

JEWISH BELIEFS AND ISSUES

KS3 TEACHER GUIDE

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Introduction

This book is part of a series on **Beliefs and Issues** which provides teaching and learning material for Key Stage 3 Religious Education. The series has been developed and written with the belief that good religious education can be seen as relevant, interesting and engaging to all students since it is concerned with studying aspects of the 'human condition'. For all of religious education there is a strong link with human experience. There are important or 'ultimate' questions that all people ask at some time in their lives. There are a number of sources for possible answers to these questions. Religions provide answers based on their own set of beliefs. It is important for students to be able to understand and appreciate views, opinions and beliefs other than their own in today's world of secularism, multi-culturalism and religious diversity.

The material seeks to:

- identify the link between human experience and religious ideas;
- engage and motivate students through active involvement in a range of activities;
- develop higher order thinking skills;
- promote greater understanding and acceptance of differing views and beliefs;
- develop skills of analysis, reasoning and discussion.

Links to the National Framework

The non-statutory National Framework for Religious Education has also guided the development of the material, particularly in that it:

- seeks to 'place value on the ethos and values that religious education can establish independent of any faith';
- states that RE should enable students 'to develop positive attitudes to their learning and to the beliefs';
- states that 'RE can transform students' assessment of themselves and others, and their understanding of the wider position of the world in which we live'.

The Framework states that RE should promote values of truth, justice, respect for all and care of the environment. There is also a special emphasis on:

- students valuing themselves and others;
- the role of family and community in religious belief and activity;
- the celebration of diversity in society through understanding similarities and differences;
- sustainable development of the Earth.

The **Beliefs and Issues** series supports the development of these values and attitudes through the subject matter covered and the learning activities that are suggested. Students are encouraged to listen to others, to express their own opinions openly and productively; to be able to disagree while maintaining respect for an opposing view and to be open to having their own opinions, beliefs and understanding challenged and possibly changed.

Using the series across Key Stage 3

The series of books are intended to be used across Key Stage 3. The National Framework for RE seeks to be 'robust' but also 'flexible'. The **Beliefs and Issues** material has also sought to balance these two facets. Although material is numbered, it is not necessarily intended to be used sequentially. Those responsible for overall planning need to have scope for creativity as they produce schemes of work for their individual situations. As a general rule, Year 7 students may concentrate on learning about religions and some of the explicit features of these, while certain moral and ethical issues may be better tackled in later years.

However, younger students should not be denied the opportunity to discuss issues with which they are confronted in other areas of life. For example, they will be aware of issues such as global poverty from television and other media coverage. They may well be actively engaged in addressing this, even if this is simply through buying and wearing a 'Make Poverty History' arm band. So, rather than dictating when a particular topic should be covered, the material is presented much more in discrete units which can be identified and allocated to particular points in the Key Stage programme by the teacher responsible.

The QCA Scheme of Work

The material relates to the QCA scheme of work but is not arranged to match it directly. For example, the QCA unit 7E is 'What are we doing to the environment?' In this QCA unit, students study the approaches of different religions to issues of conservation and stewardship, using a variety of sources to explore the teachings of different religions and how beliefs affect the lives of believers. They compare, contrast and evaluate the views of each religion and reflect on the relevance to their own lives of what they have learnt.

This unit can be covered through the **Beliefs and Issues** series with teachers locating and using the relevant sections from the Student Book and the Teacher Guide for each religion being studied by students in their school. It would be possible to revisit this topic at different stages, perhaps introducing ideas from different religions each time.

A similar approach can be used to tackle other QCA units, such as 9B 'Where did the universe come from?' or 9C 'Why do we suffer?', which require students to consider ideas from a number of different religious viewpoints as well as secular philosophies such as humanism.

There are close links with the 'knowledge, skills and understanding' and 'breadth of study' from the National Framework and these are made clear for each unit.

Using the Student Book and Teacher Guide

This book accompanies the *Jewish Beliefs and Issues* Student Book. It is intended to assist the teacher in making the most of that book by providing a flexible and useful resource which gives clear guidance for lessons based on the Student Book material.

The Teacher Guide has been written with both the non-specialist and the dedicated RE teacher in mind. The format for each piece is such that a non-specialist teacher has all that they require to deliver quality lessons which reflect the philosophical approach of the National Framework for RE. At the same time, the material is flexible enough for specialist teachers to use ideas from within the 'lessons' which can be incorporated into existing lessons or as part of the school's scheme of work.

The material is presented as discrete 'lessons', based on each double page spread of the Student Book. For each 'lesson', there is a starter activity, ideas for the main teaching section and a plenary and, in some cases, suggestions for the use of a photo from the CD-ROM as a stimulus for discussion. Relevant questions are provided for this activity which, like the starter activity, is intended to promote thinking skills.

- The starter activity is provided to stimulate the students' thoughts and encourage some interactivity. The starter is themed so that it can be used to lead directly into the rest of the session.
- The main teaching section gives instructions and guidance on how to work through the material in the Student Book. It contains suggestions for questions to stimulate discussion as well as background information where it is felt to be necessary. There are suggestions for additional activities which might be for individual students, pairs, small groups or the whole class.
- The plenary is included to indicate how best to draw a session to a close, recalling and reinforcing the main teaching points.
- Almost all the sessions have an associated Copymaster.
- A selection of 'display' files (in Word) have been provided for use on whiteboards or importing into PowerPoint, often indicated in the text by an emboldened 'display' or where text is highlighted on a whiteboard screen or on a scroll. These offer a visual stimulus for starter activities and reference materials for the main lessons and plenaries, and include the Copymaster files.

Although the above is the format for the presentation of the material, it is not the intention to limit the use of the material to individual lessons. It might be possible to work through a designated subject within that time frame but it may not give sufficient time for the students to really get to grips with some of the issues. There will be other reasons for wanting to spend more than one lesson on a given topic. Equally, there may be ideas from the books which you can use as part of an overall lesson you have planned around other material. In short, the material is presented as lessons and can be used as such but also contains 'stand alone' material which could be extracted for use outside the given format.

The activities in the Student Book are set out in the same order in the Teacher Guide. They are placed in the teacher guidance at the earliest point at which it would be sensible to ask the children to attempt them, usually when there has been some input or discussion. They provide for students to be actively engaged at points throughout the lesson. Beyond this, there is no strict timing for when the students carry out these tasks. So, for example, a teacher might feel that they would rather leave all the activities until the end of the direct teaching.

Additional activities and assessment

The activities offer an opportunity for a range of learning styles and provide a good deal of work for students. These are usually multi-ability tasks with differentiation being mainly by outcome. As has been said, the Teacher Guide also contains ideas for additional activities in the main teaching section. Neither these nor the Copymasters are intended as extension activities, available only to those who complete the exercises from the Student Book. They are activities which are intended to give further opportunities for students to reflect, analyse and respond and, in the case of the Copymasters particularly, to provide an assessment record indicating a student's level of understanding regarding a particular topic.

Some of the activities from the Student Book and the Teacher Guide would be suitable as homework projects, particularly some of the 'Take Time To Think' questions from the Student Book. Occasionally this suggestion is indicated in the material but, for the majority, this has been left to the discretion of the teacher or person responsible for RE planning.

WHO ARE THE JEWS?

NATIONAL FRAMEWORK LINKS

- 1a: investigate and explain the differing impacts of religious beliefs and teachings on individuals, communities and societies
- 1c: investigate and explain why people belong to faith communities and explain the reasons for diversity in religion
- 1e: discuss and evaluate how religious beliefs and teachings inform answers to ultimate questions and ethical issues
- 2a: reflect on the relationship between beliefs, teachings and ultimate questions, communicating their own ideas and using reasoned arguments
- 3e: beliefs and concepts: the key ideas and questions of meaning in religions and beliefs, including issues related to God, truth, the world, human life and life after death

PHOTO STARTER

- **Display** the photo of the menorah.
- Ask students if they know what it is.
- Ask them to suggest why it might have seven branches. (They may suggest days of the week.)
- Ask why light is an important symbol. (*Gives us a sense of security when it is dark, helps us to see, as a sign of God's presence – He gives security and helps people to 'see' the truth.*)
- Say that the design is specified to Moses in the Jewish Torah (Exodus).

STARTER ACTIVITY

- **Display** the title: "Who Do You Think You Are?"
- Talk briefly about the concept of a 'family tree', explaining that it is a way of mapping out a 'family line'. It shows how people are born to certain mothers and fathers and traces a 'blood line'. Model a small part of your family tree or a fictitious one.
- Ask the students to write down as much of their family tree as they can.
- Discuss some of the findings, especially people who have large 'extended' families including uncles, aunts and cousins. Briefly discuss how families can 'grow' from one couple.

MAIN TEACHING

- Introduce the topic and explain that students will be finding out about the religion of Judaism, about Jews today and about the beginnings of the faith.
- Say that the Jewish people did not suddenly come into existence but were identified as a group within ancient Mesopotamian civilisation because they moved away from common religious practices. These were generally a belief in many gods and idol worship. The Jewish people became distinct because they believed in one God and because of their experiences of this one God. Say that belief in one God is called monotheism.
- Read through the introductory material and discuss the points given about the history of the Jewish people.

- Read through the 'What's in a name?' section. Refer back to the starter activity and say how the Jews regard themselves as all being on a vast 'family tree' directly descended from Abraham.

Additional information

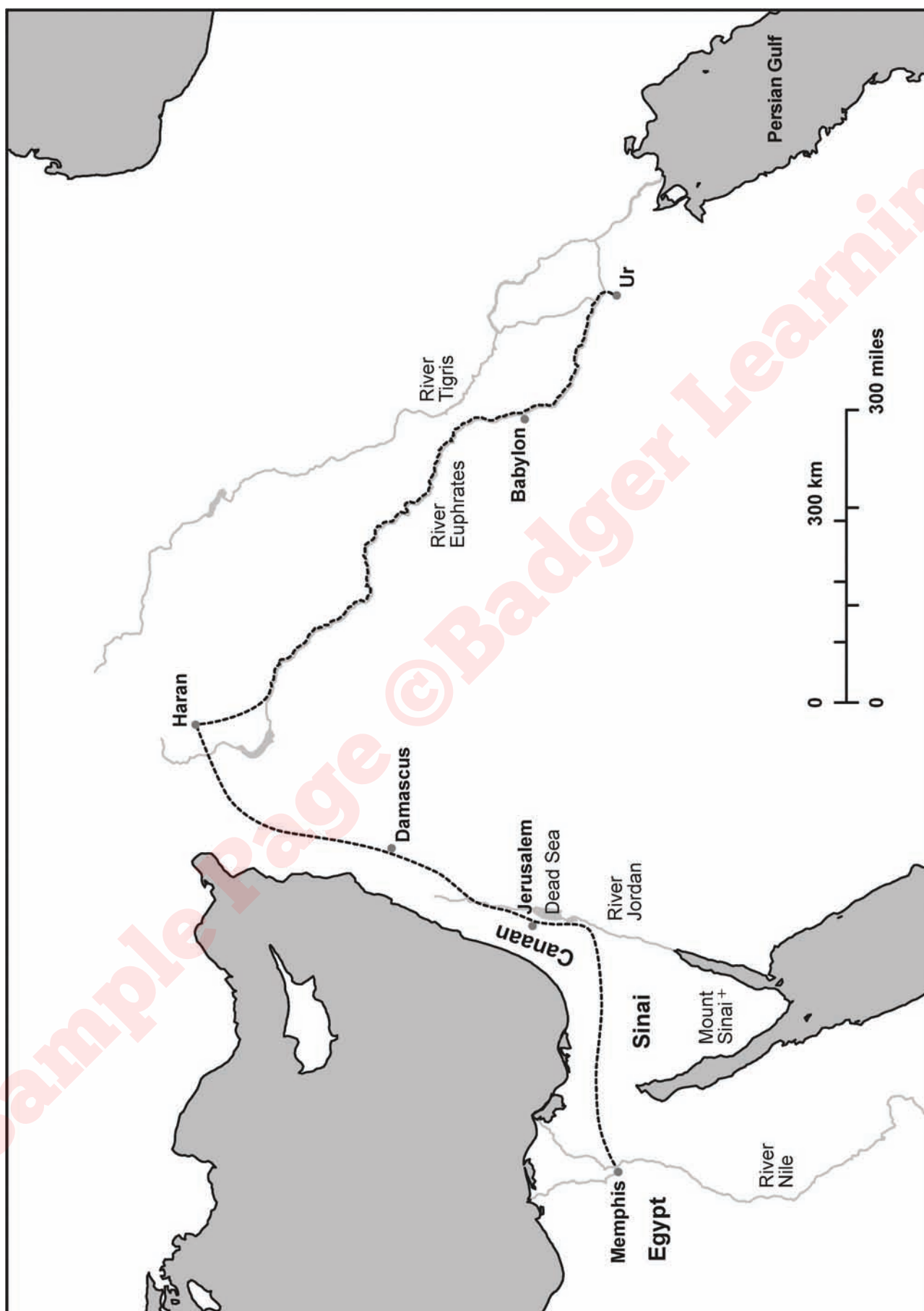
Abraham (or Abram as he was initially called) was the first person in the Bible to be referred to as the 'Hebrew'. In early writings from the 18th and 19th century BCE, there are occurrences of the word 'habiru' which is used to suggest a social designation for wanderers or 'those who pass from place to place'.

- Refer students to the 'Ten basic facts about Judaism' and ask them where and when the faith is said to have started and who is regarded as the 'founder of the faith'. (*Mesopotamia, 3000-4000 years ago, Abraham.*)
- **Display** the map from Resource Sheet (1).
- Point out features, such as the Mediterranean Sea and the Red Sea, which will help students identify the location of the area in the world.
- Point out the city of Ur. Say that this is in modern day Iraq. Say that this is where Abraham lived and that, while he was there, he became convinced that the practice of worshipping many gods, including the sun, moon and stars, was wrong. Abraham left Ur with his family on a long journey to Canaan (approximately where Israel is today). They settled in Haran (possibly located in modern northern Syria/southern Turkey). Abraham was called by God to leave and travel on to Canaan. He was told that he would be the father of a great nation.
- Say that the family arrived in Canaan but that, after a time, there was a famine in that land and they had to go to Egypt. They later left Egypt and led a nomadic existence.
- Explain that Abraham was the father of Isaac and that Isaac was the father of Jacob. It was Jacob who finally took his family and their people to Egypt because of another famine. Here the Pharaohs treated them as slaves.
- Say that this situation lasted until Moses led the people out of Egypt in an event known as the Exodus.
- After many years wandering in the wilderness, the Jews again returned to Canaan. Say how the name of this country changed many times, as did its borders. Other people invaded and ruled over the Jews, sometimes taking them away as captives. Many Jews left to live in other countries.
- Students complete 'Over To You' (1-3).
- Students use the 'Ten basic facts about Judaism' to help them complete Copymaster (1).

PLENARY

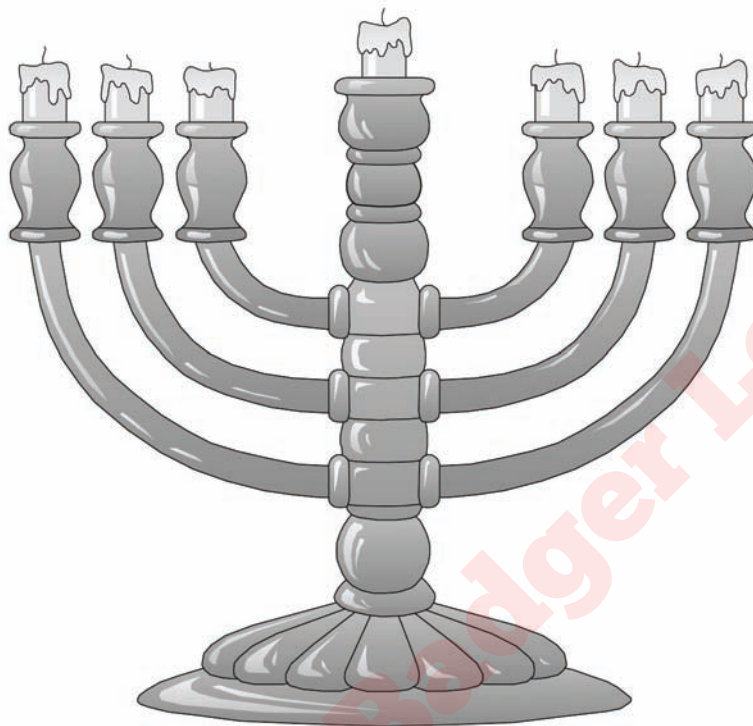
Check answers from the Copymaster with the class to recount the main teaching points.

THE AREA WHERE JUDAISM BEGAN



SEVEN FACTS ABOUT JUDAISM

When you have completed a statement below, draw a flame in a branch of the menorah. Can you light all seven?



1. Judaism began in Mesopotamia about ago.
2. The Jews trace their ancestry back to
3. Before being known as Jews, the people were called
. from their clan leader Jacob and also
. after the tribe to which they belonged.
4. Jews are , which means they worship one God.
5. Jews all rest on the , which is the seventh day
of the week.
6. Of all the Jewish scriptures, the is the most
important part.
7. The Star of is an important symbol in Judaism.