

A religious education unit for ages 9 to 11

Beliefs and actions in the world: Can Christian Aid and Islamic Relief change the world?

learn

Resources for teachers
and youth leaders

Christian Aid: Resources for teachers

This religious education (RE) unit is designed to enable pupils to learn how religious aid agencies are changing the world for the better. It has been written for Christian Aid by consultant Lat Blaylock of RE Today Services. Contact Lat via email: lat@retoday.org.uk

The unit has been written to be compatible with the English non-statutory National Framework for RE. It can also be connected with curriculum requirements in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

The image to the right was made by a pupil in response to the National Association of Teachers of Religious Education (NATRE) 'Art in Heaven' competition theme of 'a fairer world'. The activity is part of the unit described here, a creative approach to issues of religion and justice.



We believe in life before death

Religious Education: A unit of work for ages 9-11
How faith-based development charities can change the world
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For pupils aged 9-11 (year groups 5/6)

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About this unit

Overview

Christian Aid provides this unit of work for schools of any type to use, in conjunction with locally agreed syllabuses and faith school RE guidelines. Pupils will learn about the work of two major faith-based charities, Islamic Relief and Christian Aid. They will develop their understanding of the impact of religion in the world and consider important questions of justice and fairness, thinking for themselves. They will have opportunities to develop attitudes and opinions of their own and to consider key beliefs and teachings in Islamic and Christian traditions. Through their study, they compare the two charities and their work, looking at sources of inspiration to act justly for Muslims and for Christians. Learners will consider the personal challenge to make the world a better place. The unit has the potential for exciting cross-curricula work with geography, information and communications technology (ICT), citizenship and art. The unit focuses on concepts of values and commitment.

Estimated time for this unit

Ten hours (plus) of teaching time.

Where this unit fits in

This unit will focus on the work of two charities. It enables pupils to explain beliefs and their impact, and to compare and contrast aspects of religion in action. It enables pupils to develop their understanding of community and to relate what they learn to their own questions of value and commitment.

They will develop their studies of goodness and communities, asking about some ways in which Muslim and Christian charities contribute to the wellbeing of all.

The unit addresses the RE theme of beliefs and actions in the world, showing how Muslims and Christians respond to global issues of fairness and social justice. It enables pupils to develop their use of ICT in RE, particularly in developing the critical skills of evaluating web materials.

Attitudes

Pupils will have chances to explore and develop attitudes of:

- Empathy through engaging with the needs and feelings of people in different world development projects
- Commitment by considering questions of the commitments of the two charities and their own commitments
- Respect for all by thinking carefully about the ways in which the two charities embody respect for people in need and by facing the challenges this may present to their own attitudes.

Prior learning, vocabulary and resources

Prior learning	Vocabulary	Resources
<p>It is helpful if pupils have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A basic grasp of Muslim and Christian identity • Some prior knowledge of charities and the ways in which they work. 	<p>In this unit, pupils will have an opportunity to use words and phrases related to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Islam – such as almsgiving, Zakat, Ummah and generosity • Christianity – such as charity, fellowship, justice and stewardship. 	<p>Sacred texts</p> <p>Sayings and stories about wealth and poverty, fairness and justice, from the Qu’ran and from the Bible.</p> <p>Websites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Islamic Relief: www.islamic-relief.com (main site) • www.islamic-relief.com/hilal (Hilal’s World, a site for children) • Christian Aid: www.christianaid.org.uk (main site) • www.christianaid.org.uk/learn (site for teachers) • www.globalgang.org (Christian Aid’s site for children) • Spirited Arts: www.natre.org.uk/spiritedarts. Features images of children’s work and writing on the theme of this unit from competitions between 2006 and 2008. <p>DVD/video/visual</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Islamic Relief website has resources for classroom use available. • Christian Aid publishes a pack called <i>We’re Changing our World</i>, including DVD and classroom resources. It meets the needs of this unit very effectively. To order call 08700 787788 quoting code P389A (video pack) or P389B (DVD pack). <p>Other</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BBC broadcasts and DVDs: such as the Pathways of Belief series, which include programmes on Islam: www.bbcactive.com/schoolshop/search.asp • There is a selection of materials about Islam for children available from the Islamic Foundation in Leicestershire: www.islamic-foundation.com Storybooks, audio and video tapes and posters are all useful. • PCET, Folens and Nelson publish some useful photo/picture packs on particular religions. • Leicestershire Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) has a CD-ROM picture pack of faith communities in Leicester. • The Bradford Inter Faith Education Centre (01274 731674) has many useful publications about its local faith communities. • The website for NATRE at www.natre.org.uk has a database of children’s quotes on making the world a better place. Follow the links to ‘Children Talking’.

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

The unit enables pupils to develop:

- **Spiritually** – by reflecting on how key beliefs can make a difference to people’s lives and actions
- **Morally** – by thinking about their own attitudes to generosity, wealth and poverty
- **Socially** – by exploring some ideas about global community and inter-relatedness
- **Culturally** – by taking account of difference and diversity in charitable work.

Expectations at the end of this unit	
Nearly all pupils will be able to work at level 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell a story about the Prophet or about Jesus to do with money or generosity. • Suggest a reason why Muslims or Christians like to help the poor.
Most pupils will be able to work at level 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe a Christian Aid or Islamic Relief project. • Make a link between religious beliefs and texts and the actions of religious charities. • Make a link between their own ideas about wealth and poverty and the work of one of the charities.
Many pupils will be able to work at level 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe a project of Islamic Relief and a project of Christian Aid, making links between the beliefs and actions of Muslims and Christians. • Show that they understand why Muslims and Christians might support the charities. • Show that they understand the different priorities of the charities, applying their learning to the role-play task on page 5. • Apply the ideas of generosity and charity to their own attitudes to money.
Some pupils might be able to work at level 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain some similarities and differences between the work of the two charities and give reasons for them. • Use the terminology of Islam and Christianity to explain the impact of some projects of each of the two charities. • Explain their own views about the differences and similarities between the charities clearly.

Assessment suggestions

Suggestion A: role-playing world development

Set up a role-play for pupils. In two groups of five, give pupils seven different requests for aid from situations of need – such as an earthquake in Pakistan, drought in Somalia, poverty in Sudan, a medical education project in Bangladesh, a cyclone in Burma and so on. Put a 'price tag' on each project. Tell the two groups of pupils that they are the grants committee for one of the charities, and they have to rank the seven bids in order: which have the best claim for support from the charity? Why? Put the two groups – one representing Christian Aid, one representing Islamic Relief – together and ask them to compare their answers.

Ask individual pupils to record their learning in response to these questions:

- What was your role in the activity?
- Which three projects did you think most deserved support? Why?
- What do you think the Prophet would say about your chosen projects?
- What do you think Jesus would say about your chosen projects?
- What did you notice that is similar between Christian Aid and Islamic Relief?
- What differences did you notice?
- Imagine yourself in 15 years' time. Would you apply for a job with a charity such as Islamic Relief or Christian Aid? Why or why not?

Suggestion B: learning from religions about global issues

Pupils are invited to choose five questions from the list and answer each one in fewer than 50 words for themselves. This provides for a piece of extended writing that demonstrates children's learning from the unit.

- What did the Prophet teach about wealth and poverty?
- What did Jesus teach about wealth and poverty?
- What do we notice about wealth and poverty in our society and the wider world today?
- What would Jesus and the Prophet think about our world today?
- What can we find out about the work of Islamic Relief?
- What can we find out about the work of Christian Aid?
- Do these two charities follow the teachings of their religions? In what ways?
- How do these two charities make a difference in the world today?
- What are our own thoughts and experiences about wealth and poverty?
- How do our attitudes make a difference to others?
- Are there things to learn about our own attitudes from the work of Islamic Relief and Christian Aid?

What do we know about charities already?

Learning objectives	Teaching and learning	Learning outcomes	Points to note
<p>Pupils should learn to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and describe what they know already about the work of development charities Think for themselves about the unfairness in the world and respond to ideas about what can be done to change it. 	<p>What do we know about charities?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenge pupils to make the longest list of all the charities they can think of with a partner. See who can get 20 or more. Make the point that some charities help humans, some help animals, some help in the UK, some in the whole world. Talk about how fundraising is often what charities ask children to do, but in this work we are not fundraising (which should always be voluntary) but are learning about the ways in which two charities want to change the world. Use these two quotations to provoke the children to think about what is wrong with the world. What do they mean? What would happen if everyone followed these ideas? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 'Jesus said: "I have come that people might have life, and have it in all its fullness". (John 10:10).' - 'The Qu'ran teaches: "You who believe: those who spend their wealth in Allah's way are like a grain that grows seven ears, and every ear a hundred new grains. God gives to whom he will. God is all-embracing". (Surah II:261).' Ask the children how they would like to change the world. They might draw 'before and after' cartoons about their ideas. 	<p>Pupils will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe and show their understanding of the ways charities make a difference to life (L3/4) Make links between their own concerns and the charities they know about (L3) Apply the ideas of fairness, justice and equality for themselves (L4). 	<p>There would be many other ways to begin this unit, including looking at a charitable project the school has been involved in and local charity work.</p> <p>Christian Aid can provide local volunteers to visit schools in most areas of the UK. Email schools@christian-aid.org for more information.</p>

How and why does Islamic Relief try to change the world?

Learning objectives	Teaching and learning	Learning outcomes	Points to note
<p>Pupils should learn to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the work of two religious charities involved in global poverty issues • Make links between the beliefs and teachings of Islam and Christianity and the work of the two charities • Show their understanding of the issues of justice, fairness and poverty that the charities address. 	<p>Learning about Islamic Relief</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell pupils a story about the Prophet concerning wealth and poverty, and identify attitudes that help the poor and attitudes that don't. • Look at some sayings and teachings of Islam about Ummah, Zakat and wealth and poverty, and consider what differences they would make to life today if everyone followed them. This will include looking at the practices of Zakat in some detail. • Use the web and published resources to discover more about the charity Islamic Relief. Find out about some particular projects the charity has undertaken, and ask and answer questions such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - who supports Islamic Relief? Why? - what does Islamic Relief do to make a difference? Does it work? - does Islamic Relief follow the teachings of Islam? In what ways? - what do you think is good about the charity? - if you were devising an internet campaign for Islamic Relief with the aim of getting more donations in order to respond to a particular disaster, what web pages, emails and other resources would you use? How would you make the fundraising successful? 	<p>Pupils will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retell a story of the Prophet about wealth (L2) • Suggest meanings and ideas from Islamic teachings (L2) • Describe the work of the charity in speaking and listening, and in writing (L3) • Apply ideas about Zakat, Ummah and generosity for themselves (L4). 	<p>This unit draws on the global dimensions of the citizenship curriculum at every point.</p> <p>Links to the curriculum for geography and citizenship are easy to make in this work.</p>

How and why does Christian Aid try to change the world?

Learning objectives	Teaching and learning	Learning outcomes	Points to note
<p>Pupils should learn to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe the work of two religious charities involved in global poverty issues Make links between the beliefs and teachings of Islam and Christianity and the work of the two charities Show their understanding of the issues of justice, fairness and poverty that the charities address. 	<p>Learning about Christian Aid</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen to a story about Jesus that asks and answers questions about Christian attitudes to wealth and poverty, for example Matthew 19:16-30. Look at some sayings of Jesus about helping people, fellowship and generosity (such as the Good Samaritan, Luke 10:25-37). Respond by applying the ideas: what would happen if everyone did this? Investigate and report on some projects of Christian Aid and its partners that aim to change the world, asking and answering questions such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> does Christian Aid make a difference? who supports Christian Aid? Why? does Christian Aid put Jesus's teaching into action? what do you think is good about the charity? Use the Christian Aid Transformers resource (available at www.christianaid.org.uk/learn) to explore the work of the charity. Watch the online 'Transformers video' clip and use the real-life stories to discover the work of two Christian Aid partner projects. Children could write a report on a project, stating what they think it has achieved and whether it is a good use of donors' money. 	<p>Pupils will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retell a story of Jesus about wealth (L2) Suggest meanings to examples of Christian teachings (L2) Describe the work of the charity in speaking and listening, and in writing (L3) Apply ideas about fellowship, generosity or stewardship for themselves (L4). 	<p>Making links between beliefs and actions in religions is an important skill for this age group. It happens naturally where sacred texts are the background to exploring charitable action.</p>

How do global religious charities use the web? Could they do better?

Learning objectives	Teaching and learning	Learning outcomes	Points to note
<p>Pupils should learn to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate the ways in which charity websites work for themselves. 	<p>Weighing up two websites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The websites for both charities have sections for children: Islamic Relief has Hilal's World: www.islamic-relief.com/hilal and Christian Aid has Global Gang: www.globalgang.org Ask pupils to use and weigh up the websites. What are they trying to achieve? What use are they? Could they be improved? They might use these criteria: is it interesting? Is it educational? Will it increase support for the charity? How could it be improved? Ask pupils to make a list of five things that are good about each and make three detailed suggestions about how they could be improved. 	<p>Pupils will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the web to research the work of the two charities Begin to analyse the strengths and weaknesses of the charity websites. 	<p>This activity is about weighing up information, a key skill for the young web user. It connects to the ICT curriculum for Y5.</p>

Are Christian Aid and Islamic Relief similar or different?

Learning objectives	Teaching and learning	Learning outcomes	Points to note
<p>Pupils should learn to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand what is similar and what is distinctive about each of these two charities. 	<p>Similar and different</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify similarities and differences between the two charities. Ask pupils to work in pairs to make two lists, then compile an agreed list on the whiteboard. Consider whether they could merge and make one charity – or are they best working together, but being separate? This question will clarify how the pupils think the charities are related to the Muslim and Christian traditions. Reflect on the questions: can anyone support these charities, or do you need to be a member of the religion to join in? Why? 	<p>Pupils will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make links between the work of the two charities (L3) Identify (L4) and begin to explain (L5) similarities and differences between the work of the charities. 	<p>Comparison is a demanding skill for this age group, best tackled in pairs.</p>

Will I make a difference to the world in my life?

Learning objectives	Teaching and learning	Learning outcomes	Points to note
<p>Pupils should learn to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply ideas about community, fairness and justice for themselves • Consider the challenges of belonging to the Muslim or Christian faith with regard to wealth and poverty. 	<p>Viewpoints and attitudes: what do I think?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the idea that generosity or kindness can change the world. Pupils share and develop their own concepts of helping each other, and think about ideas of Ummah (Islam) or fellowship (Christianity). • What has made our world so unfair? What can be done to make it fairer? Can children make a difference? Can people 'make poverty history'? • Play the 'Paper Bag Game' to discover what it is really like to be poor. The game is available to download for free at www.christianaid.org.uk/learn • Use some reflective work or silence. Ask pupils to write a meditation, prayer or other text that expresses their response to unfairness in the world. Ask them to devise a logo or image to show why everyone should work against the evils of disaster and poverty. • Examples of children's work on these topics can be seen on the web gallery at www.natre.org.uk/spiritedarts, and pupils can enter a competition there. 	<p>Pupils will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the impact of charities such as these two on problems and issues of global fairness and justice (L4) • Apply ideas of their own to the need for generous and thoughtful action to combat injustice or to respond to disasters (L4). 	<p>Challenging poverty and unfairness is not specific to one religion: all faiths, and non-religious ways of life face this challenge.</p>

How can I express my ideas about unfairness in our world through a creative piece of work?

Learning objectives	Teaching and learning	Learning outcomes	Points to note
<p>Pupils should learn to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan and make a piece of creative work that expresses ideas about fairness and justice Relate their own ideas to the work and thinking of Christian Aid and Islamic Relief. 	<p>How can I express my ideas in creative work?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using themes such as 'rich and poor' or 'fair and unfair' or 'change the world' pupils are challenged to create a piece of work that expresses their own ideas in response to the unit. This activity needs to provide space for pupils to think creatively and then engage with an issue. A careful process of development, perhaps moving from sketching, shared ideas and peer review to using watercolour, pastel, collage or some other medium, is effective. A review of the NATRE spirited arts entries on fairness and justice models this activity well for pupils. Examples of children's work on these topics can be seen on the web gallery: www.natre.org.uk/spiritedarts and pupils can enter a competition. The activity is good for visual learners. Teachers may like to provide an alternative for the linguistically gifted – writing poetry on this theme is effective too. 	<p>Pupils will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe a problem and make a link to their own response through their artwork (L3) Apply their ideas about wealth, poverty and changing the world in an imaginative way, using religious ideas in their artwork (L4). 	<p>Curriculum links to the art and design curriculum are easy to establish and manage here.</p>

What have I learnt about the two charities? Will it make a difference to me?

Learning objectives	Teaching and learning	Learning outcomes	Points to note
<p>Pupils should learn to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Express their own views and responses to issues of poverty and injustice, in the light of religious understanding. 	<p>Learning from religions about global issues</p> <p>Pupils are invited to choose four questions from the list and answer each one in about 50 words for themselves.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What did the Prophet teach about wealth and poverty? What did Jesus teach about wealth and poverty? What do we notice about wealth and poverty in our society and the wider world today? What would Jesus and the Prophet think about our world today? What have you found out about the work of Islamic Relief? What have you found out about the work of Christian Aid? Do these two charities follow the teachings of their religions? In what ways? How do these two charities make a difference in the world today? What are our own thoughts and experiences about wealth and poverty? How do our attitudes make a difference to others? Are there things to learn about our own attitudes from the work of Islamic Relief and Christian Aid? 	<p>Pupils will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Think for themselves about the impact of religious charitable action in the world (L4) Express views that reflect the teaching and example of Muslim and Christian charities on how to change the world for the better (L5). 	<p>This can be used as a good example of an assessment-for-learning task in RE.</p>