

## Awareness, Mystery and Value (AMV) 2011: Sample Schemes of Learning

### Key Stage 2 Unit 7: How do people express their beliefs and identity? [C&D]

**This unit explores how religions and beliefs employ signs, symbols and the arts to express aspects of human nature**

#### About this example

This example is intended to provide a set of learning activities on *community cohesion* for a **Year 3/4 class**. It could be used in RE lessons or as part of a 'creative curriculum' approach where a number of subjects, including RE, contribute to pupils' understanding of issues related to 'community cohesion'.

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The focus here is on the role and voice of women within different communities and aims to engage pupils through activities that will promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

#### Where the example fits into the new primary curriculum

This example may be connected to the 'historical, geographical and social' and 'understanding the arts' areas of learning.

It may also be used as a 'stand-alone' sequence of learning within a discrete unit of learning for RE.

**Essentials for learning and life.** This sample scheme will support pupils to learn how to: listen attentively, talk clearly and confidently about their thoughts, opinions and ideas (Literacy); investigate and communicate (learning and thinking skills); work collaboratively towards common goals (social skills).

#### Prior Learning

Pupils will be familiar with some key ideas in Literacy, such as how to hold a discussion on issues and dilemmas, and will have some experience of and practice at being able to put forward a point of view and say why things are important, giving reasons.

In a programme such as SEAL, they will have explored questions of identity and feelings, self-awareness and assertiveness through the 'Good to be ME' unit.

In addition, pupils will have explored some different ways in which people live within their own environment, e.g. ,through their work on the village of Chembakolli in India, See [www.chembakolli.com](http://www.chembakolli.com) for information on the resources available from this project.

Pupils will have explored various meanings to different people of the cross in Christianity, e.g. different types of cross in the local church.

Pupils will have had some experience of and practice at speaking and listening in small group and whole class situations, e.g., describing emotional responses to a variety of stimuli.

Featured Religions / Beliefs	Areas of Enquiry		
Christianity	<b>AT 1: Learning ABOUT religion and belief</b>		<b>AT 2: Learning FROM religion and belief</b>
	A. Beliefs, teachings and sources		D. Identity and belonging ✓
	B. Practices and ways of life		E. Meaning, purpose and truth
	C. Forms of expression	✓	F. Values and commitments

**Key Question: How do people express their beliefs and identity?**

**Supplementary Questions**

- (a) How do people express their beliefs, identity and experiences using signs, symbols and the wider arts, e.g. art, buildings, dance, drama, music, painting, poetry, ritual, and story? Why do some people of faith not use the arts to represent certain things?
- (b) How and why are 'universal' symbols like colour, light, darkness, wind, sound, water, fire and silence used in religions and beliefs?
- (c) Why are the arts really important for some religions and beliefs?
- (d) How might I express my ideas, feelings and beliefs in a variety of different ways?

**Resources**

The following texts and e-resources have been used for the sample learning activities below. Teachers are, of course, free to vary the resources suggested here to suit their pupils.

- Vivid pictures of the Salvadoran countryside, and its people, customs, churches, plants, and animals can be found in the photo gallery of a native Salvadoran at <http://gocentralamerica.about.com/od/elsalvadorguide/ig/El-Salvador-Photo-Gallery/>
- Salvadoran cross, real or sketched, e.g., [www.ecva.org/exhibition/cross/pages/salvador1.html](http://www.ecva.org/exhibition/cross/pages/salvador1.html)
- Some Roman Catholic perspectives on El Salvador can be found at the following web sites: <http://crs.org/EI%2DSalvador/>; [www.mklsisters.org/](http://www.mklsisters.org/).  
For the BBC's country profile on El Salvador see [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/country\\_profiles/1220684.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/country_profiles/1220684.stm)
- Blank outline of a cross.
- Coloured markers or paints.
- Music from El Salvador, e.g: Por Eso Luchamos (This is why we are fighting) by Cutumay Camones.
- For follow-up work on Salvadoran Folk Art see <http://www.peopleofhopecrafts.org/about.php>

### Learning Outside the Classroom

Pupils should have had the opportunity to visit a local church, in particular to examine different symbols including crosses and to hear from at least one Christian point of view, e.g. from the minister at the local church, the significance of some of the crosses familiar in English churches.

Pupils could also consider from an artistic perspective, some of the symbolic meanings contained within religious art.

They could apply their learning in discussions about the role and image of women in society with friends and family members.

They could apply their learning by proposing and taking action in a school or class council meeting.

**Expectations: C&D refers here to the focus areas of enquiry identified on the previous page**

**By the end of this sequence of learning:**

<b>All pupils:</b>	<b>Most pupils (majority class expectation):</b>	<b>Some pupils:</b>
C3 use religious words to describe some of the different ways in which people show their beliefs.  D3 compare some of the things that influence me, with those that influence other people.	C4 express religious beliefs (ideas, feelings, etc) in a range of styles and words used by believers and suggest what they mean.  D4 ask questions about who we are and where we belong, and suggest answers which refer to people who have inspired and influenced myself and others, such as the Maryknoll Sisters.	C5 use a wide religious vocabulary in suggesting reasons for the similarities and differences in forms of religious, spiritual and moral expression found within and between religions.  D5 give my own and others' views on questions about who we are and where we belong and on the challenges of belonging to a religion and explain what inspires and influences me.

These statements are taken from the 'Can-do' levels published on the AMV website at: <http://amv.somerset.gov.uk/>

Key Question: How do people express their beliefs and identity?			
Learning objectives Pupils should learn:	Suggested activities for teaching and learning	Outcomes	References and points to note
<p>Pupils will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>reflect upon the underlying meaning of different forms of expression;</li> <li>consider how people express information, ideas, feelings and beliefs in a variety of ways.</li> </ul>	<p>Show pupils a decorated cross from El Salvador, e.g., from <i>Articles of Faith</i> or <i>Religion in Evidence</i> and ask pupils to identify all the different images they see and to say what they find most interesting about the designs.</p> <p>Explain that these designs are on a Christian cross and are very brightly coloured because the artists believe that the cross is a sign of hope even in the middle of terrible situations. Ask why that might be.</p> <p>Ask pupils to look at the designs again and identify the images of hope and enjoyment of life. How are the lives of women depicted?</p> <p>Ask them to discuss in pairs what pictures of hope and enjoyment of life they might put in a picture.</p>	<p>Pupils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>learn that for Christians, the cross is a sign of hope because it symbolises Jesus' resurrection after his death by crucifixion.</li> <li>learn that, for Salvadorans, images of the sun, flowers, animals, men, women and children, doves, angels, homes etc represent reminders of the good things in life.</li> </ul>	<p>The people of El Salvador are largely Roman Catholic Christians. It is a relatively poor country whose people have suffered many conflicts in recent times.</p> <p>Christian bishops, priests and nuns have even lost their lives standing up for the poorest people in El Salvador, but the people have faith that the future will be more just and peaceful. Pupils might consider why they have this faith.</p> <p>Note that many of these crosses have the life of women portrayed as a major idea.</p>
<p>Pupils will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>learn about aspects of El Salvador's history and the influence and activities of some religious groups on behalf of the poor and refugees.</li> <li>consider the value of being part of a community.</li> </ul>	<p>Tell pupils about the suffering of the people of El Salvador and about the Maryknoll Sisters and Archbishop Oscar Romero – victims of the 'death squads'.</p> <p>Ask pupils for their ideas about the character of the Sisters and Archbishop Romero – make lists of character words, e.g., brave, courageous, foolish, and choose 3 most appropriate.</p> <p>Ask how having a like-minded friend can help pupils to put forward their point of view in situations such as a school council meeting?</p> <p>Ask pupils how they think that being part of a community, like the Sisters, can help in situations of oppression. Can they give examples?</p>	<p>Pupils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>respond to the history and stories of suffering in El Salvador and make comments about the character of those who stood up to violence, including the Maryknoll Sisters.</li> <li>learn the importance of building trust into a community to enable people to express their views and opinions.</li> </ul>	<p>See the Maryknoll Sisters Website for information about the 4 churchwomen who were killed in El Salvador in 1980: <a href="http://www.mklsisters.org/">www.mklsisters.org/</a></p>

<p>Pupils will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reflect on what gives meaning to their lives and consider why God is important to many people as they create crosses of hope using symbols and images from their experience;</li> <li>• think about the key question: art and being human.</li> </ul>	<p>Ask pupils what gives them hope and enjoyment in their lives. Is the idea of a God who brings happiness out of suffering helpful / meaningful to them? How can art be used to express ideas about human beings living together in communities / families? Where are women's voices to be heard in this art?</p> <p>Supply pupils with large pieces of paper with an outline of a cross. Ask them to use their ideas on what gives them hope and enjoyment to design their own Salvadoran style crosses. They might include words as well as pictures and include ideas on how men and women, boys and girls, can all get on well together.</p> <p>If the equipment is available, take digital photos of finished results and display on the whiteboard. Invite pupils to comment on their own designs and on what they liked about those of others.</p>	<p>Pupils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reflect upon the underlying meaning of different forms of expression on the crosses: signs and symbols, artistic expression, universal symbols, use of vibrant colour;</li> <li>• produce their own artistic responses to the ideas of being human and being in community;</li> <li>• write explanations of what is included in their designs, showing links between what they have learnt and their own ideas and experiences.</li> </ul>	<p>Sensitivity needs to be shown when asking pupils to share their ideas about God. Members of some faiths might find it inappropriate, for example, to ask pupils to draw pictures of God. There are also sensitivities in some faith traditions about the depiction of people and animals in 'religious' art and it may be more appropriate to ask for more 'symbolic' designs.</p> <p>Point out some similarities and differences between the lives of Salvadorans and those in Britain.</p>
<p>Pupils will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reflect on themes of hope and reconciliation;</li> <li>• explore ways of expressing what is important to them and other people and brings meaning and hope to their lives.</li> </ul>	<p>Explain the meaning of 'community cohesion' and 'reconciliation' to pupils. What factors might help bring this about? Jot down ideas on the whiteboard.</p> <p>Ask pupils to construct their own short poem or simply a collection of words such as those on the board to go with their cross designs, entitled, 'Being Human'.</p>	<p>Pupils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reflect upon the needs of poor and oppressed people;</li> <li>• produce their own ideas on the struggle for peaceful (cohesive) communities.</li> </ul>	<p>Use, e.g., 'Power of Reading', and 'Talk for Writing' (Standards website) approaches, e.g., looking at their own pictures, jotting down connected words and phrases and linking together in a poem.</p>