How and why do we worship Goddess Bhumi? Is it important for Hindus to care for the earth?’ Here are the answers. <p style="color: #800000;">“In our community we want to make sure that Diwali is not a time of waste and pollution. Here are their four ideas. We’re having less expensive fireworks this year but also more singing and dancing at Diwali. It cuts down on cost and pollution: less money going up in smoke! It is also less frightening for pets too. At Diwali we always love food from the takeaway shops. We are going</p> 	<p>These activities will help pupils to work towards achieving the following expected outcomes:</p> <p>Emerging:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe some key Hindu teachings about the Earth (A1). • Respond sensitively to examples of green Hindu practice with ideas of their own (B2). <p>Expected:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make connections between Hindu beliefs about the earth and activist behaviour (A1). • Understand the challenges facing the planet and responses from Hindus (B2). • Discuss their own and others’ ideas about what must be done to ‘save the Earth’ (C3). <p>Exceeding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider and evaluate the contributions Hindus can make to environmental protection (B3). • Express ideas about key questions to do with the need for ‘greener religions’ (C3).

<p>Develop and use their skills in gathering and deploying information and ideas.</p>	<p>to choose shops which use cardboard which can biodegrade, not plastic or foil trays. In the Diwali story, Rama and Sita go to live in the Forest of Vrindavan and live lives close to nature. We are going to make our own decorations, using leaves and flowers from gardens, just like the way Rama and Sita lived in Vrindavan. We are going to celebrate outdoors, and pray to the deity or goddess Bhumi to give us courage and ideas to help save the earth (she is goddess of the Earth).</p> <p>When we start to build a new mandirs and other buildings too we hold a special act of worship called 'Bhumi Puja'. We use incense, lamps and gifts to the goddess and we pray that Bhumi will accept and bless our building. Bhumi Devi is the deity or goddess of the Earth, our 'Mother Earth'. We Hindus teach that she is Vishwambhara (All-Bearing), Vasudhaa (the producer of all wealth) and Pratihtha (the foundation on which we live). These good things come from Bhumi, so it is also very important for all Hindu devotees to love the Earth and take great care to be humble and kind to the Earth. This is especially important these days as we work to deal with the climate crisis."</p> <p>Which of the ideas Priya heard from the Hindu community leader do you think are the most useful? Which ones are the hardest to put into action? Which ones will make the most difference? Are there any messages in the ways Hindus are trying to be greener that every human could listen to and practice?</p> <p>From your work so far in this RE unit of study, do you think people in the different religions can do more to make their contributions to a greener future?</p>	
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INTENTIONS: LESSON OBJECTIVES	Implementation: Teaching and learning ideas and activities	IMPACTS: LEARNING OUTCOMES
What do Jewish people think and do about caring for the earth and working to improve the environment?		
<p>Pupils will learn to:</p> <p>Retell a story from the tradition about the natural world and the environment</p> <p>Develop a rich knowledge of Jewish ideas and practice about nature and the environment, using new vocabulary accurately</p> <p>Consider how effective Jewish people can be in contributing to protecting the earth</p> <p>Give reasons for their own ideas about what they have learned in relation to climate and faith</p> <p>Develop and use their skills in gathering and deploying information and ideas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn in detail about key concepts such as Tu B'Shevat (Jewish new year for trees) which have implications for care of the earth. Connect these ideas to words and stories from sacred texts. Learn about the work of projects such as the Jewish Ecological Coalition. Consider some reasons why these projects may need to grow and influence their traditions more strongly. Should religions be greener? Learn in detail about examples of creative expressions of green spirituality from Judaism in works of art, music, drama, prophecy and activist protests or actions: what are the spiritual roots of such expression, and what impacts can they have? Find out about connections between ancient wisdom in holy texts and some ways religious people have become "climate justice activists". A Jewish festival to celebrate trees The festival of Tu B'Shevat, a new year for trees, is celebrated by Jewish people. It reminds Jewish people of the importance of the land and how much they rely on it for food. Jewish people often celebrate this festival by planting trees and eating fruit, particularly fruit that grows in Israel such as grapes, figs, pomegranates and dates. Lots of people choose to plant tree on Tu Bishvat, providing fruit for generations to come. You could hare the story of 'Honi the Circle Maker' shown on this webpage for Jewish children: www.myjewishlearning.com/article/planting-trees-for-tu-bishvat/ Could the pupils plant a tree in your school grounds? As a class draw or write all the good reasons for planting tree and put them on a poster advertising your tree planting ceremony. Teach the pupils some information on the Jewish Climate Action Network (JCAN) www.jewishclimate.org Rabbi Katy Allen started out as a biology teacher in the USA, and later, became a rabbi and an environmental campaigner. In 2013, she set up JCAN. This organisation educates people to help them understand climate change, and how they can take action against it. JCAN holds workshops and conferences. It supports local, national and global campaigns such as the 'People's Climate March' and letter writing to people who have the power to make important decisions that affect the environment. As a Jewish person, Rabbi Allen believes God created a world that is good and has everything we need in it. Jewish people believe that God put human beings in charge of looking after His creation, which is a great responsibility. 	<p>These activities will help pupils to work towards achieving the following expected outcomes:</p> <p>Emerging:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe some key Jewish ideas about the Earth (A1). Respond sensitively to examples of green Jewish practice with ideas of their own (B2). <p>Expected:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make connections between Jewish beliefs about the earth and activist behaviour (A1). Understand the challenges facing the planet and responses from Jewish religion (B2). Discuss their own and others' ideas about what must be done to 'save the Earth' (C3). <p>Exceeding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider and evaluate the contribution Rabbi Katy Allen is making to to environmental protection (B3). Express ideas about key questions to do with the need for 'greener religions' (C3).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A big part of Rabbi Allen's work is encouraging Jewish people to make changes in their own lives to help reduce the effects of climate changes. This goes beyond what they do in their homes, at work and in their leisure time: Rabbi Allen even helps find ways to make synagogues and festivals more environmentally friendly. In fact, hers is a synagogue with no walls! Rabbi Allen leads worship and celebration of Jewish festivals in the great outdoors. She believes that worshipping outside, all year round, surrounded by the natural world and the changing seasons, helps Jewish people to feel a special connection to God's creation. It helps people to develop a real love of the natural world around them. The 'Cranberry Shabbat' is a favourite for the Rabbi's Jewish community. This is where, late in October, the Shabbat service is combined with picking wild cranberries, which are then donated to help the homeless.• Engage pupils with Rabbi Katy's story and the work of JCAN. Ask them to consider what they think her three most important contributions to 'greener Jewish ways of living' might be. This could be a basis for written work.	
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What have we been learning about the different ways to make religions 'greener'?		
<p>Pupils will learn to:</p> <p>Develop and deploy rich knowledge of what 4 different religions teach about the natural worlds and human responsibility</p> <p>Use new vocabulary accurately to describe and weigh up issues about religion and climate</p> <p>Give reasons for their own ideas about whether this is 'God's good earth'</p> <p>Express thoughtful views about how people must respond to the climate crisis</p> <p>Develop and use their skills in handling and deploying information from different religions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revise and recap the unit of work. You could do this from the up to date info about religions and communities involved in the climate justice movement on the fine website of Green Faith: https://greenfaith.org/ • Use the diagram below as the centre of a display to sum up what pupil learned about issues of climate change, environmental protection and the future sustainability of the planet, in the light of teaching and practice from 4 religions. You could add a fifth box too for non-religious views if this fits with your class. • Make connections between ancient wisdom in holy texts and some ways religious people have become "climate justice activists". • Discuss what must happen for people and planet to survive and re-balance the ways humans have exploited the earth. • What kinds of behaviour, belief and expression does the world need now? Weigh up different responses as we face the crisis of climate justice. <div data-bbox="703 735 1637 1390" style="text-align: center;"> <p>Muslims</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From the Qur'an, learn that Allah the Creator made a beautiful world. • Humans have corrupted it, but are Allah's khalifah to put it right. • Muslims seek new ways to ways to be 'guardians of Allah's world' <p>Hindus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try to live harmlessly • Goddess Bhumi is a Hindu expression of the idea that Earth is our Mother and we must care for her • Hindus are trying to find new and better ways of caring for the earth <p>Christians</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christians believe God loves the whole earth and made all the species, asking humanity be 'stewards' • Christians are trying to find new ways to make their faith greener <p>Jewish people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Believe Almighty G-d created the world • Teach that the Almighty yearns for humans to repair any damage to the earth • They are seeking new ways to make their religion greener. <p>Add a fifth box to consider non-religious worldviews in the light of these issues</p> </div>	<p>These activities will help pupils to work towards achieving the following expected outcomes:</p> <p>Emerging:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe some key environmental problems and some key religious teachings about the Earth (A1). • Respond sensitively to examples of green religious practice with ideas of their own (B2). • Describe examples of religious projects seeking to have an environmental impact (C3). <p>Expected:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make connections between beliefs about the earth and activist behaviour in different religions (A1). • Understand the challenges facing the planet and responses from different religions (B2). • Discuss their own and others' ideas about the kinds of collaboration, activism and commitment needed to 'save the Earth' (C3). <p>Exceeding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain similarities and differences between religious beliefs about the Earth (A1). • Consider and evaluate the contributions religions can make to environmental protection (B3). • Express varied ideas about key questions to do with the need for 'greener religions' (C3).

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What are we learning? How can we display our new knowledge about 'green religion' and express our own ideas?		
<p>Pupils will learn to:</p> <p>Recount their learning about climate justice issues and religions in detail with clarity</p> <p>Express a rich knowledge of religious and non-religious beliefs about nature and care of the Earth</p> <p>Use new vocabulary accurately, for example stewardship, khalifa, Bhumi, Tu B'Shevat.</p> <p>Consider how practical action motivated by beliefs can contribute to reducing environmental damage</p> <p>Understand the significance of the place of religions in climate justice movements</p> <p>Express thoughtful views about solving climate problems and religions and worldviews.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As the world wakes up to the damage we are doing to the environment so to do many people from different religions. Some religions are inspired by rereading sacred text and noticing what is said about the natural world. This unit investigated in depth some issues of attitudes to nature, climate change, environmental protection, and the future sustainability of the planet, in the light of teaching and practice from different religions and worldviews. Host a final discussion: what must happen for people and planet to survive and re-balance the ways humans have exploited the earth? You could use the 'washing line' strategy where pupils peg a name label on a string between 'strongly agree' and 'strongly disagree' to show their views and then discuss the range of views in the class. What kinds of behaviour, belief and expression does the world need now? Weigh up different responses as we face the crisis of climate justice. <p>Create a 'trees of life' exhibition and display:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils can work in teams to create different sections, maybe 5 or 6 in all, that show how and why people from different religions and worldviews have responded to the challenges of our climate crisis, and are seeking to do their part in 'saving the planet'. A good focus for a display might be some trees or branches on one large tree which represent different religions or worldviews and where pupils use leaves to draw, describe, report and weigh up quotes from holy texts, names of activists – and their activities, examples of spirituality and prayer for the earth, responses to a range of different problems and issues. In between the trees, pupils may position themselves, with speech and thought bubbles, suggesting their own ideas and responses to their learning. This example used hundreds of leaves to record ideas and thoughts in the class's 'spiritual earth' week. Consider how to extend this activity's challenge for secondary students. Can the display enable pupils to show evidence that they have achieved many of the outcome statements in the column to the right? 	<p>These activities will help pupils to work towards achieving the following expected outcomes:</p> <p>Emerging:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe some key environmental problems and some key religious teachings about the Earth from at least 2 religions (A1). Respond sensitively to examples of green religious practice with ideas of their own (B2). <p>Expected:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make connections between beliefs about the earth and activist behaviour in at least three different religions (A1). Express knowledge-rich responses to challenges facing the planet (B2). Express their own and others' ideas about the kinds of collaboration, activism and commitment needed to 'save the Earth' (C3). <p>Exceeding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain similarities and differences between religious beliefs about the Earth (A1). Express ideas about key questions to do with the need for 'greener religions' (C3).

Vocabulary + concepts	Resources (Links working Autumn 21, but search if they break)
<p>In this unit, pupils will have an opportunity to use words and phrases related to:</p> <p>Key concepts for thinking about climate justice and religion and worldviews:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God as creator and lover of the earth • Climate change • Climate justice (alert to the fact that climate change hits the poorest hardest) • Global warming • Species extinction • Sustainability <p>Specific religions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Islam, Judaism, Christianity, Hinduism • Non-religious world views • Stewardship • Khalifa • Bhumi • Tu B'Shevat. <p>The language of shared human experience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect for the earth • Activism • Climate justice • Worldview • Natural world 	<p>Teachers might use these resources and links:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Green Faith ▪ www.faithfortheclimate.org.uk Home ▪ ARC - Alliance of Religions and Conservation (arcworld.org) ▪ A Rocha UK – Caring for God's Earth ▪ Home - A Rocha International ▪ EcoSikh Sikh Response to Climate Change - EcoSikh ▪ IFEES Protecting our planet for future generations using Islamic teachings ▪ The Mosque - Cambridge Central Mosque ▪ green_temple-1.pdf (arcworld.org) ▪ Green Mosque Projects - IFEES ▪ EcoSynagogue – Promoting environmental sustainability in our synagogues and beyond ▪ Eco Church - An A Rocha UK Project ▪ Plastic Free Iftar - IFEES ▪ The National Association of Teachers of RE (NATRE) has two excellent web starting points for these issues: www.natre.org.uk/spiritedarts enables pupils to view and judge numerous works of pupil art on key spiritual ideas from young people. This is a good starting point: ▪ Online searchable sacred texts from different religions at: www.ishwar.com ▪ Try www.reonline.org.uk for a good general gateway to RE materials. • Teachers will find it helpful to refer to: www.faithfortheclimate.org.uk/ • Here's an alliance of faith groups giving a summary of religious teachings: https://greenfaith.org/greenfaith_religious_teachings • A good set of ideas about greening Eid can be read here: https://www.arabnews.com/node/949431/columns • This site gives useful understanding for teachers of ecology in Hindu dharma and community: http://www.anaadifoundation.org/blog/category/ecology/ • Operation Noah is a Christian response to climate change, and helps churches to 'go green' Find out about their work here: https://operationnoah.org/ • Hindu dharma – some good extra resources about the drive to reduce plastic in ceremonies and making statues from pottery not plastic: https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2020/aug/28/covid-19-turns-tide-on-indias-ganesh-festival-traditions And https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2020/dec/03/all-change-indias-railways-bring-back-tea-in-clay-cups-in-bid-to-banish-plastics • Harry Baker's poem 'Impossible' is a fabulous way to address the claim that we can't change enough to save the planet. Use it as a stimulus to encourage pupils' own poetry about the climate crisis. https://www.facebook.com/harrybakerpoetry/videos/harry-baker-impossible/1078858809230878/

Contributions to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- Opportunities for spiritual development come from developing attitudes of open minded and courageous engagement with different views and questions of justice and climate change and varied perspectives from religions and worldviews
- Opportunities for moral development come from thinking about fairness and considering religious and moral teachings about the rights of all and the importance of accepting difference and seeking justice, particularly in relation to climate and environment
- Opportunities for social development come from developing an appreciation of the ways in which our current use and abuse of nature demand a shared response from us all
- Opportunities for cultural development come from appreciating the wide and global range of ways in which our cultures and communities respond to the natural world and can work to protect it.



Bella, 13, pictures the impact of climate change on the whale and turtle. She asks: can the religions of the world do more to repair the damage we have caused and save the planet?'



This primary pupil, Sam, 8, pictures a turtle in a sea of waste.