

PART TWO: A CLOSER LOOK AT THE MAJOR LIVING TRADITIONS

All students must study two religious traditions: one from list A and one from list B. In addition the higher-level students are expected to do two comparative studies under topics 2.1 to 2.5 and have an awareness of the particular relationship between Christianity and Judaism, its origins and implications.

LIST A	LIST B
Christianity (any denomination)	Islam
Judaism	Buddhism
	Hinduism

Syllabus Objectives	<p><i>Knowledge</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have a detailed knowledge of the main features of two major religious traditions and knowledge of one other living tradition • be aware of the particular relationship between Christianity and Judaism and the origins and implications of this relationship <p><i>Understanding</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand that while each tradition has its own unique characteristics, there are also elements which the major religious traditions share in common • be aware that the major religious traditions have undergone many developments and restorations since their foundation, and continue to be of influence in the lives and cultures of their adherents. <p><i>Skills</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognise evidence of religious belief in contemporary culture • recognise similar motifs and characteristics in inter religious traditions <p><i>Attitudes</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • appreciation of the significance of inter-faith dialogue • respect for the religious beliefs of others and of other cultures
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Topic: 2.1 A vision of salvation

Procedure

Description of content: *In the two traditions the vision of salvation / liberation proposed*

Photo Assignment:

- Present students with a selection of photographs / images (Photospeak etc.)
- Ask students to pick a photograph / image that they associate with the word salvation.
- Write the word SALVATION on the chalkboard and display the photographs / images chosen by students around it.
- Ask students individually to identify their chosen photograph / image and say why they associate it with salvation.

Discuss: What do we have anything in common in terms of our understanding of salvation?

How do we differ in our understanding of salvation?

Take feedback from students and if necessary explain that salvation may be understood as freedom or safety from forces that are destructive. It refers to a sense of health or wholeness.

Research Assignment:

Divide the students into groups or pairs to identify the vision of salvation in the two chosen religious traditions by researching answers to the following questions:

- What do the terms salvation and liberation mean in each tradition?
- How is salvation achieved?
- In each tradition what is the understanding of human destiny (where is human life headed)?

When students have conducted their research give them time to present their findings to the rest of the class. As each presentation is made profile on the chalkboard the response to each question for the different religious traditions.

Discuss: What do the different religious traditions have in common in terms of their understanding of salvation?

How do the religious traditions differ in their understanding of salvation?

Take feedback and conclude that depending on the religion, salvation can refer to this life or to an afterlife and is either an activity initiated by God, or depends entirely on the action of the individual.

Description of content: In the two traditions

- *the image of the human person*

- *the nature of the relationship between the transcendent and the human**

(*Higher Level only)

Review course content covered in relation to creation stories i.e.

- Leaving Certificate Religious Education Syllabus Section A Part 2
- Junior Certificate Religious Education Syllabus Section D Part 5

Storyboard Assignment: Read the creation account of each chosen religious tradition.

Divide the chalkboard into two / three* columns.

<p>In the first column write the names of the chosen religious traditions and ask students to outline in words or pictures the key points of each creation story. Or read Student Work: Story of Creation Genesis 1-2: 4 & Islamic Creation Stories in Section J Part 2 Topic 2.4</p>	<p>In the second column ask students to state what each account shows about the understanding of the human person in its tradition?</p>	<p>*In the third column ask students to state what each account shows about the understanding of the transcendent / God in its tradition?</p>
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Or *Poster Assignment:*

Give students time to gather resources and prepare a collage of stories / quotes / pictures / songs / music / sacred text etc. from each of the chosen religious traditions.

When finished have each student present their completed collage to the rest of the class, identifying and explaining the different images on display.

Discuss:

- What do the religious traditions have in common in terms of their understanding of the human person?
- How do the religious traditions differ in their understanding of the human person?
- *What is the relationship between the transcendent / God and the human person in each of the religious traditions?
- *What do the religious traditions have in common in terms of their understanding of the transcendent / God and the human person?
- *How do the religious traditions differ in their understanding of the transcendent / God and the human person?

Written Assignment:

- Compare the vision of salvation or liberation or enlightenment as proposed in the two traditions you have chosen to study (one from list A and one from list B).
- Summarise the idea of the human person present in each of the two traditions you have studied.
- Using examples from each tradition, describe the relationship between the transcendent (God) and the human in each of the two traditions you have chosen to study.

Outcomes:

- compare and contrast the vision of salvation/liberation proposed
- compile a profile of 'the human person' as presented in each tradition.
- describe how the transcendent and the human relate to one another, using examples from each tradition.

Topics: 2.2 The community of believers* & 2.4: Challenges to the tradition*

Procedure

Description of content: In the two traditions

- the place of community in the traditions under study
- the nature and ordering of the relationship between members
- structure and organisation at local and global levels
- the contemporary experience of the tradition, with particular reference to the tradition in Ireland
- the source and meaning of authority*
- the nature and ordering of the relationship between members of the tradition and the world*
- new movements and developments in the expansion of the tradition* (Higher level only)

Interview Assignment: Students conduct interviews with local members the chosen religious traditions using the relevant question cards below.

Or Flyer Assignment: Students produce an information sheet or newspaper flyer profiling each tradition under the following headings where relevant.

<p><i>The place of community in the tradition</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many members are there in the local community? • How many communities are there nationally / internationally? • Do members of the local community have contact with others internationally? • Etc. 	<p><i>The relationship between members</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How the community is organised / how it is structured? • How it is funded? • What is the role of women in the community? • Etc.
<p><i>* Authority</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is in charge? • Who leads the worship? • Who makes decisions for the community? • How is authority understood within the community? • Where does authority come from - is it in a text, the leader, the people, or the tradition? • Etc. 	<p><i>* Challenges</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the challenges facing this community? • What are the future possibilities for this community?
<p><i>* The relationship between members of the tradition and the world</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the community have any connection with a global community e.g. membership of the World Council of Churches? Etc. • How do the members of this community involve themselves in issues around them – political, social, inter-religious? • What is their attitude to the world and society? Etc. 	

Written Assignment:

- a. How do each of the two traditions you have chosen to study understand the role and place of community?
- b. What challenges are faced by the traditions you have chosen to study?
- c. Pick two key movements or developments that have taken place in the last 50 years in each of the traditions you have chosen to study. What challenges do these developments present to members of the community of believers in each tradition?

Outcomes:

- give an account of the place of community in each of the traditions
- describe the organisation of people in the tradition
- give an account of the structure and organisation at local and global levels
- define ‘authority’, stating what it means and where it comes from in the traditions
- describe how members of the tradition relate to and understand the world, and vice versa.
- report on the contemporary experience of the traditions, particularly in the Irish context
- discuss possible future developments for the traditions.

Topic: 2.3 A celebrating tradition

Procedure

Description of content: In the two traditions

- elements of rite, with particular reference to rites of initiation

Review course content covered in relation to the celebration of faith i.e.

- Leaving Certificate Religious Education Syllabus Section A Part 2 & G
- Junior Certificate Religious Education Syllabus Section E

Place the word RITE on the chalkboard and brainstorm students as to its meaning.

Take feedback and conclude that religious rites are found in all religious traditions. Rites are part of normal human activity but incorporating the elements of symbolism, the making holy or sacred, repetition, and remembrance gives a rite religious meaning.

Show Video / photographs or ask students to recall participating in or observing a rite of initiation e.g. baptism etc.

Discuss: What elements of a rite were involved -Where was there the use of symbolism, making holy or sacred etc.?

What was being expressed in the rite?

How is this rite of initiation similar to that of another religion?

How is this rite different to that of another religion?

Take feedback and conclude by emphasising the religious meaning of the rite of initiation within a tradition.

Description of content: In the two traditions

- the marking and celebration of time and / or the seasons

- celebration of stages in the life cycle

Brainstorm: How do religious traditions mark the passing of time and seasons?

Or Write the calendar date on the chalkboard.

Then write a date using a liturgical / religious calendar e.g. First week of Advent; First day of Ramadan etc.

Buzz: Why is there a difference between these calendar dates?

Take feedback and conclude that in any religion certain events that occurred in the past are central to its story and characterize the beliefs and practices of those who are members. These events are also recalled at particular seasons.

Present students with calendars of the seasons celebrated in the chosen traditions e.g.

<http://www.interfaithcalendar.org/> or

Poster Assignment: Make calendars of the seasons celebrated in the chosen traditions.

Identify how the seasons are celebrated in each tradition by including symbols of the festivities that mark the season?

Research Assignment: Pick one of the following key moments in the lives of people – birth, death, entry into adulthood, loss, death, marriage, illness and research how this is marked in the two traditions you are studying.

Or Review the handout on funeral rites within different religious traditions in the sample lesson plan for Section A Part 2.1

Written Assignment:

Select *two* key elements of the human life cycle (e.g. birth, adulthood, commitment, illness, death, etc.) and show how your two chosen traditions celebrate each element.

Outcomes:

- Describe any rites of initiation associated with the traditions (or where none exist, another rite of significance)
- Describe how the tradition marks and celebrates time and or seasons, using examples
- Present key elements of the human life cycle and show how the tradition celebrates each.

Topic: 2.5 Inter-faith dialogue

Procedure

Description of content: - the origins of inter-faith dialogue
- the nature and purpose of this dialogue
- the role of religious belief in two of the world's contemporary conflict situations.

Review course content covered in relation to inter-faith dialogue i.e.

- Junior Certificate Religious Education Syllabus Section A Part 4

Or Brainstorm: What is inter-faith dialogue?

Take feedback and conclude that inter-faith dialogue describes the dialogue between the religions. A dialogue is a discussion or exchange of ideas and opinions, especially between groups with a view to resolving conflict or achieving agreement.

Research Assignment: Produce an “inter-faith diary” with short entries describing when the idea of such dialogue began and what is happening to promote it today.

When students have completed the assignment take feedback.

Draw a time line on the chalkboard and mark on it significant date such as the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893 (where the idea of inter-faith dialogue began), the Inter-faith Gatherings, in Assisi 1986 and 2002 etc.

Written Assignment:

- a. What is meant by ‘inter-faith dialogue’?
- b. Describe the origin of this dialogue and its purpose in relation to two major world religions you have studied.
- c. Assess its current state.

Outcomes:

- outline clearly what is meant by ‘inter-faith’ dialogue and give examples of its origins
- discuss the importance of inter-faith dialogue
- name two contemporary conflicts where religious beliefs play a role and explain the nature of the relationship between religion and the conflict.

Resources which teachers have suggested include:

- rites of passage - <http://re-xs.ucsm.ac.uk/re/passage>
- calendar of the seasons celebrated in religious traditions - <http://www.interfaithcalendar.org/>
- Inter-faith dialogue - www.columban.ph/SeanDwan_interreligious_dialogue.HTM;
www.multifaithnet.org ; www.religioustolerance.org